

**‘BAPTISM, NO WALL OF DIVISION’:
SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY PARTICULAR BAPTISTS
AND DYNAMICS OF TOLERATION**

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DECLARATION

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Signed _____

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines religious toleration dynamics from the perspective of a religious minority, the Particular Baptists in seventeenth-century England. Religious toleration has most commonly been analysed ‘from above’. Scholars have ably discussed how the state responded to Nonconformist communities in society, and the philosophical reasons given for tolerating them. Recent scholarship has highlighted the more pragmatic dimensions of toleration, exploring how toleration dynamics were at play among the wider English populace. This thesis continues such work, by examining how the Particular Baptists experienced, and engaged in toleration dynamics. While the civil and intellectual contexts are important to recognise, they were not the only contexts in which religious toleration took place. Rather, toleration was multi-dimensional. Particular Baptist congregations showed toleration and intolerance of those among their flock. The various Nonconformist denominations constantly engaged in toleration dynamics with each other, as well. Moreover, not only did King Charles II wrestle with whether to tolerate the Particular Baptists, but at times they deliberated whether to tolerate him. Indeed, ultimately some chose not to do so, resulting in the Rye House Plot and the Monmouth Rebellion. This thesis chronologically charts how the Particular Baptists engaged in dynamics of toleration, from their inception in the late 1630s, through the Civil War, the Interregnum, the Restoration, the reign of James II, to the Glorious Revolution. This reveals how religious minorities often have greater agency in how toleration takes place, than might be expected. It also highlights the distinct contributions those seeking toleration can provide to our understanding of religious tolerance and intolerance.

ABBREVIATIONS AND NOTES

B.A.R.	<i>Association Records of the Particular Baptists of England, Wales and Ireland to 1660</i>
O.D.N.B	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i>
C.S.P.D.	<i>Calendar of State Papers, Domestic</i>

For biblical references throughout this thesis, I cite Théodore de Bèze, ed., *The Bible: That Is, the Holy Scriptures Contained in the Olde and Newe Testament* (London: Christopher Barker, 1587), more commonly known as *The Geneva Bible*. This was the most widely used Bible translation by Dissenters throughout the seventeenth century. For more information, see Alister E. McGrath, *In the Beginning: The Story of the King James Bible and How It Changed a Nation, a Language, and a Culture, 1st edition* (New York, NY: Anchor, 2002), 129.

Unless otherwise stated, all italic and capitalised emphases within quotations are from the original. I have also retained the original spelling and grammar.

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INTRODUCTION

In a Bristol Anglican church during the late 1630s, the vicar stood up to preach a quintessentially Laudian sermon, arguing ‘that pictures and images might be used’ in worship. In response, Dorothy Hazzard ‘had openly, and in the presence of the congregation, gone forth in the midst of his sermon ... away she went forth before them all, and said she would hear him no more, nor never did to this day.’¹ Instead, Hazzard began a congregation in her home, as part of the emerging Nonconformist group, the Particular Baptists. Driven by their strong conviction that paedobaptism was unscriptural, Hazzard even organised for women to give birth surreptitiously in her home, to avoid their children having to be christened.² In 1643, Hazzard would lead over 200 women to defend Bristol’s Frome Gate against Prince Rupert’s royalist attack during the Civil War.³

This story of Dorothy Hazzard typifies many of the key themes of this thesis. This work explores the dynamics of toleration in seventeenth-century England from the perspective of a religious minority. It demonstrates that while religious and political authorities deliberated the limits of toleration, they were not the only ones to do so. In fact, similar debates were occurring within the very Dissenters seeking toleration from those authorities. Nonconformists wrestled with how tolerant they themselves should be, both to other religious minorities, and to the religious and political establishment. As Hazzard’s abrupt departure from the Anglican service indicates, Nonconformists were often emphatically intolerant of the authorities. Their very nomenclatures – ‘Dissenters’, ‘Nonconformists’ – were descriptors for their intolerance of social ecclesiastical norms.

¹ Edward Terrill, *The Records of a Church of Christ Meeting in Broadmead, Bristol, 1640-1687*, ed. Edward Bean Underhill (London: Hanserd Knollys Society, 1847), 14.

² *Ibid.*, 15.

³ *Ibid.*, 519.

The focus of this study is the Particular Baptists, a Nonconformist group that began in the 1630s and grew in significance, even notoriety, over the seventeenth century. Their often-odious reputation was not only borne out of their religious dissent, but also their frequently uncompromising political stance, which at times was tantamount to treason.

1. PARTICULAR BAPTISTS IN ENGLISH PROTESTANTISM

The use of the term ‘Particular’ is to distinguish them from another English Baptist group that had begun in 1609, the General Baptists. The distinction rests on each group’s understanding of providence and atonement: General Baptists held an Arminian position, believing that Christ’s atoning work is available for all people, to choose for themselves; Particular Baptists were Calvinist, maintaining that Christ had atoned for the sins of the elect, those that God had chosen. The distinctive origins of each group, and especially the Particular Baptists, will be explored further in Chapter 1. In terms of definitions, this thesis employs the framework described in Diagram I.1 (not to scale):

Seventeenth-Century English Protestantism						
Conformists	Nonconformists, Dissenters					
Anglicans	Presbyterians	Independents	Baptists		Quakers	Minor Sects
			Particular	General		

Diagram I.1.

Seventeenth-century English Protestantism can be broken into two broad categories: Conformity, and Nonconformity. Beneath these two groups, all other denominations existed.

I use the term ‘Anglican’ to describe the traditional episcopalian Church of England. Note here, also, my use of the lower-case ‘e’. Here I use the term

‘episcopalian’, not in its institutional sense (as in the Episcopalian Church, which did not exist until nineteenth-century America). I am using it in its ecclesiological sense, as a form of leadership structure within a type of denomination, which can be opposed to presbyterian or congregational leadership structures. Any denomination that has a hierarchical leadership structure – such as Anglican, Catholic, Orthodox, Lutheran – can be defined as episcopalian. Anglicans remained consistently Conformist, in attitude even if at times not in actuality: they desired to collaborate with the state to be the national Church.

The rest of English Protestantism can be broadly described as ‘Nonconformist’, with the synonymous nomenclature, ‘Dissenters’. I recognise that such definitions have been a source of significant debate, and acknowledge such terms’ fluidity. ‘Puritan’ has also been widely debated, and I generally avoid aligning it with either Conformists or Nonconformists in this thesis.⁴ Rather, I follow Richard Greaves in identifying it with a piety that could be found across the English ecclesiastical spectrum.⁵ I acknowledge that Presbyterians and Independents both sought to be the Conformist Church at times, especially before the Restoration of 1660. However, both groups were usually unable to become the national Church, and from the 1670s generally embraced their Nonconformist identity.⁶ Nonconformity also included more idiosyncratic groups, such as Quakers and Socinians, who were frequently rejected and suppressed by wider English Protestantism. Both Baptist groups also stand within Nonconformity, though the

⁴ William Haller, *The Rise of Puritanism* (New York, NY: Harper, 1957); R.J. Acheson, *Radical Puritans in England, 1550-1660* (Oxford: Routledge, 2013); J.I. Packer, *A Quest for Godliness: The Puritan Vision of the Christian Life* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1990); John Spurr, *English Puritanism, 1603-1689* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002).

⁵ Richard L. Greaves, ‘The Nature of the Puritan Tradition’, in *Reformation, Conformity and Dissent: Essays in Honour of Geoffrey Nuttall*, ed. R. Buick Knox (London: Epworth Press, 1977), 258–59.

⁶ N.H. Keeble, *The Literary Culture of Nonconformity in Later Seventeenth-Century England* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1987), 40–44.

Particular Baptists' Calvinism resonated more with Presbyterians than the General Baptists' Arminianism.

Therefore, the following categorisations are utilised throughout this thesis, unless otherwise specified. 'Anglican' and 'Conformist' are largely synonymous. 'Nonconformists' and 'Dissenters' are interchangeable terms, referring collectively to Presbyterians, Independents, both Baptist groups, Quakers, and other minor sects. The term 'Baptists' refers to both Particular and General Baptists, collectively. I often abbreviate the Particular Baptists to 'Particulars', but do not refer to the General Baptists as 'Generals', given that the word 'General' often refers to other things, such as the Major-Generals, or a General Assembly.

At the same time, I recognise any such categorisation of religious groups is hardly straightforward, and must be attempted carefully. For example, there was a significant degree of denominational fluidity among many in seventeenth-century England. Frequently, people were part of intersecting groups, or moved across denominational lines throughout their lives.⁷ In 1646, Thomas Edwards wrote that 'among all these sorts of sects and sectaries, there are hardly now to be found in *England* ... any sect thats simple and pure, and not mixt and compounded ... as for example, where can a man finde a Church of simple Anabaptists?'⁸ Indeed, Daniel Featley suggested that English Baptist theology incorporated facets of many other groups, 'so in one Anabaptist you have many Heretiques ... many erroneous and schismatical positions.'⁹ Ann Hughes refers to this denominational elasticity as 'the

⁷ Andrew Bradstock, *Radical Religion in Cromwell's England: A Concise History from the English Civil War to the End of the Commonwealth* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2010), xix–xx.

⁸ Thomas Edwards, *Gangraena, or, a Catalogue and Discovery of Many of the Errors, Heresies, Blasphemies and Pernicious Practices of the Sectaries of This Time: The First and Second Part* (London, 1646), 13.

⁹ Daniel Featley, *The Dippers Dipt. or, the Anabaptists Duck'd and Plung'd Over Head and Eares, at a Disputation in Southwark* (London: Nicholas Bourne, 1645), B2.

muddle, the overlapping interests and speculations’ and the ‘flux, overlap, and confusion’ within ecclesiastical England during this period.¹⁰ As Diane Purkiss has shown, often there was also a slow evolution in people’s associations: from devout Anglican, to anti-Laudian, to Nonconformist, to being against paedobaptism, to being apocalyptic, or going in a host of other religious directions, all intersecting and interacting with each other.¹¹ It was rare that a Puritan was purely part of one denomination or another, without some degree of affiliation with other groups – indeed, this thesis relies on such inter-denominational dynamics regularly occurring.

However, I also seek to avoid what Crawford Gribben describes as ‘the homogenizing tendency’, whereby various groups are unhelpfully conflated.¹² This can be exacerbated by the fact many early moderns did the same, as seen in the Edwards quote above. Alexandra Walsham warns, ‘to assume that early modern people were as aware of theological distinctions as modern scholars who spend hours studying, dissecting and categorising them’, can ‘do violence to the unstable and amorphous nature of religious affiliation at this time.’¹³ There are certainly times where such conflation is legitimate and constructive, and as Walsham suggests, to dissect groups too precisely can become anachronistic. Nonetheless, Gribben’s ‘homogenizing’ of all ‘Nonconformists’ can also prove counter-productive. This can happen with the Particular and General Baptists, for example. Mark Bell identifies a ‘false impression that there ever was a single monolithic Baptist movement.’ Rather, the two Baptist

¹⁰ Ann Hughes, *Gangraena and the Struggle for the English Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 177.

¹¹ Diane Purkiss, ‘Anna Trapnel’s Literary Geography’, in *The Intellectual Culture of Puritan Women, 1558-1680*, ed. Johanna I. Harris and Elizabeth Scott-Baumann (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 163.

¹² Crawford Gribben, *God’s Irishmen: Theological Debates in Cromwellian Ireland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 60.

¹³ Alexandra Walsham, *Charitable Hatred: Tolerance and Intolerance in England, 1500-1700* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), 20.

denominations were distinct, even while ‘bearing some family resemblance to each other’ and ‘existing under one name but many faces’.¹⁴ Equally, this distinctiveness, ‘does not preclude some discussion of “Baptist” theological beliefs’ that they all shared, such as believer’s baptism.¹⁵ Baptists were not as ‘mutually exclusive as the modern historian might wish.’¹⁶ Indeed, the complex tension between collaboration and autonomy between the Particulars and other Nonconformists, is a central dynamic of this thesis. In managing this tension, I attempt to carefully delineate when the Particular Baptists are specifically being discussed, and when they are to be included within the wider Baptist, and indeed Nonconformist movements.

At other times, the distinct contribution of a specific group, such as the Particulars, should be identified, in order for the wider context to be understood more clearly. For example, Andrew R. Murphy states, ‘I stress that no major political or religious group desired toleration during the run-up to the English Civil War’.¹⁷ Murphy is certainly correct, if we accept how he defines the ‘major’ groups throughout his book: namely, as the two main antagonists of the Civil War, the Anglicans and the Presbyterians. However, such definition risks undervaluing the contribution of important ‘minor’ groups, such as the Particulars, who certainly did desire toleration at that point. More broadly, Murphy examines the Presbyterians and Congregationalists, the New Model Army, the Levellers, and then describes a more general grouping of ‘sectarians’. His broad definition of ‘sectarian’ means the specific contribution of Baptists is not recognised, despite them having been key members of the Army, the

¹⁴ Mark Bell, ‘Freedom to Form: The Development of Baptist Movements during the English Revolution’, in *Religion in Revolutionary England*, ed. Christopher Durston and Judith D. Maltby (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), 181.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 182.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 186.

¹⁷ Andrew R. Murphy, *Conscience and Community: Revisiting Toleration and Religious Dissent in Early Modern England and America* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), 8.

Levellers, and other key influencers in the 1640s.¹⁸ Recognition of the Baptists' distinct articulation of liberty of conscience is extremely valuable to a thorough analysis of toleration. Indeed, this thesis will show many distinct contributions that the Particular Baptists made to views of toleration throughout the seventeenth century.

2. TOLERATION AND ITS ALTERNATIVES

A historically appropriate definition of toleration is also essential. Walsham warns of the 'danger of misapprehending' terms like toleration, indulgence, or liberty of conscience, 'by anachronistically confusing the modern connotations of these words with the significance they had in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.'¹⁹ Blair Worden agrees that, 'the word toleration has so many evaluative and potentially anachronistic connotations' which can become 'an impediment to understanding.'²⁰ In this section, I present preliminary definitions of toleration and its main alternatives, all of which will receive further elaboration throughout this thesis.

Early modern toleration had three essential facets: firstly, an aversion to the beliefs or practices of a certain group; secondly, restraint of any reaction against that group, irrespective of the reasons for such restraint; and thirdly, a decision by all parties to remain in community, despite these tensions.²¹ Religious toleration and intolerance were, therefore, built upon unresolved tensions within a community, caused by a group's beliefs and actions being considered inappropriate by the majority. In the seventeenth century, to abandon the established Church and its teachings was not just a

¹⁸ Ibid., 90–94.

¹⁹ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 233.

²⁰ Blair Worden, *God's Instruments: Political Conduct in the England of Oliver Cromwell* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 71.

²¹ Ingrid Creppell, *Toleration and Identity: Foundations in Early Modern Thought* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2003), 3–4; Jesse Spohnholz, *The Tactics of Toleration: A Refugee Community in the Age of Religious Wars* (Newark, NJ: University of Delaware Press, 2011), 16.

matter of taste. It was not considered to be merely an alternative theological perspective. It was wrong, doctrinally and morally. It was schismatic and probably blasphemous. Toleration centred upon how society could endure a group that was deemed to be wrong, and indeed whether such a group should be allowed to exist at all.

Just as the religious minorities' beliefs were considered sinful, the act of toleration was itself sinful.²² Benjamin Kaplan suggests that in this period, toleration was considered an act of weakness, apathy, or cowardice. Toleration usually engendered a sense of embarrassment, or even shame.²³ Walsham shows that toleration was considered to be an 'anathema, a recipe for chaos and anarchy, if not an invitation to apocalyptic destruction.'²⁴ Authority figures, from monarchs to local magistrates, thus had a civil obligation to be intolerant.²⁵ Indeed, the general populace sometimes feared the authorities were neglecting their duty to protect the population from heresy's gangrenous rot, and took it upon themselves to punish Nonconformists instead.²⁶ Such concerns about toleration were intensely felt in England, to the point where John Coffey writes, 'few debates were so fierce, protracted or seminal as the controversy over toleration ... Nowhere else in seventeenth-century Europe, with the possible exception of the Netherlands, produced such a rich literature on religious toleration.'²⁷ Much of this literature was not supportive of toleration, at all. Worden suggests the only reason toleration gradually developed after the English Civil War, was merely because of 'the

²² Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 44–45.

²³ Benjamin J. Kaplan, *Divided by Faith: Religious Conflict and the Practice of Toleration in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2007), 143.

²⁴ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 2.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 46.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 138.

²⁷ John Coffey, 'The Toleration Controversy during the English Revolution', in *Religion in Revolutionary England*, ed. Christopher Durston and Judith D. Maltby (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), 42.

difficulty of stopping it.²⁸ Frequently existing as a brooding irritation at Nonconformity, then, toleration was not necessarily the opposite of intolerance.²⁹ It was rather intolerance waiting to erupt, like ‘a sleeping giant’.³⁰

Toleration can be distinguished from several other approaches to religious diversity. For example, a distinction can be made between toleration and acceptance. To tolerate a religious minority was not akin to believing they were correct in their convictions. It was to begrudgingly allow them to exist, despite an often deep-seated repugnance at their convictions. Coffey insists that, when defining toleration, ‘the element of disapproval is important, because toleration is often confused with indifference or approval.’³¹ This is an important distinction, with significant implications for the relationship between religious toleration and later civil rights, for example. Kaplan argues that ‘religious tolerance became the paradigmatic, first tolerance of Western history, the matrix out of which emerged the modern concept of tolerance as applied to all forms of difference – ethnic, cultural, and racial as well as religious.’³² However, Murphy disagrees that early modern toleration ‘generalizes fairly easily and unproblematically to divisive contemporary social and political issues such as gender, race, ethnicity, and sexuality and provides a basis for multicultural and “identity” politics.’³³ The reason for Murphy’s concern is that Kaplan’s ‘modern concept of tolerance’ should not be applied to ethnic, gendered, or many other forms of civil rights, precisely because toleration is enduring something that is considered wrong.

Therefore, to say that upholding the civil rights of women or a particular ethnicity is an

²⁸ Blair Worden, ‘Toleration and the Cromwellian Protectorate’, *Studies in Church History* 21 (1984): 205.

²⁹ Spohnholz, *The Tactics of Toleration*, 14.

³⁰ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 148.

³¹ John Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration in Protestant England, 1558-1689* (Harlow: Longman, 2000), 10.

³² Kaplan, *Divided by Faith*, 4.

³³ Murphy, *Conscience and Community*, 14.

example of toleration, is to imply that they are in some way ‘wrong’. Certainly, Kaplan does not intend to make that implication, and neither do other historians of toleration. Yet it is still important that this distinction is made. When debating whether to tolerate a religious minority, the legitimacy of that minority was rarely the focus. Rather, the question was whether an illegitimate group should be allowed to exist in society.

Toleration was also not the same as indulgence, comprehension, moderation, or liberty of conscience. As Walsham has pointed out, indulgence was not so much toleration as ‘a manifestation of kingly magnanimity’, and was unsuccessful anyway.³⁴ Conformists sometimes advocated for comprehension or accommodation, whereby some religious diversity was allowed within the confines of the national Church.³⁵ As Martin Sutherland states, ‘comprehension’ was about ‘who’s in’, asking how variant theologies could come into the Church, whereas toleration revolved around ‘who’s out’, and what to do with them.³⁶ For the most part, however, Anglicans jealously protected their exclusive right to define and control the Church of England. Underlying Conformist alternatives to toleration was the ideal of moderation, the healthy *via media* between the perceived ‘tyranny’ of Catholicism and the ‘hot’ anarchy of Nonconformity.³⁷ Toleration was also different from the common Nonconformist ideal, liberty of conscience. Religious liberty recognises the reality of internal religious diversity in any society, and insists free expression of that is socially beneficial. As Ingrid Creppell has astutely noted, liberty of conscience argues that those in a minority cannot sacrifice their convictions simply to remain part of the *status quo*. It is thus ‘one

³⁴ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 265.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 234; Kaplan, *Divided by Faith*, 132–33; Murphy, *Conscience and Community*, 89.

³⁶ Martin Sutherland, *Peace, Toleration and Decay: The Ecclesiology of Later Stuart Dissent*. (Carlisle: Wipf & Stock, 2007), 2.

³⁷ Ethan H. Shagan, *The Rule of Moderation: Violence, Religion and the Politics of Restraint in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 127.

value or attitude that will justify or underscore' toleration, but is not synonymous with it.³⁸

The connection between persecution and intolerance has of course been a major facet of toleration scholarship.³⁹ Persecution, as Walsham points out, is 'instinctively' seen 'in polar opposition' to toleration, as the height of intolerance.⁴⁰ 'Persecution' is sometimes defined broadly, as any abuse or stricture perpetrated upon a religious minority, whether by the state or anyone else. This thesis, however, uses the term more precisely, corresponding to Jacqueline Rose's insight that, the distinction between 'prosecution' and 'persecution' was always 'depending on one's point of view'.⁴¹ As Walsham insists, for Conformists, the punishment of religious dissidents was intrinsically similar to punishing political or social criminals: it was about protecting the populace from something dangerous. Moreover, persecution was usually identified exclusively with God's faithful, suffering servants. From an Anglican perspective, then, heretics and schismatics were ineligible for the honour of being 'persecuted' as such. As Augustine astutely observed, 'Not the punishment, but the cause, makes a martyr.'⁴² In contrast, Dissenters considered themselves the righteous saints, and as such believed they were persecuted whenever they were 'on the receiving end' of any repression.⁴³ As Brad S. Gregory states, "'Martyr" was an essentially interpretive category'.⁴⁴ This

³⁸ Creppell, *Toleration and Identity*, 34.

³⁹ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*; Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration*; Ole Peter Grell, Jonathan I. Israel, and Nicholas Tyacke, *From Persecution to Toleration: The Glorious Revolution and Religion in England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991).

⁴⁰ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 1.

⁴¹ Jacqueline Rose, *Godly Kingship in Restoration England: The Politics of the Royal Supremacy, 1660-1688* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 163.

⁴² Augustine, in Brad S. Gregory, *Salvation at Stake: Christian Martyrdom in Early Modern Europe*, Harvard Historical Studies ; 134 (London: Harvard University Press, 1999), 33.

⁴³ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 2.

⁴⁴ Gregory, *Salvation at Stake*, 5.

subjective aspect of the terms ‘martyr’ and ‘persecution’ is examined throughout this thesis.

Defining terms like toleration, indulgence, and persecution is integral to this thesis. I recognise that within seventeenth-century England there existed a widespread sense that religious minorities were wrong, and that therefore allowing them to exist in society was sinful and misguided. Similarly, indulgence was socially irresponsible, notwithstanding the many reasons frequently given to justify it. Prosecution of Nonconformity was entirely justified in such a framework, even though it increasingly proved counter-productive, as it became perceived as persecution instead. These terms will receive further elaboration and definition throughout the chapters that follow.

3. CONTEXTS FOR TOLERATION

This thesis argues that our understanding of toleration is further enhanced by defining various contexts in which dynamics of toleration took place, and especially by moving away from a focus on elite expressions, such as those by the state, national Church, or intellectuals. Certainly, such elites cannot be ignored, but I join recent scholars in framing magisterial and intellectual views of toleration within those of the general populace, and especially of religious minorities themselves. Coffey identifies three ‘strands’ to ‘a satisfactory history of religious toleration’: the ‘ideological’, articulating the reasons for or against toleration; the ‘legal’ or ‘political’, examining the state policies and procedures around toleration; and the ‘social’, discussing toleration dynamics in everyday society.⁴⁵ Throughout the history of toleration scholarship, from the Whig historians to the present day, the ideological and political streams have been discussed extensively. As Walsham states, in much of the historiography, ‘toleration is

⁴⁵ Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration*, 14–15.

on the whole firmly fixed within the history of ideas. Many are essentially narratives of the victory of progressive thought of learned elites'.⁴⁶ Historians have also charted how magistrates enacted policies around toleration, what Coffey has also called 'civil toleration'.⁴⁷ This may include political elites, such as the various Stuart monarchs and Oliver Cromwell, or their Parliaments. It can encompass legal and local authorities, such as law courts. The role of the Anglican Church itself is also frequently discussed, with its various ecclesiastical deterrents to Dissent.

More recently, historians have moved their gaze towards the role played by ordinary English subjects, including the religious minorities themselves. As far back as 1984, Worden wrote, 'even if we insist on the importance of ideas in the subject of toleration, ought we not at least to consider the ideas of laymen, and to move beyond the boundaries of theological argument?'⁴⁸ Several historians have since heeded Worden's call, including Andrew R. Murphy and Alexandra Walsham. Walsham also highlights the work of scholars like Derek Plumb, Christopher Marsh and Bill Stevenson, who emphasise the ways Dissenters were integrated into the wider populace's 'grassroots reality'.⁴⁹ Such historians examine what Bob Scribner describes as 'the tolerance of practical rationality': that of 'ordinary people', 'found frequently in daily life'. Here, people often 'made little fuss about differences of belief', though Scribner also recognises that 'popular intolerance' also occurred.⁵⁰ This thesis follows such scholars'

⁴⁶ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 7.

⁴⁷ Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration*, 11.

⁴⁸ Worden, 'Toleration and the Cromwellian Protectorate', 206.

⁴⁹ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 11; Derek Plumb, 'A Gathered Church? Lollards and Their Society', in *The World of Rural Dissenters: 1520-1725*, ed. Margaret Spufford (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Christopher Marsh, *The Family of Love in English Society, 1550-1630* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Bill Stevenson, 'The Social Integration of Post-Restoration Dissenters, 1660-1725', in *The World of Rural Dissenters: 1520-1725*, ed. Margaret Spufford (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

⁵⁰ Bob Scribner, 'Preconditions of Tolerance and Intolerance', in *Tolerance and Intolerance in the European Reformation*, ed. Ole Peter Grell and Bob Scribner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 38; Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 107.

emphasis. Certainly, I acknowledge historians' significant analyses of the major intellectual and magisterial contributions to toleration in early modern England. However, my focus is on ordinary toleration, as it relates to a specific Nonconformist denomination, the Particular Baptists.

Of course, historians have always recognised that Nonconformists were, to some degree, involved in how they were tolerated, if only in terms of how they responded to intolerance. Dissenters commonly had several approaches, well summarised by Walsham. They might leave the country, or they might stay and suffer the repercussions of their faith. They might willingly embrace persecution, or even martyrdom. Some might feign Conformity, participating in the liturgy and sacraments of the established Church. If they refused to attend Anglican services, they then had to decide on the limits of their self-imposed isolation, whether that be the chapel, the marketplace or the marriage bed. Some might avoid any involvement with outsiders, for fear of heretical contamination, but others might feel interaction in certain contexts was allowable. Similar tensions existed around how to treat a monarch who did not share their beliefs. Did the king's status as a God-ordained ruler override his failure to recognise the true nature of that same God?⁵¹ Such deliberations are commonplace in the Particulars' literature and congregational minute-books.

Historians of toleration consistently discuss these issues and how religious minorities faced them, and Walsham's summary of a minority's options is impressively thorough. This thesis elaborates on such historians' contributions. It highlights that in fact, these issues reveal how minorities themselves also engaged in religious intolerance. They debated the degree of toleration that they should grant those outside

⁵¹ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 160.

their church. If a minority thought they were the true Church, that also meant they considered the Anglican Church to be false and therefore evil. Indeed, Murray Tolmie went so far as to describe such congregations' 'disgust' for the Church of England.⁵² In that case, each minority church had to decide to what extent they would tolerate the national Church. To quote Samuel Taylor Coleridge, tolerance is, therefore, the 'conscientious toleration of each other's intolerance'.⁵³ My thesis examines these multiple dimensions of toleration and intolerance, where religious minorities may seek forbearance by an institution they themselves could not accept, for example. I explore the struggle to define the boundaries of toleration within a religious minority. Examining these internal debates, within the context of the already existing literature on toleration, offers nuance to our understanding of how toleration worked in early modern Church and society.

My approach can be seen in Diagram I.2 below (not to scale).

⁵² Murray Tolmie, *The Triumph of the Saints: The Separate Churches of London, 1616-1649* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 2.

⁵³ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 5; Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *The Complete Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge: With an Introductory Essay Upon His Philosophical and Theological Opinions*, vol. II (New York, NY: Harper & Brothers, 1854), 92.

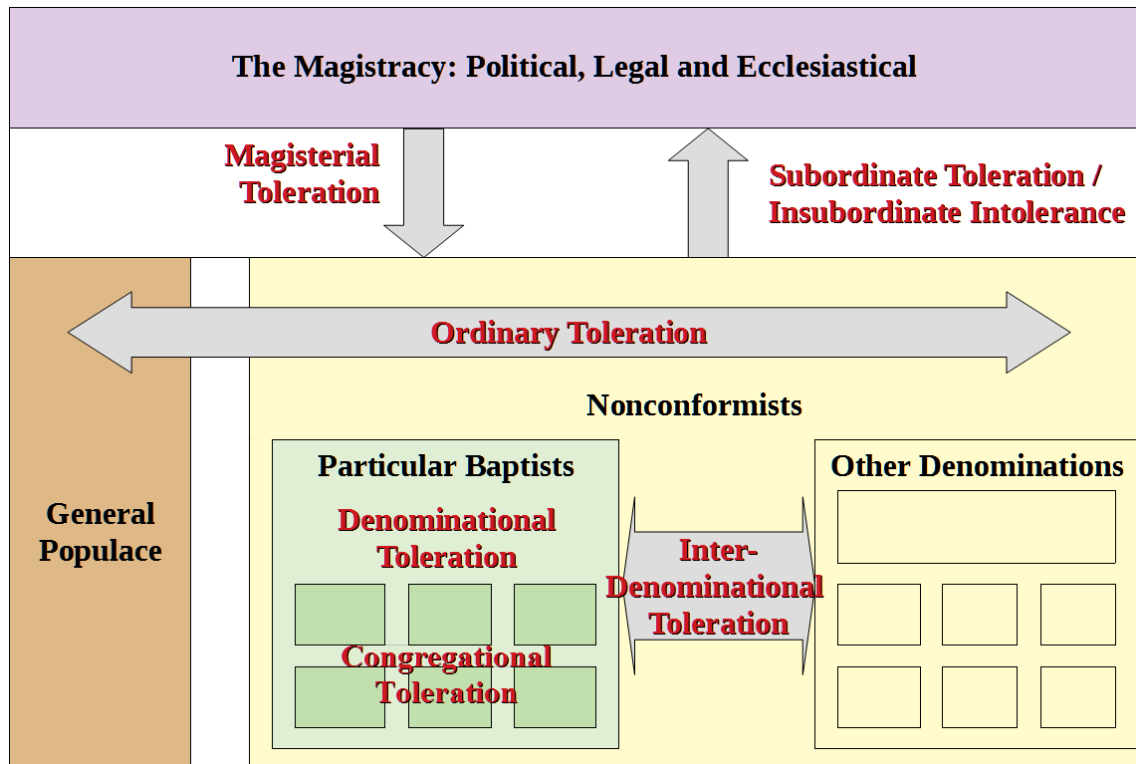


Diagram I.2.

This diagram suggests there are, in fact, multiple dimensions to toleration, that can all occur simultaneously. This is because there are various contexts where toleration dynamics can take place. Certainly, magisterial toleration, by the various political, legal and ecclesiastical authorities towards religious minorities, was a key dynamic. However, there were also occasions where religious minorities tolerated those authorities, what I refer to as subordinate toleration. Equally, there were times where their faith compelled them to resist the Church and state, which I describe as ‘insubordinate intolerance’. Dissenters also engaged in toleration dynamics with the wider populace, in ‘ordinary toleration’, such as in economic or domestic interactions. The various Nonconformist denominations and sects also had to determine how to treat each other, the tension between identity and unity: what I call ‘inter-denominational toleration’. Put negatively, Walsham insists that ‘internecine conflict’ between dissenting groups ‘played no

inconsiderable part in creating and perpetuating' intolerance in England.⁵⁴ Denominational toleration also occurred, whenever various congregations within a specific minority had disagreements but still remained united. Finally, even at the congregational level, dynamics of toleration occurred, as congregants wrestled with the diverse beliefs and behaviours among their own flock. All of these contexts for toleration are examined throughout this thesis.

This toleration struggle within religious minorities can be seen, for example, if one considers exile and martyrdom as expressions of insubordinate intolerance. A religious minority might choose to leave a place where a false and evil Church presided. Similarly, martyrdom was also an act of intolerance, the ultimate exile, whereby the Dissenter would rather die, literally, than acquiescing to the established Church. In contrast, the question of whether one could legitimately participate in the established Church's worship, was a question of toleration. Walsham argues that feigned Conformity 'involved a degree of concession to the demands of a repressive regime.'⁵⁵ Concessions are the actions of toleration.

Certainly, toleration historians have, to an extent, recognised that toleration dynamics occurred within all these contexts, even if they have not defined them by terms like 'insubordinate intolerance'. This is especially true of more recent historians, like Walsham. She writes, 'We need to avoid one-sided accounts which approach [toleration] from the perspective of either aggressors or victims, bestowers of Christian charity or its recipients.'⁵⁶ Here, Walsham highlights the passivity implied to Dissenters in many histories: they are 'victims' or 'recipients' of the government's aggression or

⁵⁴ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 122.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 188.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 322.

charity. This implication can be seen in Creppell, who considers toleration to be an act of restrained power, and has suggested that ‘the less powerful and minorities cannot really be described as restraining themselves, because for them the option to coerce the more powerful or the majority is not possible.’⁵⁷ Yet Nonconformist groups did develop many expressions of agency throughout this period. Leaders of one denomination could influence how their followers treated other Nonconformists, for example. During a debate between two prominent Particular ministers, William Kiffen (1616-1701) and John Bunyan (1628-1688), Kiffen insisted ‘we do not look upon Baptism to be such a Wall of Division’ between Particulars and other Dissenters.⁵⁸ In so doing, he encouraged Particulars and other Nonconformists to somehow tolerate each other. By explicitly defining such expressions as forms of toleration or intolerance, historians can have a stronger grasp of the interplay between the various groups involved.

Recognising the dynamic of subordinate toleration also adds to our understanding of the relationship between religious toleration and political allegiance. Nonconformists certainly could ‘coerce the more powerful’, at times. Historians have long recognised the magisterial dynamics of this relationship. Early modern Europe saw an intrinsic link between religious and national identity. As Kaplan notes, ‘this fusion of religious and political identity, piety and patriotism ... led both rulers and ordinary people to equate orthodoxy with loyalty and religious dissent with sedition.’⁵⁹ This, coupled with the serious divine repercussions that many feared heresy and schism would visit upon a nation, meant that religious dissent inevitably had political connotations.⁶⁰ Conformist anti-tolerationists had long identified Conformity with

⁵⁷ Creppell, *Toleration and Identity*, 5.

⁵⁸ William Kiffen, *A Sober Discourse of Right to Church-Communion* (London: George Larkin, 1681), 19.

⁵⁹ Kaplan, *Divided by Faith*, 102–3.

⁶⁰ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 44–45.

political stability, and Nonconformity with anarchy.⁶¹ In England, this was further compounded by the monarch being the head of the national Church. The English embraced the view of the Swiss theologian, Thomas Erastus (1524-1583), that the civil government had direct responsibility for religious discipline of the nation. Erastianism meant that even the most loyal Nonconformist subjects were constantly under suspicion that their loyalty was merely pretence, or that it would falter if an alternative government model emerged.⁶² Kaplan has suggested that Nonconformist subjects were often perceived as a kind of ‘Trojan horse’ that ‘always evoked paranoia’.⁶³ In particular, lay preachers were often portrayed as dangerous conspirators.⁶⁴ This resulted in an increased tendency for schismatics to be punished as traitors by the state.⁶⁵

This context also informed Nonconformists’ actions towards the authorities, necessitating subordinate toleration dynamics. Certainly, some did take a more passive approach, isolating themselves in the hope that they would be ignored by the authorities. Many, however, took a more active approach. If minorities believed the government was supporting a false Church, that government must be, at least to some degree, evil. To obey such a government could thus be considered an act of toleration, a sin, on the part of the minority. In this regard, Conformist concerns were well founded: when minorities did have the opportunity to rebel against governments they considered false and deluded, some had no qualms whatsoever in doing so.⁶⁶ Moreover, Kaplan has pointed out that equating heresy with sedition became a self-fulfilling prophesy, further perpetuating insubordinate intolerance: when the state began punishing Dissenters as

⁶¹ Murphy, *Conscience and Community*, 211.

⁶² Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 52.

⁶³ Kaplan, *Divided by Faith*, 115.

⁶⁴ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 145.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 52.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 59.

traitors, they frequently came to resent that state, often resulting in them becoming seditious.⁶⁷ The Rye House Plot and Monmouth Rebellion are two examples of this discussed in this thesis. These were not just acts of secular treason. They were also acts of religious, insubordinate intolerance.

Other Dissenters responded to an erroneous state with subordinate toleration. Often this was done to curry favour from the state, in order to alleviate the sufferings of their own group: the pursuit of magisterial toleration facilitated subordinate toleration. Other Nonconformists did so because of the divine ordination for government: if God tolerated the king, they felt they should do so as well.⁶⁸ For example, William Kiffen was also a wealthy merchant who donated a large sum to Charles II when that monarch was lacking necessary funds.⁶⁹ Whatever Kiffen's motives for the donation, the commonly-identified dynamics of toleration seem inverted here. Kiffen's generous donation was an act of subordinate toleration towards Charles II.

Kiffen's donation also reveals an inherent inconsistency in how toleration was practised: standards of toleration were applied differently, depending on various contexts. Kiffen refused to participate in the monarch's established Church, but he would engage him at another level, that of business. Furthermore, Kiffen did so without requiring Charles to uphold moral standards that, as a Particular minister he demanded of his congregants. Kiffen's motivations are worthy of examination, and represent a wider phenomenon. Walsham insists there was a 'considerable degree of inconsistency' between what people tolerated in one context over another.⁷⁰ Furthermore, multiple dimensions of toleration could all exist together. As Walsham states, 'the impulses of

⁶⁷ Kaplan, *Divided by Faith*, 124.

⁶⁸ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 160.

⁶⁹ Ronald Angelo Johnson, 'The Peculiar Ventures of Particular Baptist Pastor William Kiffin and King Charles II of England', *Baptist History and Heritage*, no. 44.1 (1 January 2009).

⁷⁰ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 278.

assimilation and segregation, resistance and compromise' did not exist entirely in opposition, but rather 'operated in tandem and were dialectally linked.'⁷¹ For example, two Nonconformist groups may express inter-denominational toleration by colluding together, in their insubordinate intolerance against the state. Such diversity in how toleration was applied is a valuable area for research, and represents one of the major themes that this thesis explores.

Furthermore, even where a religious minority lacked national authority, they could still exercise considerable influence in various ordinary contexts, facilitating toleration dynamics. For example, minute-books for Particular Baptist meetings indicate that in their congregations, strict standards of holiness were upheld. Congregants were often examined, and the wayward excommunicated, in part to protect others from their bad influence. Excommunication, then, was an example of congregational intolerance. Domestic toleration, such as occurred in religiously mixed marriages or families, was frequent as well. Religious minorities also occasionally had some influence within a specific geographic locale. In her discussion of toleration within smaller towns, Walsham shows Dissenters would sometimes make slight expressions of Conformity, tolerating the established Church, in order to ease tensions among their community, facilitating ordinary toleration.⁷² Jesse Spohnholz suggests that examining such localised toleration could 'uncover not only the crucial role of civic leaders in preserving the peace, but also the complicity of ordinary individuals in preserving coexistence, as well as alternate avenues for avoiding conflict when mutual connivance was not an option.'⁷³ Such local toleration can often be underestimated, because it can seem mundane. Yet Nadine Lewycky and Adam David Morton have suggested that

⁷¹ Ibid., 212.

⁷² Ibid., 277–78.

⁷³ Spohnholz, *The Tactics of Toleration*, 17.

religious identity 'is best understood by examining ordinary life at the parish level'.⁷⁴ Spohnholz also argues that we must go beyond examining toleration 'only in state proclamations or philosophical treatises', and instead should recognise that 'informal systems of coexistence, when they did emerge, did so in city streets and taverns as well as inside private houses, in church pews and in cemeteries, in courthouses and in the secret whispers of backrooms.'⁷⁵

Another reason that local, everyday toleration is sometimes overlooked can be the seeming paucity of sources. Precisely for this reason, Walsham laments that, 'religious minorities are, therefore, difficult to study'.⁷⁶ Dissenters' sources are usually weighted more to insubordinate intolerance than subordinate toleration, as are the official records. Those who acted more 'prudently' are often harder to discover, but certainly did exist.⁷⁷ Walsham suggests, consequently, that 'historians have to attune their ears to the telling silences in their sources.'⁷⁸ Fortunately, Particular Baptist leaders wrote copiously about toleration in regular 'paper wars', including against leaders of the Anglican Church, as well as other religious minorities. They not only discussed abstract points of theology in their literature, but the practical questions of their congregants, many of which revolved around toleration. Utilising *Early English Books Online*, I regularly examine such sources, as well as similar published debates between Particular leaders themselves. Particulars argued together about various toleration issues, such as how a member of the faithful should treat their unbelieving parents or spouse, or whether they could share the Lord's Supper with members of other denominations.

⁷⁴ Nadine Lewycky and Adam David Morton, *Getting Along? Religious Identities and Confessional Relations in Early Modern England: Essays in Honour of Professor W.j. Sheils* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012), 1; See also Spohnholz, *The Tactics of Toleration*, 16.

⁷⁵ Spohnholz, *The Tactics of Toleration*, 14.

⁷⁶ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 26.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 161.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 29.

These issues are also discussed in Particular minute books from their congregations and associations, which I also examine. These include B.R. White's *Association Records of the Particular Baptists*, as well as minute books for the Broadmead and Bedford congregations. I also draw from the remarkable anthologies of documents pertaining to William Kiffen, recently collated by Larry J. Kreitzer. Finally, in 2011 I examined some Particular documents available from various English archives, including in Taunton, Oxford, Huntingdon, and London. All these writings allow us to enter into Walsham's 'telling silences', and even some of Spohnholz's 'secret whispers', to provide valuable insights about everyday toleration, as this thesis will reveal.

Examining such ordinary contexts and how Dissenters facilitated toleration within them, helps historians redress the emphasis upon intellectual arguments for toleration. The classic Whig tendency to suggest toleration emerged out of forward-thinking philosophers from the eighteenth century, for example, is indicative of a wider issue identified in much of the historiography. Murphy challenges the 'myth' that toleration was the abstract, theoretical invention of sceptical Enlightenment thinkers such as Locke or Voltaire.⁷⁹ Such philosophers were usually from the 'elite' of society, and thus could only approach toleration as an abstract ideal. Yet toleration was primarily discussed by those seeking to be tolerated, the religious minorities themselves.⁸⁰ To them, toleration was not just a theory, but very much a practical necessity.⁸¹ Walsham insists that the majority of those discussing the mechanics of toleration, were not 'disinterested outsiders', but those experiencing magisterial intolerance: 'at root, it was a strategy for ensuring survival rather than an end in and of itself.'⁸² Walsham suggests

⁷⁹ Murphy, *Conscience and Community*, 12.

⁸⁰ Kaplan, *Divided by Faith*, 7.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁸² Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 236.

that the ‘parochial experience’ of ordinary people in religious minorities lay the theoretical groundwork for later philosophers’ arguments for toleration.⁸³ This can be seen throughout much of this thesis.

By more specifically defining the contexts in which toleration took place, this thesis seeks to add clarity and depth to our understanding of toleration in seventeenth-century England. Toleration was not a purely magisterial dynamic, and was never a purely intellectual debate. Rather, it was occurring in multiple contexts among religious minorities. Particulars expressed toleration and intolerance to various magistrates, the established Church, fellow citizens, other denominations, as well as their fellow Particular congregations and congregants. By recognising this more relational, reciprocal dimension to toleration, the agency of Nonconformists is highlighted, and can thus be better understood. Their contribution to the development of toleration throughout the period can also be appreciated, further emphasising its pragmatic, rather than intellectual, underpinnings.

4. METHOD: CHRONOLOGICAL CONTEXTUALISATION

This thesis also maintains that, when discussing toleration, examining any phenomenon can benefit from placing it within its specific historical context, while also recognising any chronological causality. The previous section argued the social context – which group was expressing toleration or intolerance – is important. Similarly, the historical context – when the group was expressing toleration or intolerance – is also significant. A chronological approach highlights how a group’s ideals or practices changed, depending on their contemporary circumstances, and how those ideals evolved in meaning or purpose as precedents emerged. For this reason, the thesis examines the

⁸³ Ibid., 279.

Particulars chronologically, rather than thematically. I break the period into five distinct periods. Three of these periods are over a decade long: the era before 1648, when the Particulars were founded and the Civil War occurred; the Interregnum of 1648-1660; the Restoration period, especially 1660-1677. The last two chapters examine two shorter periods: 1678-1685, from the beginning of the Exclusion Crisis to the Monmouth Rebellion; and 1685-1689, from the Bloody Assizes to the early days of the Glorious Revolution. This approach is designed to show how toleration dynamics were affected by the distinct circumstances of each period, while also revealing how such dynamics developed over time.

Any suggestion that dynamics of toleration ‘evolved’ and ‘developed’ over this period, inevitably needs further clarification. After all, scholars of toleration have often faced a strong teleological temptation, a sense that early modern views of toleration progressed toward some kind of modern ideal. Worden remarks of W.E.H. Lecky and other toleration historians of the Victorian era, that they ‘were prone to congratulate the past on becoming more like the present.’⁸⁴ Coffey has also criticised earlier toleration historians, from the Whigs to W.K. Jordan in the 1930s, who often portrayed the seventeenth century as a long process leading to toleration, either in 1660 or later in 1689. Coffey warns this meant ‘anachronism strikes with a vengeance’, as exceptions to this teleological progress have often been downplayed, vilified or ignored.⁸⁵

Yet Coffey also fears modern revisionist historians, ‘ironically, in claiming to repudiate strongly teleological narratives’, have sometimes implicitly supported ‘one of the grandest teleological stories of all, the secularisation thesis’, that modernisation inevitably leads to religion’s demise.⁸⁶ He and others warn against portraying the early

⁸⁴ Worden, ‘Toleration and the Cromwellian Protectorate’, 199.

⁸⁵ Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration*, 2.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 8.

modern period as inherently intolerant, and eighteenth-century toleration as a marked response against that intolerance.⁸⁷ Lewycky and Morton argue that toleration, ‘so long considered the cornerstone of the Enlightenment’, is more accurately seen as quintessentially early modern, with much of its underpinnings coming from the sixteenth and seventeenth century.⁸⁸ Spohnholz also insists that toleration was positively experienced by many people, well before the eighteenth century.⁸⁹ Kaplan ends his book on toleration, *Divided by Faith*, with a final rebuttal of this ‘spurious’ anachronism:

No longer do we hail Protestantism for giving birth to religious freedom; instead we credit secular values – individualism, privacy, equality, human rights – whose rise we trace in the past and whose present triumph we celebrate ... Blinding us to the varieties of *bona fide* religion, the secularization story encourages us to associate religion in general with certain intolerant forms of religion ... The history of early modern Europe suggests a different view. It demonstrates that, even in communities that did not know our modern values, people of different faiths could live together peacefully.⁹⁰

Murphy describes this revisionist teleological secularism as ‘contemporary Whiggism’, arguing that ‘the historian’s task seems only to identify why it took so long for some people to realize this necessary logical or theological relationship.’⁹¹ Murphy warns that, ‘such historical assumptions, even in their most muted form, do nothing to help us

⁸⁷ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 7.

⁸⁸ Lewycky and Morton, *Getting Along?*, 1.

⁸⁹ Spohnholz, *The Tactics of Toleration*, 12–13.

⁹⁰ Kaplan, *Divided by Faith*, 357–58.

⁹¹ Murphy, *Conscience and Community*, 20–21.

understand how toleration developed, both as a philosophical element of the liberal creed and as a substantive, highly contested political reality.’⁹²

Nonetheless, Murphy here still suggests that ‘toleration developed’: there was undoubtedly some degree of change in approaches to religious minorities between Henry VIII and William III. Coffey himself ‘reasserts the unfashionably Whiggish claim’ that seventeenth-century England generally moved from prosecution to toleration, uniformity to pluralism.⁹³ Such criticism of revisionists’ secularist teleology, then, is less about the fact that toleration gradually became the norm, and more about why it did so. Modern toleration is often believed to be built on sceptical relativism: that since no convictions we hold can have any degree of certainty, it is logically unjustifiable to impose our potentially incorrect convictions on anybody else.⁹⁴ Yet toleration in the early modern period was primarily sought by religious Nonconformists, who were not driven at all by relativism, but usually by its direct opposite, theological absolutism. Indeed, Walsham has argued that originally, toleration ‘was far more likely to grow from the soil of Protestant zeal’ than among latitudinarians.⁹⁵ Indeed, the reasons for this will be discussed at various points in this thesis.

I support these historians in refuting such teleological narratives, as if modern ideals of toleration were a goal that early modernists sought to attain. I also recognise the dangerous temptation to ascribe anachronistic motivations to seventeenth-century figures, and I seek to avoid doing so throughout this thesis. Nonetheless, I also see several benefits to a chronological approach, because ideas around toleration did develop, in some respects, throughout the period, just as Murphy, Coffey, and others

⁹² Ibid., 23.

⁹³ Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration*, 5.

⁹⁴ Murphy, *Conscience and Community*, 76.

⁹⁵ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 244.

have suggested. Views of toleration changed, partly because of the fluctuating circumstances in which Nonconformists existed. This meant it became necessary for them to update how their ideals should be applied. The interplay between the Particulars' consistently held principles, and the staggering array of different situations they found themselves over the years, is a fascinating topic frequently explored in this thesis.

Many important works on toleration over the last two decades have primarily approached the topic thematically. Alexandra Walsham's *Charitable Hatred* is one of the finest examples. In doing so, she also attempts to overcome the tendency to imply a teleological shift from intolerance to toleration over the early modern period. She argues toleration dynamics never followed a neat, linear direction. 'What needs to be stressed, then, is the enduring fluidity of the ecclesiastical landscape in England during this period', leading regularly to 'dramatic reversals of fortune' for religious minorities.⁹⁶ She insists toleration dynamics 'are best seen as part of a complex continuum that could flow in both directions', and this results in her 'tackling the subject in a thematic rather than a chronological fashion.'⁹⁷ Derek Hirst follows a similar approach in his analysis of toleration. There, as he discusses each specific theme, Hirst briefly cites several examples taken from across many time periods.⁹⁸ There are tremendous benefits in such historians following this approach, but it inevitably has certain disadvantages – precisely because of Walsham's identified 'dramatic reversals in fortune'. Firstly, such brief descriptions of complex, multi-faceted situations risks reducing them to one specific facet, obscuring other significant factors, such as localised, temporal tensions,

⁹⁶ Ibid., 20.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 231.

⁹⁸ Derek Hirst, 'Bodies and Interests: Toleration and the Political Imagination in the Later Seventeenth Century', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 70, no. 3 (2007): 401–26.

that may have been at play. Secondly, this approach potentially conflates events that on the surface may seem the same, but can be vastly different within different historical and geographical contexts. Returning to this thesis' topic as an example, the Particulars' circumstances frequently changed dramatically over the seventeenth century: from marginalisation throughout most of the 1640s, to acceptance in the 1650s, to retribution in the 1660s and 1670s, to becoming seditious in the early 1680s, to receiving toleration after the Glorious Revolution of 1689. To thematically conflate examples from each of these periods can sometimes be valuable, but does risk confusion of highly fluctuating contexts. Coffey recognises that 'confusion abounds in this field because many writers fail to distinguish the different contexts in which the concept of tolerance can be used.'⁹⁹

Instead, here I seek to place any evidence within its given period, while also showing how the Particulars responded to chronological changes in circumstance. I recognise this approach itself is not without risks. Yet many toleration historians who follow a thematic approach, nonetheless see value in framing events within their historical and geographical context. Creppel insists that society's deliberations about toleration were always 'attempts to solve [specific] political, social and cultural problems', and that therefore each historical document must be examined 'by locating the work within each particular context.'¹⁰⁰ Moreover, other toleration historians have used such a chronological approach successfully. Martin Sutherland reiterates the point that while toleration was often a theological issue for early moderns, theology did not necessarily preclude pragmatism. Therefore, historians benefit from recognising that 'theology is a creature of historical context' and 'new theologies were also galvanized by historical experience.'¹⁰¹ Andrew Murphy, in his books *Conscience and Community*,

⁹⁹ Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration*, 11.

¹⁰⁰ Creppell, *Toleration and Identity*, 15.

¹⁰¹ Sutherland, *Peace, Toleration and Decay*, xix.

and *Liberty, Conscience and Toleration*, also follows a generally chronological approach to toleration in the seventeenth century.¹⁰² He reveals the benefits of such a methodology when studying religious minorities in seventeenth century England. It can be seen in the simple point that the Civil War and Interregnum had a significant effect on the national psyche from the Restoration, and into the Glorious Revolution.¹⁰³ This indicates that, even where there may not be a teleological direction, there is always some historical causality. My thesis pursues similar goals, of framing events within their context, while also showing their relationship to what has happened before.

5. LIMITATIONS

This thesis focuses entirely on the seventeenth century, and especially the period between the Particulars' beginnings in the late 1630s, and the Glorious Revolution in 1689. Geographically, this thesis primarily discusses England, and avoids direct discussion of North America or continental Europe during that period, even where similar issues were involved. I recognise the valuable contributions to toleration of people beyond the specified time and place. Nonetheless, this narrow framework still provides ample sources and topics for a work of this type to explore.

There are two more significant limitations in scope for this thesis. As already stated, I primarily focus on pragmatic dynamics of toleration, rather than the intellectual reasons for it that developed over this period. This is not because the intellectual contribution is unimportant, but rather that the Particulars primarily engaged in pragmatic expressions of toleration, rather than abstract arguments about it. This leads to the last, and most obvious limitation: my primary focus will always be the Particular

¹⁰² Murphy, *Conscience and Community*; Andrew R. Murphy, *Liberty, Conscience, and Toleration: The Political Thought of William Penn* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

¹⁰³ Murphy, *Liberty, Conscience, and Toleration*, 123.

Baptists. Such a narrow denominational emphasis does run considerable risks. There is the danger that I may incorrectly elevate the significance of the Particulars, implying they were the main, or even only, contributors to a given event or idea. Indeed, throughout my thesis I suggest other historians can fall into a similar trap, by ignoring the Particulars as they focus on larger groups like the Presbyterians. Many of the points already made in this introduction should alleviate such concerns. Firstly, I take care to define when I am discussing a distinctly Particular issue, and when they must be seen as participants in a larger social demographic, such as Nonconformity. I also seek wherever possible to recognise the wider context, and the extent of the Particulars' place within it: for example, I carefully define what proportion of prominent seditionists in the 1680s were Particulars. Finally, while I cannot extensively discuss every other movement's contribution to toleration in this period, I do attempt to recognise significant contributors from outside the Particulars where appropriate, such as John Owen, William Penn or John Locke.

6. CHAPTERS

My first chapter examines the origins of the Particular Baptists, as they emerged out of early seventeenth-century separatism in the late 1630s. Being caught between their widely-accepted Calvinism and their distinct commitment to believer's baptism, the Particulars wrestled with inter-denominational toleration from their very inception. As they became more prominent in the 1640s, many people identified specific reasons for Particulars to not be tolerated, such as their allegedly violent apocalypticism. They deftly navigated these criticisms, ultimately becoming involved in the regicide, where multiple toleration dynamics simultaneously emerged.

Indeed, during the Interregnum the Particulars became accepted as part of the Cromwellian Church and state, as discussed in Chapter Two. This raised unexpected toleration issues for the Particulars. They had to reconcile their new-found position within government with their previous sectarian identity. They wrestled with their commitment to religious liberty, now that they were no longer merely recipients of it, but shared the responsibility to bestow it to other religious minorities. They also had to decide how to collaborate with other denominations in Cromwell's national Church. The Interregnum, therefore, proved a rich period for exploring dynamics of toleration among Particulars, full of distinct complexities.

Chapter Three discusses their response to the Restoration, as their fortunes shifted dramatically. It examines how they responded to the increasingly severe magisterial intolerance directed towards Nonconformity by the Cavalier Parliament. It shows that, while Particulars did extend subordinate toleration towards Charles, their attempts to encourage ordinary toleration among the English populace ultimately proved more successful. The broad prosecution of Nonconformists also brought these groups closer together, which exacerbated Particular debates about open and closed communion, an issue of inter-denominational toleration. Ultimately, despite the explicitly intolerant mood at the start of the Restoration, this period saw a gradual move toward ordinary toleration, both towards Nonconformity, and within it.

As Chapter Four explores, the connection between Conformist prosecution and Nonconformist collaboration reached an acute point in the early 1680s. Dissenters faced severe oppression after supporting the Whigs in the Exclusion Crisis. This ultimately provoked several of them, including many Particulars, to expressions of insubordinate intolerance. At first, these were non-violent, sometimes little more than seditious

whispers in clubs and academies. They soon grew to public expressions, such as petitions and publications. Finally, they resulted in violent insurrection, via the Rye House Plot and Monmouth Rebellion. How Particulars joined other Nonconformists in these acts of sedition is discussed, highlighting how internal toleration dynamics contributed to their failure.

Chapter Five begins by examining the ultimate example of the seditionists' defeat, the Bloody Assizes. There, many of the rebels, including several prominent Particulars, were executed. Ostensibly a judicial act punishing treason, the rebels deftly reframed themselves as martyrs, portraying the authorities as magisterially intolerant. This resulted in two paradoxical responses among Particulars during James II's reign: some supported him in the hopes he would end all persecution; while others resisted him, unable to forgive him for executing their brethren. Consequently, at the Glorious Revolution, the Particulars not only had to seek toleration from Parliament, but also denominational reconciliation among themselves.

CONCLUSION

Throughout these chapters, the various contexts for toleration act largely as interweaving themes, highlighting how the Particulars' relationships with those around them changed over time. These can be summarised briefly. Ordinary toleration is frequently examined, revealing English society's gradual shift from suspicion of the Particulars to a general tolerance. The Particulars' approach to congregational toleration were also quickly established in the early years of their movement, with a strong emphasis on holiness but also loving support. This received more definition during the Interregnum, then became defined around solidarity amidst persecution after the Restoration. In terms of denominational toleration, Particulars also developed a distinct

approach to mutual toleration between their own congregations. Eventually described by one of their leaders, Christopher Blackwood, as ‘Unity of Charity’, it recognised the autonomy of each separate Particular congregation, while still upholding several broad identity-markers across the denomination, as they collaborated together. Particulars occasionally attempted to encourage other prominent Nonconformist groups to engage in unity of charity, as a form of inter-denominational toleration. This rarely proved viable, however: for example, Presbyterians were usually too suspicious of Particulars during the 1640s, and were competing with them in Cromwell’s court during the 1650s. The most successful attempts at inter-denominational toleration were built on another approach described by Blackwood, ‘Unity of Necessity’, joining together against a common foe. From the Restoration, such enemies included the Conformist Church, and eventually the Roman Catholic James II, facilitating such inter-denominational collaboration. Blackwood, however, had warned such unity would inevitably be brittle, and this proved correct. Finally, the interplay between magisterial and subordinate toleration is frequently discussed, as are occasions of mutual intolerance between Particulars and the state. More than any other context of toleration, it is in these dynamics that the Particulars experienced Walsham’s ‘dramatic reversals in fortune’, receiving favour from some magistrates and rancour from others. Sometimes, two different authorities would simultaneously offer toleration and intolerance to the Particulars. In response, Particulars themselves showed a wide array of responses, from supporting government to expressing outright hostility towards it. This became, at points, an issue of division between the Particulars themselves, further adding to their own denominational toleration dynamics. Indeed, this thesis ultimately shows that all these contexts of toleration – ordinary, congregational, denominational, inter-

denominational, subordinate, and magisterial – often became powerfully interwoven, creating remarkable complexity for all those involved.

CHAPTER 1:

THE PARTICULAR BAPTISTS TO THE INTERREGNUM

Now of all Heretiques and Schismatiques, the Anabaptist ... ought to be most carefully looked unto, and severely punished, if not utterly exterminated and banished out of the Church and Kingdome ... they defile our Rivers with their impure washings, and our Pulpits with their false prophecies and phanatical enthusiasms, so the Presses sweat and groane under the load of their blasphemies.¹

This was how the Anglican Daniel Featley described the Baptists in 1645, barely seven years after the Particulars had emerged in 1638. By then, the Civil War had so destabilised England that religious minorities enjoyed unprecedented space. Consequently, the 1640s and 1650s became ‘a significant locus of toleration debate in their own right, perhaps the single most fertile period of English thought about religious liberty’, according to Andrew Murphy.² This chapter focuses on the Particulars in the 1640s, revealing dynamics of toleration that can be easily overlooked in studies of toleration ‘from above’. Notwithstanding recent shifts in toleration historians’ approaches to the English Revolution, the focus has remained upon magisterial debates about toleration. By discussing one of the religious minorities themselves, significant aspects of the toleration debates during this period come to light. Indeed, this chapter shows how inter-denominational toleration dynamics were intrinsically involved in the very origins of the Particulars. It also reveals the reasons why they seemed so

¹ Daniel Featley, *The Dippers Dipt. or; the Anabaptists Duck'd and Plung'd Over Head and Eares, at a Disputation in Southwark* (London: Nicholas Bourne, 1645), B2.

² Andrew R. Murphy, *Conscience and Community: Revisiting Toleration and Religious Dissent in Early Modern England and America* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), 8.

intolerable to those around them, attracting allegations of apocalypticism, violence, sexual depravity, and anarchic tendencies. I also explore how they came to be involved in the regicide, and the multiple dimensions of toleration this event provoked. Their story throughout this period is one of a young movement seeking tolerance and stability, in a decidedly intolerant and volatile society.

The historiography of English toleration can be broken into four distinct phases. The earliest phase was dominated by Whig historians such as Lord Macaulay and W.E.H. Lecky, who argued that Enlightenment approaches to toleration emerged from seventeenth-century Puritanism, especially during the English Revolution.³ This approach was elaborated upon by later-Whig historians like William Haller, and especially by W.K. Jordan in his exhaustive work on the topic.⁴ Indeed, so thorough was Jordan's analysis, that English toleration remained largely unstudied until a revisionist movement in the 1990s, led by Ole Grell, Jonathan Israel, and Nicholas Tyacke. These revisionists questioned Whiggish assumptions that seventeenth-century Puritans had really been proto-Enlightenment modernists. They argued instead that throughout the English Revolution persecution, and not toleration, remained the preferred approach to religious minorities.⁵ In the 2000s, a group of post-revisionist historians began to explore other aspects of toleration during the English Revolution that had remained previously under-examined. This chapter primarily engages with these post-revisionists, such as Andrew Murphy, Perez Zagorin, and especially John Coffey.

³ Baron Thomas Babington Macaulay, *The Works of Lord Macaulay, Complete: History of England* (London: Longmans, Green, 1848); W.E.H. Lecky, *History of the Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe: In Two Volumes* (London, 1865).

⁴ W.K. Jordan, *The Development of Religious Toleration in England* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1932); William Haller, *Liberty and Reformation in the Puritan Revolution* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1955).

⁵ Ole Peter Grell, Jonathan I. Israel, and Nicholas Tyacke, *From Persecution to Toleration: The Glorious Revolution and Religion in England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991); Ole Peter Grell and Bob Scribner, *Tolerance and Intolerance in the European Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

The post-revisionists agree that the English Revolution, incorporating both the 1640s and 1650s, was significant in the history of religious toleration.⁶ Nonetheless, they observe an over-emphasis on intellectual history among earlier toleration historians, be they Whigs or revisionists. While continuing to recognise the intellectual arguments presented by various Puritans at the time, the post-revisionists recognise that pragmatism and politics, far more than ideology, drove toleration. For example, Murphy argues that portraying the 1640s as the birth of magisterial toleration is misguided, since Parliament never publicly advocated for religious toleration, and only offered it begrudgingly when given no choice by the New Model Army.⁷ Post-revisionists take particular aim at one intellectual argument often posited for toleration: what Murphy describes as ‘epistemological skepticism’, which can be more easily identified with tolerationists from the eighteenth-century.⁸ Similarly, Coffey criticises the tendency to turn figures like Cromwell and Milton ‘into modern, secular liberals’, who are ‘vaguely religious’ despite all evidence to the contrary.⁹ Coffey also points out that, ‘we tend to cast dogma as the culprit and scepticism as the liberator.’¹⁰ Yet scepticism was often used in England as a justification for Conformity, not toleration. Religious ambiguity suggested moderation in belief, rather than falling into extremism. Moderation was the domain of Conformists, as opposed to the ‘hotter’ Dissenters.¹¹

In many ways, this chapter supports the conclusions of these scholars, but provides further clarity and nuance to their arguments. Many of their analyses of toleration during the Civil War focus upon the elite dispensing toleration, rather than on

⁶ John Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration in Protestant England, 1558-1689* (Harlow: Longman, 2000), 2; Murphy, *Conscience and Community*, 76–77; Perez Zagorin, *How the Idea of Religious Toleration Came to the West* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 191.

⁷ Murphy, *Conscience and Community*, 77.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 76.

⁹ Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration*, 3.

¹⁰ John Coffey, ‘Scepticism, Dogmatism and Toleration in Seventeenth-Century England’, in *Persecution and Pluralism: Calvinists and Religious Minorities in Early Modern Europe 1550-1700*, ed. Richard Bonney and David J.B. Trim (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2006), 149.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 161.

the religious minorities themselves who sought it. Coffey insists that historians should ‘sharpen’ the question about religious toleration during this period to: ‘did intellectuals and magistrates have a principled commitment to the toleration of heretics and schismatics?’¹² This is commendable, but implicitly ignores what the ‘heretics and schismatics’ themselves thought about these issues. Despite his claims to have moved beyond the intellectual history of previous toleration historians, Walsham complains that Coffey’s *Persecution and Toleration of Protestant England* ‘remains largely a political and intellectual history of the topic which makes relatively few gestures towards exploring the social dimension’.¹³ The same can be said for many post-revisionist works. In terms of denominations, these historians focus almost entirely upon the Anglicans, and the two leading factions on the Parliamentary side, the Presbyterians and the Independents. The main people cited by John Marshall are from the Presbyterian and Independent elite, such as Thomas Edwards, Ephraim Pagitt, and John Owen.¹⁴ Murphy focuses entirely on the king, ‘Parliament, the Scots and the Assembly’.¹⁵ Zagorin primarily discusses the contributions of Roger Williams, John Goodwin and John Milton, all members of the intellectual or political elite.¹⁶ These historians are certainly correct that Independents supported toleration and a decentralised national Church, while the Presbyterians responded to such proposals with ‘fear and horror’.¹⁷ They are right that ultimately, the Independents came to dominate Parliament after 1646, which in turn contributed to religious toleration. However, Independents only contributed to that toleration – they did not create it alone.

¹² Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration*, 7.

¹³ Alexandra Walsham, *Charitable Hatred: Tolerance and Intolerance in England, 1500-1700* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), 11.

¹⁴ John Marshall, *John Locke, Toleration and Early Enlightenment Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 287–88.

¹⁵ Murphy, *Conscience and Community*, 84.

¹⁶ Zagorin does briefly discuss Richard Overton in *How the Idea of Religious Toleration Came to the West*, 227, but this is because of Overton’s involvement with the Levellers, not the Baptists.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 194.

Acknowledging the contribution of religious minorities would help post-revisionists avoid inadvertently exaggerating their findings. For example, Coffey suggests that religious toleration's triumph by 'the Independents' was 'extraordinary' because 'they constituted only a small minority of the godly, let alone of the nation as a whole'.¹⁸ The sense that this is 'extraordinary' is synthetically heightened here, because the Independents were in fact only one voice among many calling for toleration.

Recognising religious minorities, such as the Particulars, helps overcome the impression that such groups were passively waiting for the Independents and Presbyterians to decide what to do with them, when that was far from the case. Coffey does identify that religious toleration was a concept more commonly associated with smaller groups, including 'Anabaptists', prior to the Independents publishing *An Apologetical Narration* in 1644.¹⁹ However, he primarily sees religious minorities' main role in toleration debates as agitative, their rapid growth throughout the 1640s forcing the elite to discuss these issues.²⁰ While it is true these minorities provoked such discussion, they did far more than that. Groups like the Particulars and General Baptists offered important reasons for toleration. They also wrestled with various aspects of toleration themselves, such as congregational and inter-denominational toleration.

Examining the Particulars reveals new facets of toleration in this period, not least in those areas discussed by post-revisionists. For example, post-revisionists argue that pragmatism drove toleration, rather than ideology. The Particulars provided ideological reasons for toleration, but they were mostly driven by their very pragmatic desire to live in peace. Also, Coffey rightly shows that scepticism was not exclusively the domain of tolerationists, but was utilised by absolutists as well. However, the same

¹⁸ John Coffey, 'The Toleration Controversy during the English Revolution', in *Religion in Revolutionary England*, ed. Christopher Durston and Judith D. Maltby (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), 48.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 46.

²⁰ Coffey, 'Scepticism', 175.

can be said of absolutism: while some anti-tolerationists were absolutist, Coffey himself recognises that ‘in a fundamental sense, tolerationists were dogmatists too’, as evidenced in the ‘intensely biblical character’ of their arguments. His examples are elite men, like Roger Williams, William Penn, and John Locke.²¹ Nonetheless, Coffey also recognises that separatists, including Baptists, had to have an ‘unwavering ... sense of their own rectitude’, given the momentous nature of leaving the established Church. Dissent was not for the religiously sceptical, but for the absolutist.²² This raises the question of how such absolutists could also advocate general toleration. The Particulars also had to wrestle with the limits of congregational and denominational toleration within their own sect, even as they advocated toleration from wider society. Other aspects of toleration also emerge when the Particulars are examined, such as their significant contribution to the idea of liberty of conscience.

These and other facets of toleration among the Particulars, will now be discussed, utilising their own writings and those of their opponents. This chapter firstly looks at how toleration dynamics were directly at play in the Particular and General Baptists’ very origins. Section 2 then examines the denominational and congregational frameworks of the Particulars from a toleration perspective. Section 3 examines the specific reasons why they were targets for intolerance, and Section 4 their responses to wider criticism. The chapter ends by looking at the Particulars’ first great reversal in fortune, receiving toleration from the emerging Cromwellian government.

1. TOLERATION IN THE PARTICULAR ORIGINS

The origins of the English Baptists have been copiously discussed by Baptist historians. This brief section engages primarily with the prevailing Baptist scholarship, but reframes it from a toleration perspective. The Particular Baptists were born out of

²¹ Ibid., 167.

²² Ibid., 173.

dynamics of inter-denominational toleration. Emerging from the English separatist movement, a central facet of their identity was whether to separate from intolerable aspects of society, whether they be the state, the national Church, or other religious groups. This can be seen by contrasting them with their Arminian cousins, the General Baptists, for example, who were frequently identified with internal division and antagonism to other groups. In contrast, the Particulars' Calvinism encouraged a more irenic relationship with wider Nonconformity, even if their commitment to believer's baptism did not. Ultimately, their affinity with other Calvinists would often come into tension with their distinctly Baptist identity.

By definition, English separatism represented inherently intolerant impulses, on multiple levels: separatists were insubordinate to the national Church and state, and often inter-denominationally intolerant of each other. In 1604, soon after his accession to the English throne, James I had threatened separatists, 'I shall make them conform themselves, or I will harrie them out of the land, or else do worse.'²³ When this threat became reality, many separatists went into exile to the comparatively tolerant and prosperous Netherlands.²⁴ Magisterial intolerance is clearly evident in James' policies, but what can sometimes remain unrecognised is that the separatists' response was also an act of intolerance. Separatism was motivated by a refusal to remain in communion with those considered heterodox. The extent of this unwillingness was often remarkable, overcoming simple definitions of submission to king or country. Furthermore, this insubordinate intolerance had a strong tendency to escalate into other forms of intolerance. Having refused to remain part of the established church, English separatist congregations in the Netherlands often continued the separating process. They divided

²³ William Barlow, *The Summe and Substance of the Conference Which, It Pleas'd His Excellent Maiestie to Have with the Lords Bishops, and Other of His Cleargie* (London: Eliot's Court Press, 1604), 83.

²⁴ Michael Haykin, *Kiffin, Knollys and Keach: Rediscovering English Baptist Heritage* (Leeds, UK: Reformation Today, 1996), 19.

into ever more small, well-defined groups, insisting upon congregating with people who only shared their own narrow religious standards. As separatism developed, these standards became more extensive, rigid and defined, leading to a vast array of smaller congregations, each claiming legitimacy, often over and against each other.²⁵

One such group became the General Baptists, who were driven by a widely-repudiated commitment to believer's baptism, usually identified with Dutch Anabaptism. Their founder, John Smyth (1570-1612), had been an Anglican rector since 1594, before becoming disillusioned with the established Church's liturgy and governance. In 1607, he and another leader, Thomas Helwys (1575-1616), led a group of less than fifty souls to Amsterdam.²⁶ At this point, the group had not embraced believer's baptism and thus joined the largest separatist congregation there, the 'Ancient Church' led by Francis Johnson. However, Smyth soon came under the influence of a Dutch Mennonite group, the Waterlanders.²⁷ Mennonites had originally begun in the 1530s under Menno Simons, who had gathered together those Dutch Anabaptists remaining after the disastrous rebellion in Munster in 1535.²⁸ The widespread identification of believer's baptism with radical Munsterites would remain a constant problem for all 'Anabaptists' throughout the seventeenth century. In fact, English separatists like Johnson had avoided believer's baptism precisely because of these perceived associations. Driven by apocalyptic expectations of Christ's return, the radicals at Munster had not only practised baptism, but also polygamy and violent

²⁵ Stephen Brachlow, 'Life Together in Exile: The Social Bond of Separatist Ecclesiology', in *Pilgrim Pathways: Essays in Baptist History in Honour of B.R. White*, ed. William Brackney, Paul S. Fiddes, and John Briggs (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1999), 112.

²⁶ William Brackney, *The Baptists* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1994), 4.

²⁷ Jason K. Lee, *The Theology of John Smyth: Puritan, Separatist, Baptist, Mennonite* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2003), 26, 37.

²⁸ William Estep, *The Anabaptist Story: An Introduction to Sixteenth-Century Anabaptism*, 3rd Ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996), 156, 160.

revolution.²⁹ When the Mennonites had emerged out of Munsteritism after 1536, they had retained believer's baptism but repudiated its more violent aspects.

General Baptists also followed the Mennonites in adopting a view of Christ's atonement that was different to the prevailing Calvinist position among English separatists.³⁰ Calvinists uphold that God predestined a select group of people, 'the elect', to be saved, and that Christ's atonement was particularly available for that elect. Mennonites disagreed, arguing instead that Christ's atonement was available generally to all. Such a view is often described as 'Arminianism', although technically the Mennonites had derived this theology independently of Jacob Arminius.³¹ The General Baptists retained the separatist desire for a pure congregation, but took from the Waterlanders the Mennonite emphasis upon a general view of the atonement, and believer's baptism. These two emphases – being 'General' and 'Baptist' – would quickly make the group an anathema to most of English Christianity. When discussing Arminianism, post-revisionist toleration scholars tend identify it with ecclesiological issues, such as liturgy and episcopalianism, because of Archbishop William Laud. Murphy describes Arminianism in terms of 'popery', 'idolatry', or 'elaborate ceremonialism', for example.³² However, the General Baptists' Arminianism utterly repudiated such ecclesiastical trappings, and was instead focused on soteriology. Indeed, soteriology, far more than ecclesiology, dominated most debates between Calvinists and Arminians. As such, the Generals were anathematised by the Calvinist establishment in a similar way to Laudian Anglicans, but for very different reasons.

The General Baptists' beginnings were defined by division, from wider Nonconformity and from each other, before experiencing some consolidation over the

²⁹ C. Douglas Weaver, *In Search of the New Testament Church: The Baptist Story* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2008), 13.

³⁰ Estep, *The Anabaptist Story*, 175–76.

³¹ Karl Koop, *Anabaptist-Mennonite Confessions of Faith: The Development of a Tradition* (Kitchener, ON: Pandora Press, 2004), 40–41.

³² Murphy, *Conscience and Community*, 82.

coming decades. In 1609, Smyth's congregation separated from Francis Johnson's church entirely. Smyth baptised himself, and then baptised each member of his congregation, including Helwys. Smyth's self-baptism shocked the English separatists throughout Amsterdam. Soon after, Smyth also began to regret baptising himself, considering it presumptuous and unbiblical.³³ He therefore insisted that he and his whole congregation must be baptised again by the Waterlanders, and join their denomination. Most of the congregation did so, but ten members under Helwys' leadership left Smyth's congregation, believing their baptism under Smyth had been sufficient.³⁴ Helwys led this small band back to England in 1611, and they began to meet at Spitalfields in London. Within ten years, the denomination had grown to at least five churches across England, comprising approximately 150 people.³⁵ By 1650, there would be at least forty-seven General Baptist congregations.³⁶ These could be found throughout Somerset, Southampton, Rochester, Devon, Kent, Stafford, and the Midlands, as well as London.³⁷ While the number of General Baptists were small and their influence upon Nonconformity hardly significant, the reputation their origins perpetuated would continue to influence perceptions of all English Baptists.

The Particular Baptists also emerged from English separatism, but entirely independently of the General Baptists, almost thirty years later. That they were a distinct group was often missed by the authorities, and Particular leaders frequently denied any association with General Baptists.³⁸ Similar conflation often occurs among scholars, leading the Baptist historian, William Brackney, to insist, 'a polygenetic approach to

³³ Marvin Jones, *The Beginning of Baptist Ecclesiology: The Foundational Contributions of Thomas Helwys* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2017), 5–6; Lee, *The Theology of John Smyth*, 71.

³⁴ Weaver, *In Search of the New Testament Church: The Baptist Story*, 19.

³⁵ Haykin, *Kiffin, Knollys and Keach*, 39.

³⁶ H. Leon McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1987), 39.

³⁷ Roger Hayden, *English Baptist History and Heritage*, 2nd ed. (Didcot: Baptist Union of Great Britain, 2005), 27.

³⁸ Peter Naylor, *Calvinism, Communion and the Baptists: A Study of English Calvinistic Baptists from the Late 1600s to the Early 1800s* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2003), 16–19.

Baptist origins is now mandatory', whereby historians recognise the different origins of both groups.³⁹ Certainly, the Particulars were also a product of the Dutch-English separatism of the early seventeenth century, though the origins of the Particulars are harder to determine than their General counterparts. Indeed, Michael Edward Williams and William B. Shurden suggest that, 'sorting out the genesis of Particular Baptists is like trying to untangle a snarled fishing line in the dark.'⁴⁰ They eventually emerged out of a congregation reacting to separatism: the 'JLJ church', so named because of its first three pastors, Henry Jacob, John Lathrop and Henry Jessey. Jacob (1563-1624) began the congregation in 1616 in Southwark. He had spent some time among Calvinist separatists in the Netherlands, but had grown frustrated with the rigidity of the congregations there. Once he returned to England, Jacob began a congregation that would maintain a Puritan theology, but with a less separatist, more tolerant, attitude. J.F. McGregor refers to Jacob's congregation as 'semi-Separatist'.⁴¹ For example, it did not cut off all ties with those who still attended an established church.⁴² This would set the usual tone of Particulars later on.

In 1622, Jacob was replaced by John Lathrop (1584-1653), and it was at this point that the early Particulars left the congregation, though without the usual separatist animosity. In fact, they left the church primarily because it had grown so large, raising fears of discovery and prosecution by the 'Nimrods of the Earth', the English government.⁴³ Led by Samuel Eaton (d. 1665) and made up of about nineteen people, this small group may have upheld believer's baptism, though that is debatable.⁴⁴ The

³⁹ William Brackney, 'Forward', in Larry J. Kreitzer, ed., *William Kiffin and His World*, vol. 4 (Oxford: Regent's Park College, 2015).

⁴⁰ Michael Edward Williams and Walter B. Shurden, *Turning Points in Baptist History: A Festschrift in Honor of Harry Leon McBeth* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2008), 37.

⁴¹ J.F. McGregor, 'The Baptists: Fount of All Heresy', in *Radical Religion in the English Revolution*, ed. J.F. McGregor and B. Reay (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 27.

⁴² Haykin, *Kiffin, Knollys and Keach*, 27.

⁴³ Edward Whiston, *The Life and Death of Mr. Henry Jessy, Late Preacher of the Gospel of Christ in London* (London, 1671), 10–11.

⁴⁴ Haykin, *Kiffin, Knollys and Keach*, 28; Weaver, *In Search of the New Testament Church: The Baptist Story*, 18.

first definitively Baptist Particulars left the JLJ church during the leadership of Lathrop's successor, Henry Jessey (1601-1663). Comprising only six people, this small offshoot amicably separated in 1638, under the leadership of John Spilsbury (1593-1668), and soon merged with Eaton's congregation. Meeting in Wapping in London, it grew to over 300 people by 1670.⁴⁵ The Spilsbury congregation's move away from the JLJ church was gradual, and far less fiery than the usual splits among separatists. When it began, most of its members still occasionally attended the JLJ church. Both congregations also continued to share many significant theological convictions, including Calvinism. The Particulars frequently emphasised their Calvinist commitment, in order to stress their affinity with other Puritans. The Particulars first public description of their faith, *The Confession of Faith of those Churches which are commonly (though falsely) called Anabaptists* of 1644, explicitly copied nearly half of a widely-accepted separatist confession of 1596, and adopted the 1619 Synod of Dort's 'five point Calvinism'.⁴⁶ This was an attempt to show a resonance with wider Puritans, creating a platform for inter-denominational toleration, especially with the Calvinist Presbyterians.

The Particulars' amicability towards broader Puritanism represents a significant point of distinction between them and the General Baptists. Both groups were responses to the separatism from which they had emerged. Leon McBeth states that, 'Whereas the Separatism of Smyth and Helwys was rigid, the Particular group emerged from more moderate semi-Separatist congregations.'⁴⁷ From their inception under Smyth and Helwys, then, the General Baptists had been more 'hyper-separatist', often dividing over ever more precise standards and being antagonistic to other groups, including other

⁴⁵ Haykin, *Kiffin, Knollys and Keach*, 28; Brackney, *The Baptists*, 6; Weaver, *In Search of the New Testament Church: The Baptist Story*, 19.

⁴⁶ William Kiffin et al., *The Confession of Faith of Those Churches Which Are Commonly (Though Falsly) Called Anabaptists* (London: Matthew Simmons, 1644); Hayden, *English Baptist History and Heritage*, 75.

⁴⁷ McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage*, 39.

separatists. While General Baptists did at times pursue a more conciliatory approach, their distinctly Arminian theology inevitably led to conflict with many Nonconformists. In contrast, the Particular Baptists frequently sought to emphasise their doctrinal affinity with the broader Puritan community, not least because of the attitude of the JLJ church from which they had emerged. This had tangible repercussions: in 1640s London, ministers from Presbyterian, Independent and Particular congregations would often hold conferences to discuss various issues – the General Baptists were rarely invited to attend.⁴⁸ To a degree, then, Presbyterians and Independents could tolerate Baptists, as long as they shared the same Calvinist convictions.

For their part, the Particulars also sought to tolerate other dissenting groups, while also wrestling with how to uphold their distinctive identity. Ingrid Creppel has pointed out that ‘toleration has always been intimately connected to this phenomenon that we call identity.’⁴⁹ The Particulars’ commitment to both their identity and inter-denominational toleration represented a delicate balance. Their main identity-marker, believer’s baptism, could easily be perceived as an act of public criticism: those who chose to be baptised as an adult inevitably implied society’s decision to baptise children was wrong. Therefore, more so than most other denominations, at the heart of their identity all Baptists had a publicly intolerant act. In many ways, then, the very name ‘Particular Baptist’ represents a tension of inter-denominational tolerance: ‘Particular’ conveying an affinity with, and ‘Baptist’ suggesting a repudiation of, the dominant Calvinist paedobaptist theology among Nonconformists.

Baptist origins, be they General or Particular, can be better understood when approached from a toleration perspective. Separatism inherently drew congregations to

⁴⁸ Murray Tolmie, *The Triumph of the Saints: The Separate Churches of London, 1616-1649* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 123.

⁴⁹ Ingrid Creppell, *Toleration and Identity: Foundations in Early Modern Thought* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2003), ix.

ask questions around how to tolerate religious diversity, with each Baptist group responding differently. The General Baptists had quickly developed a mutual inter-denominational intolerance with those around them, driven by several factors. These included the shock generated among Dissenters at Smyth's self-baptism, as well as their Arminian theology. The Particulars, in contrast, emerged more gradually and peacefully from wider separatism, though this also created interesting tensions. They found themselves caught between the more irenic impulses of their Calvinism, and the more broadly insulting implications of their baptisms. This consequently affected how they became structured internally, as the next section will discuss.

2. INTERNAL PARTICULAR TOLERATION

The boundaries of toleration were not merely a question for the nation as a whole, but also for denominations, and each congregation. Post-revisionist scholarship would benefit greatly by examining this further. Perez Zagorin briefly mentions Roger Williams' view that congregations could not exercise authority over wider society, but could exercise spiritual sanctions including excommunication of their members. However, in this brief analysis, Zagorin does not define this as congregational intolerance.⁵⁰ John Coffey discusses what he calls 'ecclesiastical toleration', focusing primarily on 'Anglicans' and 'a few liberal Dissenters'. He also recognises that while Dissenters desired toleration from the government, they were internally very intolerant, because of their commitment to 'strict ideological and moral discipline'.⁵¹ As this section will show, each congregation had to wrestle with differences of opinion, many of which could be considered quite serious, especially for dogmatic biblicists like the Particulars. Such complications only increased when seeking union with other congregations, who may be like-minded in many respects, but not in all. Beyond

⁵⁰ Zagorin, *How the Idea of Religious Toleration Came to the West*, 206.

⁵¹ Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration*, 12–13.

doctrinal disagreement, questions of congregants' morality could also lead to the highly intolerant act of excommunication. Nonetheless, the Particulars had several reasons to forge some kind of unity, which this section will explore. Doctrinally, they were all committed to Calvinism and believer's baptism, as well as sharing many other theological convictions. Pragmatically, banding together amidst wider intolerance of Baptists also made sense. This section explores these dynamics, by examining the Particulars' four key mechanisms for maintaining unity amidst their congregations' diversity and autonomy: baptism itself, congregations, confessions, and associations.

As briefly mentioned in the previous section, the shared practice of baptism defined all Baptists as collectively distinct from the wider population, and this facilitated a sense of unity among the Particulars themselves. This was heightened by the extremely public nature of adult-baptism in seventeenth-century England. Until 1640, the mode of baptism for both the General and Particular Baptists had been pouring, which could be done unobtrusively during worship in one of their house congregations.⁵² However, in 1638 several members of Henry Jessey's congregation decided the Bible held immersion as the ideal method of baptism, as it symbolised dying and rising again. They then discovered the contemporary Waterlanders in Holland still baptised by immersion. In 1640, one of Jessey's congregants, Richard Blunt, went to Holland and received baptism from the Waterlanders. Upon his return Blunt baptised a 'Mr. Blackrock', then both of them baptised fifty-three others.⁵³ Given that the Waterlanders were Arminians, that Blunt was willing to tolerate a non-Calvinist group shows the depth of his congregation's new commitment to baptism by immersion.⁵⁴ Some Particulars, such as John Spilsbury, disapproved of Blunt's going to the

⁵² Haykin, *Kiffin, Knollys and Keach*, 27.

⁵³ Anon., 'Kiffen Manuscript' (1641), in B. R. White, ed., 'The "Kiffen Manuscript", Authorship and Importance for History of Particular Baptists, 2 Pts', *Baptist History and Heritage* 2, no. 1 (January 1967): 31–32.

⁵⁴ McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage*, 46.

Waterlanders. However, that was not so much because of their Arminianism, but because Spilsbury felt such baptismal ‘succession’ was unnecessary, baptising his own congregants anyway.⁵⁵ This indicates the sense of priority in toleration dynamics: for the sake of a primary ideal, a secondary ideal can be compromised: baptism by immersion was more important than Calvinism for Blunt’s fellow congregants, but not for Spilsbury’s congregation.

As this practice of baptism spread, it had further unforeseen consequences, inside and outside the denomination. From their perspective, it was an act of absolute biblical obedience: they had identified that only adults were explicitly baptised in the New Testament, and found no evidence for children receiving the rite.⁵⁶ Yet despite its biblical foundations, their baptisms proved deeply controversial. In 1646, Daniel Featley in *Dippers Dipt* wrote, ‘They flock in great multitudes to their *Jordans*, and both Sexes enter into the River, and are dipt after their manner with a kinde of spell containing the heads of their erroneous tenets.’⁵⁷ Featley’s comment not only reveals the wider Puritans’ disdain for this practice, but also where baptisms took place. Most seventeenth-century buildings did not have pools or baths, so baptisms by immersion inevitably needed to take place outside, usually in rivers or ponds. Thus baptism became a highly public act of repudiating the established Church, and wider society. This heightened the sense that the baptised person had intimately joined with a new community. Thus it intensified Particulars’ fellowship, uniting them in their rejection of such a long-held tradition as paedobaptism.⁵⁸ Expressions of intolerance felt from outsiders frequently engender feelings of unity within a given group.

⁵⁵ Thomas Crosby, *The History of the English Baptists: From the Reformation to the Beginning of the Reign of King George I*, vol. I (London, 1738), 103–4.

⁵⁶ Kiffen et al., *The London Particular Baptist Confession (1644)*, secs 39–40.

⁵⁷ Daniel Featley, *The Dippers Dipt, or, the Anabaptists Duck’d and Plung’d Over Head and Eares*, Fourth Edition (London, 1646), 5.

⁵⁸ McGregor, ‘The Baptists’, 41.

Such a bond can become strong enough to encourage more diversity within the faithful. Indeed, the Particulars found even baptism itself left room for congregational and denominational toleration, as their congregations had differing views on how baptism affected admission to the Lord's Supper. Some Particular congregations supported 'open communion', sharing the Lord's Supper with unbaptised Nonconformists. Others refused to do so, vehemently upholding 'closed communion'. Nonetheless, congregations that disagreed on communion still remained in fellowship, amidst wider societal persecution. For example, while many in Jessey's congregation were also baptised when Blunt returned from the Waterlanders, the congregation remained inclusive, believing adult-baptism by immersion was optional, not required. Jessey himself led the congregation without being baptised until 1645, when he was baptised by Hanserd Knollys (1598–1691), who went on to lead a closed Particular congregation.⁵⁹ In 1643, William Kiffen's closed congregation in London welcomed the open Broadmead Particulars into their meetings, after Broadmead were driven from Bristol by the Civil War.⁶⁰ Furthermore, even for open Particulars who chose to not get baptised, the decision to congregate with Baptists was often enough to have them anathematised by wider Puritanism. This yet again perpetuated a sense of unity among Particular congregants. This provides valuable insights into the point made earlier, that it was often absolutists, and not latitudinarians, who proved most tolerant. The Particulars' commitment to believer's baptism was due to their absolute obedience to the Scriptures. Yet it facilitated several forms of toleration, in large part because of the wider social intolerance it engendered. Those Particulars who congregated together in open communion were more broadly criticised by society, irrespective of whether they

⁵⁹ Anon, 'Knollys Manuscript' (1644), in W.T. Whitley, 'Debate on Infant Baptism, 1643', *Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society* 1.4 (1909 1908): 245.

⁶⁰ Edward Terrill, *The Records of a Church of Christ Meeting in Broadmead, Bristol, 1640-1687*, ed. Edward Bean Underhill (London: Hanserd Knollys Society, 1847), 31.

personally got baptised or not, and this drew them together. Closed communionists could also tolerate open Particulars for much the same reason.

Baptist minute books provide a window into how this sense of unity was expressed in their gatherings. Both Particular and General Baptists retained the common separatist preference for regular, small, intimate congregations.⁶¹ The minute books commonly relate where and when they held meetings, who attended, who led, what decisions they made, and how they related to each other. For example, members were often recorded as ‘Sr’ (‘Sister’) or ‘Br’ (‘Brother’), even during disagreements. Baptists rarely identified themselves as ‘Baptists’ or ‘Anabaptists’ as such, instead calling themselves the ‘Brethren’, seeing themselves primarily as a spiritual family. Such communion hardly differentiated them from wider Nonconformity, though their commitment to believer’s baptism did. The congregation was at the heart of Baptist life. Congregations met every Sunday, and worshipped for as many as three or four hours. Meetings often occurred in homes or outdoors. As a result, while Conformist worship had architectural mechanisms to focus attention upon a leader, Baptist worship did not. For example, an Anglican chapel’s seats were fastened to the floor and faced the nave or pulpit, in order to make the congregation act more as an audience, but this was not the case in house churches.⁶² This allowed the Baptist congregants to enjoy a great degree of equity during worship, facilitating each congregant’s sense of investment to the group. Four or five members of the congregation could preach on a biblical passage each meeting, though one member often acted as a moderator, beginning and ending the meeting with prayer. Members also contributed extemporaneously throughout, making Baptist worship ‘somewhat unpredictable’, to use Leon McBeth’s memorable phrase.⁶³

⁶¹ A fine example would be the ‘Minutes for Devonshire Square (Particular) Baptist Church’, 1676-1664, CLC/179/MS20228/1A, London Metropolitan Archives, although they obviously relate to a slightly later period.

⁶² Diane Purkiss, *The English Civil War: A People’s History* (London: Harper Press, 2006), 433.

⁶³ McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage*, 92.

At first, all Baptists frowned upon congregational singing, but soon many had embraced it as another way the whole congregation could contribute to the worship.⁶⁴ This sense of equity was also expressed in how congregations made major decisions. They expected the Holy Spirit to speak through any-and-all members of the congregation, and not merely the leaders from the pulpit. This commitment to equity among congregants became a presiding principle for the Particulars, facilitating distinct dimensions of toleration. Whereas magisterial toleration, for example, is usually enacted by authorities, Particular toleration dynamics were primarily driven by the collective.

This does not mean Particular congregations devalued leadership – most of their churches had a minister or elder, along with deacons and deaconesses. The specifications for these roles were notoriously vague and inconsistent, in keeping with the Baptists' distaste for hierarchical models, such as those structuring the episcopalian Anglican and Catholic Churches. Each Particular church chose their own minister, often from among their own fold, further asserting that congregation's ultimate control. Nonetheless, many Particular leaders exercised considerable authority.⁶⁵ This was aided in part by long pastorates, with many of them leading for decades: Henry Jessey led his congregation from 1637 until his death in 1663; Hanserd Knollys from the early 1640s to the 1680s; and William Kiffen from 1642 until he died in 1701.⁶⁶ Leaders often engaged in public speaking, sometimes with great success – Thomas Edwards lamented that Knollys spoke to crowds of over 1,000 people, for example.⁶⁷ Theological debates were also popular, and McBeth identifies nearly eighty debates in which Particular

⁶⁴ Anna Trapnel, *The Cry of a Stone* (London, 1654).

⁶⁵ McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage*, 77.

⁶⁶ Stephen Wright, 'Jessey, Henry (1601–1663)', ed. H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison, *O.D.N.B.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/14804>; Kenneth G.C. Newport, 'Knollys, Hanserd (1598–1691)', ed. H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison, *O.D.N.B.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/15756>; Michael Haykin, 'Kiffin, William (1616–1701)', ed. H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison, *O.D.N.B.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/15521>.

⁶⁷ Thomas Edwards, *Gangraena, or, a Catalogue and Discovery of Many of the Errors, Heresies, Blasphemies and Pernicious Practices of the Sectaries of This Time: The First and Second Part* (London, 1646), I.2.40.

leaders participated between 1641 and 1660. Such debates were often against formidable opponents from other denominations, yet Particular leaders proved to be proficient debaters.⁶⁸ Particular leaders also advocated for their flock during government suppression, including prosecutions.⁶⁹

William Kiffen was distinctly influential, being described as the ‘Metropolitan’ of the Particulars in 1645.⁷⁰ He was the main contributor to the influential 1644 *London Confession*, and was considered the leader of the Particulars by many polemicists, such as Josiah Ricraft in *A Looking Glass for the Anabaptists* (1645), and Edwards in *Gangraena* (1646).⁷¹ Kiffen, was the main antagonist in the debate with Daniel Featley, which was later turned into *The Dippers Dipt*.⁷² Kiffen’s influence can be partly attributed to his wealth. He was a successful merchant, as discussed in the Introduction, which allowed him to make significant financial contributions to the Particular cause. His ability to acquire commodities otherwise in short supply also made him a useful ally for the various governments of the day, resulting in a modicum of magisterial toleration for his denomination. Kiffen met and assisted the three Stuart kings who reigned during his adult years, and worked with both Oliver and Richard Cromwell during the Interregnum. He is one of the most important Particular figures throughout this thesis, and regularly involved in the events I explore.

Congregants’ equity and leaders’ authority among the Particulars influenced their main expression of congregational intolerance, excommunication. Excommunications fill many of the minute books’ pages.⁷³ Occasionally, individual

⁶⁸ McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage*, 64.

⁶⁹ Brackney, *The Baptists*, 9.

⁷⁰ I.R., ‘Letter The 10. of Decem 1645’, in Edwards, *Gangraena, Parts I & II*, 7. A Metropolitan is a high-ranking leader within the Eastern Orthodox Church.

⁷¹ Josiah Ricraft, *A Looking Glasse for the Anabaptists and the Rest of the Separatists* (London, 1645); Edwards, *Gangraena, Parts I & II*.

⁷² Featley, *The Dippers Dipt* (1645), 5. Kiffen’s name was written as ‘Cufin’ in this text.

⁷³ An excellent example of 1640s minute books is Edward Bean Underhill, *Records of the Churches of Christ, Gathered at Fenstanton, Warboys, and Hexham, 1644-1720* (London: Haddon Brothers, 1854). Although these were all General Baptist congregations, the patterns of practice were much the

cases gained wider notoriety, such as the Elizabeth Poole's excommunication by Kiffen's congregation for 'scandalous evils', some time in the 1640s.⁷⁴ McGregor explains that, 'the high ethical conduct demanded of the [Baptist] sect's members emphasized its detachment from the corrupt, materialistic world.'⁷⁵ As biblicists, the Baptists identified these ideals of 'high ethical conduct' and 'detachment' with the Bible's definition of holiness: 'Therefore shall ye be holie unto me: for I the Lorde am holy, and I have separated you from other people, that ye shoulde be mine.' (Leviticus 20:26). Breaking the congregation's moral code threatened the holiness, the 'purity' of the whole congregation.⁷⁶ So to protect themselves, the congregation had to 'expel the wicked person from among you.' (1 Corinthians 5:13) Such expulsion was an expression of intolerance.

Holiness is thus essential for understanding intolerance within Nonconformist congregations, in a way that was often less commonly articulated in national toleration.⁷⁷ Certainly, the alleged immorality of a minority was frequently cited as a reason for social intolerance – this very chapter will give examples of that in later sections – though 'holiness' was not a widely utilised motif for this. The authority dynamics among Particular leaders and congregants also make their excommunications different from the usual examples of intolerance discussed by post-revisionists. As discussed earlier, intolerance is frequently identified with political leaders, such as

same in Particular congregations. They are consistent with later Particular minute books, such as B. R. White, *Association Records of the Particular Baptists of England, Wales and Ireland to 1660* (London: Baptist Historical Society, 1971).

⁷⁴ Thomasine Pendarves, 'A Copy of a Letter to the Congregation of Saints, Walking in Fellowship with Mr. William Kiffin', in *An Alarum of War Given to the Army and to Their High Court of Justice (so Called) Revealed by the Will of God in a Vision*, by Elizabeth Poole (London, 1649), 8.

⁷⁵ McGregor, 'The Baptists', 43.

⁷⁶ Mark Bell, 'Freedom to Form: The Development of Baptist Movements during the English Revolution', in *Religion in Revolutionary England*, ed. Christopher Durston and Judith D. Maltby (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), 184.

⁷⁷ Holiness is not a major theme in most histories of toleration. For example, Creppell, *Toleration and Identity*; Jesse Spohnholz, *The Tactics of Toleration: A Refugee Community in the Age of Religious Wars* (Newark, NJ: University of Delaware Press, 2011); Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*; Kaplan discusses it very briefly in *Divided by Faith: Religious Conflict and the Practice of Toleration in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2007), 60.

kings, MPs, or mayors, and thus is highly hierarchical, 'from above'. Yet Baptist excommunications were not hierarchical, but followed the standard Baptist practice of consultation and agreement by the whole congregation. Baptist minute books regularly show various laity discussing whether or not to excommunicate someone, as will be explored more fully in Chapter 2. Leaders certainly played a role, but this communal aspect highlights how intolerance did not necessarily have to be 'from above', even at the congregational level.

Toleration dynamics also occurred between each Particular congregation, a form of denominational toleration. Given their emphasis upon local meetings, each of these sought to retain their independence, making them what Rachel Adcock aptly describes as 'a heterogeneous group'.⁷⁸ Such diversity could have quickly become disagreement, especially in 1640s Nonconformity, but their pragmatic need for unity, as well as their ideological commitment to each congregation's autonomy, helped them overcome potential tensions. This section now examines the key mechanisms for denominational toleration that were developed by the Particular Baptists: confessions and associations.

Confessions were an extremely important expression of inter-congregational toleration for the Particulars, and indeed General Baptists, during the 1640s.⁷⁹ These were statements of faith, very similar to creeds, but with significant differences from a toleration perspective. Leon McBeth notes the distinction between confessions and creeds, a difference 'both real and important to early Baptists', primarily because of denominational toleration: 'A confession *affirms* what a group of Baptists, large or small, believes ... a creed *prescribes* what members must believe. Confessions include; creeds exclude.'⁸⁰ Creeds help facilitate uniformity, while these confessions encouraged

⁷⁸ Rachel Adcock, *Baptist Women's Writings in Revolutionary Culture, 1640-1680* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2015), 12.

⁷⁹ McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage*, 20.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 67.

some toleration within and between Baptist congregations. One of the most important Particular confessions in this period was *The Confession of Faith of Those Churches Which Are Commonly (though Falsly) Called Anabaptists*. Commonly referred to as *The London Confession*, it was written in 1644 by thirteen leaders from seven Particular congregations in London.⁸¹ Murray Tolmie highlights how *The London Confession's* introduction stressed that each signatory was from a 'distinct' congregation, signing 'for conveniency sake', emphasising their autonomy amidst their shared convictions.⁸² Two years later, they updated the document, calling it *A London Confession*. Larry Kreitzer has suggested the deliberate change of article ('The' to 'A') may have some significance, heightening the inclusive tone: 'The' suggests that *Confession* alone defines the Particulars' doctrine, whereas 'A' suggests it is merely one such statement available for those Particulars who would care to use it.⁸³ Thus while it would be easy to assume that confessions were a mechanism for enforcing doctrinal uniformity, they in fact could encourage religious diversity within the Particular community.

While upholding autonomy, *The London Confession* also suggested it would be 'by all means convenient' for the congregations to share good 'counsell' and to 'help one another in all needful affairs of the Church.'⁸⁴ At first, this 'counsell' occurred informally, with members of different congregations visiting each other, but it soon assumed a more formal structure, via associations. The Western Association and the London Association eventually became the two dominant bodies within the Particulars. The London Association was the most influential, while the Western Association was probably the most far-reaching, with leaders from Bristol and South Wales, to Devon

⁸¹ Michael Braddick, *God's Fury, England's Fire: A New History of the English Civil Wars* (London: Allen Lane, 2008), 344.

⁸² Kiffen et al., *The London Particular Baptist Confession (1644)*, Introduction; Tolmie, *The Triumph of the Saints*, 56–57.

⁸³ Larry J. Kreitzer, ed., *William Kiffen and His World*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Regent's Park College, 2010), 263.

⁸⁴ Kiffen et al., *The London Particular Baptist Confession (1644)*, sec. 47.

and Cornwall.⁸⁵ The Associations remained rather loose throughout the 1640s, but became a major facet of Particular life during the Interregnum.⁸⁶ Within these Associations, the autonomy of the local congregation was still constantly upheld. For example, while the General Baptists shared the Lord's Supper with each other at their Associations, Particulars did not: this might again suggest a lack of unity. Yet their reasons for doing so were specifically because they saw the Lord's Supper as a meal suitable only for the local congregation.⁸⁷ It was not a symptom of disunity, so much as a recognition of congregational autonomy and equity.

The Particulars had to struggle with the boundaries of toleration among themselves from their inception. On the one hand, their absolutist biblicism was the reason they were baptised in the first place. Yet it was out of this absolute conviction, and not any kind of relative scepticism, that doctrinal priorities could be determined, with lesser priorities being tolerated. Indeed, baptism itself became a space for internal toleration, as can be seen in the differences between open and closed communion in this period: open communionists could congregationally tolerate those who chose not to be baptised, and closed communionists could denominationally tolerate their open Brethren. The Particulars' commitment to baptism amidst wider criticism also perpetuated a sense of unity and investment, which was further facilitated by their congregational worship. Therefore, while they did have prominent leaders, expressions of congregational intolerance like excommunication were less hierarchical than magisterial examples. At a denominational level, Particulars emphasised the autonomy of each congregation even as they sought unity together, as evidenced by their confessions and associations. Throughout this period, then, the Particulars were seeking to define the boundaries of what was tolerable among themselves, and what was not. Yet

⁸⁵ Hayden, *English Baptist History and Heritage*, 75.

⁸⁶ White, *B.A.R.*

⁸⁷ Weaver, *In Search of the New Testament Church: The Baptist Story*, 26.

while the Particulars grappled with these questions of internal unity and toleration, their opponents sought to subject them to condemnation, exclusion and denial of toleration.

3. WIDER INTOLERANCE AGAINST THE PARTICULARS

This section examines the reasons why 1640s Conformists, whether Presbyterian or Anglican, considered the Particulars a blight upon English society. As stated in the Introduction, both toleration and intolerance lay upon the supposition that something is evil. However, among toleration scholarship, there is much more to discover about why religious minorities were considered so iniquitous. It was not simply because they were Dissenters, not remaining part of the Conformed Church. While that is certainly part of it, there were other significant criticisms of Nonconformists. One reason these criticisms have not been more examined, could be because they were often specific to each denomination. Historians tend to focus on toleration of Nonconformity generally, yet condemnations of a specific denomination's practice cannot be universally applied. As such, by examining criticisms of a specific minority, like the Particulars, new dimensions of Conformist toleration debates are revealed. This does not negate the fact them having rejected the Conformed Church was significant. This in itself was an expression of denominational intolerance on the part of Nonconformists like the Baptists.

Revisionist and post-revisionist historians are correct to point out that Presbyterian Parliamentarians would have preferred all forms of religious Nonconformity to simply disappear. They wanted England to have a Conformed Church, much as Charles I's forces did; the only difference was that they supported a presbyterian model rather than an episcopalian one.⁸⁸ Indeed, one of the reasons they had gone to war against the king was because they could not tolerate his

⁸⁸ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 18, 54.

episcopalianism, which they identified with Catholicism.⁸⁹ There is little evidence to suggest they were interested in freedom of conscience. As late as February 1647, the Parliamentary Committee of Examinations summoned the Particular leaders Knollys, Kiffen and his associate Thomas Patient (d. 1666) on charges of lay-preaching. Even at that stage, the Particulars were not allowed to speak outside a Parliament-controlled national Church.⁹⁰

Yet there were also more specific problems identified with the Particulars, and the Baptists as a whole. They were widely considered to be an anarchic disease within English society, needing to be expunged.⁹¹ Polemicists frequently identified all English Baptists with the violent ‘Anabaptists’ from sixteenth-century Europe, such as the Munsterites of 1535, and Thomas Muntzer, the revolutionary preacher in the Peasants’ War of 1525.⁹² This was, of course, despite both English Baptist groups having been born decades after these riotous events, and the Particulars emerging almost entirely independently of any Continental Anabaptist influence. Edwards identified ‘Thomas Muncer’ as ‘one of the first preachers and ring-leaders of the Anabaptists’, despite there being no clear evidence of Muntzer having ever baptised an adult at all.⁹³ In 1642, the popular anonymous tract, *A Warning for England especially for London in the famous history of the frantick Anabaptists*, dedicated most of its pages to the Munster rebellion, arguing that ‘Anabaptism’ of any sort inevitably led to anarchy, and thus should not be tolerated.⁹⁴ In *Dippers Dipt*, Featley exaggerated even the faintest implications of Munsteritism in *The London Confession*, writing, ‘it appears that the masters of our Anabaptism & Ring-leaders of that sect in ... *Munster; Saxonie*, and the Low Countries,

⁸⁹ Ibid., 284.

⁹⁰ Tolmie, *The Triumph of the Saints*, 137.

⁹¹ Ibid., 148.

⁹² Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 122.

⁹³ Edwards, *Gangraena, Parts I & II*, Preface.

⁹⁴ Anon., *A Warning for England Especially for London in the Famous History of the Frantick Anabaptists Their Wild Preachings & Practises in Germany* (London, 1642).

held such erroneous tenets as are' in *The London Confession*.⁹⁵ The Presbyterian Stephen Marshall responded to *A London Confession* in 1646 by suggesting that most English Baptists 'do much more agree with the Anabaptists in Germany, than with this handful who made this confession here in London.'⁹⁶ These references to radical religious minorities on the continent suggest that a central reason for much of the intolerance aimed toward Baptists was not merely because they were schismatics. It was because both Presbyterians and Anglicans feared their potential to unleash similar political disruption in England. Given that England was embroiled in a Civil War in this period, fears of even more social destabilisation were understandable.

As passages from Daniel Featley's anti-Baptist tract have already revealed, the Baptists' commitment to believer's baptism was also a source of concern for Puritans. Chapter 28 of the 1646 *Westminster Confession* explicitly refuted Baptist beliefs, dismissing 'dipping' as unnecessary, demanding infant baptism, and insisting the sacrament of baptism could only be done once.⁹⁷ Many were especially concerned by the Particulars' decision to make baptism by immersion their standard practice. It heightened suspicions that Baptists were mysterious, immoral extremists.⁹⁸ These were only intensified by claims that they baptised people – both men and women – when they were naked, or at least scantily clad.⁹⁹ In fact, such misgivings were directly addressed in *The London Confession*: a side-note assured readers that while baptism should be done by immersion, 'yet so as with convenient garments ... with all modesty.'¹⁰⁰

⁹⁵ Featley, *The Dippers Dipt* (1645), 220.

⁹⁶ Stephen Marshall, *A Defence of Infant-Baptism: In Answer to Two Treatises, and an Appendix to Them Concerning It; Lately Published by Mr. Jo. Tombes. Wherein That Controversie Is Fully Discussed, the Ancient and Generally Received Use of It from the Apostles Dayes, Untill the Anabaptists Sprung up in Germany* (London: Ric. Cotes, 1646), 76.

⁹⁷ Westminster Assembly (1643-1652), *The Humble Advice of the Assembly of Divines, Now by Authority of Parliament Sitting at Westminster, Concerning a Confession of Faith* (London: For the Company of Stationers, 1646), 45–47.

⁹⁸ McGregor, 'The Baptists', 28.

⁹⁹ McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage*, 48.

¹⁰⁰ Kiffen et al., *The London Particular Baptist Confession* (1644), sec. 40.

The concern that both sexes might bathe together nude during baptisms, points to how gender often incited wider intolerance of the Baptists. Indeed gender underpinned many of the arguments made by the Particulars' opponents, with suggestions of moral impropriety regularly levelled against Baptists for their more egalitarian treatment of women. This was inevitably translated into hints of sexual scandal and can be seen in polemical condemnations of believer's baptism. This can be seen in the cover of Featley's *Dippers Dipt*:



Illustration 1.1¹⁰¹

The descriptors around the edges of this picture articulate the many reasons why Featley deemed 'Anabaptists' intolerable, including the now familiar 'Muncerian' accusation.

¹⁰¹ Daniel Featley, *The Dippers Dipt, or, the Anabaptists Duck'd and Plung'd Over Head and Eares*, Fourth Edition (London, 1646), 18.

However, it is the sexual inferences that dominate the centre picture, especially the nudity of the men and women being baptised. Added to this are allegations that the Baptists are ‘Libertine’, abandoning traditional and biblical calls for sexual restraint. Featley also accuses Baptists of being ‘Adamite’, of attempting to return to the nudist, pre-clothed era from before the Fall.¹⁰² Such accusations saturated Baptist practice with ‘lewdness’, inappropriate relations between men and women. In 1647, local magistrates in Rutland interrogated one Particular leader, Samuel Oates, saying ‘Hee dipps women naked, in ye night, fitt for workes of darknes.’¹⁰³ Thomas Edwards was apparently told by a friend, ‘Another woman having a desire to be Re-baptized, and having pulled off all her cloaths to the naked skin, ready to go into the Water, but forbearing during the time the Dipper prayed, she covered her secret parts with both her hands.’ Ultimately, the woman refused to be baptised ‘for modesties sake’.¹⁰⁴ The Scottish Presbyterian Robert Baillie, in his polemic against the Baptists, cited the Munsterites’ polygamy as evidence of Baptists’ sexual misconduct.¹⁰⁵ *England’s warning by Germanies woe* also assumed polygamy was rife among all Baptists.¹⁰⁶ Notwithstanding any inaccuracies in these accusations, they still represent the paranoia that the Particulars’ baptising of women could produce.

Critics also frequently attacked the Baptists, alongside other radical groups, for their endorsement of women preaching. *The Anatomy of a Woman’s Tongue* of 1638 had

¹⁰² Featley’s depictions of Baptist women are reminiscent of pictures of Mennonite women in the Netherlands from a similar period. See Gary K. Waite, ‘Naked Harlots or Devout Maidens? Images of Anabaptist Women in the Context of the Iconography of Witches in Europe, 1525-1650’, in *Sisters: Myth and Reality of Anabaptist, Mennonite, and Doopsgezind Women Ca 1525-1900* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 22–25.

¹⁰³ McGregor, ‘The Baptists’, 41.

¹⁰⁴ I.R., ‘Letter, The 10. of Decem. 1645’, in Edwards, *Gangraena, Parts I & II*, 5.

¹⁰⁵ Robert Baillie, *Anabaptism, the True Fountaine of Independency, Brownisme, Antinomy, Familisome, and the Most of the Other Errours* (London: M.F., 1647).

¹⁰⁶ Friedrich Spanheim, *Englands Warning by Germanies Woe: Or, an Historicall Narration, of the Originall, Progresse, Tenets, Names, and Severall Sects of the Anabaptists, in Germany, and the Low Countries* (London: John Dever & Robert Ibbitson, 1646), 34.

warned women would seize control if permitted to speak.¹⁰⁷ Yet the Particulars had several prominent ‘she-preachers’, as did the General Baptists.¹⁰⁸ The Broadmead Particular congregation’s records indicate that when their female evangelists preached in their local market, ‘wicked men vilified them, saying, they met together in the night to be unclean ... and would further deride them, as that they had women preachers among them’.¹⁰⁹ Robert Baillie complained of Baptists that, ‘only in this are they more distinct then the Brownists, many of their women do venture to preach then of the other.’¹¹⁰ Accusations that a woman prophets’ visions were merely her own imaginings were common, and discredited her far more than if she had been a man.¹¹¹ Furthermore, the supernatural flavour of their prophecies could be turned against them – the line between prophecy under the Lord and witchcraft under the Devil was at times a fine one.¹¹²

While they never ordained any women, the Particulars were also criticised for giving women leadership roles. Amanda Capern has shown that even in the sixteenth century, the established Church had several ways women could be involved in leadership, such as becoming church-wardens, for example.¹¹³ Nonetheless, many critics of the Particulars believed that the prominence of women was a key example of the denomination’s heresy. In the opening address of *Gangraena*, Edwards complained that before England had abandoned Catholicism, ‘We had Bishopping of children,’ but that thanks to the Baptists, ‘now we have Bishopping of men and women, by strange laying

¹⁰⁷ Anon., *The Anatomy of a Womans Tongue*, ed. William Oldys and John Malham (London: For Robert Dutton, 1809), 275.

¹⁰⁸ Edwards, *Gangraena, Parts I & II*, 9; Baillie, *Anabaptism*, 53–54; Adcock, *Baptist Women’s Writings*.

¹⁰⁹ Terrill, *Broadmead Records*, 1847, 17.

¹¹⁰ Baillie, *Anabaptism*, 53.

¹¹¹ Diane Purkiss, ‘Producing the Voice, Consuming the Body: Women Prophets of the Seventeenth Century’, in *Women, Writing, History, 1640-1740*, ed. Isobel Grundy and Susan Wiseman (Athens, GE: University of Georgia Press, 1992), 155.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 140; See also Lyndal Roper, *Witch Craze: Terror and Fantasy in Baroque Germany* (London: Yale University Press, 2006); Jonathan Barry et al., *Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Lyndal Roper, *The Witch in the Western Imagination* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2012).

¹¹³ Amanda Capern, *The Historical Study of Women: England, 1500-1700* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 150.

on of hands'.¹¹⁴ Polemicists also argued that women should not be teachers, because they fell more easily into religious error due to their inherent gullibility, citing Eve and the serpent as biblical evidence.¹¹⁵

Frequently, domestic dynamics of toleration occurred when women became Particulars. After all, many critics of women's voice claimed it threatened the heart of the Puritan family.¹¹⁶ One example is the Particular prophet, Elizabeth Poole, who was baptised by William Kiffen into his church in the mid-1640s. She had been converted to the Particulars by her father's maidservant when only sixteen years old.¹¹⁷ In 1645, Kiffen wrote *A Brief Remonstrance* in dialogue with Elizabeth's father, Robert Poole, who was highly intolerant of his daughter's new faith.¹¹⁸ When Kiffen had baptised Elizabeth Poole, her father had accused Kiffen of being 'a Seducer and Blasphemer ... seducing my Children and servants into your errors.'¹¹⁹ Edwards also suggested that the Kiffen-Poole case was evidence that 'Anabaptism' led to the disintegration of the family.¹²⁰

Marital tensions could also be exacerbated in religiously mixed marriages, such as that of Dorothy and her husband, the Anglican vicar Matthew Hazzard. When Dorothy Hazzard had stormed out of the Anglican chapel during the rector's sermon, cited at the beginning of this thesis' Introduction, it may well have been her husband who was preaching at the time. This became a source of widespread criticism in Anglican circles. In 1640, Dorothy Hazzard housed a visiting Particular speaker, John Canne, in the vicarage, and organised a public debate with another Bristol Anglican

¹¹⁴ Edwards, *Gangraena, Parts I & II*, Epistle Dedicatory, B2.

¹¹⁵ Capern, *The Historical Study of Women*, 241.

¹¹⁶ Michelle M. Dowd, *Women's Work in Early Modern English Literature and Culture* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 5.

¹¹⁷ Manfred Brod, 'Politics and Prophecy in Seventeenth-Century England: The Case of Elizabeth Poole', *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies* 31, no. 3 (1 October 1999): 395.

¹¹⁸ William Kiffen, *A Briefe Remonstrance of the Reasons and Grounds of Those People Commonly Called Anabaptists, for Their Seperation* (London, 1645), 11.

¹¹⁹ Robert Poole, in *ibid.*, 1, 2–3.

¹²⁰ Brod, 'Politics and Prophecy in Seventeenth-Century England', 397.

rector, Mr. Fowler. After the debate, ‘Mr. Hazzard being come home, Mr. Fowler aforesaid meeting with him, told him his wife was quite gone, and would hear him no more. Others deridingly said, the next thing that followed would be that she would forsake the bed also.’¹²¹ Dorothy Hazzard’s commitment to the Particulars was considered a threat to her marriage. It also undermined the credibility of her husband, a representative of the established Church. While her husband tolerated her Particular activities (they were married until his death in 1671), Dorothy Hazzard still represented a threat to the patriarchal social order in a way that was intolerable to men like Mr. Fowler. This indicates that hierarchical dynamics of toleration could indeed take place in contexts beyond the magisterial. Domestically, Elizabeth Poole’s father was intolerant, while Dorothy Hazzard’s husband seems to have extended her toleration – but either way, both represent traditional patriarchies. Furthermore, because the domestic context was often seen as a microcosm of wider society, a threat to the domestic hierarchy was deemed intolerable because it was, by extension, a threat to larger societal hierarchies – in Hazzard’s case, that of the Anglican priesthood.¹²²

The prominence of women in Nonconformity was, consequently, also one of the central reasons the Parliament sought to suppress Puritan forms of worship. Nonconformist women and the Parliamentarian government were often at loggerheads. For example, many women supported Charles’ peace initiatives of 1643-45, and later argued against the regicide, including Elizabeth Poole.¹²³ Throughout the 1640s, polemical writings, such as Henry Neville’s *An Exact Diurnall of the Parliament of Ladyes*, satirically warned that, if unchecked, women might become members of Parliament itself.¹²⁴ Such texts were part of a larger corollary between women breaking

¹²¹ Terrill, *Broadmead Records*, 1847, 22–23.

¹²² Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 47; Purkiss, ‘Producing the Voice, Consuming the Body’, 156.

¹²³ Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England, 1550-1720* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 410.

¹²⁴ Henry Neville, *An Exact Diurnall of the Parliament of Ladyes Ordered by the Ladyes in Parliament* (London, 1647).

traditional norms and social disorder.¹²⁵ Any acceptance of women's voices was perceived as anarchic by many, and conversely, anarchy had long been seen as a consequence of tolerating deviance.¹²⁶ This was exacerbated for the Particulars, given the wider accusations of anarchy and impropriety already levelled at them, because of Munsterite Anabaptism.

The Particulars' schismaticism was therefore only a small factor in magisterial debates about whether to tolerate them. Of far greater concern was the possibility that they were anarchists, based on the example of continental Anabaptism. Their decision to abandon paedobaptism for believer's baptism was also concerning, because it denied a long-held societal and religious norm. Potentially, it was also physically dangerous and morally licentious, especially for women. The place held by Particular women, through roles in preaching and leadership, also led to concerns they were seductively deconstructing patriarchal hierarchies, the fabric of the family, and by extension society itself. The Particular Baptists experienced intolerance, not just because they rejected Conformity, but because of understandable suspicions that they could be dangerous extremists, who would lead England further into chaos.

4. PARTICULAR RESPONSES TO INTOLERANCE

Given these many serious concerns, Particulars chose to respond in several ways. First of all, they strove to undermine the validity of those concerns, and show where their theology and practice resonated with wider Puritanism. Secondly, they utilised the concept of liberty of conscience: that magistrates had authority to rule in political matters, but did not have the capacity to dictate their subjects' religious convictions. Or put the other way, they argued that while they defied the magistrates' religious

¹²⁵ Patricia Crawford, *Women and Religion in England, 1500-1720* (London: Routledge, 1993), 129.

¹²⁶ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 47.

commands, they were not political anarchists. In part, this was designed to minimise accusations of Munsterite militarism, but it also implied they would be subordinate to the government. Consequently, once the government divided between the king and Parliament, the Particulars chose to support the side that more likely offered them toleration, joining the New Model Army. As they gained influence within the Army, this led to unforeseen dynamics of toleration for the denomination: a dizzying convergence of magisterial, subordinate, inter-denominational, and congregational toleration for the Particulars. In an astonishing turn of events, several prominent Particulars found themselves involved in deciding whether Charles I, and indeed the monarchy itself, would be tolerated by the nation.

Beyond merely framing Particular identity, the London Particulars' Confessions had a subsidiary purpose, of facilitating inter-denominational toleration, especially with Presbyterians. As stated earlier, such Confessions were all highly derivative of Presbyterian statements of faith, especially highlighting the Particulars' Calvinism, such as the emphasis on the predestined 'elect' in Articles 21-26 of *The London Confession*.¹²⁷ Murphy recognises that tolerationists would often encourage a 'Christian minimalism', identifying core Christian beliefs that all could agree with, and allowing for diversity in everything else. Murphy identifies 'the most notable source' for such Christian minimalism as Lord Falkland's 'Tew Thinkers' in the 1630s – again, his focus is on how Conformists approached tolerating others, not how minorities advocated toleration for themselves.¹²⁸ Yet such Christian minimalism was also the motivation of the Particular Confessions, at least in part. The Particulars also provide several other examples of this conciliatory attitude. For example, when in 1646, Kiffen offered to meet Thomas Edwards to discuss his accusations in *Gangraena*, Kiffen added, 'I hope

¹²⁷ Kiffen et al., *The London Particular Baptist Confession (1644)*, secs 21–26.

¹²⁸ Murphy, *Conscience and Community*, 108.

we shall do it with moderation as becometh Christians.’¹²⁹ Kiffen’s use of the term ‘moderation’, of avoiding extremes, would be more commonly identified with Conformists at the time.¹³⁰ This approach would continue to be developed by Nonconformists over time, including by the Particulars: they would seek to reverse perceptions, by portraying themselves as emotionally moderate, and their Conformist opponents as ‘hot’ and intemperate.

Nevertheless, no amount of Christian minimalism was going to make the Particulars acceptable, a recognised good, to wider Puritanism – they therefore had to provide reasons why they should be tolerated. The main reason they gave was one they largely derived from their General Baptist cousins, liberty of conscience. In 1612, the General Baptist leader, Thomas Helwys, had published a tract for James I, *A Shorte Declaration of the Mistery of Iniquity*. In it, he maintained that while the king had political authority over his subjects, he did not have the capacity to impose religious uniformity. *A Shorte Declaration* had a handwritten preface, written directly to the king, which stated, ‘the king is a mortall man, & not God, therefore hath no power over ye immortall soules of his subiects, to make lawes & ordinances for them, and to set spirituall Lords over them ... God save ye King.’¹³¹ Walsham has pointed out that *A Shorte Declaration* was one of few treatises in this period to extend toleration to adherents of not just other denominations, but other religions, including Jews and Muslims.¹³²

The Particulars joined the General Baptists in advocating liberty of conscience, as did many other religious minorities.¹³³ In 1642, Kiffen was imprisoned for meeting in

¹²⁹ William Kiffen, in Edwards, *Gangraena, Parts I & II*, 47.

¹³⁰ Ethan H. Shagan, *The Rule of Moderation: Violence, Religion and the Politics of Restraint in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

¹³¹ Thomas Helwys, *A Shorte Declaration of the Mistery of Iniquity* (Amsterdam, 1612), 1.

¹³² Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 234.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 235.

a Nonconformist conventicle. Following his release, he published the sermon he had been giving at the time of his arrest. He directed the preface to the magistrates who had convicted him, writing:

for the Lord is my witsesse, I desire to honour ... all men in place of authority, as I am bound by the Word of God to do, and though I am accused and condemned for being at a conventicle, truly if praying for the King and Parliament and edifying one another in our most holy faith, be keeping conventicles, then I am guilty.¹³⁴

This reveals how the Particulars made a distinction between political and religious authority. Kiffen here insisted that, even when practising a type of religion that disobeyed the government's religious laws, he and his congregation upheld the state's political authority. Articles 50 and 51 in 1644's *The London Confession* made this distinction clear:

And if God should provide such a mercie for us, as to incline the Magistrates hearts so for to tender our consciences, as that we might bee protected by them ... we shall, we hope, look at it as a mercy beyond our expectation ... But if God withhold the magistrates allowance and furtherance herein; yet we must notwithstanding proceed together in Christian communion, not daring to give place to suspend our practice, but to walk in obedience to Christ ... remembering alwayes we ought to obey God rather then men.¹³⁵

¹³⁴ William Kiffen, *Certaine Observations upon Hosea the Second the 7th and 8th Verses* (Little Eastcheap: William Larner, 1642), iii–iv.

¹³⁵ Kiffen et al., *The London Particular Baptist Confession (1644)*, secs 50, 51.

The Particular leader Christopher Blackwood (1607-1670) also argued that religious liberty was intrinsically tied to their commitment to believer's baptism itself.

Infant baptism upholds a Nationall Church, because if that were taken away, a nationall Church would fall down, for it is hereby that all Nations become (psuedo-Christians, many of them) Christians, not from any National multiplication of disciples ... Absurdity, by this Infant-baptisme, all are compelled to become Christians whether they will or no.¹³⁶

Such statements undermined the king's obligation to enforce religious Conformity, by distinguishing between outward worship and internal conscience. Walsham has shown how Conformists believed permitting heterodoxy effectively condemned heretics to hell.¹³⁷ Yet even assuming the Conformed Church was good, hypothetically, the Particulars argued it and the king should not 'compel' his subjects to go to Anglican services, if attendance was driven by mere pretence and not heartfelt conviction. Compelled congregants' orthopraxy could conceal their heterodoxy. Ultimately, though, God judges the heart, punishing those who 'honour me with their lips, but have remooved their heart farre from me' (Isaiah 29:13). Instead, liberty of conscience would create an openness that fostered effective dialogue, which would in turn allow the wayward to discover the error of their ways.¹³⁸ In contrast, because believer's baptism was a personal decision, it allowed people to honestly portray themselves as believers or not. In principle, therefore, the Particulars could have never endorsed Conformity, even if they themselves became the majority Church. As another Particular minister, Samuel Richardson explained, 'it is well known, we desire no man might be forced against his

¹³⁶ Christopher Blackwood, *Apostolicall Baptisme* (London, 1646), 31.

¹³⁷ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 2.

¹³⁸ Murphy, *Conscience and Community*, 110–11.

judgement and conscience in any way of worshipping God ... but rather to pray to God to open their eyes, and wait with long patience till God perswade them.¹³⁹

Articles 50 and 51 in the 1644 *Confession* also raised the issue of how Particulars would prioritise authorities: if faced with the dilemma of either disobeying the king or disobeying God, they would understandably obey God. Nonetheless, in Article 49 they indicated that in political matters, the prevailing government always receives divine endorsement:

The supreme Magistracie of this Kingdome we beleewe to be the King and Parliament freely chosen by the Kingdome, and that in all those civill Lawes which have been acted by them, or for the present is or shall be ordained, we are bound to yeeld subjection and obedience unto in the Lord.¹⁴⁰

By recognising the political authority of the king and Parliament, the Particulars hoped to ease concerns that they were anarchists like the Munsterites. Even the full title of *The London Confession*, emphasising that they were ‘falsly called Anabaptist’, was meant to show that they were in no way associated with such violent movements.¹⁴¹ The later 1646 *A London Confession*, also specifically revised those phrases from 1644’s *The London Confession* that Featley had identified with Munster. For example, Featley had claimed that Article 31 supported Munsterite communism.¹⁴² The 1646 revision qualified this Article by endorsing private ownership of property.¹⁴³

¹³⁹ Samuel Richardson, *Some Briefe Considerations on Doctor Featley His Book, Intituled, the Dipper Dipt* (London, 1645), 3.

¹⁴⁰ Kiffen et al., *The London Particular Baptist Confession (1644)*, sec. 49.

¹⁴¹ McGregor, ‘The Baptists’, 25–26.

¹⁴² Featley, *The Dippers Dipt (1645)*, 221.

¹⁴³ A fine summary of all such alterations can be found in Mark Bell, *Apocalypse How? : Baptist Movements during the English Revolution* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2000), 89.

By disassociating themselves from revolutionary ‘Anabaptists’ in this way, the Particular Baptists’ also implicitly expressed subordinate toleration of the government. Even though they believed the king’s episcopalianism was wrong, and the Parliamentarians’ Presbyterianism was wrong, the Particulars would tolerate their rulers’ right to lead in civil matters. One might argue with Creppell that toleration first requires having the power to eradicate the intolerable, and then choosing not to do so.¹⁴⁴ In that case, a religious minority like the Particulars might be considered ineligible to tolerate these national authorities, since they were in no position to destroy them. However, the Civil War placed religious minorities in just such a position, forcing them to choose to fight against a national authority, whether king or Parliament. This section ends by exploring how the Particulars joined with wider Nonconformity to support Parliament, considering it their best hope for mutual toleration between themselves and the wider Puritan churches and state.

Baptists came to have a major influence upon the New Model Army, significantly reshaping the dynamics of magisterial toleration just after the Civil War.¹⁴⁵ As well as Baptists becoming soldiers, many Baptist ministers became Army chaplains. This was an extremely influential role, involving preaching not only to soldiers, but to villagers in towns where troops were stationed.¹⁴⁶ Several Particulars also became Army officers, and even held positions in the Army Council, such as Daniel Axtell and Robert Lilburne. The Army Council ultimately took control over the English Revolution, culminating in 1647 with ‘Pride’s Purge’ of Parliament and the execution of the king. That the Particulars went, in less than a decade, from being an unheard-of sect in 1638 to directly influencing the fate of both king and Parliament in 1647 is astonishing. Yet the full implications of this can easily be missed. Murphy astutely points out that the

¹⁴⁴ Creppell, *Toleration and Identity*, 5.

¹⁴⁵ Purkiss, *The English Civil War*, 420.

¹⁴⁶ Bell, *Apocalypse How?*, 98.

Army is an example of pragmatism driving toleration, rather than ideology: ‘the victory of the New Model Army, not the noble nature of tolerationist ideas or the mean-spirited obstinacy of their opponents, ensured the “success” of tolerationist arguments.’¹⁴⁷ However, more can be said about the prominence of sectarians within the Army, including the Baptists, and thus the reason why it pushed for toleration at all. Similarly, when discussing why various Englishmen joined one side or the other in the Civil War, Coffey does not mention the role of religious minorities, and what their motivations might have been. Ultimately, he does recognise that religion, and more specifically religious liberty may have been the ‘key determinant’ in the side chosen by soldiers.¹⁴⁸ This excellent point can be further developed, and I will do so here.

Recognising the Baptists’ prominence in the Army adds nuance to Creppell’s argument about toleration and power, by showing that as the waves of fortune would shift, the dynamics of toleration shifted with them. For example, the dynamics of magisterial and subordinate toleration between the Particulars, and magistrates like the king and Parliament, became directly reversed. Particular leaders like William Kiffen directly supported Pride’s Purge of Parliament.¹⁴⁹ Having written only a year earlier in *A London Confession* of their subordinate toleration of the king, some Particulars now had to decide, as magistrates, whether to execute him. In 1647, Kiffen met Charles I in prison, offering to mediate a treaty between the king and Oliver Cromwell, if the king would allow Particulars liberty of conscience.¹⁵⁰ Kiffen organised for Elizabeth Poole to speak to the Army Council on this very issue. In early 1649, Poole wrote *The Disease and Cure of the Kingdom*, a written account of advice she had given the Council in late

¹⁴⁷ Murphy, *Conscience and Community*, 77.

¹⁴⁸ Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration*, 139.

¹⁴⁹ William Kiffen et al., *Walwins Wiles or The Manifestors Manifested, Vis Liev. Col. John Lilburn, Mr Will Walwin, Mr Richard Overton, and Mr Thomas Prince, Discovering Themselves to Be Englands New Chains and Irelands Back Friends*. (London: Henry Whalley, 1649).

¹⁵⁰ Tolmie, *The Triumph of the Saints*, 164–65.

December 1648.¹⁵¹ Poole was in no way a royalist, and yet she called for the Council to show Charles mercy, telling it to ‘bring him to triall, that he may be convicted in his conscience, but touch not his person.’¹⁵² Caught between two magistrates, the Particulars sought to find a way to work with both. Moreover, at this point they still maintained the longstanding tradition of obedience to the monarch, and this motivated their subordinate toleration of the king.

Of course, the Army Council chose not to take Poole’s advice, executing Charles, and this in turn opened up multiple dimensions of toleration. As mentioned in the Introduction, Walsham states that religious toleration often facilitates ‘impulses of assimilation and segregation, resistance and compromise’, which become ‘dialectally linked.’¹⁵³ The regicide reveals further dimensions to Walsham’s point: multiple expressions of intolerance and toleration were all happening simultaneously in this example. Firstly, for the wider Particular congregations, the only hope for ongoing magisterial toleration now lay entirely in appeasing the emerging Cromwellian government. The Long Parliament (1640-1648) had given Baptists religious toleration on 4 March 1647, but had then rescinded it on 2 May 1648.¹⁵⁴ In order to regain magisterial support, the Particulars had to disassociate themselves from any criticism of the regicide. This led to a demonstration of denominational intolerance for Elizabeth Poole, who they excommunicated – while they claimed it was for improper behaviour, her criticism of the Council’s decision was obviously a major factor.¹⁵⁵ They also cut ties with former allies, such as John Lilburne and the Levellers, who had a long-

¹⁵¹ Susan Wiseman, *Conspiracy and Virtue: Women, Writing, and Politics in Seventeenth Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 144.

¹⁵² Elizabeth Poole, *A Vision: Wherein Is Manifested the Disease and Cure of the Kingdome* (London, 1649), 6.

¹⁵³ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 212.

¹⁵⁴ Crosby, *The History of the English Baptists*, I:196.

¹⁵⁵ Brod, ‘Politics and Prophecy in Seventeenth-Century England’; Pendarves, ‘A Letter to Kiffen’s Congregation’.

standing affinity with many Particular leaders.¹⁵⁶ Lilburne and Kiffen had been friends since the 1630s, with Kiffen having written the preface for Lilburne's book, *The Christian Man's Triall* in 1641.¹⁵⁷ Another prominent Leveller, William Walwyn, had defended the Baptists in his influential 1644 tract on toleration, *The Compassionate Samaritane*.¹⁵⁸ Nonetheless, the Particulars began to publicly voice concerns about the Levellers in 1647.¹⁵⁹ By then, Lilburne, Walwyn and other Leveller leaders had vehemently criticised the Army's increasing control.¹⁶⁰ Finally, the Particulars explicitly disassociated themselves from the Levellers, endorsing the Army Council and Rump Parliament to begin the 'settling of the Commonwealth'.¹⁶¹ Here multiple expressions of toleration overlapped: the Particulars expressed subordinate toleration of the Parliament and insubordinate intolerance to Charles; they did this primarily to receive magisterial toleration from the Parliamentarians; this in turn compelled them to show denominational intolerance to Poole, and inter-denominational intolerance to a semi-religious group like the Levellers.

Moreover, this tactic proved successful: in 1649, the Particulars sought toleration again, when Kiffen presented a petition to the House of Commons, signed by many Particular leaders. The petition argued that once the war had ended, 'we were something cheered in the hopeful expectation of a safe harbour for this Nation ... But with great grief we acknowledg our fears have of late been renewed'. The petitioners also noted the state's ongoing intolerance was due to 'the injustice of Historians, or the

¹⁵⁶ Bell, *Apocalypse How?*, 99–100.

¹⁵⁷ William Kiffen, 'To the Reader,' in John Lilburne, *The Christian Mans Triall: Or, a True Relation of the First Apprehension and Severall Examinations of Iohn Lilburne* (London, 1641), 1.

¹⁵⁸ William Walwyn, *The Compassionate Samaritane Unbinding the Conscience* (London, 1644), 8–9.

¹⁵⁹ Anon., *A Declaration by Congregationall Societies in, and About the City of London; as Well of Those Commonly Called Anabaptists* (London: M. Simmons for Henry Overton, 1647), 7.

¹⁶⁰ Kiffen et al., *Walwins Wiles*.

¹⁶¹ Anon., *The Humble Petition and Representation of Several Churches of God in London, Commonly (Though Falsly) Called Anabaptists. Together with the Answer and Approbation of the Parliament* (London: Francis Tyton and John Playford, 1649), 6.

headiness of some unruly men formerly in *Germany* called *Anabaptists*.¹⁶² However, the magistrates' intolerance had also become intimately linked to questions about where the Particulars' loyalties ultimately lay. The Parliament subsequently assured the Particulars that their 'good Affection to the Parliament and Publique', as evidenced in 'your disclaiming' of a Leveller tract 'which gave such just Offence to the Parliament', had encouraged the government to 'assure you of Liberty and protection'.¹⁶³

The Particulars had therefore proven remarkably effective at weathering the storms of political change. By utilising Christian minimalism and liberty of conscience, they had carved an ideological justification for them to be tolerated. Pragmatically, their prominence in the New Model Army proved even more successful. Indeed, it resulted in the dynamics of magisterial and subordinate toleration being turned upside down, as the leaders of the Particulars became embroiled in the regicide itself. Consequently, different dimensions of toleration converged, resulting in the Particulars excommunicating a prophet, betraying old allies, but also receiving legitimacy within the new Commonwealth. This section shows how toleration is often far more multi-dimensional and fluid in this period than historians have generally portrayed it.

CONCLUSION

Zagorin describes the Baptists as 'only a small sect on the fringes of English Protestantism ... little noticed at this period'.¹⁶⁴ Yet there can now be little doubt that post-revisionist toleration historians would benefit greatly by expanding their scope beyond magisterial toleration, by also examining toleration dynamics among religious minorities like the Particulars. As this chapter has indicated, such an examination adds further depth and nuance to our understanding of toleration during the English

¹⁶² Ibid., 4.

¹⁶³ Ibid., 8.

¹⁶⁴ Zagorin, *How the Idea of Religious Toleration Came to the West*, 192.

Revolution. Concepts and practices of toleration affected their own congregational health, their relationships with like-minded congregations, and their interactions with wider Puritanism. Calls for intolerance towards the Particulars were commonplace, for several reasons relating to anarchy, gender, and even baptism itself. Where possible, the Particulars defended the legitimacy of their views, but where this proved difficult, they relied on the concept of liberty of conscience, and the limitations of government. This resulted in them having a hand in the fate of England's two greatest political institutions, the king and Parliament. It also led to their flourishing in one of seventeenth-century England's most tolerant eras – albeit, an era that was short lived. It lasted for barely a decade, during the 1650s Interregnum.

CHAPTER 2:

THE PARTICULAR BAPTISTS IN THE INTERREGNUM

Cane his highness believe, that the Anabaptists, and especially those heer, to be his best and most faithfull friends? ... Let us not be deceived ... It is good to use tenderness towarde them. I have done it, and shall still doe it; but shall withall be carefull to keep them from power, whoe, if they hade it in their power, would express little tenderness to those, that would not submitt to their way.¹

Henry Cromwell wrote these words from Ireland to his father, Oliver, via State Secretary John Thurloe in 1656. He was deeply concerned at the Particulars' influence in Ireland, and how it affected their relationship with the Cromwellian state, and other denominations. The 1650s are a unique period for this study: at every other point in the seventeenth century, the Particulars were an unacceptable religious minority; but in this decade, they became an accepted part of the English establishment. This change in status brought unprecedented opportunities, but also several distinct challenges, even temptations. The Particulars wrestled with how to reconcile their marginalised past with their new privileged position, one that often seemed entirely antithetical to their previous sectarian identity. Ultimately, their inability to effectively manage this dramatic shift in circumstances would have severe and long-lasting consequences.

In terms of scope, chronologically this chapter follows Blair Worden in primarily focusing on the period from Barebone's Parliament in 1653, to Oliver

¹ 'H. Cromwell, major general of the army in Ireland, to secretary Thurloe, 26 Dec. 1655', in Thomas Birch, ed., *A Collection of the State Papers of John Thurloe*, vol. 4, September 1655-May 1656 (London, 1742), <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/thurloe-papers/vol4>.

Cromwell's death in 1658.² Certainly, events like the Rump Parliament before 1653, or Richard Cromwell's Protectorate after 1658, could provide valuable insights for a study of Interregnum toleration. The chosen period nonetheless provides ample resources for this study. I continue to mainly focus on England, although I also discuss Interregnum Ireland. I refrain from exploring the Particulars' contribution to the Jews' resettlement in England in 1656, simply because of lack of space, although that is certainly worthy of further study.³ I also give specific attention to the *Association Records of the Particular Baptists*, edited by B. R. White.⁴ These records are important for any study of Interregnum Particulars, yet no extended analyses of them exist, despite these records having been available since 1971. Providing a more comprehensive analysis of these records provides valuable insights for toleration history.

Historians often view the Civil War and Interregnum together as 'the English Revolution', and thus certain issues discussed in the previous chapter are relevant here as well.⁵ When examining the 1650s, historians also continue to mainly focus upon the political and intellectual elite, such as Oliver Cromwell, John Milton, and John Owen, as well as the two most prominent denominations, the Independents and Presbyterians.⁶

Yet ignoring the contributions of religious minorities skews the extent to which the

² Blair Worden, *God's Instruments: Political Conduct in the England of Oliver Cromwell* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 1.

³ John Coffey, 'The Toleration Controversy during the English Revolution', in *Religion in Revolutionary England*, ed. Christopher Durston and Judith D. Maltby (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), 155–57.

⁴ B. R. White, *Association Records of the Particular Baptists of England, Wales and Ireland to 1660* (London: Baptist Historical Society, 1971).

⁵ Coffey, 'The Toleration Controversy'; Mark Bell, *Apocalypse How?: Baptist Movements during the English Revolution* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2000); Sarah Mortimer, *Reason and Religion in the English Revolution: The Challenge of Socinianism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Michael Finlayson, *Historians, Puritanism, and the English Revolution: The Religious Factor in English Politics Before and After the Interregnum* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 1983); Jacqueline Eales, "'So Many Sects and Schisms": Religious Diversity in Revolutionary Kent, 1640-60', in *Religion in Revolutionary England*, ed. Christopher Durston and Judith D. Maltby (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006).

⁶ Sharon Achinstein and Elizabeth Sauer, eds., 'Toleration and Nationhood in the 1650s: "Sonnet XV" and the Case of Ireland', in *Milton and Toleration* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); Elizabeth Sauer, *Milton, Toleration, and Nationhood* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016); Andrew R. Murphy, *Conscience and Community: Revisiting Toleration and Religious Dissent in Early Modern England and America* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), 116.

elites contributed to toleration. It can leave the impression that minorities, like the Particulars, passively waited for Presbyterians and Independents to determine how toleration should be applied. Yet Particulars were directly involved in such discussions, even at a parliamentary level. Historians also continue to miss the internal dynamics of toleration within those minorities' congregations.

Several distinct issues within the historiography are also brought to light when the Interregnum is specifically studied. This includes the tendency among toleration historians to meld these two decades into one 'English Revolution'. In many ways, this is entirely legitimate, given the destabilisation of England that occurred throughout that period. Nonetheless, scholars who do so run the risk of conflating issues that took place in two vastly different situations. One example of this point is the shift from theoretical discussions about toleration in the Civil War period to more tangible deliberations about how to apply toleration in the Interregnum. Another is the distinction between the magistrates' outright antagonism towards religious minorities during much of the Civil War period compared to Cromwell's acceptance of many such minorities in the Interregnum, including the Particulars. Walsham highlights how many separatist groups, having historically 'thrived on persecution', consequently 'found it difficult to adjust to victory', and how 'reversals of fortune that transformed a repressed sect into a dominant church brought their own trials and tribulations.'⁷ She adds that Calvinism contributed to the difficulty for victorious separatists, given Calvinists' tendency to identify themselves as God's elect remnant: 'Temperamentally and theologically, Calvinism was particularly well suited to the condition of adversity.'⁸ The Particular Baptists, a Calvinist group who suddenly found themselves among the upper echelons of influence in the 1650s, offer a fine case study of Walsham's argument.

⁷ Alexandra Walsham, *Charitable Hatred: Tolerance and Intolerance in England, 1500-1700* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), 213.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 214.

Walsham's point, that 'a repressed sect' could become 'a dominant church', is reminiscent of Ernst Troeltsch's distinction between sects and churches.⁹ This approach proves helpful when examining how the Particulars responded to their massive shift in status during the 1650s. Troeltsch theorised that religious groups can have two main identities: the 'sect' and the 'church'. Churches seek to 'dominate' and 'be dominated by' the 'world' (that is, the prevailing establishment), while sects see the 'world' as something to avoid dominating or being dominated by.¹⁰ According to J. Milton Yinger, sects also exist on a scale, between being 'aggressive' and 'accepting' of the government, where the aggressive sect fights against wider society, while an accepting sect seeks a 'live and let live' mutual toleration between it and the state.¹¹ More recently, Mark Bell has applied Troeltsch and Yinger's approaches in his study of the Baptists during the English Revolution, revealing that having been a 'sect-type' in the 1640s, in the 1650s they had to decide whether to remain sectarian, or become an 'accommodating sect', or even a 'church-type'.¹² This chapter develops Bell's findings, utilising his terminology of sect-type and church-type, and focusing upon their implications for toleration. When factoring religious minorities themselves into discussions around toleration, Troeltsch's distinction between sect-types and church-types proves extremely helpful.¹³

Examining the Particulars from a Troeltschian perspective is also helpful. He identifies that sect-types are usually intolerant of other religious groups, and frequently

⁹ H. Richard Niebuhr, *The Social Sources Of Denominationalism* (New York, NY: Meridian, 1922); See also Michael Watts, *The Dissenters* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 388–91.

¹⁰ Ernst Troeltsch, *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches*, trans. Olive Wyon, vol. 1 (New York, NY: The Macmillan Company, 1931), 336.

¹¹ J. Milton Yinger, *Religion in the Struggle for Power a Study in the Sociology in Religion*. (New York, NY: Russell & Russell, 1961), 19.

¹² Bell, *Apocalypse How?*, 6–7.

¹³ Perez Zagorin cites Troeltsch once in *How the Idea of Religious Toleration Came to the West* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), n. 53, p. 326, but not about the distinction between sect and church; Alexandra Walsham refers to this distinction briefly in *Charitable Hatred*, n. 43, p.325. However, Troeltsch does undergird much of her book, especially in her discussions on sects.

have latent insubordinate intolerance. It is latent because, even as they are antagonistic towards the state, they may have no mechanisms to act upon that antagonism. In contrast, by entering the mainstream of society, the church-type recognises it must extend reciprocal toleration to a tolerant government, and often to other church-types. The church-type does not necessarily have to accept those institutions, but it must at least tolerate them. The Particulars found themselves having been recently established as a sect-type, even if a rather tolerant, ‘Semi-Separatist’ sect-type, to quote J.F. McGregor.¹⁴ Now they had been thrust into broad toleration, even acceptance by Cromwell, his government, his Church, and to some extent the nation. Many of the Particulars’ tensions around toleration in the Interregnum involved wrestling between their sectarian past and their new position as a church-type. Hence while there may certainly be value in examining Particulars using Troeltsch’s model in other periods, the Interregnum offers unique opportunities, because it was the only time they acted as a church-type, not a sect-type.

This chapter will argue the counter-intuitive point that, in many ways, it would have been far better for the Particulars to remain a sect-type, rather than embracing the trappings of a church-type. Walsham has correctly identified the serious dangers a religious minority faced when embracing a sectarian, isolationist identity: doing so often meant they were unable to engender sympathy from the wider populace, or encourage mercy from antagonistic authorities.¹⁵ Certainly, this was frequently the case, but the Interregnum Particulars offer an important qualification to this point. Most Particulars emphatically embraced the role of a church-type, enjoying magisterial influence throughout most of Oliver Cromwell’s career, and even attempting to rule Ireland. They found themselves also drawn into the new national conglomerate Church, alongside the

¹⁴ J.F. McGregor, ‘The Baptists: Fount of All Heresy’, in *Radical Religion in the English Revolution*, ed. J.F. McGregor and B. Reay (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 27.

¹⁵ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 142–43, 210–11.

Independents and Presbyterians, though the Particulars ultimately came to be perceived as intolerant and unmanageable by those denominations. As a young, absolutist movement, Particulars proved incapable of performing the tasks of a church-type effectively, which meant possessing such a status became counter-productive. It created deep resentment towards Particulars among many in the Interregnum Church, state, and nation. Indeed, they would feel the repercussions of this era throughout later decades.

This chapter discusses these various dynamics. Section 1 begins by outlining the key demographics of the Particulars during the 1650s to provide overall context. It then looks at how the Particulars becoming a church-type affected their relationship with the Cromwellian state, especially Oliver and Henry, and eventually proved highly problematic. The last two sections examine the Particulars' inter-denominational policy. Section 2 begins by examining their approach, as articulated by one of their ministers, Christopher Blackwood. He described their model as 'Unity of Charity', and the rest of this section explores how this was implemented in their congregations and associations. Section 3 examines their relationship with the other major church-types: the Independents and Presbyterians. It shows how they either failed to live up to their ideal of unity of charity, or it proved simply incomprehensible to those around them. Examples include their attitude to tithes and clerical stipends, key mechanisms of the established Church of which they were now members.

1. THE PARTICULARS AND THE CROMWELLIAN STATE

While some Particulars did remain sectarian, the trappings of becoming a church-type, of entering the English mainstream, proved irresistible to many. They were accepted by Cromwell into key facets of English government throughout the 1650s. Yet as time wore on, that relationship deteriorated, though this section shows this was not because they

reverted to their sectarian roots. Indeed, it reveals the full extent of the Particulars' political ambition in Ireland, where some of them sought to dominate Henry Cromwell's government. This has several significant implications for the scholarship. For example, it again shows the complexities behind Creppell's statement about whether minorities had the power to tolerate.¹⁶ As they shifted from being a sect-type to a church-type, Particulars had to deliberate whether they should tolerate Cromwell and his sons. The interplay between the Particulars and the Cromwells would become increasingly antagonistic and mutually intolerant.

From the outset, it is important to establish the core demographics of the Particulars. The size of the group during the Interregnum cannot be estimated exactly, but certainly their influence outweighed their numbers. J.F. McGregor made a 'generous estimate' of 25,000 Baptists in Britain by 1660, or half a per cent of the population.¹⁷ Andrew Bradstock agrees, estimating about 300 congregations existed across Britain by that time.¹⁸ About sixty-five per cent were Particular congregations, with the rest comprised of General and Seventh-Day Baptists, a later sabbatarian offshoot. Most Particular churches were in England, but Ireland and Wales had several congregations as well.¹⁹ Mark Bell describes the 1650s as 'the breakout moment for the English Baptists'.²⁰ They expanded rapidly, from about forty congregations in the late 1640s, to 170 congregations in 1655, to Bradstock's estimate of 300 only five years' later.²¹ This

¹⁶ Ingrid Creppell, *Toleration and Identity: Foundations in Early Modern Thought* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2003), 5.

¹⁷ McGregor, 'The Baptists', 33.

¹⁸ Andrew Bradstock, *Radical Religion in Cromwell's England: A Concise History from the English Civil War to the End of the Commonwealth* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2010), xv.

¹⁹ Roger Hayden, *English Baptist History and Heritage*, 2nd ed. (Didcot: Baptist Union of Great Britain, 2005), 74.

²⁰ Mark Bell, 'Freedom to Form: The Development of Baptist Movements during the English Revolution', in *Religion in Revolutionary England*, ed. Christopher Durston and Judith D. Maltby (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), 182.

²¹ William Brackney, *The Baptists* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1994), 9; Bradstock, *Radical Religion in Cromwell's England*, xv.

growth caused concern in some circles. In December 1654 the Venetian ambassador to England wrote:

The Anabaptists are more numerous and increasing daily. The majority of the army consists of them, so it is no wonder if their demands are excessive. It seems probable that the disorders originally introduced by the Puritans may one day be exceeded by the Anabaptists, to the yet greater confusion of this nation.²²

An alarmist tract from 1655 also warned Cromwell that the Baptists had ‘filled your Towns, your Cities, your Provinces, your Islands, your Castles, your Navies, your Tents, your Armies ... your Court ... your very Council.’²³ Whether or not these sources accurately reflect the Baptists’ influence by this point is difficult to determine. Nonetheless, they do reveal the fear that the Baptists’ growth could engender.²⁴ They also show that Oliver Cromwell was intrinsically connected to their influence.

1.1. The Particulars and Oliver Cromwell

This sub-section begins by establishing Cromwell’s toleration policy, especially towards the Particulars. It reveals that this went beyond toleration, and into acceptance, with Cromwell allowing them considerable political influence, including in the Army, Parliament, and among the Major-Generals. Over time, however, this relationship became increasingly strained, as the Particulars grew evermore critical of his adjusting policies.

²² ‘Venice: December 1654,’ in *Calendar of State Papers Relating to English Affairs in the Archives of Venice*, vol. 29 : 1653-1654 (London: His Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1929), 292.

²³ Anon., *A Short Discovery of His Highness the Lord Protector’s Intentions Touching the Anabaptists in the Army* (London, 1655), 2.

²⁴ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 26.

I uphold the longstanding view that Oliver Cromwell was the prime agent of magisterial toleration during the Interregnum. Historians have long recognised that he wrestled with tensions around toleration, similar to those within the Particulars. Worden describes the extent of religious freedom that Cromwell provided Britain as ‘incontestably revolutionary’, yet Cromwell’s exact views on toleration remain unclear.²⁵ Coffey states that, ‘in many ways, Cromwell embodies the Puritan Revolution’s paradoxical combination of bigotry and tolerance.’²⁶ On one hand, Murphy suggests Cromwell had a ‘relatively narrow definition of Protestant orthodoxy’.²⁷ Yet other scholars, such as Ann Hughes, argue Cromwell had ‘a generous definition of religious orthodoxy’, and showed a ‘flexibility’ and ‘willingness to enter discussions with those who disagreed with him (and with each other)’.²⁸ In his analysis of Cromwell’s seemingly contradictory toleration policy, Smith helpfully suggests that, ‘instead of trying to resolve these contradictions, it seems wiser for historians to live with them and not to invest Cromwell’s beliefs with greater coherence and consistency than he did himself.’²⁹ Like the Particulars themselves, Cromwell’s toleration policy was thus highly nuanced, as this section further reveals.

That the Particulars were tolerated by Cromwell and his government is evident in much of the literature – at times this extended into outright acceptance.³⁰ He consistently identified only three legitimate church-types: Presbyterians, Independents,

²⁵ Worden, *God’s Instruments*, 74.

²⁶ Coffey, ‘The Toleration Controversy’, 147.

²⁷ Murphy, *Conscience and Community*, 117.

²⁸ Ann Hughes, *Gangraena and the Struggle for the English Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 102–3.

²⁹ David L. Smith, ed., ‘Introduction’, in *Cromwell and the Interregnum: The Essential Readings* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2003), 6.

³⁰ The relationship between Cromwell and the General Baptists is more ambiguous. While Generals were certainly tolerated alongside other religious minorities during the Interregnum, Particulars were far more likely to have taken major roles in government, such as Parliaments or Councils, given ongoing wider prejudice against Arminianism.

and Particulars.³¹ Indeed, such was his high regard for the Particulars, on several occasions their antagonists attempted to undermine that relationship. For example, the Dutch diplomat Heinrich Oldenburg wrote to Cromwell in February 1654, falsely accusing him of planning to expel ‘anabaptists’ from the army.³² Some eighteen months later, the apocalyptic group, the Fifth Monarchists, published Oldenburg’s letter, in their attempts to divide the Particulars and the Protector.³³ Even so, both the letter and the pamphlet conceded Cromwell had seemed to so ‘love the Anabaptists’ during the Civil War, ‘that you did not onely invite them into the Army, but entertain them into your Family’.³⁴ This reflected his position at this point. Cromwell did not tolerate the Particulars as an unavoidable blight upon the nation, but accepted them as a blessing, giving them unprecedented legitimacy and influence. In March 1654, the Venetian Ambassador to England wrote that the Baptist ‘sect has certainly increased since his [Cromwell’s] elevation.’³⁵ In 1656, Thurloe wrote that under Cromwell, Baptists ‘have equall justice, respect, and protection with others, which wee judge their due, whilst they continue in the same peaceable behaviour and carriage with other Christians.’³⁶ Indeed, the extent of their influence, over the nation’s Army, Parliament, and other governmental positions during this Interregnum was unprecedented, and considerable.

The Particulars were accepted by Cromwell in part because of their prominence in the Army.³⁷ Cromwell’s government called on Particular officers like Captain Jerome Sankey to recruit ministers, and even asked some like Captain Samuel Wade to preach.

³¹ Bernard S. Capp, *England’s Culture Wars: Puritan Reformation and Its Enemies in the Interregnum, 1649-1660* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 112.

³² ‘Queries for his highness to answer to his own conscience, Feb 1655’, in Thomas Birch, ed., *A Collection of the State Papers of John Thurloe*, vol. 3, December 1654-August 1655 (London, 1742), <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/thurloe-papers/vol3>.

³³ Anon., *A Short Discovery*.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 2.

³⁵ ‘Venice: February 1654,’ in *Venetian State Papers*, 29 : 1653-1654:179.

³⁶ ‘Secretary Thurloe to H. Cromwell, major general of the army in Ireland, 15 Apr. 1656’, in Birch, *Thurloe Vol. 4*.

³⁷ Diane Purkiss, *The English Civil War: A People’s History* (London: Harper Press, 2006), 420; Murphy, *Conscience and Community*, 77.

When Cromwell appointed the army's Major-Generals to help him reform the counties in 1655, he included several Particulars, like William Packer and Robert Lilburne, the brother of the Leveller John Lilburne.³⁸ Although the Major-Generals' rule was short-lived, Cromwell nonetheless initially bestowed considerable power upon them.³⁹ Indeed, they were so powerful, that later in 1659 Packer repudiated his time as Major-General in a speech to Parliament, feeling it had compromised his commitment to civil liberty.⁴⁰

Particulars could also be found in government positions throughout the Commonwealth, including as Members of Parliament. A 1655 pamphlet claimed that 'the Anabaptist-Spirit and Principle' had dominated the 1653 Nominated Assembly, despite only five of its MPs actually being Particulars.⁴¹ Indeed, it became widely known as 'Barebone's Parliament' after the MP Praise-God Barebone, who was also an open-communion Particular minister.⁴² Another Particular MP in Barebone's Parliament was Henry Lawrence.⁴³ Lawrence was also President of the Protectorate Council, and is described by Timothy Venning as 'a serious theologian' who also 'bore much of the weight of day-to-day business under the protectorate'.⁴⁴ Barebone and Lawrence were later representatives in the first Protectorate Parliament of 1654, as well.⁴⁵ The Particulars John Hewson, Sankey and Packer were members of the second Protectorate Parliament of 1656, as was Kiffen – though not without controversy. Thurloe described how upon Kiffen's election to the seat of Middlesex, 'It is certeyne that Mr. Kiffin ...

³⁸ Christopher Durston, *Cromwell's Major Generals: Godly Government during the English Revolution* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), 51.

³⁹ Anthony Fletcher, 'Oliver Cromwell and the Localities: The Problem of Consent', in *Cromwell and the Interregnum: The Essential Readings*, ed. David L Smith (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2003), 123.

⁴⁰ Durston, *Cromwell's Major Generals*, 50.

⁴¹ Anon., *The Protector; (so Called,) in Part Unveiled* (London, 1655), 80.

⁴² Austin Woolrych, *Commonwealth to Protectorate* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), 224.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 423.

⁴⁴ Timothy Venning, 'Lawrence, Henry Appointed Lord Lawrence Under the Protectorate (1600-1664)', ed. H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison, *O.D.N.B.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/24269>.

⁴⁵ Anon., *A Catalogue of the Names of the Members of the Last Parliament* (London: A.M., 1654).

with all his company had beene cut in pieces, if the souldiers had not beene at hand to rescue them; the country people fell upon them pel mel, cryeing out, Noe Anabaptist: very many were wounded.⁴⁶ How much such antagonism was indicative of ordinary intolerance of Particulars during this period is difficult to deduce. Nevertheless, that these Particulars were allowed to sit as MPs, despite such public protestations, shows an unparalleled level of magisterial acceptance, and their own embracing of legitimacy as a church-type. Crawford Gribben has also identified twelve Particular governors, forty-three military officers, including ten colonels, and twenty-three civil list officers.⁴⁷ Islington had a Baptist magistrate.⁴⁸ In 1656, Cromwell also appointed ‘Commissioners for securing the peace of the commonwealth’ in each district, and Kiffen was one of those selected for London. This was primarily because of his business acumen, but also because of his long-standing support for Cromwell’s government.⁴⁹

The relationship between the Particulars and the Cromwellian government deteriorated over the course of 1650s, from mutual acceptance to suspicion, and even antagonism. This section now examines several major points of tension that emerged between the Particulars and Cromwell. The first was the Particulars’ close connections to the radical apocalyptic group, the Fifth Monarchy. This contributed to their general disappointment with his abandoning the Nominated Assembly for a Parliamentary model, with him as Lord Protector. The relationship deteriorated further during Cromwell’s deliberations over whether to accept the crown, before reaching an ‘acute crisis’ late in his rule. Overall, despite such concerns among some Particulars, their

⁴⁶ ‘Secretary Thurloe to H. Cromwell: 26 Aug. 1656’ in Thomas Birch, ed., *A Collection of the State Papers of John Thurloe*, vol. 5, May 1656-January 1657 (London, 1742), <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/thurloe-papers/vol5>.

⁴⁷ Crawford Gribben, *God’s Irishmen: Theological Debates in Cromwellian Ireland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 84.

⁴⁸ Capp, *England’s Culture Wars*, 166.

⁴⁹ ‘August 1648: Ordinance to associate the Counties of Carnarvon, Merioneth, Denbigh, Montgomery, and Flint, in N. Wales.’ in Charles Harding Firth and Robert S. Rait, *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum 1642-1660* (London, 1911), <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/acts-ordinances-interregnum>.

leaders encouraged subordinate toleration to Cromwell, arguing it was the best way for them to continue participating in government. Even when they eventually did not support him, they did not retreat back into sectarianism, but retained a commitment to engage in politics. Therefore, though their attitude to Cromwell himself could fluctuate, they remained firm supporters of the Interregnum state, because they believed it represented their best chance at magisterial acceptance and influence. Subordinate toleration was not merely about the individual magistrate: even if they could not tolerate Cromwell, they would tolerate the Commonwealth itself.

The sense that relations between the Particulars and Cromwell broke down can be exaggerated. Even in the more sectarian rural associations, the Particulars generally recognised Cromwell as God's chosen instrument, alongside other government agencies.⁵⁰ The 1655 Somerset Particulars' *Confession* stated, 'that the ministry of civil justice ... is an ordinance of God, and that it is the duty of the saints to be subject thereunto, not only for fear but for conscience' sake.'⁵¹ The Midlands Particular Association insisted that all their congregants 'must readily endeavor to obey all their [governors] lawful and just commands and this with reverence and singleness of heart.'⁵² God had endorsed the 'present powers', so even 'if the magistrate shall now give forth unto us unlawfull commands', that Association insisted, 'wee ought rather to suffer patiently for our just refusing to yeald in active obedience to them then to rise up in rebellion against the magistrate.'⁵³ These are quintessential examples of subordinate toleration, consistent with Yinger's more 'accepting' sectarianism.

⁵⁰ McGregor, 'The Baptists', 41.

⁵¹ 'Somerset Confession', in Edward Bean Underhill, *Confessions of Faith and Other Public Documents Illustrative of the History of the Baptist Churches of England in the 17th Century* (London: Hanserd Knollys Society, 1854), 104.

⁵² White, *B.A.R.*, 1:29.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 1:30.

Eschatology was another dynamic in the move from sect-type to church-type among the Particulars, and directly impacted upon their relationship with the Cromwellian state.⁵⁴ Eschatological emphases are more common in sect-types, since a group that is ostracised and demeaned will be naturally attracted to a future hope, where they will be vindicated and embraced – something Christian eschatology affords them. This hope is then used to validate their intolerance of established societal institutions, be they political or ecclesiastical. In contrast, a church-type, comfortably tolerated, will be less attracted to leave this world for the next. I recognise that a rigid connection between sectarianism and apocalypticism is untenable, but extreme millenarians did come into conflict with many Particulars during this period. Worden explains, ‘the Baptists [were] always torn between the attractions of a respectable political conformism which would secure them toleration, and the claims of political radicalism which aligned some of them with Fifth Monarchists’.⁵⁵ The prime example of apocalypticism in the Interregnum was indeed Fifth Monarchism, Niebuhr’s ‘stormy petrels of revolution’.⁵⁶ Fifth Monarchism was based on a pericope from Daniel 2, in which the Lord dismantles four kingdoms, with the fourth kingdom’s demise being the harbinger of God’s Kingdom on earth – hence ‘Fifth Monarchy’. Fifth Monarchists identified Charles I with the fourth kingdom, surmising his defeat pointed to Christ’s imminent arrival.⁵⁷

While there were some Presbyterians among their ranks, most Fifth Monarchists were Baptists, making it also an issue of internal denominational toleration, at least in part.⁵⁸ In his definitive work on the group, Capp underplayed the Baptist influence upon

⁵⁴ Bell, *Apocalypse How?*

⁵⁵ Blair Worden, ‘Toleration and the Cromwellian Protectorate’, *Studies in Church History* 21 (1984): 221–22.

⁵⁶ Niebuhr, *Social Sources*, 51–52.

⁵⁷ Isabel Yeamans, *The Year of Wonders: Or, the Glorious Rising of the Fifth Monarch* (London, 1652); William Aspinwall fl, *A Brief Description of the Fifth Monarchy or Kingdome That Shortly Is to Come into the World* (London: M. Simmons, 1653); Bernard S. Capp, *The Fifth Monarchy Men: A Study in Seventeenth-Century English Millenarianism* (London: Faber, 1972).

⁵⁸ Capp, *Fifth Monarchy Men*, 181; Bell, ‘Freedom to Form’, 164.

the Fifth Monarchists, arguing they ‘are not easy to classify in religious terms.’⁵⁹ However, I concur with Bell that this is a ‘somewhat questionable’ aspect of Capp’s work.⁶⁰ Nearly all the Fifth Monarchist communities, and their leaders, were Baptists of some kind or had been heavily influenced by them.⁶¹ Henry Jessey himself had used the term ‘Fifth Monarchy’ in his apocalyptic writings in 1647: writings that would be highly influential on the movement, as even Capp recognises.⁶² Commonly, Particulars were deeply eschatological, which resonated with the Fifth Monarchists’ rhetoric.⁶³ For example, the Western Association wrote to the Irish Particulars in 1655 that both of them were united in waiting for ‘the revelation of Jesus Christ, when we shall be no more at a distance, but shall ever be together with all the saints and with the Lord.’⁶⁴ Yet leaders like Kiffen and John Spilsbury were also among the most vehement critics of the Fifth Monarchists.⁶⁵ Even where leaders like Jessey shared the Fifth Monarchists’ eschatology, they grew increasingly alarmed by the group as the 1650s wore on.⁶⁶

Much of this alarm was because of the Fifth Monarchists’ increasing antagonism towards Cromwell, and the Particular leaders themselves. As long as the Fifth Monarchists felt Cromwell’s actions prepared for Christ’s imminent arrival, he had their fervent approval.⁶⁷ They supported Cromwell’s Nominated Assembly, for example, but when he dissolved it and became Lord Protector, they feared he was potentially delaying Christ’s return.⁶⁸ One prominent Fifth Monarchist, Vavasor Powell, prayed publicly, ‘Lord, wilt Thou have Oliver Cromwell or Jesus Christ to reign over us?’⁶⁹ In

⁵⁹ Capp, *Fifth Monarchy Men*, 172.

⁶⁰ Bell, *Apocalypse How?*, 166, fn. 4.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 168–70, 172.

⁶² Capp, *Fifth Monarchy Men*, 22.

⁶³ White, *B.A.R.*, 2:65.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 2:72.

⁶⁵ Bradstock, *Radical Religion in Cromwell’s England*, 22–23.

⁶⁶ Bell, *Apocalypse How?*, 65.

⁶⁷ Bradstock, *Radical Religion in Cromwell’s England*, 121.

⁶⁸ Woolrych, *Commonwealth to Protectorate*, 209; Bell, ‘Freedom to Form’, 196; Capp, *Fifth Monarchy Men*, 75; Bradstock, *Radical Religion in Cromwell’s England*, 121.

⁶⁹ Bradstock, *Radical Religion in Cromwell’s England*, 124.

late 1653, several prominent Fifth Monarchists attended a meeting at the All Hallows Particular congregation, a church led by the millenarian John Simpson. Powell and his fellow Fifth Monarchist, Christopher Feake, spoke for nearly five hours, heavily criticising the Protectorate, and the Particular leaders who supported it.⁷⁰ Jessey, Kiffen and even Simpson eventually arose to denounce the speech, leading many there to accuse Kiffen of being ‘a courtier’ and Simpson ‘an apostate’.⁷¹

After that meeting, the Fifth Monarchists began fervently attacking Particular leaders for their collusion with Cromwell’s government. In 1654, they published a declaration with 150 signatures, including several Baptists.⁷² In it they described Particular leaders as their ‘Adversaries’, and accused the government of having promised ‘*Freedom, Peace and Light, and behold Darkness, Oppression, and Distraction.*’⁷³ In a 1655 tract, they attacked ‘Mr. Kiffin, and severall members of the Baptized Churches’, accusing them of seeking ‘riches and honour’, while other Particulars more ‘faithfull to their light’ were being ‘persecuted and imprisoned’.⁷⁴ The Fifth Monarchists’ apocalypticism made them highly sectarian, which in turn led them into insubordinate intolerance of Cromwell, and then inter-denominational intolerance of any Particulars who supported him.

Particular ministers quickly responded to Fifth Monarchist attacks, ultimately revealing those leaders’ commitment to the Particulars’ newfound status within the establishment. In 1654, the London leadership wrote a letter, first sent to the Irish Particulars and then distributed across the country.⁷⁵ In it, they insisted that, ‘the principles held forth by those meeting ... under pretence of the fifth monarchy ... would

⁷⁰ ‘A relation of some passages at the meeting at Alhallowes, on monday, Jan. 5, 1656/7’ in Birch, *Thurloe Vol 5*.

⁷¹ ‘Alhallowes, Jan. 5, 1656/7’ in *ibid.*

⁷² Anon., *A Declaration of Several of the Churches of Christ* (London, 1654), 21–23.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 2, 3.

⁷⁴ Anon., *The Protector; (so Called,) in Part Unvailed*, 85.

⁷⁵ Woolrych, *Commonwealth to Protectorate*, 349.

have brought as great dishonour to the name of God and shame and contempt to the whole nation'.⁷⁶ That same year, Samuel Richardson challenged the Fifth Monarchists' anti-Cromwellian stance, saying, 'it is best for this whole Nation ... to thanke God that things are no worse than they are; indeed I look upon this Government in which we enjoy liberty in matters of Religion, to be a blessed Government.'⁷⁷ From then on, Fifth Monarchist influence within Particular congregations, and the nation, rapidly waned.⁷⁸ The Fifth Monarchists' attempts to incite rebellion had driven the Particular leadership to the exact opposite, a stronger subordinate toleration.⁷⁹ In much the same way as with the Levellers in Chapter 1, the Particulars resisted any group that jeopardised a positive relationship with a tolerant government. Yet the fiery protestations of the Fifth Monarchists, and their prominence within the Particulars, created an ongoing stigmatisation in wider society, further confirming the common identification of Baptists with 'Munsterite' apocalyptic anarchism.

Even so, Cromwell's sweeping political changes from 1653 onward deeply concerned many Particulars, irrespective of the Fifth Monarchists – though ultimately their ministers again managed to soothe most of those concerns.⁸⁰ Cromwell's abandonment of a nominated parliamentary model and return to a more democratic model disappointed many Particulars. Many also criticised his becoming Lord Protector, a position reminiscent of the monarchy they had recently overthrown.⁸¹ Spies from Wales even reported rumours that 'the anabaptists will fight it out, before they will submit to the protector, or present government'.⁸² In March 1655, Thurloe wrote of 'a

⁷⁶ 'Kiffen et al to Ireland', in Underhill, *Confessions of Faith*, 324.

⁷⁷ Samuel Richardson, *An Apology for the Present Government, and Governour* (London, 1654), 15.

⁷⁸ Bell, *Apocalypse How?*, 191.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 181.

⁸⁰ McGregor, 'The Baptists', 53.

⁸¹ Bell, *Apocalypse How?*, 153.

⁸² 'An intercepted letter of Mr. J. Phillipps to Mr. John Gunter, 15 Feb. 1654', in Thomas Birch, ed., *A Collection of the State Papers of John Thurloe*, vol. 2, 1654 (London, 1742), <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/thurloe-papers/vol2>.

meetinge of many of the Anabaptist churches in severall parts of the nation ... with a full intention to have engaged the churches in blood'. Fortunately, 'some grave and sober men of their owne judgment in matters of religion were sent to meet them, where matters were soe handled' that those inciting rebellion 'are now looked upon as men of wrathfull spirits and savouringe the thinges of satan and of this world'.⁸³

As Thurloe's letter suggests, this discontent did not escalate into outright rebellion, thanks largely to the Particulars' leadership. These leaders insisted that loyalty to the prevailing government was their best hope for ongoing acceptance of the Particulars as a denomination.⁸⁴ After all, the same *Instrument of Government* that had made Cromwell Lord Protector also included Article 37, which gave liberty of conscience to each religious minority, so long 'as they abuse not this liberty to the civil injury of others and to the actual disturbance of the public peace'.⁸⁵ Kiffen and other leaders ensured Particulars across the nation understood the significance of this article. A few months after Cromwell became Lord Protector, northern English Particular churches wrote a letter of loyalty 'towards your highness, whom God hath eminently raised (as a wise, valiant, faithful, Joshua) (Judg. v. 9), to protect us in these halcyon days of peace, plenty, and liberty.'⁸⁶ They added that they were 'happy in that excellent instrument, the saints' civil Magna Charta', the *Instrument of Government*, 'wherein such blessed provision is made for the tender lambs of the Lord Jesus'.⁸⁷ This indicates that the Particular leaders' loyalty to Cromwell here, was more driven by the kind of nation he was helping to create: one they felt perpetuated not only 'peace, plenty', but

⁸³ 'Secretary Thurloe to H. Cromwell, major general of the army in Ireland, 18 Mar. 1655', in Birch, *Thurloe Vol. 4*.

⁸⁴ Bell, *Apocalypse How?*, 153–54.

⁸⁵ William Cobbett, ed., *The Parliamentary History of England: 1066-1803* (London: Hansard & Bagshaw, 1808), vol. 3.1425.

⁸⁶ 'Address from the Baptized Churches in Northumberland, &c., to the Lord Protector', in Underhill, *Confessions of Faith*, 332.

⁸⁷ 'Letter from Northumberland', in *ibid.*, 333.

also ‘liberty’, for them, as well as anybody else. As long as he remained an effective mechanism in doing so, he retained their support.

Another point of tension came in 1657 when Cromwell was offered the crown, something most Particulars vehemently opposed.⁸⁸ Even London Particular ministers wrote to Cromwell, saying, ‘we conceive it necessarily incumbent on us from the Lord (especially considering the encouragements some of us have received from you...) to address ourselves unto you in this sad and unexpected juncture of affairs’.⁸⁹ The mention of ‘encouragements’ suggests they still had a positive relationship with Cromwell. Still, they conveyed ‘our deep resentment’ at ‘the fearful apostacy’ of Cromwell seeking ‘to re-edify that old structure of government, which God by you and them had signally borne testimony against and destroyed’.⁹⁰ This letter was signed by nineteen ministers, including Knollys, Spilsbery, and Jessey.⁹¹ A notable exception was Kiffen – as Bell points out, ‘This letter is the only major Baptist document from the period that does not bear Kiffin’s signature.’⁹² Given that he was an MP in the very Parliament offering Cromwell the crown, he may well have felt a conflict of interest. At any rate, Cromwell rejected the crown, to most Particulars’ relief. Furthermore, there is no direct evidence of any Particulars withdrawing into a deeper sectarianism because of this or any other conflicts. Particulars who had embraced the mainstream sought to resolve these issues from inside it, not return to the outside. Again, this indicates that a religious minority can become intolerant of a specific magistrate, without becoming intolerant of the central magisterial mechanisms of the state. Indeed, central to their concern about Cromwell potentially taking the crown, was that it would damage the

⁸⁸ Worden, *God’s Instruments*, 85.

⁸⁹ ‘Address of the Anabaptist Ministers in London, to the Lord Protector’ (3 Apr. 1657), in Underhill, *Confessions of Faith*, 335.

⁹⁰ ‘Anabaptist Ministers to the Lord Protector’, in *ibid.*, 336.

⁹¹ ‘Anabaptist Ministers to the Lord Protector’, in *ibid.*, 338.

⁹² Bell, *Apocalypse How?*, 191.

structure of the new government, returning to a model defined by ideals they despised, including Conformity.

These Particulars' aversion to sectarian isolationism remained, even when the relationship between Cromwell and the Particulars dissolved. By February 1658, the situation had reached an 'acute crisis', according to David Underdown, with several Particulars signing a petition that called for a government restructure.⁹³ Feeling betrayed, Cromwell dismissed Packer and five other captains who were 'all Anabaptists'.⁹⁴ When the petition was subsequently published, the petitioners complained of the 'great deale of dirt' they had endured for signing it, including accusations of sedition and treason.⁹⁵ The reasons for this crisis are extremely complex and beyond the scope of this section, but in terms of what it indicates about the Particulars' subordinate toleration, it again highlights their distinction between loyalty to the magistrate, and protecting the state itself. While the officers dismissed were apparently all Particulars, those signing the petition were not: it included many Presbyterians and Independents, none of whom ever showed any desire to become sectarian. Indeed, the petition was an example of all three denominations collaborating for the sake of governmental reform – and it was reform of the government that the petitioners sought, not its dissolution. They were merely defending the 'generall, fundamentall and absolutely necessary Rights and Liberties, anciently contended for by Parliaments, and granted by several kings, expressed in the Magna Carta'.⁹⁶ They felt Cromwell was not upholding these magisterial responsibilities, when Parliaments were

⁹³ David Underdown, 'Cromwell and the Officers, February 1658', *English Historical Review* LXXXIII (1968): 101.

⁹⁴ 'Secretary Thurloe to Lockhart, ambassador in France, 11/21 Feb. 1658', in Thomas Birch, ed., *A Collection of the State Papers of John Thurloe*, vol. 6, January 1657-March 1658 (London, 1742), <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/thurloe-papers/vol6>.

⁹⁵ E. H., *A True Copy of a Petition Signed by Very Many Peaceable and Well-Affected People, Inhabiting in and About the City of London, and Intended to Have Been Delivered to the Late Parliament* (London, 1657), 2.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 5.

‘so frequently garbled, interrupted and Dissolved’, people were imprisoned without due cause, and officers like Packer were being unfairly dismissed.⁹⁷ Therefore, the Particulars did not want to retreat from a role in government, they wanted to join others in rectifying it. This section has shown how their commitment to the Commonwealth remained, even as their affinity with Oliver Cromwell deteriorated over time. Their relationship with his son, Henry, was even more volatile.

1.2. The Irish Particulars and Henry Cromwell

Far from desiring to return to the sectarian shadows, this sub-section reveals the full extent of the Particulars’ political ambition during the Interregnum. In Ireland, Oliver Cromwell’s son, Henry, discovered that they had every intention of dominating the government. Sent by his father to Ireland, he soon became engaged in a fiery power battle with Particulars. The Irish Particulars’ behaviour there indicates, yet again, that they had no problem distinguishing between showing insubordinate intolerance to a magistrate, and supporting the state itself. It also gives a brief glimpse into the inter-denominational tensions that will be discussed in the last section of this chapter. Overall, the situation in Ireland could be perceived as a warning to the English, of the true intolerance in the hearts of the Baptists.

The Particulars had gained significant influence in Ireland once Oliver Cromwell left the Irish campaign in 1650, having been rewarded for their part in the army’s conquest there. Oliver had also appointed Charles Fleetwood as Ireland’s Parliamentary Commissioner in 1652, and rumours began flowing to London that Fleetwood was currying the favour of the Irish Particulars. Rumours surfaced that Particular officers were trying to undermine the Protectorate, in hopes of taking over Ireland themselves.⁹⁸

⁹⁷ Ibid., 6.

⁹⁸ ‘Introduction’, in Henry Cromwell, *The Correspondence of Henry Cromwell, 1655-1659*, ed. Peter Gaunt (London: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 13–14.

At that point, Oliver sent Henry to Dublin to investigate. Until then, Henry had enjoyed an amicable relationship with several Particulars, including Thomas Patient, who had recalled pleasant pastoral conversations ‘betwixt him and I’ in 1650.⁹⁹ That was about to change – Crawford Gribben describes how, by 1653 ‘the specter of Anabaptist terror was haunting revolutionary Dublin.’¹⁰⁰ Henry soon found himself in a bitter power struggle with the Particulars there.

Henry wrote to Thurloe in March 1653 that the Particulars were ‘endeavouring to render the government as unacceptable as possibly they could’.¹⁰¹ Henry’s letter leads to the question, what did Henry mean when he accused Particulars of trying to make ‘the government ... unacceptable’? It does not seem that they wanted to destroy the Interregnum government as such – rather, they desired to control it in Ireland. Particular agitators included Colonel Daniel Axtell, described by Bell as ‘a constant concern’ for Henry.¹⁰² Another was Colonel Matthew Alured, with one officer informing Henry that Alured ‘manifested noe little discontent at the present government,’ and ‘rendered himselfe incapable of the trust reposed in him’.¹⁰³ Moreover, the Particulars were more than willing to work with members of the government, as long as they still supported Particular interests. Henry discovered that they ‘had sufficient encouragement from those in cheife place heer,’ especially Fleetwood.¹⁰⁴ In a separate letter, this time encrypted, Henry warned that Fleetwood ‘is a little too deeply ingaged in a partial affection to the persons of the anabaptists ... though I doe believe it rather to proceed from tendernes then love to their principles.’¹⁰⁵

⁹⁹ ‘Patient to Oliver Cromwell’, in Underhill, *Confessions of Faith*, 313–14.

¹⁰⁰ Gribben, *God’s Irishmen*, 74.

¹⁰¹ ‘H. Cromwell to secretary Thurloe. Dublin, this 8 Martii, 1653’ in Birch, *Thurloe Vol. 2*.

¹⁰² Bell, ‘Freedom to Form’, 149.

¹⁰³ ‘A letter of Thomas Sandford: 24 May, 1654’, in Birch, *Thurloe Vol. 2*.

¹⁰⁴ ‘H. Cromwell to secretary Thurloe. Dublin, this 8 Martii, 1653’ in *ibid*.

¹⁰⁵ “Deciphered letter of Henry Cromwell to secretary Thurloe: 8 Mar. 1653”, in *ibid*.

Meanwhile, Particulars within the Irish Church resented Henry's inter-denominational 'tenderness', since they were working to undermine other denominations, as will be discussed in Section 3.¹⁰⁶ In part, then, Henry was attempting to subdue the Particulars' excesses, in order to establish a liberty of conscience which, surprisingly, he felt they themselves were suppressing.¹⁰⁷ Henry also told Thurloe that he hoped the Irish Particulars might be settled by 'a letter very lately come to their handes from Mr. Kiffin and Spilsebury, in which they have dealt verry homely and plainly'.¹⁰⁸ In that letter, the London ministers described 'those general rumours which are in the mouths of many' of 'a spirit of great dissatisfaction and opposition against this present authority' among the Irish Particulars, and 'we hear it is your resolution to make a public protest against it'. The London leaders warned them that 'the report of which is indeed no small occasion of trouble to us', further undermining the Particulars' denominational legitimacy in the capital. Instead, London's leaders gave 'exhortations to be subject to all civil powers, they being of God.'¹⁰⁹ They warned 'if any trouble should arise, either with you or us ... would not it all be imputed and charged upon the baptized churches?'¹¹⁰ There is little evidence, however, that the Irish Particulars accepted this rebuke, as things only became worse. Again, multiple dimensions of toleration are at play here: the inter-denominational and insubordinate intolerance that the Irish Particulars conveyed to those around them, risked the magisterial intolerance of all their Brethren; this in turn brought about denominational conflict between the Irish and London Particular churches.

The situation deteriorated in part thanks to Oliver Cromwell, who sought to rectify the Irish problem in a way that proved totally unmanageable. Despite Henry's

¹⁰⁶ Gribben, *God's Irishmen*, 213, fn. 64.

¹⁰⁷ 'Introduction', in Cromwell, *Correspondence of Henry Cromwell*, 20.

¹⁰⁸ 'H. Cromwell to Thurloe, 8 Martii, 1653' in Birch, *Thurloe Vol. 2*.

¹⁰⁹ 'Letter from Mr. Kiffen and Others, to the People of Ireland', in Underhill, *Confessions of Faith*, 323.

¹¹⁰ 'Kiffen et al to Ireland', in *ibid.*, 325.

damaging report, Oliver promoted Fleetwood to Lord Deputy of Ireland in August 1654, then immediately recalled him to England. He made Henry the Major-General of Ireland in 1655. In so doing, Oliver had given Henry the mammoth task of overcoming a power struggle, without giving him a strong enough mandate to do so.¹¹¹ In a meeting in January 1655, Henry told several Particular army officers that, ‘liberty and countenance they might expect from me, but to rule me, or to rule with me, I should not approve of’. He added, ‘I doe not thinke that God has given them [the Particulars] a spiritt of government; neither is it safe they should have much power in their handes.’¹¹² Yet whenever Henry tried to suppress the Particular’s excesses, they would complain to Fleetwood, who would subsequently overturn Henry’s decisions.¹¹³

The tide began to turn in early 1656, when Henry wrote the letter to his father quoted at the beginning of this chapter, questioning the Particulars’ political loyalty and religious ‘tenderness’.¹¹⁴ After that, Oliver finally gave Henry the authority to bring the Particulars under control. Their ministers were made to submit or lose their stipends, which proved successful. By October 1656, Henry reported having ‘bin more courted by the Anabaptists, then formerly’, with Particular ministers like Thomas Patient having expressed to him ‘their satisfaction with my management of thinges here, and that their people had as much liberty as they could desire’.¹¹⁵ When Oliver was offered the crown, the Irish Particular churches joined others in publicly discouraging him from accepting it, but added, ‘we do assure your highness, that whatsoever report you have heard of either the church baptized ... in Ireland ... we shall, through grace, live and die with

¹¹¹ Toby Christopher Barnard, *Cromwellian Ireland: English Government and Reform in Ireland 1649-1660* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 20.

¹¹² ‘H. Cromwell to secretary Thurloe. Dublin, Jan. 18, 1655’ in Birch, *Thurloe Vol. 4*.

¹¹³ ‘Introduction’, in Cromwell, *Correspondence of Henry Cromwell*, 16.

¹¹⁴ ‘H. Cromwell, major general of the army in Ireland, to secretary Thurloe, 26 Dec. 1655’, in Birch, *Thurloe Vol. 4*.

¹¹⁵ ‘H. Cromwell Lord deputy of Ireland to secretary Thurloe: Oct. 22, 1656’, in Thomas Birch, ed., *A Collection of the State Papers of John Thurloe*, vol. 1, 1638–1653 (London, 1742), <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/thurloe-papers/vol1>.

your highness.’¹¹⁶ The letter was signed by 119 Particulars, including their two main ministers, Thomas Patient and Christopher Blackwood.¹¹⁷

Henry also began replacing Particulars with non-Baptists in key government positions, especially in the army, but not without resentment by Particular officers.¹¹⁸ In late November 1656, four Particular senior officers, including Axtell, met with Henry to offer their resignations, ‘findeinge themselves of late not to have bin made use of’. In that meeting, they began ‘belching forth their discontents’ to him. Yet despite ‘all the venom they spitt against me’, Henry joined ‘a generall rejoyceing in those, that are godly, sober, and well-affected, that these gentlemen have thus quitted their employments’.¹¹⁹ Notwithstanding this surrender by the Particulars, Henry insisted it was only because he had ‘thwarted and checkt that exorbitant power, which they formerly exercised’, and remained certain that, if given the chance to rule, they would certainly have taken it. Moreover, in his eyes, had they taken power, they would have proved themselves magisterially intolerant, despite all their previous pretensions of supporting religious liberty.¹²⁰ This case study suggests that the Irish Particulars, at the very least, were attempting to become magistrates. This was not welcomed by Henry Cromwell, or based on his reports, the population in Ireland.

By the time Oliver Cromwell’s health declined, both he and Henry had become utterly intolerable to many of the Particulars, and some did indeed become actively seditious. When Oliver became seriously ill in 1658, Captain Langley wrote to Thurloe warning of, ‘fresh desires in the Anabaptists to begine a new propagation’, and finished

¹¹⁶ ‘The Baptized Christians in Dublin’, in Underhill, *Confessions of Faith*, 340–41.

¹¹⁷ “The Baptized Christians in Dublin”, in *ibid.*, 341–42.

¹¹⁸ Richard L. Greaves, *God’s Other Children: Protestant Nonconformists and the Emergence of Denominational Churches in Ireland, 1660-1700* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997), 12.

¹¹⁹ ‘H. Cromwell, major general of the army in Ireland, to secretary Thurloe, 3 Dec. 1656’, in Birch, *Thurloe Vol 5*.

¹²⁰ ‘H. Cromwell, major general of the army in Ireland, to secretary Thurloe, 17 Dec. 1656’, in *ibid.*

his letter by warning, ‘it is evident to mee they are lifted up with sum dark hopes, that if, &c. which God divert!’¹²¹ Langley wrote this from Leith Hill, a rural area, and thus this may have been isolated to regional Particulars, already prone to sectarianism. Nonetheless, when Richard Cromwell became Lord Protector, London Particulars like Kiffen, Packer, and Sankey joined Presbyterians and Independents in orchestrating his downfall.¹²² Again, the very fact Particulars were collaborating with those two other denominations at this point, would suggest they hoped to maintain the Protectorate state – it was merely Richard as Protector that they rejected, precisely because they felt he placed the state in jeopardy. But it also meant that they became intrinsically identified with the breakdown of the Protectorate.

As this section has shown, many Particulars, especially in London and Ireland, embraced the status of a church-type within Cromwell’s government, and the mainstream of society more broadly. At first, they were not merely tolerated, they were accepted, and in turn showed subordinate acceptance of that society. Even as their relationship with the Cromwells cooled, they remained committed to participating in the underlying mechanisms of the Interregnum government. The Interregnum Particulars reveal how subordinate toleration of a magistrate is not necessarily tied to allegiance to the state itself. Indeed, it was precisely because they felt the state, and their position in it, had become jeopardised by the magistracy, that motivated the Particulars’ intolerance of it. This overcame previous gratitude, affinity, and any claims of divine toleration of Cromwell or his family. This ultimately contributed to the destabilisation that led to the Commonwealth disintegrating. Another central facet in this was their relationship with other churches, as the next two sections explore.

¹²¹ ‘Captain Langley to secretary Thurloe, 4 Sep. 1658’, in Thomas Birch, ed., *A Collection of the State Papers of John Thurloe*, vol. 7, March 1658-May 1660 (London, 1742), <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/thurloe-papers/vol7>.

¹²² Aidan Clarke, *Prelude to Restoration in Ireland: The End of the Commonwealth, 1659-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 58.

2. PARTICULAR ‘UNITY OF CHARITY’ INTERNALLY

This section discusses the Particulars’ internal frameworks during the Interregnum, in terms of denominational toleration. It examines aspects of their denominational toleration throughout this decade, particularly in light of Troeltsch’s distinction between the sect-type and church-type. Specifically, it examines the five ‘Unities’, the reasons for toleration, as articulated by Christopher Blackwood. I then discuss how his preferred model, unity of charity, played out at a denominational and congregational level among the Particulars. Unity was indeed a high priority for the Particulars, and mechanisms such as their associations facilitated that. However, they did not use their associations to enforce uniformity, but instead tolerated a surprising amount of diversity and autonomy between their congregations. Congregational discipline, such as excommunication, could potentially have been used as another mechanism for enforcing a more formalised uniformity, at the expense of toleration. Yet despite continuing to be an expression of intolerance, the Particulars generally discouraged using excommunication to enforce doctrinal uniformity. Rather, it was utilised to maintain practical holiness, and with the hope of reconciliation.

The most extensive attempt to articulate the Particulars’ approach to inter-denominational and denominational toleration was in Christopher Blackwood’s *Four Treatises*, written in 1653. Written by a relatively minor figure when compared with the likes of Owen or Milton, this treatise has received no historical attention. Yet Blackwood was a noted preacher, described by Thomas Harrison in 1655 as ‘the Oracle of the Anabaptists in Ireland’.¹²³ Moreover, this work is invaluable for understanding key facets of inter-denominational toleration during the seventeenth century. Asking how the national Church could have unity amidst its theological diversity, Blackwood

¹²³ ‘Mr. Tho. Harrison to secretary Thurloe, 17 Oct. 1655’, in Birch, *Thurloe Vol. 4*.

admitted that a solution seemed impossible: ‘these contentions we have are about Religion, conscience and duty to God, wherein we cannot give way.’¹²⁴ Ultimately, then, Blackwood saw only five options for unifying the national Church: unity by ‘Authority’, ‘Verity’, ‘Perswasion’, ‘Necessity’, or ‘Charity’. To those advocating for ‘the unity of Authority ... the Magistrate compelling all to such a practice’, Blackwood asked, ‘whether the Remedy will not be worse than the disease?’, as it would only make ‘Gods people’ begin ‘conforming themselves against their own light’, destroying liberty of conscience.¹²⁵ Another option was ‘Unity of Verity’, or truth, where ‘many learned Divines’ had determined ‘things exactly’. Blackwood dismissed this, on the basis of perspective: ‘the variety of sight’, had led people to have ‘judged and despised one another’, assuming ‘no truth of grace in the contrary party’. Moreover, ‘Ignorance’ and ‘distempered passions’ destroy truth’s ability to bring unity, especially once people move away from the general ideals they agree upon, and begin ‘proceeding too far to particulars.’¹²⁶ Others suggested a unity of ‘Perswasion’, of encouraging mutual dialogue to share each other’s arguments. While this showed some potential, Blackwood argued most people would retain their already-existing convictions anyway, even if proven wrong.¹²⁷ Blackwood also criticised a ‘Unity of *necessity*’, where ‘the danger of a general enemy is like to unite us’:

Its true, a forraign enemy is a reconciler of brethren, and
common danger holds them together as long as it lasts: But
1 This unity of necessity may perhaps be only so long as this
necessity lasts; for when one side hath no need of the other, such

¹²⁴ Christopher Blackwood, *Four Treatises: The First Setting Forth the Excellency of Christ; The Second Containing a Preparation for Death; The Third Concerning Our Love to Christ; The Fourth Concerning Our Love to Our Neighbour* (London: T.M., 1653), 84.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 86.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 86–87.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 87.

unities use to cease. 2 The unity of necessity is only *pro re nata*, not the union of their spirits; for though against a common enemy they are united, yet still in other things they are disunited.¹²⁸

Writing less than five years after the Civil War had ended, few could miss the implications of this statement. The Interregnum government had been born out of just this situation, but now that ‘the danger of a general enemy’ had passed, Blackwood doubted whether the nation could remain united, ecclesiastically or even politically. Yet this kind of unity proved over the coming decades to be remarkably attractive for Nonconformist groups, just as it had during the 1640s. Blackwood’s analysis will be regularly returned to when examining later attempts at dissenting collaboration.

For Blackwood, the only solution left was a ‘Unity of Charity, either side to bear with the judgement of other in all due Christian moderation; either side then to abate what they can’.¹²⁹ His terms ‘to bear’, and ‘to abate’ are expressions of inter-denominational toleration, of having to endure other denominations. Specifically, Blackwood’s ‘Unity of Charity’ envisaged different denominations existing throughout Britain without any central authority ‘from above’. ‘From below’, in congregations, they would also not be forced to meet together, instead respecting each other’s right to worship independently. Tangible expressions of unity were limited to ‘duties of love and kindness, as sending of gifts to one another’, and ‘mutual counselling, mutual lending, mutual helping’. This could include the various groups engaging in brief ‘mutual visitings’ and ‘mutual entertainment in a way of hospitalitie’, but permanently joining in worship together was not encouraged.¹³⁰ Thus Blackwood’s ideal model for inter-

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 87–88.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 89.

denominational toleration upheld a general national unity, with some collaboration amidst diversity, alongside the autonomy of each congregation. Indeed, Blackwood seems to have been advocating for the Particulars' own associational system to be applied upon the national Church in its entirety.

Unity of Charity can be seen in the structures that closed-communion Particulars put in place during the Interregnum, forming several associations. These were occasional conventions, where congregational delegates met for advice and support.¹³¹ To be represented at an association, a congregation had to have at least twelve members.¹³² The Welsh Association first met on 6 November 1650 with delegates from four congregations.¹³³ By 1656, the Western Association included nearly twenty churches spread across towns like Lyme Regis in Dorset, Bridgewater, Taunton, Chard, and Wells in Somerset, and Bristol's Pithay congregation.¹³⁴ The Abingdon Association had at least twelve churches, in places like Abingdon, Reading and Oxford.¹³⁵ In Ireland, there were about ten Particular churches, in Dublin, Kilkenny, Waterford, Galway, and elsewhere.¹³⁶ While there are no records of an Irish Association as such, Particulars there were engaged in 'a more revived correspondency with each other by letters and loveing epistles.'¹³⁷

This associational structure reveals many facets of denominational toleration within the Particular movement, and are indicative of Blackwood's unity of charity, especially in their emphases on unity and autonomy. Theologically, the Particulars portrayed their congregations as collectively the unified body of Christ. The Abingdon

¹³¹ Bell, *Apocalypse How?*, 137.

¹³² White, *B.A.R.*, 1:33.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 1:4.

¹³⁴ 'The Confession of the Faith of Several Churches of Christ in the County of Somerset, and of some Churches in the Counties neer adjacent' (1656), in Underhill, *Confessions of Faith*, 73; White, *B.A.R.*, 2:75.

¹³⁵ White, *B.A.R.*, 3:127, 139–40, 145.

¹³⁶ Gribben, *God's Irishmen*, 84.

¹³⁷ White, *B.A.R.*, 2:113.

Association insisted that, ‘particular members make up one particular church under the same head, Christ ... in his body ther is to be no schism.’¹³⁸ The Western Association in 1655 wrote to the Irish Particulars of their having ‘the same faith and in the same visible profession and worship, being baptized into one body by one and the same Spirit’.¹³⁹ R.J. Acheson suggests the Particulars’ goal in this period was to ‘impose uniformity’ of doctrine and practice, but this overstates the case.¹⁴⁰ The Particular association did pursue unity, but consistently in combination with congregational autonomy and equality.¹⁴¹ Even London Particulars were largely treated as one-among-equals, despite London’s wider financial and geographic importance. For example, Bell describes the Somerset Particular minister, Thomas Collier (d. 1691), as ‘the leading force in the Western Association’, but also attests that Collier ‘did not follow the London line’.¹⁴² Gribben also argues that the Irish Particulars ‘were not merely derivative’ of England, and that their influence extended throughout the entire denomination.¹⁴³ The Irish Particulars, for example, wrote a letter to their London counterparts in 1653, signed by over thirty ministers, including Thomas Patient, William Kiffen’s former pastoral apprentice.¹⁴⁴ Kiffen described how in the letter, ‘our brethren of Ireland’ had challenged the London Particulars ‘to awake to righteousness, to remember our first love, to rend our hearts and not our garments and to turne to the Lord with our whole hearts’.¹⁴⁵ Far from resenting this rebuke, London’s Particulars honoured their Irish Brethren’s request to send the letter to Particular churches all across Britain.¹⁴⁶

¹³⁸ Ibid., 3:126.

¹³⁹ Ibid., 2:72.

¹⁴⁰ R.J. Acheson, *Radical Puritans in England, 1550-1660* (Oxford: Routledge, 2013), 59.

¹⁴¹ Bell, ‘Freedom to Form’, 183.

¹⁴² Bell, *Apocalypse How?*, 138, 139.

¹⁴³ Gribben, *God’s Irishmen*, 86.

¹⁴⁴ White, *B.A.R.*, 2:118.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 2:111.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 2:112, 115.

This emphasis on unity alongside autonomy inevitably had several implications for the Particulars' denominational toleration, at several levels: within congregations, associations, and the denomination as a whole. Sometimes Particulars were denominationally intolerant, via discipline and excommunication. Acheson suggests the Particulars were 'coming to terms with the unwelcome fact that the "formalising" of dissent brought with it the same problems about the exercise of discipline that had plagued episcopal Church government'.¹⁴⁷ Such an analysis is certainly attractive for this chapter, given the process of 'formalising' seems congruent with the migration from sect-type to church-type. Yet Acheson's assertion seems unlikely for several reasons. Firstly, most of the extant examples of such discipline are from rural congregations and associations, which generally maintained a more informal sectarian impulse. Secondly, Acheson exaggerates how much the Particulars sought to establish 'uniformity'. In fact, the Particular associations regularly encouraged toleration of diversity of religious practice between congregations. For example, the Western Association in 1653 discussed whether all new believers had to partake in the ritual of 'laying on of hands', with some congregations considering it a necessary rite. Acheson specifically refers to this example in his discussion of the Particulars' 'uniformity'.¹⁴⁸ Yet the Western Association decided the ritual 'is no ground of the breach of communion' among the churches, thus facilitating toleration between differing congregations on that issue.¹⁴⁹ During the 1650s, the Particulars did not abandon the principles of denominational toleration they had established in the 1640s: unity amidst some diversity, facilitated by congregational autonomy.

Unity of Charity was encouraged to a degree on a congregational level as well.

The Abingdon Association debated in 1656, 'whether those that do not agree' with a

¹⁴⁷ Acheson, *Radical Puritans*, 59.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁹ White, *B.A.R.*, 2:54, 70–71.

congregation's theological position should be treated like 'disorderly persons'. They decided that, 'If the things whereto they doe not agree be doubtfull or questionable and, if ... they do not dissent out of frowardness but conscientiously, they ought not then to be looked upon as disorderly.'¹⁵⁰ This was effectively liberty of conscience within a congregational context. In 1657, a congregation asked the Western Association how to treat 'an offending member' who was 'still professing conscience in the matter they differ about'. The Association suggested the congregant be shown 'forbearance', a word associated with enduring annoyance or provocation.¹⁵¹ Claims that there was a pursuit of rigid uniformity within the Particulars at this time seem to be exaggerated. Moreover, this shows their commitment to unity amidst some diversity, facilitated by respecting autonomy, also could occur in a congregational context as well: congregants who held varying views were expected to tolerate each other, so long as a congregant's attitude did not encourage discord among the group.

Even where discipline was utilised by Interregnum Particulars, the goal was not so much to impose uniformity, but rather holiness, and ultimately reconciliation. It is true that, in 1654, the Abingdon Association decided that anybody deemed to 'professedly hold an error directly contrary to any fundamentall doctrine of the Gospell' was a 'heretike' and would be excommunicated. They feared 'such a one, if not rejected would corrupt many with his leaven of damnable heresie'.¹⁵² They also made clear that the same standards of toleration, or intolerance, were to be applied at every level of the denomination, saying, 'in respect of union in Christ there is a like relation betwixt the particular churches each towards other, as there is betwixt particular members of one church.'¹⁵³ Consequently, anybody excommunicated by one

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 3:164.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 2:68.

¹⁵² Ibid., 3:133.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 3:128.

congregation, was excommunicated from the rest of that congregation's association as well.¹⁵⁴ Having said that, the Western Association insisted that even the most 'gross offender' could only be excommunicated after 'admonition' first, 'except in the want of opportunity'.¹⁵⁵ This suggests that many such persons chose to leave the Particulars, expressing their own autonomy, albeit in intolerance of their congregation.

Furthermore, as stated by the Western Association, 'if the evil be repented of', the congregant should not be excommunicated at all, 'repentance being the end of all church dealings and censures.'¹⁵⁶ For example, Oliver Dicks, from the open-communion Particulars in Bedford, stole a sheep in January 1657, and sold its fleece for about four to eight shillings. When his theft was discovered, the authorities forced Dicks to return the sheep, and give the owner twenty shillings in compensation. The Bedford congregation deemed his actions had been 'to the great dishonour of God, the wounding of his own soule, and great scandall to the Church of Christ of which he is a member', and excommunicated him.¹⁵⁷ Almost six months later, Dicks asked the congregation if he could return. They sent two members to interview Dicks, and once they decided that he was 'sensible of his sin and hath also made restitution and given satisfaction to the person offended', he was restored to the congregation.¹⁵⁸ This suggests that excommunication was primarily performed with the hope of the person returning to the fold. Certainly, the Particulars' commitment to holiness remained, but reconciliation was the ultimate desire, because it reestablished congregational unity.

Unity of charity was clearly a strategy for toleration within the Interregnum Particular denomination. Their development of an associational structure and processes

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 3:130.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 2:54-55.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 2:55.

¹⁵⁷ H.G. Tibbutt, ed., *The Minutes of the First Independent Church (Now Bunyan Meeting) at Bedford 1656-1766*, vol. 55, The Publications of the Bedfordshire Historical Record Society (Bedford: Bedfordshire Historical Record Society, 1976), 25.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., 55:27-29.

of discipline could have been used to impose uniform beliefs, but their emphasis upon congregational autonomy alongside unity suggests outright uniformity was not their focus. Instead, the Particulars pursued a more complex goal, of mutually tolerating some doctrinal diversity, amidst maintaining some consistency throughout the movement. Even excommunications were motivated by the hope of reconciliation, of restoring unity. Having identified how this model took place inside the Particulars, the last section examines whether they could foster a similar approach elsewhere. The results were less successful, ultimately stigmatising the Baptists as resolutely intolerant.

3. THE PARTICULARS IN THE NATIONAL CHURCH

Michael Watts notes that during the 1650s, ‘for the first and last time in English history an official attempt was made to accommodate Independents and Baptists within the established church.’¹⁵⁹ That this occurred was truly remarkable – the Particulars had existed for barely a decade, and were committed to beliefs far beyond the pale of mainstream Nonconformity, as the previous chapter discussed. That this was the last time, however, is not surprising at all. Some degree of conflict between Particulars and the other accepted denominations was inevitable. This section begins by showing why that was the case, from the outset of the Cromwellian experiment. Nonetheless, the Particulars made a serious attempt to be part of the national Church, both in England and Ireland, as I will discuss. Indeed, Ireland gave Blackwood the chance to apply his unity of charity, but this proved disastrous. More broadly, Particulars came to resist other major expressions of national Church, such as tithes and pastoral stipends. Instead, they advocated each church paying their minister, an expression of their commitment to congregational autonomy. Finally, this section examines how and why Particulars

¹⁵⁹ Watts, *The Dissenters*, 152.

advocated for the autonomy of more extreme religious groups, such as the Quakers and Socinians – though this also proved counter-productive.

Ecclesiastically, toleration was distinctly challenging for those closed-communion Particulars who embraced Cromwell's ecclesiastical experiment. After all, Independents and Presbyterians either resented the Particulars' recent ascent, or pursued forms of collaboration that compromised key facets of Particular identity, such as believer's baptism. Other Particulars did not have to wrestle with such perplexities. Open-communion Particulars like Barebone and Jessey could comfortably worship alongside paedo-baptist Presbyterians and Independents. Equally, sectarian closed-communion Particulars, such as many in the rural associations, simply ignored other denominations entirely, making 'baptism be absolutely necessary to an orderly church communion'.¹⁶⁰ For closed-communion Particulars in the national Church, such as Kiffen in London, or Patient and Blackwood in Ireland, compromising on believer's baptism was unthinkable. Patient wrote in 1654, 'such as are not inlightned in the Lords baptism cannot be admitted into Church-fellowship; because in one and the same Fellowship, there is ... *one* and the same *Baptism*.'¹⁶¹ He also described paedo-baptism as 'so heinous a sin', and believer's baptism as 'so solemn a duty'.¹⁶² Even if a minister was 'able to preach the doctrine of Faith', if he was still 'destitute of the true knowledge of the doctrine of Baptists', he was 'not a justifiable Minister'.¹⁶³ Patient wrote this even while he was one of five ministers at Christ Church, Dublin, four of whom were not 'justifiable' by his criteria.

Certainly, inter-denominational intolerance was not only a Particular problem in Cromwell's new Church: the last chapter discussed how, throughout the Civil War, the

¹⁶⁰ White, *B.A.R.*, 2:63-64.

¹⁶¹ Thomas Patient, *The Doctrine of Baptism* (London: Henry Hills, 1654), 170.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, 150.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 7.

Presbyterians had fought specifically to become the one Church of England, and had frequently criticised the ‘Anabaptists’. Now that Cromwell recognised Independents, Presbyterians and Particulars as legitimate, they each competed for Cromwell’s favour, much to his frustration.¹⁶⁴ At his 1655 Parliament, Presbyterian MPs attempted to undermine the *Instrument’s* Article 37 on religious toleration wherever possible.¹⁶⁵ The second Protectorate Parliament of 1656 proved even more divisive.¹⁶⁶ Cromwell complained that the MPs wasted ‘time, precious time, needlessly ... quibbling about words’. Presbyterians ‘despise him under baptism, and will revile him, and reproach, and provoke him’, while Particulars ‘shall be censuring the godly ministers of the nation’.¹⁶⁷

Despite this inter-denominational antagonism, many Particulars did not retreat into sectarianism again.¹⁶⁸ In 1652, the government established the Welsh Approvers scheme, which replaced 278 Welsh pastors with government-approved pastors, several of whom were Particulars.¹⁶⁹ The approval scheme was extended to England in 1654 via the Triers, who approved over 3,500 pastors by 1659.¹⁷⁰ Cromwell appointed several Particulars as Triers, including Henry Jessey and William Packer.¹⁷¹ Triers examined pastoral candidates by four criteria: ‘divine grace, holy conversation, knowledge of the Gospel, and capacity to preach it’, but not their view of believer’s baptism.¹⁷² Thus

¹⁶⁴ Capp, *England’s Culture Wars*, 112.

¹⁶⁵ Patrick Little and David L. Smith, *Parliaments and Politics during the Cromwellian Protectorate* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 205.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 60.

¹⁶⁷ ‘Guibon Goddard’s Journal: The Protector’s Speech at opening of Parliament (17th September 1656)’, in Thomas Burton, *Diary of Thomas Burton*, vol. 1 (London: Colburn, 1828), <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/burton-diaries/vol1>.

¹⁶⁸ Hayden, *English Baptist History and Heritage*, 68.

¹⁶⁹ White, *B.A.R.*, 1:14.

¹⁷⁰ Ann Hughes, ‘“The Public Profession of These Nations”: The National Church in Interregnum England’, in *Religion in Revolutionary England*, ed. Christopher Durston and Judith D. Maltby (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), 97.

¹⁷¹ Durston, *Cromwell’s Major Generals*, 50; Hughes, ‘The Public Profession of These Nations’, 99.

¹⁷² Worden, *God’s Instruments*, 126.

Particular Triers may well have approved non-Particular ministers to lead congregations.

Particulars became firmly established within the official Irish Church as well, especially Christopher Blackwood and Thomas Patient, as already noted.¹⁷³ According to Edward Warren, Patient was ‘lookt upon as the chief’ Particular in the ‘moist climate’ of Ireland.¹⁷⁴ He was a pastoral adviser to Particular officers like Axtell, Sankey, Richard Lawrence, and even to Oliver Cromwell himself. Just before Cromwell left Ireland in 1650, Patient wrote to him in a familiar, pastoral tone, advising him to ‘still keep a close watch over your own heart’.¹⁷⁵ Patient and other Particular leaders were also involved in the Civil Lists, a pastoral approval scheme in Ireland, much like the Triers in England.¹⁷⁶ They even wrote to their London counterparts in 1653, requesting more pastoral candidates, ‘for the peace and tranquility of the nation wherein wee live ... and for the rulers and magistrates the Lord hath sett over us’.¹⁷⁷ Indeed, so many Particular pastors joined Irish congregations that the Western Association wrote in 1655, ‘the large allowance by the state in Ireland hath drawn over many brethren to be preachers there.’¹⁷⁸

Blackwood represents a fine example of the distinction between theory and practice in toleration: the Interregnum meant his theories on inter-denominational toleration, on unity of charity, could be applied. How he and Patient applied it in the Irish Church clarifies what Blackwood meant by unity of charity. In reality, encouraging different denominations to worship together simply could not work for closed-

¹⁷³ Gribben, *God's Irishmen*, 87.

¹⁷⁴ ‘The Epistle’, in Edward Warren, *Caleb's Inheritance in Canaan by Grace, Not Works an Answer to a Book Entituled the Doctrine of Baptism, and Distinction of the Covenants, Lately Published by Tho. Patient* (London, 1656).

¹⁷⁵ ‘Patient to Oliver Cromwell’, in Underhill, *Confessions of Faith*, 312.

¹⁷⁶ Gribben, *God's Irishmen*, 113.

¹⁷⁷ White, *B.A.R.*, 2:115.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 2:73, 75.

communion Particulars like Blackwood and Patient. They were happy to collaborate with others in areas other than congregational worship: Patient worked with several ministers from other denominations on the Client List in 1652, for example.¹⁷⁹ But that same year, Patient adamantly criticised the open-communion approach of John Rogers, the senior minister at Christ Church in Dublin, demanding it become closed-communion instead.¹⁸⁰ Under Rogers, the congregation had attracted both Particulars and paedobaptists alike, and had grown in size significantly. When Patient replaced Rogers, Patient opposed anything other than explicitly Particular practice, including believer's baptism. Rogers was horrified, especially when his former congregants began leaving the church in droves.¹⁸¹ He wrote a scathing attack on Patient, and the Irish Particulars generally, saying:

Those blazing *Meteor-like Comets* (for I fear they are so in *Ireland*) those *unchristian*, rough, threatening *Anabaptists* (for I speak of them) that rather than lay aside their *form*, they will see all the *differing* Saints in the world *ruin'd*, and help to torment and persecute them themselves, and lay more *weight* upon their doubtfull *ordinance*, then they do upon the *undeniable*, an *absolute ordinance of love*.¹⁸²

In 1654, Patient wrote *The Doctrine of Baptism*, further attacking paedobaptism.¹⁸³ This book only added to the tension, given his position at Christ Church.¹⁸⁴ In 1656, the paedobaptist Edward Warren wrote a refutation of Patient's book, which criticised

¹⁷⁹ 'Dec. 16, 1652', in Robert Dunlop, *Ireland Under the Commonwealth: Being a Selection of Documents Relating to the Government of Ireland from 1651 to 1659*, vol. 2 (Manchester: The University Press, 1913), 304.

¹⁸⁰ Gribben, *God's Irishmen*, 89.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 59–60.

¹⁸² John Rogers, *Ohel or Beth-Shemesh a Tabernacle for the Sun, or, Irenicum Evangelicum* (London, 1653), 543.

¹⁸³ Patient, *The Doctrine of Baptism*.

¹⁸⁴ Gribben, *God's Irishmen*, 148.

Patient's lack of 'Charity', the exact word Blackwood had used when discussing toleration.¹⁸⁵ This lack of 'charity' meant that 'the manner of gathering is destroyed'.¹⁸⁶ Inter-denominational intolerance had directly led to congregational intolerance, and 'destroyed' that congregation.

Blackwood soon replaced Patient at Christ Church, which only exacerbated these problems. Several members of the Irish Church wrote to Thurloe in September 1655, after meeting Blackwood to discuss the Particulars' 'toll withdrawings from us in publique worship', because of 'our not observing the order of the apostles by baptisme.' Blackwood had demanded that at any shared service or lecture, the Particulars 'may speake last, that if any thing be spoken against God or Christ or the truth, they might have an opportunity to bear witness against it'. He also warned that the non-Baptists 'should not hinder godly men', that is, Particulars, 'from places of authority and power.'¹⁸⁷ By 1656, things had become so 'intensely fissiparous' according to Gribben, that the entire Irish nationalised Church was in jeopardy.¹⁸⁸ Samuel Winter, a paedo-baptist who now also shared the pulpit with Blackwood at Christ Church, publicly attacked his baptismal doctrine.¹⁸⁹ Blackwood and Patient responded by excommunicating anybody who even met with Winter.¹⁹⁰ The Particulars' inter-denominational intolerance was at great risk of breaking the Irish Church apart completely. This indicates that baptism itself remained the limiting factor in unity of charity for Particulars like Patient. Furthermore, the subtleties of Blackwood's unity of charity were entirely lost on Rogers and many others. Such experiences with individual

¹⁸⁵ Warren, *Caleb's Inheritance in Canaan*, 67.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 70.

¹⁸⁷ 'Mr. Tho. Harrison to secretary Thurloe, 17 Oct. 1655', in Birch, *Thurloe Vol. 4*.

¹⁸⁸ Gribben, *God's Irishmen*, xii.

¹⁸⁹ Samuel Winter, *The Summe of Diverse Sermons Preached in Dublin* (Dublin, IR: William Bladen, 1656).

¹⁹⁰ 'Mr. Tho. Harrison to secretary Thurloe, 17 Oct. 1655', in Birch, *Thurloe Vol. 4*.

Particulars left the impression that they were all too dogmatic, divisive, and ultimately destructive.

Furthermore, throughout these controversies, more sectarian Particulars still voiced uneasiness about the very concept of a national Church. This reached a flash point when debating tithes for nationally-licensed ministers.¹⁹¹ In 1655, the Wantage Particulars wrote to the Abingdon Association, suggesting that all must pay tithes out of obedience to the magistrate, a suggestion that Association firmly rejected.¹⁹² In 1657, the Western Association discussed how to respond to magistrates continuing to forcibly ‘tax’ people for national Church stipends. They insisted that any such tax was really a tithe by another name, and instructed congregants ‘to expose themselves to sufferings, by refusing utterly to pay through a real scruple in tenderness of conscience only towards God’.¹⁹³ Many regional associations disapproved because they considered ministers in the national Church entirely unacceptable, identifying any national Church with the Beast of Revelation 13.¹⁹⁴ The Abingdon Association condemned Particulars becoming Triers, describing the Triers as ‘a manifest part of the whore of Babilon’.¹⁹⁵ The Western Association considered it ‘unlawful’ to even hear a sermon from a ‘parochial national minister’.¹⁹⁶ It did not matter whether the national Church preacher ‘hath received a gift from the Lord’, engaged in ‘holy and grave conversation’, and denied ‘wholly the world’s waies’ – if he was not baptised, he was unacceptable.¹⁹⁷

The polarity between sect-type and church-type Particulars on the issue of tithes inevitably caused internal tension. After all, many had taken the path of Blackwood,

¹⁹¹ Bell, ‘Freedom to Form’, 185.

¹⁹² White, *B.A.R.*, 3:151, 153–54.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 2:69.

¹⁹⁴ Bell, *Apocalypse How?*, 30–31.

¹⁹⁵ White, *B.A.R.*, 3:154.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 2:61–62.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 2:67.

who was paid a stipend of £150 per annum as the preacher for Kilkenny, from 1653-55.¹⁹⁸ The Particular minister, Richard Harrison, happily accepted government pay and practised open membership, to the public consternation of his colleague Benjamin Coxe.¹⁹⁹ In 1655, the Western Association wrote to the Irish Particulars outraged ‘that the ministers of Christ’ there ‘should make use of the magistrate’s power for to get a coercive maintenance for them.’²⁰⁰ Unsurprisingly, this chastisement was ignored by the Irish.²⁰¹ The Western Association also condemned any of their leaders who had become ‘a minister to a parish, or lecturer, or chaplin’, since it would ‘put a tye and fetter upon the feet of the ministers of the Gospel’, forcing them to do ‘the will of men’, rather than ‘follow the Lord freely’.²⁰² They considered pastoral stipends to be ‘preaching for hire and selling of the gift of God for money’, a point Coxe also made in his criticism of Harrison’s pastorate.²⁰³ To their horror, the Western Association discovered in 1655 that several of their pastors were taking ‘a set maintenance from the magistrate for preaching’. Because they ‘will not reform’, the Association considered excommunicating them.²⁰⁴ The Midlands Association also warned that any Particular messenger (*vis.*, an evangelist) who received a stipend would be ‘seriously dealt with’, potentially with excommunication.²⁰⁵ Coxe even wanted Harrison to be excommunicated for accepting a stipend.²⁰⁶ Yet despite such strong intolerance of a national Church among sectarian Particulars, there is no evidence of them ever openly seeking to cut ties with church-type Particulars, or vice versa – despite grave misgivings

¹⁹⁸ Greaves, *God’s Other Children*, 25.

¹⁹⁹ ‘Benjamin Coxe to Richard Harrison on Ministerial Maintenance’ (March 1658), in White, *B.A.R.*, 1:43.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 2:74.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 2:76.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, 2:62.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, 2:63.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 2:64.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 1:31.

²⁰⁶ ‘Coxe to Harrison’, in *ibid.*, 1:43.

on either side, they maintained their affiliation, tolerating each other. Unity of charity held strong within the Particulars even on this issue.

Some Particulars had also sought to end tithes and stipends at the Barebone's Parliament, although they were ultimately unsuccessful.²⁰⁷ Barebone himself sat on the committee regarding tithing, seeking its end.²⁰⁸ Wider support still lingered for tithes, though, especially among the majority Presbyterians, and indeed with Cromwell himself. Cromwell dissolved the Nominated Assembly in large part to protect tithes, with a royalist spy writing that 'truly I believe if the house had sate a weeke longer, [tithing] law and the [paid] ministry had been voted down.'²⁰⁹ Many Particulars were extremely disappointed. Later in March 1656, William Bradford told Cromwell that 'the Anabaptists sayes you are a perfidious person, and that because you promised them att a certaine day to take away tythes, but did not perform with them.'²¹⁰ Cromwell's choice to side with Presbyterians rather than the Particulars in the tithing debates, directly contributed to the deterioration of his relationship with the Particulars discussed earlier.

Many Particulars also insisted God had a better way for ministers to be financially supported: by their own congregations. This again shows their commitment to the autonomy of each congregation. Sectarian Particulars had long advocated for ministers to only be paid by their congregants, who would hold them accountable for their performance.²¹¹ The Somerset *Confession* also insisted congregations had a 'duty ... to provide a comfortable subsistence for' their pastors, 'if they be able'.²¹² A remarkable shift in approach occurred in April 1657: the Abingdon Association, in collaboration with some London Particulars, proposed the establishment nationally of 'a

²⁰⁷ Woolrych, *Commonwealth to Protectorate*, 236.

²⁰⁸ Murphy, *Conscience and Community*, 80.

²⁰⁹ "James Corker, 1653/4", in Birch, *Thurloe Vol. 1*.

²¹⁰ 'Mr. William Bradford to the Lord Protector' (4 Mar. 1656), in John Nickolls, *Original Letters and Papers of State, Addressed to Oliver Cromwell* (London: William Bowyer, 1743), 141.

²¹¹ White, *B.A.R.*, 2:62.

²¹² 'Somerset Confession', in Underhill, *Confessions of Faith*, 96.

yearly allowance towards the maintenance of a Gospelle ministrie' run exclusively by the Particulars themselves, especially for those congregations that 'are not able to maintaine' their own ministers.²¹³ They had observed 'a great neglect' of ministers in some congregations 'hath brought some to pinching poverty' and 'run others upon desperate temptations'.²¹⁴ Wealthier churches were asked to give 'for the reliefe of those where the churches to whome they doe belong are not able to maintain them', by placing it in 'a joynt stock' managed by senior leaders.²¹⁵ This was a pastoral stipend in all but name. The only reason it was acceptable now was because it was exclusively run for and by Particulars. The prime motivation for opposing tithes and stipends among some Particulars was evidently their intolerance of a national Church.

The ideals of unity amidst diversity through respecting autonomy can also be seen in how the Particulars approached more unusual sects like the Socinians and Quakers during this period. Toleration historians have discussed these sects extensively, especially the Socinian John Biddle, but also the Quaker James Nayler, tried by Parliament for blasphemy in 1656. Yet the focus has primarily been upon the elite's response to them, whether it be Oliver Cromwell to Biddle, Presbyterian or Independent MPs to Nayler, and Owen to Socinians and Quakers generally.²¹⁶ Particulars were instrumental to how the nation responded to both Socinians and Quakers. Certainly,

²¹³ White, *B.A.R.*, 3:174.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 3:173.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 3:174.

²¹⁶ John Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration in Protestant England, 1558-1689* (Harlow: Longman, 2000), 148–50; John Coffey, 'The Toleration Controversy During the English Revolution', in *Religion in Revolutionary England*, ed. Christopher Durston and Judith D Maltby (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), 151–55; John Marshall, *John Locke, Toleration and Early Enlightenment Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 293, 296; Paul C.-H. Lim, 'Adiaphora, Ecclesiology and Reformation: John Owen's Theology of Religious Toleration in Context', in *Persecution and Pluralism: Calvinists and Religious Minorities in Early Modern Europe 1550-1700*, ed. Richard Bonney and David J. B. Trim (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2006), 250; Lim does briefly mention Baptists, once, in his larger work on early modern Socinianism, *Mystery Unveiled: The Crisis of the Trinity in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); Sarah Mortimer, *Reason and Religion in the English Revolution: The Challenge of Socinianism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 207–12 Mortimer's book is one of the major works on Socinianism in the English Revolution, yet never mentions the English Baptists at all, only ever referring to Continental Anabaptists from the sixteenth century.

Presbyterians frequently insisted that the rise of such sects should be heavily sanctioned, and ultimately eradicated.²¹⁷ For their part, however, Particulars tried to minimise such sanctions. This is not to say that Particulars did not come into conflict with such groups throughout this period. Indeed they engaged in vicious debates with the Quakers, since many from that sect had left Particular congregations, especially in Bristol.²¹⁸ Rather, their calls for leniency to sects were partly motivated – or at least justified – by their commitment to liberty of conscience, of respecting people’s religious autonomy.

Another significant factor, though, was probably the Particulars’ acute awareness that they themselves had been considered a ‘heretical’ sect by many, quite recently. Thus any threat to liberty of conscience for other religious minorities might quickly be applied to themselves. Indeed, the Socinian Biddle explicitly stated to Henry Lawrence, President of Cromwell’s Council and a Particular, that ‘my persecutors’ had earlier attacked ‘Mr. *Kiffin*’, and that ‘these blood-thirsty men ... will not stop there’ but would move against all non-Presbyterians, including Lawrence himself.²¹⁹ Consequently, Particulars publicly advocated leniency for both Biddle and Nayler. Furthermore, Particular MPs like William Packer and William Kiffen represented some of the most lenient responses to Nayler in the Parliamentary debates, helping to save him from execution.²²⁰ Larry Kreitzer has observed that Kiffen’s speech, and even Packer’s more elaborate appeal for leniency, have largely been ignored by scholars.²²¹ Nonetheless, John Coffey does briefly describe Packer’s speech as an ‘eloquent attack on persecution’.²²² Indeed, Packer offered some of the most sophisticated arguments in

²¹⁷ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 284.

²¹⁸ Catie Gill, *Women in the Seventeenth-Century Quaker Community: A Literary Study of Political Identities, 1650-1700* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 25; Capp, *England’s Culture Wars*, 112; Ted LeRoy Underwood, *Primitivism, Radicalism, and the Lamb’s War: The Baptist-Quaker Conflict in Seventeenth-Century England*, Oxford Studies in Historical Theology (Cary: Oxford University Press, 1997), 10.

²¹⁹ John Biddle, *Two Letters of Mr. Iohn Biddle* (London, 1655), 6.

²²⁰ Larry J. Kreitzer, ed., *William Kiffen and His World*, vol. 3 (Oxford: Regent’s Park College, 2013), 1.

²²¹ *Ibid.*, 3:9.

²²² Coffey, ‘The Toleration Controversy’, 154.

defense of Nayler. For example, he argued blasphemy did not justify execution, given that ‘few of us but are blasphemers in one sense’, since blasphemy is merely describing God inadequately. ‘But if so, we must destroy all sects, Socinians, Arminians, Quakers, and what not; nay, every man that speaks a lie. Few will escape this law.’²²³ Much more could be said about this topic. The most important point for this thesis, is what this reveals about the Particulars’ commitment to liberty of conscience, of respecting others’ autonomy. Any defence of Nayler within the broadly outraged second Parliament, ran great risk, not least that the Particulars themselves would be identified yet again with such extremists.

This section has examined the dynamics of toleration between the Particulars and the other two church-types during the Interregnum, including their attitude towards a national Church. It has highlighted again the notable distinction between the theory and practice of toleration: as seen in the writings and ministry of Blackwood in Ireland. Furthermore, the process of some Particulars entering the national Church led to dynamics of intolerance between them and their more sectarian brethren, as seen in the vehement disagreements around tithes and stipends. Particular MPs even found themselves acting contrary to the rest of the Parliament on issues of religious liberty. Blackwood’s aspirations of a unity of charity, of wider denominational collaboration alongside congregational autonomy, proved a bridge too far for all those involved in the Interregnum’s national Church. Instead, the Particulars were accused of intransigence and disunity. Such accusations would not soon go away.

CONCLUSION

By the end of the Interregnum, the Particulars had failed dismally in their dealings with both Church and state, as a church-type. This had resulted in them being identified with

²²³ “13 December 1656” in Burton, *Diary, Vol. 1*.

a tendency to try to seek political power themselves, and of implementing an unmanageable dogmatism ecclesiastically when they did. They had also shown a strong commitment to the ideals of the Commonwealth, such that they would reject a leader who did not uphold it. All this would have lasting repercussions. Their strong commitment to the Commonwealth's ideal of government meant that when it was abandoned, they were part of what was being rejected. Moreover, any ongoing assurances they made of subordinate toleration of the magistracy, or of a moderate and broad inter-denominational toleration, were often met with incredulity. This quickly became evident in the events after April 1660, and the Restoration of the English monarchy.

CHAPTER 3:

THE PARTICULAR BAPTISTS IN THE RESTORATION

The Anabaptists have particular commands from God in Scripture ... to fear God, and to honour the King: To be subject unto the higher Powers, acknowledging there is no Power but of God, and the Powers that be, are ordained by God ... to honour all men, to do good to all men ... If then both Judges and Magistrates ... concur with Anabaptists in all these Principles, may we say that Judges and Magistrates ... are all Anabaptists.¹

The Particulars wrote these words to Charles II in January 1660, emphatically expressing their loyalty to him, and any other ‘Magistrates’. They later published it as a pamphlet in 1661, to assure the wider public that they would ‘do good to all men’. Moreover, capitalised above this quote were the words, ‘OH THAT MEN WOULD DO AS THEY SAY, OR SAY AS THEY DO.’ The acceptance they had enjoyed in the Interregnum had suddenly dissipated, restoring them to being a Troeltschian sect-type. Moreover, they now carried the problematic reputation they had garnered under Cromwell. The Particulars realised that in this volatile new age, toleration of any kind had to be earned through action as well as words.

This chapter argues that while the Particulars did pursue magisterial toleration in the Restoration, they also avidly sought ordinary toleration from the wider populace. This populist approach proved more successful than their attempts to placate the magistracy. Furthermore, this approach was primarily driven by pragmatism, as they daily collaborated with those not of their flock. Particulars also provided distinct

¹ Anon., *The Character of an Anabaptist* (London, 1661).

ideological reasons for toleration. They continued to wrestle with how far to extend toleration to others: subordinate toleration to the magistracy, but also inter-denominational toleration to non-Particulars more broadly. Ultimately, it was in ordinary contexts, like the congregation and marketplace, that toleration was achieved first, preparing the ground for a lasting magisterial toleration at the Glorious Revolution.

This chapter primarily discusses the period from the restoration of the monarchy in 1660 until the end of the Cavalier Parliament in 1678. These eighteen years represent a distinct period in the history of English religious toleration. Jacqueline Rose suggests that, until recently, toleration historians have under-examined the broader Restoration period, focusing mainly on the monarchy's return from 1660-1662, the Exclusion Crisis of 1678-1682, and the Glorious Revolution of 1688-1689.² For example, in his 2001 work, *Conscience and Community*, Andrew Murphy wrote a chapter on the English Revolution, then moved straight to the Glorious Revolution in the next.³ Yet Murphy himself represents a scholarly shift, in his more recent 2016 book, *Liberty, Conscience and Toleration*, recognising historians' longstanding tendency to overlook the Restoration, distracted by its 'more bombastic predecessors'.⁴ He also identifies a growing appreciation for the Restoration period among toleration historians.⁵

Where toleration historians have examined the Restoration period, two paradoxical narratives have developed. One states that intolerance increased over the course of the Restoration. While Parliament remained intolerant throughout, Charles II began as a tolerant monarch from 1660, culminating in his 1672 Declaration of

² Jacqueline Rose, *Godly Kingship in Restoration England: The Politics of the Royal Supremacy, 1660-1688* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 13.

³ Andrew R. Murphy, *Conscience and Community: Revisiting Toleration and Religious Dissent in Early Modern England and America* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), chaps 3 & 4.

⁴ Andrew R. Murphy, *Liberty, Conscience, and Toleration: The Political Thought of William Penn* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 2.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 2–3.

Indulgence. Once Parliament quashed Charles' Indulgence in 1672, however, Charles himself began to move towards a more intolerant position. He became ambivalent to the Dissenters' plight after 1673, and even antagonistic towards them in the early 1680s.⁶ This approach sometimes portrays the Glorious Revolution as unexpected, or surprising. As discussed in my Introduction, however, some scholars also identify a decrease in intolerance across the Restoration, ultimately culminating in the Glorious Revolution.⁷ John Coffey even suggests that persecution significantly abated from 1666, once the Restoration government became secure.⁸ He argues that 'England was gradually becoming a more open society.'⁹ One of the most frequently-cited examples of this shift is John Locke, who in 1660 wrote against toleration in his *Two Tracts on Government*, but who supported it nearly thirty years later in his *A Letter on Toleration*.¹⁰

This chapter seeks to resolve this tension within the historiography, by instead examining these narratives as two 'streams' of toleration that simultaneously developed across different strata of society: the magisterial stream, comprised of the king, Parliament, and most Anglican clergy; and the ordinary stream, involving everyday relationships. The magisterial stream became increasingly intolerant, whereas the ordinary stream moved towards toleration.¹¹ Thus, toleration became, as Alexandra Walsham argues, 'a complex continuum that could flow in both directions.'¹² Certainly, too sharp a polarity between a vindictive magistracy and a tolerant-yet-impotent populace should be avoided. I recognise there were expressions of popular intolerance

⁶ Mark Goldie, 'The Theory of Religious Intolerance in Restoration England', in *From Persecution to Toleration: The Glorious Revolution and Religion in England*, ed. Ole Peter Grell, Jonathan I. Israel, and Nicholas Tyacke (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 331; John Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration in Protestant England, 1558-1689* (Harlow: Longman, 2000), 172.

⁷ Derek Hirst, 'Bodies and Interests: Toleration and the Political Imagination in the Later Seventeenth Century', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 70, no. 3 (2007): 401.

⁸ Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration*, 171.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 180.

¹⁰ John Locke, *Two Tracts on Government* (London, 1660); John Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration Humbly Submitted* (London, 1689).

¹¹ Alexandra Walsham, *Charitable Hatred: Tolerance and Intolerance in England, 1500-1700* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), 6, 106.

¹² *Ibid.*, 231.

and magisterial magnanimity throughout this period.¹³ Nonetheless, this chapter will argue that the general trajectory towards toleration among the masses, alongside heavier prosecution by magistrates, holds true. Walsham argues that there was from 1500-1700 a ‘growing, if still trickling stream’ of toleration among England’s populace.¹⁴ This chapter argues this stream became accelerated during the Restoration period.

Understandably, the historiographical focus has often rested on the magisterial stream within the Restoration.¹⁵ For example, James Tully defines three phases in ‘the battle for toleration’ during the Restoration: ‘by royal prerogative 1667-73; by parliamentary legislation 1674-1681; and by revolution 1681-1683, 1685, and 1688-9.’¹⁶ The ‘royal’ and ‘parliamentary’ emphases here are indicative of many scholars. Murphy identifies that historians devote ‘relatively little attention to the broader contexts of tolerationist thought’, where Nonconformists interacted.¹⁷ Walsham has, of course, significantly contributed to redressing this imbalance, as have Bill Stevenson and several others.¹⁸ This is important, because a magisterial focus ignores how religious minorities themselves helped develop toleration among the populace. In turn, this can create confusion as to why the Glorious Revolution eventually occurred.

Moreover, while there has been extensive work on the theories of toleration posited during the Reformation, ordinary toleration was primarily driven by pragmatism: ordinary people lived and worked with Dissenters first, and then determined reasons why it was permissible. Theories did not motivate toleration, they justified it. I recognise that studying theoreticians, like Milton or Owen, has of course

¹³ Ibid., 107.

¹⁴ Ibid., 229.

¹⁵ Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration*, 167–71.

¹⁶ James Tully, *An Approach to Political Philosophy: Locke in Contexts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 52.

¹⁷ Murphy, *Liberty, Conscience, and Toleration*, 6.

¹⁸ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*; Bill Stevenson, ‘The Social and Economic Status of Post-Restoration Dissenters, 1660-1725’, in *The World of Rural Dissenters, 1520-1725*, ed. Margaret Spufford (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

been fruitful.¹⁹ The eminent example is Locke, who according to Rose was ‘the greatest thinker of the age.’²⁰ Yet how greatly his thinking changed over that age, from intolerance to toleration, baffles many historians. This leaves them to ask, as Ingrid Creppell does, whether Locke ‘simply ignored’ or ‘had forgotten or dismissed’ his earlier concerns about toleration when he came to support it in 1689.²¹ The solution, I propose, is to frame Locke’s theory within his practice. When in 1689 he revealed how much his position had changed, he wrote:

What I say concerning the mutual toleration of private persons differing from one another in religion, I understand also of particular churches which stand, as it were, in the same relation to each other as private persons among themselves: nor has any one of them any manner of jurisdiction over any other; no, not even when the civil magistrate (as it sometimes happens) comes to be of this or the other communion.²²

Note Locke here identifies three contexts for toleration: the ‘private’, ‘churches’, and the ‘civil magistrate’. Creppell defines these contexts, with ‘private’ being everyday relationships, and ‘churches’ being denominations.²³ Moreover, she highlights Locke’s contention that private toleration was ‘well-established and respected’ by 1689. However, she immediately claims that, ‘though a fiction ideologically’, this contention ‘was presented by him as an accepted reality because he needed it for his reconstruction.

¹⁹ Hirst, ‘Bodies and Interests’, 409; Goldie, ‘The Theory of Religious Intolerance’, 332; Paul C.H. Lim, ‘Adiaphora, Ecclesiology and Reformation: John Owen’s Theology of Religious Toleration in Context’, in *Persecution and Pluralism: Calvinists and Religious Minorities in Early Modern Europe 1550-1700*, ed. Richard Bonney and David J.B. Trim (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2006).

²⁰ Rose, *Godly Kingship*, 11; Martin Sutherland, *Peace, Toleration and Decay: The Ecclesiology of Later Stuart Dissent*. (Carlisle: Wipf & Stock, 2007), 102, 115–17.

²¹ Ingrid Creppell, *Toleration and Identity: Foundations in Early Modern Thought* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2003), 110.

²² Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration Humbly Submitted*, 18.

²³ Creppell, *Toleration and Identity*, 111.

And what he was stating must have been in some sense plausible for his readers.’²⁴ It was entirely plausible, though, because it was not a fiction. It was indeed ‘an accepted reality’ among his readers, and indeed, for himself, as this chapter will reveal.²⁵ As Walsham states, ‘regular interaction’ between religious minorities and the wider populace ‘defused ... the mythical spectres’ of Dissent.²⁶ She argues that rural Baptists, for example, frequently involved themselves in the lives of their neighbours, including social gatherings and public service, citing an example from the Restoration period.²⁷ This chapter will provide further evidence for her argument.

Of course, Dissenters also provided reasons for toleration during this period, which were usually less theoretical than those discussed by intellectual historians. For example, Dissenters had long been accused of stubborn intolerance of others, but in the Restoration they flipped this accusation, portraying Conformity as inherently irrational, cruel, and implacable. This linked the national Church’s religious intolerance, so long portrayed as a virtue in society, with a series of vices, making it also sinful. In contrast, Dissenters portrayed themselves as tolerant, evidenced by their restraint, patience, kindness, and love. Portraying themselves as moderate or tolerant, sometimes posed significant challenges for the closed-communication Particulars, who struggled with inter-denominational toleration. This led to the major Particular debate of the period, around open and closed communion, which will also be discussed in this chapter.

I also engage here with historians’ discussions on magisterial toleration, examining the implications of Charles and the Parliament’s toleration policies upon Dissenters, and especially Particulars. After all, the magisterial stream inevitably had great influence over the ordinary stream. It was, however, not the only influence, and

²⁴ Ibid., 120.

²⁵ Rose, *Godly Kingship*, 173; Hirst, ‘Bodies and Interests’, 417–19.

²⁶ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 149.

²⁷ Ibid., 210.

this chapter will demonstrate how Particulars also helped change public attitudes to toleration. The chapter begins by discussing the approaches of both the magisterial and ordinary contexts towards the Particulars during this period. It then examines the Particulars' response, highlighting their attempts to 'DO AS THEY SAY'. The chapter finishes by looking at the Particulars' debate around open and closed communion. Ultimately, the Particulars not only encouraged toleration among the English populace, they had to reciprocate it themselves.

1. TOLERATION DYNAMICS IN RESTORATION SOCIETY

This section examines how various spheres of English society approached toleration of Dissenters during the Restoration. In terms of magisterial toleration, I support the common claim that Parliament was consistently intolerant, and that Charles began his reign as a tolerant monarch, but became less so over time. This section elaborates on this widely-held framework, engaging with the prevailing scholarship extensively, while looking at how this directly affected Dissenters like the Particulars. Yet it also examines ordinary toleration, revealing how it moved in the opposite direction: at the start of the Restoration, often the English populace was vehemently intolerant of Dissenters, but it gradually became more tolerant over time. Usually, this thesis focuses upon a specific denomination, the Particular Baptists. While this can be beneficial, such a focus runs the risk of portraying them as more distinctive than they necessarily were, in certain contexts. This section acts as a counter-balance. It shows that the Restoration had caused the lines of Nonconformity to be more broadly defined: any group other than episcopalian Anglicans soon became identified as 'Nonconformist'. Presbyterians were never again a serious rival for the national Church – they were now firmly placed in the Dissenters' camp. Furthermore, the increase in Conformist prosecution meant collaboration between Nonconformist denominations became all the more important.

The travails of one Nonconformist group increasingly became the travails of them all. For this reason, this section examines the state's policies towards Dissenters generally. The Particulars are still specifically identified at points, but as one example of the wider experience of Restoration Nonconformity.

After a brief contextual summary, this section begins by exploring the overall mood against Dissenters in England, and why they were attacked, using William Kiffen as a key example. It then looks at the early approach to toleration by Charles and his court. I then examine the intolerant Parliament, which placed the Presbyterians firmly into Nonconformity, and instituted the Clarendon Code. I also discuss the economic motivations behind both Charles and the Parliament's policies, and how economics also contributed to ordinary toleration as well. I end by showing how ineffective the Parliament's strictures turned out to be. This section confirms that, while magistrates certainly became increasingly intolerant over time, ordinary contexts began shifting the opposite direction.

Throughout the Restoration period, Dissenters had more influence over ordinary society than is often recognised. Bill Stevenson establishes that, 'post-Restoration dissenters were drawn from a very wide cross-section of society at large. They included all the major social categories and sub-groups, except for the nobility and the vagrant poor.'²⁸ Even those who were from the Dissenters' 'upper strata' were not from the nobility, but were wealthy businessmen.²⁹ A magisterial focus can miss Dissenters' influence over everyday English life. The extent of that influence was probably considerable, given there were at least 250,000 Dissenters in 1660, with half being Presbyterians, and the rest being Independents, Quakers and Baptists.³⁰ Certainly, Presbyterians and some Independents are sometimes discussed by toleration historians,

²⁸ Stevenson, 'Social and Economic Status', 357.

²⁹ Ibid., 342.

³⁰ Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration*, 168.

but Quakers and Baptists are rarely acknowledged. Recently, Murphy has examined the Restoration Quaker, William Penn, although Penn was still undoubtedly an elite, given his influence at court.³¹ Yet so many of the dynamics of toleration during the Restoration occurred in ordinary contexts, where Dissenters like the Particulars were far more prominent.

After the chaotic religious pluralism of the Interregnum, many not only sought a restored monarchy but also a return to rigid uniformity.³² As the Protectorate government crumbled, deep concerns arose that religious radicals, including the Particulars, might tighten their grip upon England, bringing pandemonium.³³ The Restoration soon revealed the populace's resentment towards Puritans: the frequent bonfires celebrating Charles' return often came with harassment of Dissenters, especially Quakers and Baptists.³⁴ This included the sacking of many Particular meeting-houses, including William Kiffen's, on May Day and on 8 May.³⁵ These riots, which resulted in over £200 of damage, were serious enough to be recorded in the *Journal of the House of Lords*.³⁶ Alongside rioting, Particulars also endured ridicule in publications: Larry Kreitzer has discovered twelve satirical writings published about Kiffen alone between 1659 and 1661, including *The Life and Approaching Death of William Kiffin*.³⁷

³¹ Murphy, *Liberty, Conscience, and Toleration*, 1–6.

³² Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 286.

³³ Paul Seaward, *The Restoration* (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1991), 41; N.H. Keeble, *The Restoration : England in the 1660s* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002), 51.

³⁴ Keeble, *The Restoration*, 41.

³⁵ Gary S. De Krey, *London and the Restoration: 1659-1683* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 63.

³⁶ Anon., *Journal of the House of Lords: 1660-1666*, vol. 11 (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1767), 13, <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/lords-jrnl/vol11/pp13-14>; Hanserd Knollys, 'The Anabaptist Petition', 1660, PA, HL/PO/JO/10/1/283, London Metropolitan Archives.

³⁷ Larry J. Kreitzer, ed., *William Kiffen and His World*, vol. 4 (Oxford: Regent's Park College, 2015), 294–301; Anon., *The Life and Approaching Death of William Kiffin* (London, 1660).

Public attacks upon Particulars were less due to theology than fears they were preparing for revolution.³⁸ Furthermore, such concerns seemed justified after a series of rebellions erupted during the early years of the Restoration. In April 1660, the former parliamentarian John Lambert escaped from prison and led a military rebellion, with support from Particulars like Daniel Axtell.³⁹ Then at the beginning of 1661, Thomas Venner led about fifty Fifth Monarchists in another rebellion, which ended with him and fourteen others being hung, drawn and quartered.⁴⁰ Venner's actions inevitably implicated the Particulars in rebellion in the popular mind. Indeed, Particulars were frequently involved, or at least suspected, in these rebellions, which inevitably legitimated their suppression. When John Bunyan was arrested, he argued the Act of Uniformity was specifically for those 'making the exercise of religion their pretence to cover their wickedness', and that his Bedford Particulars' meetings were merely for 'edification'. The Clerk of the Peace replied that 'every one will say the same', including those leading 'the late insurrection at London.'⁴¹

William Kiffen is also a useful example of how much London Particulars were harassed at this point. Despite consistently asserting his loyalty to the prevailing government, Kiffen's prominence as a Particular leader often brought him under suspicion. Even before Charles' return, in February 1660, several Particulars' houses had been searched, including those of Kiffen and his son-in-law, Benjamin Hewling. In response, they had written to London's Mayor, Thomas Alleyn, complaining that their houses had been invaded at midnight, without warrant from any governing authority. Those investigating had found weapons, but significantly less than expected.⁴² In

³⁸ Samuel S. Thomas, *Creating Communities in Restoration England: Parish and Congregation in Oliver Heywood's Halifax* (Boston, MA: BRILL, 2013), 69.

³⁹ De Krey, *London and the Restoration*, 63.

⁴⁰ Keeble, *The Restoration*, 46.

⁴¹ John Bunyan, *A Relation of the Imprisonment of Mr. John Bunyan* (London: James Buckland, 1765), 30.

⁴² William Kiffen et al., *A Letter Sent to the Right Honourable, the Lord Mayor of the City of London* (London: Henry Hills, 1660).

January 1661, Kiffen was imprisoned with 400 other Dissenters after Venner's rebellion, despite his long-standing repudiation of Fifth Monarchism. That February, Kiffen and Hewling were arrested again for attending an illegal conventicle in the house of a Robert Malbon. The congregation had been meeting at Malbon's house while they repaired their meeting house, damaged during the 1660 riots. Kiffen posted a surety of £50, while Hewling paid £20.⁴³ Kiffen was then required to pay a further £500 as bond, although in April 1661 he and Hewling were acquitted and their bonds returned.⁴⁴ A spy falsely implicated Kiffen with the Fifth Monarchists in August 1661, and he was briefly incarcerated again.⁴⁵ After Robert Walley attempted to assassinate Charles in October that year, Kiffen was again imprisoned.⁴⁶ At each arrest, Kiffen used his wealth and connections to obtain release from prison and any potential charges. In Buckinghamshire in 1663, twelve General Baptists, men and women, were charged under the Act of Uniformity and sentenced to be hanged, although they too received a late reprieve.⁴⁷ Many other Dissenters were not so fortunate. As Kreitzer suggests, any rights the Particulars had enjoyed during the Protectorate were now 'in danger of being lost altogether.'⁴⁸

This collective public resentment meant the Particulars had to place their hopes in a benevolent monarch. On 4 April 1660, Charles issued the *Declaration of Breda*, offering pardon to the Interregnum government and committing himself to cooperate with Parliament. Charles assured Dissenters he would uphold 'Liberty to Tender Consciences', though he also warned that Nonconformist sedition would be punished.⁴⁹

⁴³ 'Kiffen Indictment, 26 February 1661', in Larry J. Kreitzer, ed., *William Kiffen and His World*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Regent's Park College, 2010), 148–49.

⁴⁴ 'Kiffen Bond, 20 April 1661', in *ibid.*, 1:150.

⁴⁵ 'Spy's Report, 23 August 1661', in *ibid.*, 1:146–47.

⁴⁶ Richard L. Greaves, *Enemies under His Feet: Radicals and Nonconformists in Britain, 1664–1677* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990), 112.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 130; Keeble, *The Restoration*, 160.

⁴⁸ Kreitzer, *William Kiffen and His World*, 2010, 1:131.

⁴⁹ King Charles II, *His Declaration to All His Loving Subjects of the Kingdom of England, from His Court at Breda in Holland* (Edinburgh: Christopher Higgins, 1660).

While generally an indulgent monarch at the beginning of his reign, Charles was far from tolerant if he thought Dissenters had become a political threat.⁵⁰ He responded to the Venner Rebellion by briefly forbidding all Dissenting meetings, including by Particulars.⁵¹ When Charles supported suppression of Nonconformists, it seems to have been largely driven by his presiding life principle: a pragmatic defence of his own life and crown.⁵² For the most part, though, he represented himself as a champion of toleration for Nonconformists until his *Declaration of Indulgence* of 1672. This approach meant many Nonconformists convinced themselves ‘that even when he ordered the laws to be enforced, he did not really mean it’, as John Miller remarks.⁵³ This was also the approach of his Privy Counsellors, the CABAL: Baron Clifford, the Earl of Arlington, the Duke of Buckingham, Baron Ashley-Cooper (vis., the Earl of Shaftesbury), and the Duke of Lauderdale. Throughout the 1660s and early 1670s, Charles and the CABAL often had an irenic relationship with Dissenters, including the Particulars.

Magisterial intolerance towards Nonconformists during this period mainly came from the Parliament, and the episcopal Anglican Church. Here, I examine their approach to Presbyterians, then provide an overview of the Clarendon Code, and other Conformist strictures. The Cavalier Parliament from 1661 to 1678 was, according to Gary S. de Krey, ‘more royalist than Charles himself; and unlike Charles, many members had not forgiven their enemies.’⁵⁴ The disjunction between the king and Parliament’s approaches to toleration inevitably had ecclesiastical implications. Charles desired a broad national Church, incorporating both presbyterian and episcopalian

⁵⁰ John Miller, *After the Civil Wars: English Politics and Government in the Reign of Charles II* (Harlow: Longman, 2000), 147.

⁵¹ Peter Naylor, *Calvinism, Communion and the Baptists: A Study of English Calvinistic Baptists from the Late 1600s to the Early 1800s* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2003), 23.

⁵² Miller, *After the Civil Wars*, 204.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 150.

⁵⁴ Gary S. De Krey, *Restoration and Revolution in Britain: A Political History of the Era of Charles II and the Glorious Revolution* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 22.

Conformists.⁵⁵ In September 1660, Charles organised for leaders of the two factions to meet in Worcester. There, both groups proved generally amenable, with presbyterian advocates conceding that the new state Church could have bishops, and the episcopalian party allowing the Prayer Book to be slightly modified. However, while this was ratified by a grateful monarch, it was rejected by Parliament.⁵⁶ Moreover, Coffey claims this parliamentary rejection was partly due to the Baptists having been implicated in the Fifth Monarchist uprisings of 1661.⁵⁷ The episcopalian party was categorically victorious, becoming the Church of England, while Presbyterians became part of Nonconformity. The new Anglicans, who during the Interregnum had been suppressed by Presbyterians, Independents and Particulars, now discouraged toleration of any Dissent.⁵⁸ The populace was expected to attend Anglican services each Sunday, and nothing else. Moreover, rectors' sermons frequently attempted to fight against any growing support for Nonconformity among the ordinary English population.⁵⁹

Another way Parliament sought to suppress Nonconformity, and encourage ordinary intolerance, involved a series of acts, the 'Clarendon Code'. The Corporation Act of 1661, restricted government office only to those who had taken the Anglican Eucharist in the last year. The 1662 Act of Uniformity ejected from national churches any minister who would not adhere to the Anglican Prayer Book. Nearly 2,000 ministers were ejected, many of them well respected in their communities.⁶⁰ The 1664 Conventicle Act also forbade all Nonconformist meetings of more than five people.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 28.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 29.

⁵⁷ Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration*, 2.

⁵⁸ John Coffey, 'The Toleration Controversy during the English Revolution', in *Religion in Revolutionary England*, ed. Christopher Durston and Judith D. Maltby (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), 170.

⁵⁹ Robert South, *A Sermon Preached at Lambeth-Chappel on the 25th of November* (London: Tho. Newcomb, 1666), 1.

⁶⁰ John Spurr, 'Religion in Restoration England', in *The Reigns of Charles II and James VII & II*, ed. Lionel K.J. Glassey (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1997), 92.

Then the Five-Mile Act of 1665 forbade all Dissenting ministers from living within five miles of any place they had previously ministered.

The 1662 Licensing of the Press Act also suppressed Dissenters, restricting all printing to London, Oxford or Cambridge, and limiting the number of legal printers to twenty. The Stationers' Company enforced the act, including registering printers, indicting unregistered publishers, and destroying illegal tracts. It was led by Sir Roger L'Estrange, who Keeble describes as 'more vindictive and partisan than anything experienced before.'⁶¹ Such censorship seemed to prove effective: publications dropped from 2,740 in 1660 to 1,584 in 1661, and to 633 in 1666, then hovered at an average around 1,000 by the 1670s.⁶² Many Particulars were punished by this Act. In 1668, L'Estrange imprisoned Elizabeth Poole for unlicensed publication.⁶³ The Particular minister Benjamin Keach (1640-1704) was tried in 1664 for his book, *The Child's Delight*, though it never directly criticised the king or Parliament. Nonetheless, Keach was fined £20, pilloried and imprisoned.⁶⁴ Such measures were designed to heighten the public's sense that Nonconformity was criminal and therefore intolerable. L'Estrange and Parliament also utilised spies to catch Dissenters in acts of sedition.⁶⁵ Such spies were frequently found to be false at trial, but usually by then, the accused had already spent a long time in prison.⁶⁶ False reports were exacerbated by the rewards that spies received for their reports – William Haggett, for example, received nine £20 payments

⁶¹ Keeble, *The Restoration*, 152.

⁶² Tim Harris, *Restoration: Charles II and His Kingdoms, 1660-1685* (London: Allen Lane, 2005), 70.

⁶³ Mary Anne Everett Green, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic: Charles II, 1667-8 (November 1667 to September 1668)*, vol. 8: Nov 1667-Sep 1668 (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1893), 369.

⁶⁴ Keeble, *The Restoration*, 131.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 152.

⁶⁶ John Marshall, *John Locke, Toleration and Early Enlightenment Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 97.

for information between 1664 and 1666.⁶⁷ Nevertheless, Particulars were frequently arrested on the basis of spy reports, though often based more on rumour than evidence.⁶⁸

From 1668 to 1673, Dissenters found their fortunes fluctuating between the differing policies of Parliament and king, with Charles ultimately giving way. In 1668, the Conventicle Act lapsed, giving Nonconformists hope that the worst was over. The CABAL were able to stall a new Conventicle Act, but only until April 1670.⁶⁹ This Conventicle Act was even more strict, especially for ministers, who now received fines of £20 to £40.⁷⁰ Kiffen was arrested and fined £40 in May 1670, although he appealed and was eventually released.⁷¹ The Dissenters' fortunes briefly improved in 1672, when Charles issued his *Declaration of Indulgence*, distinguishing between loyal peaceable conventicles and seditious meetings. Dissenting clergy from around 1,600 congregations registered their congregations, including Particulars.⁷² However, the Declaration was almost immediately revoked by Parliament, which also passed the first Test Act in 1673. This added an explicit renunciation of transubstantiation for public officers, to counteract the emerging 'Popish' threat, commonly identified with James the Duke of York.⁷³ While anti-poperly was certainly a factor in this period, it reached an acute point afterwards, as will be examined in the next chapter. At any rate, this section has so far confirmed that the state did become more magisterially intolerant as time went on – while the new Parliament was always intolerant, Charles retained a tendency to toleration until 1670, when his approach began to turn as well.

⁶⁷ Larry J. Kreitzer, ed., *William Kiffen and His World*, vol. 2 (Oxford: Regent's Park College, 2012), 167.

⁶⁸ Andrew Bradstock, *Radical Religion in Cromwell's England: A Concise History from the English Civil War to the End of the Commonwealth* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2010), 24.

⁶⁹ De Krey, *Restoration and Revolution in Britain*, 87.

⁷⁰ Harris, *Restoration*, 53.

⁷¹ William Kiffen, *Remarkable Passages in the Life of William Kiffin*, ed. William Orme (London: Burton & Smith, 1823), 50.

⁷² De Krey, *Restoration and Revolution in Britain*, 92–93.

⁷³ Spurr, 'Religion in Restoration England', 94.

While historians have made much of the religious motivations behind the magistrates' varying approaches to Dissenters, more pragmatic reasons were often at play, especially economics.⁷⁴ Economics greatly influenced Parliament's intolerance of Nonconformists. Many MPs were rural gentry, who had lost their lands during the Interregnum because of their royalism. They had expected their lands to be returned upon the monarchy's restoration. This proved difficult for Charles to enact, breeding resentment.⁷⁵ Those who did have lands restored, watched as prices for their agricultural products fell, largely thanks to London's merchants.⁷⁶ Seaward has described these merchants as the 'new gentry' of the Restoration, and many of them were Dissenters, even Particulars.⁷⁷ Slingsby Bethel, a key trader and economic writer of the time, suggested merchants should be able to elect 'their members of Parliament out of themselves'.⁷⁸ While economic motivations should not be exaggerated – there were Conformist merchants as well – they nonetheless exhibit many toleration dynamics.⁷⁹ Samuel Parker, the Anglican bishop of Oxford, complained in 1671 that Nonconformists, advocates of 'the Mutinies of Religion', dominated London's mercantile structure, and that it was 'notorious, that there is not any sort of People so inclinable to Seditious Practices as the Trading part of a Nation.'⁸⁰ Of course, there were other factors as well. As Richard Greaves suggests, Parliament's suppressive approach was also 'yet another manifestation of the old and not unfounded argument linking nonconformity with revolutionary politics.'⁸¹ John Bunyan recorded that, in November that year, a Bedfordshire justice ordered a constable 'to keep a very strong watch' on the

⁷⁴ Greaves, *Enemies under His Feet*, 146.

⁷⁵ De Krey, *Restoration and Revolution in Britain*, 28.

⁷⁶ Seaward, *The Restoration*, 28–29.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁷⁸ Slingsby Bethel, *The Present Interest of England Stated by a Lover of His King and Countrey* (London, 1671), 12.

⁷⁹ Sutherland, *Peace, Toleration and Decay*, 12–13.

⁸⁰ Samuel Parker, *A Discourse of Ecclesiastical Politie* (London, 1671), xxxix–xl.

⁸¹ Greaves, *Enemies under His Feet*, 143.

Bedford Particulars, in case they ‘did intend to do some fearful business, to the destruction of the country’.⁸² Parliament’s strictures, then, could be understood as responsible protection of the populace, given the upheaval of the Interregnum, discussed in Chapter 2. Economics was one important reason for intolerance, alongside other factors.

Economics also facilitated toleration, especially after England fought several wars with the Dutch from 1665 to 1667 and lost. This proved to be a ‘political train wreck’, according to de Krey, but it was also economically disastrous.⁸³ In June 1667, the Dutch navy even sailed up the Thames, destroying several ships and stealing the English flagship, the Royal Charles.⁸⁴ Given the trading significance of the Thames, the Dutch blockade reduced English trade to virtually nothing.⁸⁵ Merchants who could still get goods into the country became highly valued, by the elites and the commoners alike. Many such merchants were Nonconformists, including the Particulars William Kiffen and Benjamin Hewling. This was possible because Dissenters often had close ties to Puritans in New England, and connections with Reformed believers in Switzerland, Germany, and Holland.⁸⁶ Therefore, Bethel argued in 1671 that uniformity damaged the nation’s trade, precisely when ‘the Traders of a Nation ought to be most encouraged, and Trade accounted the most honourable of all professions.’⁸⁷ Bethel insisted, ‘imposing upon Conscience, in matters of Religion, is a mischief unto Trade’ and warned, ‘the Traders and Manufacturers [will] be forced to flye their Countries, or withdraw their stocks, by vexatious prosecutions’.⁸⁸

⁸² Bunyan, *A Relation of the Imprisonment of Mr. John Bunyan*, 4.

⁸³ De Krey, *Restoration and Revolution in Britain*, 83.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 74.

⁸⁵ Seaward, *The Restoration*, 81.

⁸⁶ De Krey, *Restoration and Revolution in Britain*, 79, 82.

⁸⁷ Bethel, *The Present Interest of England*, 2–3.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 13.

Nonconformist merchants utilised their financial influence to gain magisterial toleration. Buckingham advocated for Dissenters in Charles' court, largely because of their mercantile connections.⁸⁹ In 1672, Kiffen, the Earl of Shaftesbury, and fifteen others became business partners, in the Company of Adventurers to the Bahama Islands. Charles personally bestowed the charter rights for this endeavour.⁹⁰ Kreitzer has noted that this charter also required the proprietors to establish effective government in the Bahamas, including building churches.⁹¹ While unaware of Kiffen and Shaftesbury's partnership in the Bahamas, De Krey also argues that Shaftesbury's broader mercantile connections with Kiffen affected the Earl's approach to Nonconformist policy in the early 1670s.⁹² Thus the highly pragmatic motivations of trade and commerce motivated magisterial toleration, too.

Mercantile interests also motivated ordinary toleration as well – indeed, one of the other partners in Kiffen's Bahama Adventurers was none other than John Locke. Locke and Kiffen each contributed £100, with Locke selling his share in 1677 for £127.10s, a reasonable profit.⁹³ Furthermore, Kreitzer has identified seven direct references in Locke's records to Kiffen being his financial agent until 1678. These records also suggest Locke may have been associated with businesses involving Hewling and Kiffen's son Henry, another merchant, as well.⁹⁴ This is a tangible example of Locke himself practising his 'private' toleration. Despite having written against people like Kiffen in 1660, Locke decided to associate with him for the sake of economic gain. How much this contributed to Locke's change of position is impossible to gauge, but that economic interests did contribute to such a shift, for Locke and many

⁸⁹ Miller, *After the Civil Wars*, 206.

⁹⁰ 'Orders of the Company of Adventurers to ye Bahama Islands 1672', in Kreitzer, *William Kiffen and His World*, 2010, 1:389.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 1:364.

⁹² De Krey, *Restoration and Revolution in Britain*, 86.

⁹³ Kreitzer, *William Kiffen and His World*, 2010, 1:371.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 1:372–73.

others, seems reasonable based on these records. Indeed, Bethel was also a member of the Leathersellers' Company with Kiffen, thus his call for Dissenting 'Traders and Manufacturers' to be tolerated, clearly included both the magisterial and ordinary contexts.⁹⁵ Such collaboration significantly contributed to changes in the public perception of Dissenters.

The shift among English people, from vehement intolerance in the early 1660s towards ordinary toleration, can also be seen in how ineffective the Parliament's punitive measures proved to be. According to Archbishop Sheldon's 1669 survey, there were still at least 120,000 Nonconformists in England at that time.⁹⁶ This was half their estimated numbers from the start of the Restoration, certainly, but it was still a remarkable number given the intensity of magisterial and ordinary intolerance by this point. Moreover, local officials became evermore reluctant to enforce the Clarendon Code, or report breaches by Dissenters.⁹⁷ Many bureaucrats were either corrupt, indifferent, sympathised with Nonconformists, or were secretly Dissenters themselves.⁹⁸ Even those supportive of the laws, often found the fines too harsh to enforce: under the 1664 Conventicle Act, attending Nonconformist meetings brought a £5 fine or three months imprisonment for the first offence; a £10 fine or six months in prison for the second offence; with the third offence leading to either £100 or transportation.⁹⁹ When poorer Nonconformists were indicted, magistrates either had to release them, find a lesser charge they could afford, or risk breeding resentment by jailing or transporting them.¹⁰⁰ When in 1669, the Conventicle Act was renewed and tightened, many justices resigned in protest. Often, the punishments meted out were also inconsistent or even

⁹⁵ Gary S. De Krey, 'Bethel, Slingsby (Bap. 1617, d. 1697)', ed. H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison, *O.D.N.B.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, September 2010), <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/2303>.

⁹⁶ Greaves, *Enemies under His Feet*, 151–52.

⁹⁷ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 270.

⁹⁸ Keeble, *The Restoration*, 142; Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 90–91.

⁹⁹ Harris, *Restoration*, 52.

¹⁰⁰ Miller, *After the Civil Wars*, 150.

contradictory: Nonconformists were sometimes excommunicated by their Anglican churchwarden, only to be fined later for their non-attendance.¹⁰¹ Thus, at a lower social level, expressions of Conformity were rapidly breaking down, as the populace became less inclined to facilitate it.

Ultimately, the harshness of the penalties tended to discourage public intolerance. Public hesitance to expose Dissenters, or to indict them, was hardly isolated to the Restoration period.¹⁰² Nonetheless, Walsham argues that public sympathy can be one of the ‘side effects of concentrated episodes of intolerance’.¹⁰³ The Restoration offers an example of that. It also suggests that Conformist intolerance could, in turn, provoke public resentment or ambivalence. Ongoing poor attendance at Anglican congregations also suggests the effect of the Clarendon Code was counter-productive. Even after enjoying eight years of forced Conformity, Anglican rectors lamented poor church attendance.¹⁰⁴ Only around sixty per cent of the population went to Anglican services.¹⁰⁵ Many of those would stay outside the church during the Prayer Book’s liturgy, only entering once the sermon began. After the 1672 Indulgence, many rectors complained that their churches were empty.¹⁰⁶ Conformist retribution proved an ineffective strategy for both suppressing Dissent and encouraging Anglicanism.

This section has revealed just how pragmatically-driven the various dimensions of toleration were during the Restoration. Even the magisterial dimensions were deeply influenced by on-the-ground concerns and interactions, especially financial ones. Conformists were often landed gentry threatened by the new economics that Nonconformist merchants represented. The king would show toleration to Dissenters who offered money or resources, even resorting to surreptitious meetings with

¹⁰¹ Spurr, ‘Religion in Restoration England’, 93.

¹⁰² Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 270.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 231.

¹⁰⁴ De Krey, *Restoration and Revolution in Britain*, 78.

¹⁰⁵ Spurr, ‘Religion in Restoration England’, 103.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 93.

Particulars. Courtiers would go into business with Dissenters, too. Moreover, so would ordinary people, like John Locke, foregoing their previous antagonism towards Dissent, for the sake of a healthy profit. Ultimately, then, the Parliament's attempts at stamping out Dissenters failed, in large part because of a wider shift in the general populace towards ordinary toleration. This shift was also perpetuated by the actions and words of Dissenters themselves, including the Particulars, as the next section will reveal.

2. THE PARTICULARS' RESPONSE

In the face of vehement intolerance in the early 1660s from the Parliament above and the populace below, Nonconformists needed to change public perception and to seek the favour of any magistrates they could. The Particulars played a significant role in such attempts. Certainly, in the months preceding the Restoration, Particular leaders such as Praisegod Barebone and Kiffen had still supported the republic, seeing it as the best way they could protect the influence they had gained during the Interregnum.¹⁰⁷ Royalists made much of this upon Charles' return, in *The Picture of the Good Old Cause Drawn to the Life*, and Barebone was subsequently tried for treason.¹⁰⁸ Nonetheless, once the restoration of the monarchy became inevitable, most Baptists, General and Particular, joined in what Bradstock describes as 'a rare display of political unity', to try to uphold their survival.¹⁰⁹ Any plans to remain a Troeltschian church-type, part of the magistracy, were quickly abandoned. The only question now was what kind of sect-type they would be: while the temptation to become isolated must have been strong, most Particulars chose instead to frame themselves as an accepting sect-type. This section charts their attempts to do so. They pursued the support of the royal court, which in turn entailed

¹⁰⁷ J.F. McGregor, 'The Baptists: Fount of All Heresy', in *Radical Religion in the English Revolution*, ed. J.F. McGregor and B. Reay (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 55.

¹⁰⁸ Anon., *The Picture of the Good Old Cause Drawn to Life in the Effigies of Master Prais-God Barebone* (London, 1660).

¹⁰⁹ Bradstock, *Radical Religion in Cromwell's England*, 23.

subordinate toleration. They also sought to change ordinary perceptions of them, via their publications, serving in their local communities, taking roles in local government, or through philanthropy. The final sub-section here examines how they also responded to the Clarendon Code. Often they tried to circumvent the laws, but increasingly they portrayed themselves as innocent victims of an oppressive regime. This last approach was the key conceptual way they helped shift social attitudes towards toleration in this period. Ultimately, their methods proved remarkably successful, as this section will now demonstrate.

Having identified Charles' sympathies for Nonconformity, the Particulars joined other Dissenters in further currying his favour. Jacqueline Rose has highlighted how Dissenters utilised Charles' own frustrations with Parliament and the Anglican Church for their own ends. She states, 'Nonconformist exaltation of monarchical supremacy over the Church might look paradoxical, but it made sense as a strategy to bypass episcopal intolerance.'¹¹⁰ They argued that the Church of England was not so much one episcopalian denomination, but every English congregation. This included their own, and thus they sought to show their utmost allegiance. But it also included the Anglicans, and Dissenters emphasised to Charles that Anglican clergy 'saw him merely as an executor of their intolerant wills, debasing his power and enslaving it to the Church.'¹¹¹ This is an excellent insight, although Rose identifies it exclusively with Presbyterians. Particulars also attempted to show they were much more useful to the Crown than Conformists. For example, by 1670, Charles' financial situation had become so dire that he asked London's magistrates for a £60,000 loan. The magistrates could only raise £20,000. Seizing the opportunity, wealthy London Dissenters raised the other £40,000, as an expression of their allegiance and value to the crown, and to show that the

¹¹⁰ Rose, *Godly Kingship*, 166.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 179.

Conventicle Act was counter-productive. Kiffen himself gave Charles £3,600, making him the largest individual contributor.¹¹² Twice Charles also asked Kiffen to provide economic advice to the CABAL.¹¹³

While much scholarly discussion focuses on Charles' magisterial toleration towards Nonconformists, facets of subordinate toleration are often ignored. The Bahama partnership discussed earlier represented an economic form of toleration, not only by Shaftesbury or Locke, but also Kiffen: for the sake of financial gain, they would work together despite religious differences, in a way reminiscent of Benjamin Kaplan's analysis of the Dutch clothmakers' guild in this same period.¹¹⁴ Kiffen tolerated Shaftesbury. Similarly, Charles was consistently described positively in Particular literature. His father, Charles I, was often venerated for his piety by this point, as seen in the *Eikon Basilike*.¹¹⁵ In contrast, Charles II was no saint.¹¹⁶ As stated earlier, Charles had enormous ecclesiastical responsibilities placed upon him, whereby Church health was an intrinsic facet of his royal obligations.¹¹⁷ Yet Charles was notorious for his sexual promiscuity, card playing, gambling, and love of bawdy theatre.¹¹⁸ Murphy has highlighted how, even as Dissenters were persecuted for upholding their integrity, they knew the king's court was 'a den of lechery, libertinism, and Catholicism.'¹¹⁹ As discussed in previous chapters, the Particulars excommunicated their own congregants for far less. Nonconformists regularly criticised the wider populace as well, and especially the Anglican hierarchy for similar 'profane' practices.¹²⁰ Yet there is never a

¹¹² De Krey, *London and the Restoration*, 126.

¹¹³ Ronald Angelo Johnson, 'The Peculiar Ventures of Particular Baptist Pastor William Kiffen and King Charles II of England', *Baptist History and Heritage*, no. 44.1 (1 January 2009): 60–61.

¹¹⁴ Benjamin J. Kaplan, *Divided by Faith: Religious Conflict and the Practice of Toleration in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2007), 237–38.

¹¹⁵ King Charles I, *Eikon Basilike: The Pourtraicture of His Sacred Maiestie in His Solitudes and Suffering* (London, 1649).

¹¹⁶ Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration*, 168.

¹¹⁷ Rose, *Godly Kingship*.

¹¹⁸ Keeble, *The Restoration*, 175; De Krey, *Restoration and Revolution in Britain*, 59.

¹¹⁹ Murphy, *Liberty, Conscience, and Toleration*, 33–34.

¹²⁰ Miller, *After the Civil Wars*, 141.

hint, in the Particulars' publications or in any recorded conversations, of them criticising Charles' lifestyle. When Kiffen and the other merchants chose to give Charles £40,000 that was an act of subordinate toleration. Dissenters chose to do so, despite his questionable morality.

Partly, this suggests there were various social circles where different degrees of toleration could be applied: congregational toleration was more stringent than subordinate toleration. Pragmatism seems to have been another likely motivator. Given the populace strongly supported Charles and resented them, Nonconformists were not in a position to pressure him to change. Moreover, as has been seen already, he was instrumental for them receiving magisterial toleration, and thus they forgave his failure to uphold their own high moral standards. The quest for survival motivated toleration.

Indeed, the Nonconformists' strategy of subordinate toleration for Charles, in return for magisterial toleration, often proved successful. As discussed earlier, whenever Kiffen was incarcerated for his religious beliefs, he rapidly secured his release. Kiffen would later write in his memoirs, 'my Lord Arlington hath told me, that in every list brought him of disaffected persons, fit to be secured, I was always in for one, yet the King would not believe any thing against me ... also, the Earl of Clarendon was very much my friend.'¹²¹ Upon his arrest after Walley's assassination attempt, Kiffen quickly wrote a letter to Clarendon, who had it read to the king, who immediately had Kiffen released. Kiffen also advocated at court for other Dissenters, including the twelve General Baptists sentenced to execution. In a notable example of inter-denominational toleration, Kiffen pleaded their case to Clarendon, then Charles, and they received a reprieve.¹²² A report by William Haggett, L'Estrange's spy, also refers to Kiffen,

¹²¹ Kiffen, *Remarkable Passages*, 36.

¹²² Greaves, *Enemies under His Feet*, 130; Keeble, *The Restoration*, 160; Technically, Kiffen went to Clarendon via an intermediary, Viscountess Ranalaugh. For more information, see 'Letter, Ranalaugh to Clarendon, 1 May 1663' in Kreitzer, *William Kiffen and His World*, 2015, 4:261–62.

misnamed as ‘Mr. Kiplin’, as one ‘of the cheifs of the anabaptist party in or about London’ and ‘a Considerable marchant’. Haggett described Kiffen as ‘one yt the King would frequently send for and would be very familiar with ... a very knowing man and one yt ye King had a great respect for.’ In fact, Haggett was reporting here on an illicit meeting in July 1669 between Kiffen and Charles. Haggett had witnessed Charles explaining to Kiffen that, since ‘ye King was much blamed by his Council and Bishops for ruleing arbitrarily in yt ye Lawes and statutues were not put in execution against the Persons using private meetings’, Charles ‘could noe longer protect them so wisht them to forbear meetings.’¹²³ This reveals, to an extent rarely represented in scholarship, just how tangible Charles’ toleration could be: it went far beyond formal declarations, but even to clandestine meetings with Particulars. Yet it also shows limitations developed in such an approach: Charles ‘could noe longer protect them’.

Therefore, Particulars had to find ways to placate the general populace. They developed three key methods, which this section will now examine: publication, community service, and philanthropy in times of crisis. In terms of publication, the Parliament’s passing the Press Act indicates just how successful this proved to be. Many treatises were ostensibly written to the king, but their wider publication indicates they were also designed to allay the concerns of ordinary people. In January 1660, the Particulars presented the statement quoted at the beginning of this chapter. This statement also stressed that the Particulars would only ever resist either king or magistracy if ‘they forbid and hinder them the Worship of God’, and even then, passive resistance would be their only recourse. They also insisted ‘every one is not an Anabaptist that is so called’, disassociating themselves from any rebels in their ranks, especially any remaining Fifth Monarchists.¹²⁴ In 1660 and 1661, the London Particulars

¹²³ ‘Secretaries of State: State Papers Domestic, Charles II: Letters and Papers’, 22 July 1669, 66, SP 29/263, National Archives.

¹²⁴ Anon., *The Character of an Anabaptist*.

also presented two petitions to Parliament. Both petitions reveal their high esteem for Charles and cited his Breda Declaration's support for toleration. The first, written by Hanserd Knollys, described the 'clamouring upon us, tending to incense both Magistrates and Multitude against us.'¹²⁵ The second petition, extended 'humble gratitude to his Majestie' for his initial toleration of them, but voiced their fear that Parliament's Conformist policies would undermine that. They even claimed to have spoken directly to the king about the matter and that Charles himself had directed them to petition the Parliament, 'in whose power it would be with his Royall assent by a Generall and Publique Law to Establish liberty to all tender Consciences.'¹²⁶ In 1661 they also wrote *A Humble Apology*, quoting Breda's section on 'Libertie to tender Consciences'. Written in the wake of Venner's rebellion, it was signed by both Generals and Particulars: the rebellion had again associated them both with the Munsterites among the public, so the *Apology* stressed 'that such evil opinions and practices are no natural or necessary concomitants or consequences of the Doctrine about Baptism, nor of any possible connexion with it'.¹²⁷ The *Apology* also emphasised that only one of the rebels had really been a Baptist.¹²⁸ That same year, four Particulars who had been incarcerated in Kent wrote *The Humble Petition and Representation*, again emphasising Charles' full authority as monarch. These Kent Particulars cited both the 1646 Baptist *Confession* and Charles' own Breda Declaration to legitimate their release.¹²⁹

Particulars also joined other Nonconformists in serving throughout their local communities, including in local government roles. The Corporation Act was primarily

¹²⁵ Knollys, 'The Anabaptist Petition of 1660', in Kreitzer, *William Kiffen and His World*, 2010, 1:140.

¹²⁶ Kiffen, et al., 'The Anabaptist Petition', 1661, PA, HL/PO/JO/10/1/306, London Metropolitan Archives.

¹²⁷ William Kiffen, *The Humble Apology of Some Commonly Called Anabaptists* (London: Henry Hills, 1660), 6–7.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 8.

¹²⁹ William Jeffrey et al., *The Humble Petition and Representation of the Sufferings of Several Peaceable, and Innocent Subjects, Called by the Name of Anabaptists* (London: Francis Smith, 1661), 3.

enforced in national government, but was laxly applied in local contexts. Walsham suggests that in local contexts neighbours were often unwilling to take action against Dissenters unless they became socially ‘corrosive’.¹³⁰ Her point can also be put positively: when Nonconformists served in their communities, this was partially designed to facilitate ordinary toleration.¹³¹ Such attempts at social assimilation could be heavily suppressed by Conformists. In the London council, for example, the number of Nonconformist members nearly doubled from 1667 to 1672.¹³² In 1669, Kiffen was elected sheriff of Middlesex and London, although in August 1670, John Starkey reported that ‘Captain Kiffin our intended Sherriffe is by order discharged of that appointment.’¹³³ Other Nonconformists took his place, however, though not without magisterial opposition.¹³⁴ While from 1660 to 1666, none of London’s aldermen were vetoed, between 1667 and 1670, eighteen vetoes were issued, including to Kiffen, twice.¹³⁵ According to Kreitzer, this proved ‘a little awkward for the Court of Aldermen’ in 1670, as Kiffen was then helping Charles’ privy council resolve a dispute with the Dutch city of Dort, which would have significantly assisted London’s own economy.¹³⁶ Intolerance had so often been justified by portraying Dissenters as a burden upon society, yet by showing his value to the king and council, Kiffen’s removal as sheriff became the inconvenience, not him.

Ordinary toleration was also facilitated by Nonconformist service in times of national crisis, such as London’s Great Plague of 1665 and its Great Fire of 1666. Of the 400,000 people in London, almost twenty per cent died of the plague. Another fifty per cent left to escape it, including many Anglican clergy. In contrast, Nonconformist

¹³⁰ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 273.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 277.

¹³² De Krey, *London and the Restoration*, 99.

¹³³ John Starkey, ‘Newsheet to Sir Willoughby Aston’, August 1670.

¹³⁴ De Krey, *London and the Restoration*, 109.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 97.

¹³⁶ Kreitzer, *William Kiffen and His World*, 2012, 2:175.

ministers responded by entering the city to care for the sick and comfort the dying, effectively returning to the roles they had held there before the Great Ejection.¹³⁷ Particular ministers were among them, including Thomas Patient, who had returned from Ireland to serve with a London congregation, only to succumb to the plague himself.¹³⁸ The Parliament, meeting safely in Oxford, passed the Five-Mile or ‘Oxford’ Act, banning Nonconformist ministers from going within five miles of parishes they had previously pastored. This Act was directly intended to counteract the public goodwill generated by these Nonconformists.¹³⁹ Nonetheless, these same ministers again returned to London during the Great Fire of 1666, when over eighty per cent of the city, some 13,000 homes were destroyed.¹⁴⁰ Moreover, Bryn Roberts has stated that, ‘the psychological impact of the double catastrophe of plague and fire following so closely may indeed have precipitated a local ‘spiritual crisis’ ... which many of the nonconformist clergy were available to meet.’¹⁴¹ This is evidenced by the significant rise in Dissenting congregations after these crises, including sixteen new conventicles in Cripplegate by 1668.¹⁴² This philanthropy not only resulted in more people joining Nonconformist congregations, but also served to dissipate public antipathies. Indeed, all such methods helped encourage social toleration. Yet the issue of how to deal with magisterial strictures was also of utmost importance, as this section now explores.

¹³⁷ Richard Baxter, *Reliquiæ Baxterianæ: Or, Mr. Richard Baxter's Narrative of the Most Memorable Passages of His Life and Times*, ed. Matthew Sylvester (London, 1696), pt. III.2, <http://archive.org/details/reliquibaxterian00baxt>.

¹³⁸ W.G. Lewis, ed., *The Baptist Magazine*, vol. XII, V (London, 1868), 3.

¹³⁹ Adrian Tinniswood, *By Permission Of Heaven: The Story of the Great Fire of London* (London: Random House, 2011), 183.

¹⁴⁰ De Krey, *Restoration and Revolution in Britain*, 68; De Krey, *London and the Restoration*, 91.

¹⁴¹ S. Bryn Roberts, *Puritanism and the Pursuit of Happiness: The Ministry and Theology of Ralph Venning, C.1621-1674* (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer Ltd, 2015), 73.

¹⁴² Michael Watts, *The Dissenters* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 225.

2.1 Responding to Magisterial Prosecution

Martin Sutherland argues that the Clarendon Code, and especially the Five Mile Act ‘forced a choice of compliance or defiance’ for Dissenters.¹⁴³ Effectively responding to Parliamentary and Anglican suppression represented a tricky conundrum for Nonconformists: how could they respond to such magisterial intolerance without undermining their public assurances to being law-abiding contributors to society? When dodging the laws proved impossible, Dissenters increasingly turned to the classic English Puritan persecution trope. They portrayed themselves as martyrs and the Conformists as evil persecutors. Along with engendering wider sympathy, another consequence of identifying Conformists as a common enemy, was that it brought the various Nonconformist denominations closer together. This represented a new example of Christopher Blackwood’s unity of necessity, discussed in Chapter 2.

Sometimes, they attempted to merely circumvent the laws. To overcome the Conventicle Act’s restriction of indoor meetings to only five people, Dissenters simply met outdoors. During 1670 when the Code was being heavily enforced in London, vast numbers of Nonconformists tried to flood the city, making it impossible to invoke there. They hoped this tactic would discourage the Code being applied elsewhere, but it proved unsuccessful.¹⁴⁴ In Bristol, Broadmead Baptists established security systems in 1674 to protect themselves from government raids. Newcomers could only attend behind a curtain, to protect against them identifying ministers. Trusted congregants guarded the doors, to alert the congregation should the authorities arrive – if they did, Broadmead had installed a trap door under the pulpit to hasten the preacher’s escape.

¹⁴³ Sutherland, *Peace, Toleration and Decay*, 6.

¹⁴⁴ Miller, *After the Civil Wars*, 208.

Even so, according to Broadmead's records, authorities forced open the doors and window-shutters 'in great rage' to see inside.¹⁴⁵

Broadmead's reference to the 'great rage' of Conformists during acts of suppression, indicates another response by Dissenters while under this duress: they portrayed themselves as innocent victims, even martyrs, of an unjust and oppressive regime. Of course, this was hardly novel – many executed 'heretics' had been portraying themselves as martyrs since the sixteenth century, leading Conformists to often prefer a quieter spectacle.¹⁴⁶ However, this can be done more or less effectively. Restoration Nonconformists, including Particulars, proved extremely adept at employing the persecution trope.¹⁴⁷ They utilised this motif to attribute to Anglicans caricatures more commonly ascribed to Nonconformity. Again, Locke is helpful here. In his 1660 anti-tolerationist *Two Tracts*, he had argued that Dissenters should not be tolerated for three reasons: firstly, that they perceived others only in oppositional terms; secondly, that their absolutism meant they refused any compromises; and thirdly, what Creppell describes as 'paramountcy', whereby their religion became the ultimate, if only, measure of identity.¹⁴⁸ Dissenters throughout the Restoration consistently sought to identify these traits with Conformists. Moreover, they portrayed Conformists as being prone to fits of rage, a heinous sin. As stated in the thesis' Introduction, Conformists never perceived this as persecution at all, but prosecution for the protection of society. Yet as Bunyan noted when he was arrested, 'we had better be the persecuted, than the persecutors'.¹⁴⁹ Walsham points out that persecution could be 'immensely empowering', creating a 'superiority complex' among Dissenters to the point where they often 'thrived

¹⁴⁵ Edward Terrill, *The Records of a Church of Christ Meeting in Broadmead, Bristol, 1640-1687*, ed. Edward Bean Underhill (London: Hanserd Knollys Society, 1847), 228–29.

¹⁴⁶ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 77.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 3.

¹⁴⁸ Locke, *Two Tracts*; Creppell, *Toleration and Identity*, 106–7.

¹⁴⁹ Bunyan, *A Relation of the Imprisonment of Mr. John Bunyan*, 6.

on persecution.¹⁵⁰ Moreover, thanks to the memory of Queen Mary I, these Parliamentary policies became identified with an oppressive Catholicism, a fear only heightened after James, Duke of York's conversion became public in 1676. This in turn meant Nonconformists could identify themselves with Protestant martyrs like Thomas Cranmer during Queen Mary's reign.¹⁵¹ When seeking clemency, the Kent Particulars, for example, explicitly identified intolerance with Mary's Catholicism.¹⁵²

Bunyan regularly portrayed himself and other Nonconformists as victims of a cruel and irreligious regime. Imprisoned in November 1660, Bunyan remained there for over a decade. The sheer length of his incarceration was unusual – most convicted Dissenters were given brief prison terms or small fines.¹⁵³ Having said that, Bunyan's jail experience was not as difficult as it was for many other Dissenters, his jailers allowing him to briefly leave his cell occasionally.¹⁵⁴ He was also allowed to write, overcoming L'Estrange's publishing restrictions.¹⁵⁵ Throughout this period, he assured the authorities that he never 'savoured either of heresie' or 'rebellion'.¹⁵⁶ Nonetheless, in his prison writings Bunyan painted himself as a martyr for the Lord, undermining those authorities' legitimacy.¹⁵⁷ Imprisonment became a symbol not of his criminality, but of his virtue, a source of glory and not shame. In his 1666 edition of *Grace Abounding*, he expanded the subtitle to include 'and also what he hath met with in Prison.'¹⁵⁸ In his *Christian Behaviour* of 1663, he portrayed himself and his fellow Dissenters as those who 'have run through so many Tryals, Afflictions and Adversities, even because of that

¹⁵⁰ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 212–13.

¹⁵¹ De Krey, *Restoration and Revolution in Britain*, 81.

¹⁵² Jeffrey et al., *Humble Petition*, 11.

¹⁵³ Miller, *After the Civil Wars*, 203.

¹⁵⁴ Bunyan, *A Relation of the Imprisonment of Mr. John Bunyan*, 49.

¹⁵⁵ Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration*, 175.

¹⁵⁶ 'To the Reader', in John Bunyan, *A Confession of My Faith and a Reason of My Practice: Or, with Who, and Who Not, I Can Hold Church-Fellowship* (London: Francis Smith, 1672).

¹⁵⁷ Andrea Katherine McKenzie, *Tyburn's Martyrs: Execution in England, 1675-1775* (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2007), 163.

¹⁵⁸ John Bunyan, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners* (London: George Larkin, 1666).

Love to holiness of life'.¹⁵⁹ He also described how Anglicans were 'prosecuting their Zeal for their Worship, &c, that they do think right'. He even reversed the 'hot' dissenting motif, saying of this Anglican zeal, 'How hot hath it been, though with no reason at all. Nebuchadnezzar will have his Fiery-Furnace, and Darius his Lyons-Den for nonconformists.'¹⁶⁰ In so doing, Bunyan was drawing from commonly-recognised biblical tropes about unjust incarceration and persecution.¹⁶¹

It was Bunyan's ability to use persecution tropes in *The Pilgrim's Progress*, utilising allegory and narrative that proved remarkably successful. His exact same allusions to Nebuchadnezzar and Darius are also found during the Vanity Fair trial in *The Pilgrim's Progress*.¹⁶² That book proved so popular among Nonconformists generally, partly because it resonated not only with Bunyan's own experiences with the Restoration magistracy, but with their own.¹⁶³ His use of allegorical narrative also engendered wider public sympathy, but also resentment of Conformity's authoritarianism, encouraging unity of necessity. When Christian and Faithful are placed in the cage before their trial, sympathetic onlookers complain that the two men 'were quiet, and sober, and intended nobody any harm'.¹⁶⁴ When they are brought before the court, it is for a 'Tryal in order to their Condemnation', with conviction being a forgone conclusion.¹⁶⁵ Similarly, once caught and charged, conviction of any Dissenter seemed virtually inevitable in this period, perpetuating resentment towards the legal system.¹⁶⁶ Tried before Lord Hategood and various 'Gentlemen all', Faithful is accused

¹⁵⁹ John Bunyan, *Christian Behaviour, or, the Fruits of True Christianity* (London: Francis Smith, 1663), 20.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 28.

¹⁶¹ Peter Lake and Michael Questier, *The Trials of Margaret Clitherow: Persecution, Martyrdom and the Politics of Sanctity in Elizabethan England* (London: Continuum, 2011); McKenzie, *Tyburn's Martyrs*.

¹⁶² John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress from This World, to That Which Is to Come Delivered Under the Similitude of a Dream*, 2nd. Edition (London, 1679), 134.

¹⁶³ Bunyan, *A Relation of the Imprisonment of Mr. John Bunyan*, 20–22.

¹⁶⁴ Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress (1679 Ed)*, 126.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 128.

¹⁶⁶ Keeble, *The Restoration*, 143.

of having spoken against King Beelzebub's 'honourable Friends ... with all the rest of our Nobility', and this is what ultimately sees him executed.¹⁶⁷ While Bunyan carefully avoided identifying Beelzebub with Charles, he had no qualms portraying Vanity Fair's nobles with royalists. Richard Greaves, and Michael Davies after him, have conclusively shown that this section of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, if not the entire book, is a highly political critique of parliamentary intolerance in the Restoration period, providing a window into how Dissenters viewed themselves as martyrs in that suppression. Given the overwhelming success of *The Pilgrim's Progress* across denominational lines, it both reflected and contributed to ordinary toleration throughout England.¹⁶⁸

This portrayal of Conformity as stubborn and irrational and Dissenters as controlled and godly occurred in ordinary domestic contexts as well. A fine example is one of Bunyan's congregants, Agnes Beaumont, from Gamlingay in Cambridgeshire.¹⁶⁹ Agnes' father was a Conformist and her once-fiancé was an Anglican minister's son, Mr. Feery. In 1674, her father had punished her for having attended the Hitchen Particular conventicle, by locking her out of his house, despite it being a cold winter's night. Beaumont remained out in the barn overnight, strengthening herself with prayer.¹⁷⁰ In her description of this incident, her dissent is frequently portrayed in pious terms and she remains respectful towards her father even in her disobedience. When she first sees her father after her night in the barn, she greets him cordially, 'a good morning to you, father.'¹⁷¹ In contrast, her father is usually portrayed with frantic, disordered

¹⁶⁷ Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress (1679 Ed)*, 131.

¹⁶⁸ Michael Davies, *Graceful Reading: Theology and Narrative in the Works of John Bunyan*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 287; Richard L. Greaves, 'The Spirit and the Sword: Bunyan and the Stuart State', *Baptist Quarterly* 32, no. 8 (October 1988): 358–279.

¹⁶⁹ Rachel Adcock, *Baptist Women's Writings in Revolutionary Culture, 1640-1680* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2015), 62; Sheila Ottway, 'Autobiography', in *A Companion to Early Modern Women's Writing*, ed. Anita Pacheco (San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons, 2008), 242.

¹⁷⁰ Agnes Beaumont, 'The Singular Experience and Great Sufferings of Mrs. Agnes Beaumont', in *An Abstract of the Gracious Dealings of God, with Several Eminent Christians, in Their Conversion and Sufferings*, by Samuel James (London, 1760), 96–97.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 99.

terms. Moreover, once her father's temper had dissipated, her determined dissent compelled him to reflect about his own soul. Ultimately this led to him begging for her to pray beside him for the Lord's mercy. Her disobedience converted her father.¹⁷² That night, her father died. Her former-fiancé Feery, resentful at Agnes choosing Nonconformity over him, consequently had her arrested for patricide. Thus the resonance between her Particular faith and defiance of various authorities is heightened: father, one-time-future husband, and Anglicanism. Rachel Adcock also points out that patricide was treated like petty-treason 'because it re-enacted the monarch and subject relationship.'¹⁷³ Yet ultimately, Beaumont was vindicated at her trial, when the coroner told Feery, 'You, sir, who have defamed this young woman in this public manner, endeavouring to take away her good name, yea, her life also, if you could, ought to make it your business now to establish her reputation.'¹⁷⁴ This further shows how effective Nonconformist piety amidst Conformist harassment could be in reshaping views of toleration.

This section has revealed myriad ways that Particulars joined other Nonconformists in facilitating toleration during the Restoration. These occurred in various spheres, proving effective in the early 1660s with Charles himself, but also becoming very effective across the Restoration in ordinary contexts. Their various methods proved remarkably successful, whether they be written declarations or practical service in the community. Particulars also proved adept at depicting Parliament's prosecutions as unjust persecution. Thus they succeeded in portraying themselves as heroic martyrs, and Conformists as ungodly authoritarians, engendering sympathy among the wider populace. Conformist intolerance was reframed, from a virtue to a vice. This successfully facilitated an affinity among all the suffering saints within

¹⁷² Ibid., 109.

¹⁷³ Adcock, *Baptist Women's Writings*, 32.

¹⁷⁴ Beaumont, 'The Singular Experience', 119–20.

Nonconformity, a unity of necessity. Such success, however, raised the issue of what to do with the inherent inter-denominational intolerance still prevalent among the closed-communion Particulars themselves. The last section in this chapter discusses that very problem.

3. PARTICULAR DEBATES ON CLOSED COMMUNION

Inter-denominational toleration during the Restoration was integral to the future of English Nonconformity. Had the rivalries of Interregnum Particulars and Presbyterians continued, for example, it would have damaged their collective attempts to sway the public. Closed-communion Particulars had long wrestled with the issue of inter-denominational intolerance, but the Restoration brought those issues to a head, thanks to a new breed of Presbyterians, referred to as the ‘Ducklings’. Unlike earlier Presbyterians, these utterly rejected Conformity, and in turn pursued alliances with other Dissenters, like the Particulars.¹⁷⁵ This increasing collaboration between denominations inevitably led to each group deliberating when such affiliations damaged their identity. These internal deliberations could become so heated that they could incite disunity within a denomination itself.¹⁷⁶ The question of how far Particulars could go in accommodating Nonconformists was debated by none other than John Bunyan and William Kiffen. Strangely, this debate has received little examination among toleration historians.¹⁷⁷ It has been briefly acknowledged among Baptist historians, but without significant analysis.¹⁷⁸ Thus its full implications for wider English toleration of

¹⁷⁵ Sutherland, *Peace, Toleration and Decay*, 6.

¹⁷⁶ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 161.

¹⁷⁷ A commendable exception is Ken Simpson, “‘The Desired Country’: Bunyan’s Writings on the Church in the 1670s”, in *The Oxford Handbook of John Bunyan*, ed. Michael Davies and W. R. Owens (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

¹⁷⁸ Anthony L. Chute, Nathan A. Finn, and Michael A. G. Haykin, *The Baptist Story: From English Sect to Global Movement* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2015), 46–47; Michael Haykin and Mark Jones, *Drawn into Controversie: Reformed Theological Diversity and Debates Within Seventeenth-Century British Puritanism* (Gottingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011), 285–86; James Leo Garrett, *Baptist Theology: A Four-Century Study* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2009), 66–67; Richard L. Greaves, *Glimpses of Glory: John Bunyan and English Dissent* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002), 298–301.

Nonconformists have not been recognised. Whether similar debates took place in other religious minorities, such as the Presbyterians, Catholics, and Quakers, is also a rich topic, worthy of further examination. Nonetheless, the distinct value placed on believer's baptism by Baptists made the issue of inter-denominational toleration more acute, as this section will reveal. It will also show how the closed-communion position lost much of its force during this highly public debate, which is indicative of the wider push toward toleration in ordinary English society.

The shift towards inter-denominational accommodation among Restoration Dissenters, and the role Particulars played in that occurring, can be seen in *The Pilgrim's Progress* itself. Bunyan's villains are consistently one-dimensional caricatures: Judge Hategood, Mr. By-Ends, Mr. Worldly Wiseman. Usually, they are also obviously Anglican. Yet his heroes are denominationally ambiguous: there are no distinct denominational markers in Christian or Hopeful, for example. They are, to use Richard Baxter's famous phrase from the Great Ejection, 'Mere Christians', identified by a general Puritan godliness. Despite Bunyan himself being a Particular, none of his heroes are ever baptised as such: immersion into water is only identified specifically with despair and death, not conversion or initiation. The phenomenal success of *The Pilgrim's Progress* from its publication in 1677, right in the middle of the communion debate, suggests that Bunyan had tapped into an already existing desire for broader communion among Dissenters. Even before then, in 1673, Bunyan's other closed-communion antagonist, Thomas Paul, challenged him to 'ask your heart whether popularity, and applause of variety of professors, be not in the bottom of what you have said; that hath been your snare.'¹⁷⁹ Bunyan's broad popularity is indicative of

¹⁷⁹ Thomas Paul, *Some Serious Reflections on That Part of Mr. Bunion's Confession of Faith* (London: Francis Smith, 1673), 58.

developments within Nonconformity generally during this period that ultimately had significant implications for the Particulars.

At the beginning of the Restoration, when Presbyterians had sought to remain in the national Church, they had continued to oppose groups like the Particulars.¹⁸⁰ Yet now, thanks to Parliament, Presbyterians found themselves identified with such sectarians. At first, some Presbyterians like Richard Baxter had pursued reconciliation in the Conformed Church. Generally from an earlier generation, these became known as ‘Dons’. Younger Presbyterians, however, soon abandoned all hope or desire of presbyterianism returning to its former national authority. These ‘Ducklings’ increasingly embraced the dissenting label, aligning themselves with other Nonconformists, including the Particulars.¹⁸¹

The Ducklings represented a dilemma to the Particulars’ traditional response to wider Nonconformity, especially around the issue of open or closed communion. There had, of course, been open and closed Particulars since the start of the denomination. Furthermore, Chapter 1 highlighted how even closed Particulars had tried to facilitate broad toleration, via their various Confessions. Yet as discussed in Chapter 2, during the Interregnum many Particulars had refused Presbyterians’ invitations to shared worship, suspicious that it was surreptitious Conformity. Now that the Ducklings shared the Particulars’ distaste for the very concept of Conformity, however, those concerns dissipated somewhat. The issue now became how to remain irenic to others, while also upholding the very identity marker that distinguished all Baptists: baptism itself. For closed advocates, accepting the influx of unbaptised Nonconformists to the Lord’s Table, seemed to place this denominational distinctive at risk.

¹⁸⁰ Murphy, *Conscience and Community*, 213.

¹⁸¹ Tim Harris, *London Crowds in the Reign of Charles II: Propaganda and Politics from the Restoration until the Exclusion Crisis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 69; Miller, *After the Civil Wars*, 204; De Krey, *London and the Restoration*, 120.

The most significant Particular documents relating to the communion issue were written between 1672 and 1681. Bunyan publicly advocated for the open position, while the closed position was supported by Thomas Paul and Kiffen. There are other Particular documents that touch on these issues during this period, such as the revised London *Confession of Faith* of 1677, but these did not contribute significantly to views of communion, or toleration generally. In fact, Ted LeRoy Underwood suggests the London Particulars deliberately avoided discussing open or closed communion in the *Confession* to facilitate unity.¹⁸² In 1672, Bunyan wrote *A Confession of my Faith and a Reason of my Practice: or, With who, and who not, I can hold Church-Fellowship*. In 1673, the closed-communionists responded to Bunyan's *Confession* via Paul, in *Some Serious Reflections on the part of Bunion's Confession of Faith*. Little is known about Paul, though he was probably one of Kiffen's congregants.¹⁸³ Kiffen himself wrote the forward to *Some Serious Reflections*, supporting Paul's overall argument. Paul's tone throughout the book was very combative, which led Bunyan to write a heated reply, *Differences in Judgement about Water-baptism, no bar to Communion*. Paul replied to *Differences* in 1674, and Bunyan retaliated with *Peaceable Principles and True*, though the original imprints of these works are no longer extant, and according to Greaves, 'offered nothing new ... to the substance of the debate'.¹⁸⁴ Finally in 1681, Kiffen wrote his *Sober Discourse of Right to Church-Communion*. In it, Kiffen sought to uphold closed communion without offending Bunyan, or wider Nonconformity, any further.

This section will now examine Bunyan's argument for open-communion first, then turn to Paul's and Kiffen's argument for closed-communion. It should be recognised that Bunyan always maintained some degree of inter-denominational

¹⁸² Ted LeRoy Underwood, *Primitivism, Radicalism, and the Lamb's War: The Baptist-Quaker Conflict in Seventeenth-Century England*, Oxford Studies in Historical Theology (Cary: Oxford University Press, 1997), 72.

¹⁸³ Greaves, *Glimpses of Glory*, 292.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 300; Simpson, "'The Desired Country'", 227.

intolerance from the outset.¹⁸⁵ In 1672, the same year as his *Confession*, Bunyan published *A Defence of the Doctrine of Justification*, describing Anglicanism as a ‘Devilish design to promote Paganism, against Christianity.’¹⁸⁶ In his *Confession*, he also stressed that open communion could not extend to Anglicans and Catholics, since, ‘he who profeseth himself a member of a Church of Christ, must forthwith, nay before, forsake the Antichristian one.’ Yet even then, he immediately qualified this point, insisting Particulars should ‘receive such persons as differ upon the point of Water-baptism’.¹⁸⁷

Much of Bunyan’s argument for toleration rested on his definitions of key terminology. He explicitly defined ‘communion’ more broadly than just the Lord’s Supper to be primarily ‘fellowship in the things of the Kingdom of Christ’. This was far more important to him than either baptism or the Lord’s Supper itself.¹⁸⁸ Such ordinances should be understood as merely ‘servants ... and our mystical Ministers’ used to teach godliness.¹⁸⁹ Their purpose was primarily didactic for Bunyan, even if they were still somewhat ‘mystical’. Where they distracted from fellowship with other Christians, they had deviated from their ultimate purpose. Instead, Bunyan advocated honouring the ‘Doctrine of Baptism’, distinguishing this from the rite of baptism itself. ‘*It is lawful to hold Church-Communion with the godly sincere Believer, though he hath not been baptized with Water, because he hath the DOCTRINE of Baptism*’.¹⁹⁰ This ‘doctrine’ would be evidenced by faith and holiness, standards Particulars had long emphasised, as discussed in earlier chapters.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁵ Simpson, ““The Desired Country””, 221.

¹⁸⁶ John Bunyan, *A Defence of the Doctrine of Justification* (London: Francis Smith, 1672), 96.

¹⁸⁷ Bunyan, *Confession*, 121–23.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 48.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 64–65.

¹⁹⁰ John Bunyan, *Differences in Judgment about Water-Baptism, No Bar to Communion* (London, 1673), 32.

¹⁹¹ Bunyan, *Confession*, 86–88.

In fact, Bunyan felt the Particulars' emphasis on holiness supported open communion, since many non-Particulars were 'as good, as holy, as unblameable in life, and as sound, if not sounder in the Faith than many among our selves.'¹⁹² Even if their refusing baptism was a sin, Bunyan insisted that God also tolerated the Particulars themselves, when their sins were sometimes far more serious than avoiding baptism.¹⁹³ When Thomas Paul later accused Bunyan of therefore offering 'indulgence' to sinners – a very loaded term in the 1670s – Bunyan responded, 'We plead not for indulging. But are there not with you, even with you sins against the Lord your God? But why can you indulge the Baptists in many acts of disobedience?'¹⁹⁴ Just as Particulars insisted paedobaptism was an ineffective measure of godliness, therefore, the same was true of believer's baptism as well.¹⁹⁵ Bunyan lamented, 'Strange! Take two Christians equal in all points but this, nay let one go beyond the other far, for grace and holyness, yet this circumstance of Water shall drown and sweep away all his excellencies'.¹⁹⁶ Above all, many non-Particulars upheld the most important commandment, to love one another. In contrast, Bunyan claimed the Particulars' refusal to share communion with others disobeyed that most important commandment. 'Love therefore is sometimes more seen and shewed, in forbearing to urge and press what we know, then in publishing and imposing.'¹⁹⁷ Forbearance, toleration of others' religious convictions, was an act of love for Bunyan.¹⁹⁸ Closed-communicants, therefore, were being unloving. This was somewhat reminiscent of the Particulars' criticisms of Conformists discussed earlier in this chapter.

¹⁹² Bunyan, *Differences*, 72.

¹⁹³ Bunyan, *Confession*, 93.

¹⁹⁴ Bunyan, *Differences*, 58.

¹⁹⁵ Bunyan, *Confession*, 76.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 108.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 106.

¹⁹⁸ Simpson, "'The Desired Country'", 226.

Bunyan also utilised the growing impulse towards inter-denominational collaboration among Nonconformists. Citing the Calvinist doctrine of predestination, something most Dissenters upheld, he argued, ‘divisions and distinctions are of shorter date than election.’¹⁹⁹ Furthermore, closed-unionists themselves were already collaborating with other Nonconformists, ‘but can you commit your Soul to their Ministry, and joyne with them in Prayer, and yet not count them meet for other Gospel privileges?’²⁰⁰ Bunyan also cited the closed Particulars’ own statements that Puritans were still saved, as proof that God was willing to have eternal communion with them. If God would live eternally with the unbaptised, surely the Particulars could share the Lord’s Supper with them occasionally.²⁰¹

This section now examines Thomas Paul and Kiffen’s arguments in favour of closed-union. To them, Bunyan’s arguments seemed to undermine the Lord’s Supper and baptism, both of which they deeply valued. John Spurr has identified that Baptists usually took the Lord’s Supper monthly. This was much more frequently than Anglicans and most Presbyterians, heightening their sense of solidarity during persecution.²⁰² Closed-unionists saw believer’s baptism in a similar way. In *A Sober Discourse*, Kiffen described baptism as ‘the Foundation of all our Faith and Profession ... which Constitutes our Christianity’.²⁰³ In contrast, Paul accused Bunyan of devaluing baptism.

But you hint, the Church hath of old been pestred with Baptism,
and therefore when it is so, it may prudently be shunned. I
confess if ever you find Baptism a Pest or Plague to Churches,

¹⁹⁹ Bunyan, *Confession*, 105.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 119–20.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 89.

²⁰² Spurr, ‘Religion in Restoration England’, 114.

²⁰³ William Kiffen, *A Sober Discourse of Right to Church-Communion* (London: George Larkin, 1681), A4.

all men will shun the Plague: is this the best Title you can give
to one of Christs commands?²⁰⁴

Paul also felt that, while Bunyan had reiterated the Particulars' commitment to 'holiness', he had redefined it as merely 'walking, according to the Moral precept'. For Paul, Bunyan made these 'of little use to us: obedience to them doth not add to our Holiness, therefore a breach of them, by that rule, must be no part of our sin.' Paul insisted holiness also involved obeying 'all those Gospel-Commands, especially in instituted Worship', including those regarding baptism and the Lord's Supper.²⁰⁵ According to Kiffen, then, Christ's 'Command is a sufficient Warrant (were there no more) for our Obedience, to exclude such as disorderly practice the Ordinance of Baptism, from our immediate Communion at the Lords Table'.²⁰⁶ To not exclude them would be to validate the unholy. Paul insisted that non-Particulars 'ought to repent and be ashamed of that abomination' of refusing believer's baptism, 'before they come to have a sight of the pattern of the House of God'.²⁰⁷

Kiffen and Paul's argument here might imply inter-denominational intolerance, but they insisted they still loved their fellow Nonconformists and collaborated with them. Kiffen wrote, 'a total Exclusion of other Christians from our Love, Charity, and Christian-Communion ... we do not look upon Baptism to be such a Wall of Division, neither do we so practice it.'²⁰⁸ Paul also assured Bunyan that 'We can as boldly assert our Love to all the Godly, though Unbaptized, as you', adding 'I think we have not been behind hand to manifest it, either in private Duties of Peity with them, wherein we are agreed; or in works of Charity towards them, in all their sufferings; according to our

²⁰⁴ Paul, *Serious Reflections*, 10–11.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 6.

²⁰⁶ Kiffen, *Sober Discourse*, 6.

²⁰⁷ Paul, *Serious Reflections*, 7.

²⁰⁸ Kiffen, *Sober Discourse*, 19.

utmost ability.²⁰⁹ This further shows how, even among closed-unionists, inter-denominational collaboration was already taking place, despite religious differences. Kiffen also maintained that Nonconformists' 'Error' around baptism was 'not so fundamental as to endanger their Eternal state, we esteem them Christian Brethren and Saints, for whose further illumination we daily put up our Prayers.'²¹⁰ Ultimately, Kiffen believed 'it would be a blessed thing, if while Christians differ in their light, the best knowing but in part, it might be made up by an increase of love, this would convince the World they were Christs Disciples indeed.'²¹¹ Indeed, in 1676, Bristol's Particular minister, Andrew Gifford (1641-1721), asked the London Particulars whether it was appropriate to pray not only with godly Nonconformists, but even with unbelievers. In response, thirteen London Particular leaders, including Kiffen, wrote to Gifford that, 'Prayer cannot (by any just reason) be excluded, and if prayer be intended, 'tis comprehensive of all mankind.'²¹² These Particulars were evidently willing to participate in some aspects of Christian worship with others. Consequently, the London Particulars' position could be more accurately described as limited communion. The Lord's Supper came with a higher degree of intolerance than other facets of Puritan life, but aside from that, collaboration occurred. Kiffen insisted that other Dissenters were never excluded 'from our Love and Affection, for we hope they walk according to their Light'.²¹³

Nonetheless, the closed-unionists qualified this 'Love and Affection' by saying that any such love also required honesty. This is reminiscent of Walsham's concept of 'charitable hatred', of the faithful protecting the truth, and expressing kindness to those who would otherwise unwittingly be led to hell itself. She identifies

²⁰⁹ Paul, *Serious Reflections*, 30.

²¹⁰ Kiffen, *Sober Discourse*, 6.

²¹¹ Kiffen, in Paul, *Serious Reflections*, A5.

²¹² Joseph Ivimey, *A History of the English Baptists*, vol. 1 (London, 1811), 420.

²¹³ Kiffen, *Sober Discourse*, 6.

this as an Anglican justification for suppressing Nonconformists.²¹⁴ Yet even as they resented such ‘kindly discipline’ from Conformists, closed-communicionists applied the very same concept in a congregational setting. Kiffen insisted that ‘no motions of Peace are to be made or received with the loss of Truth.’²¹⁵ For Paul, to ‘indulge them in any act of disobedience’ could never be loving. ‘Cannot we love their Persons, Parts, graces,’ he asked, ‘but we must love their Sins, and disorders? I take it to be the highest act of friendship to be faithful to these professors, and to tell them they want [*vis.* lack] this one thing in Gospel order, which ought not to be left undone.’²¹⁶ Bunyan’s compromise was therefore not love at all: ‘Is this your faithfulness to your friends, that you pretend so much love to? I doubt when it comes to be weighed in God’s Ballance, it will be found no less than Flattery, for which you will be reproved.’²¹⁷ Instead, Paul advocated using closed-communicion as a loving discipline.

May I not love a Saint, as a Saint for Christ’s sake, unless I hold Church-Communion with him? Unless I countenance him in a breach of Gospel Order? Nay ... yet I ought to love him: though I am forced to deal with him, and to withdraw from him, yet I am not to count him as an enemy, but admonish as a brother in some respects.²¹⁸

Surprisingly, Paul and Kiffen also relied heavily on the precedent of the Church’s history for their position, in ways that inadvertently suggested toleration of Anglicans. As Biblicists, the Particulars often disregarded the Church’s history, often aligning it with Catholicism. Yet at the outset of the communion debate, Kiffen had written in the forward to *Some Serious Reflections* that open Particulars broke the precedent of the

²¹⁴ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 228.

²¹⁵ Kiffen, *Sober Discourse*, Preface.

²¹⁶ Paul, *Serious Reflections*, 30.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 30–31.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 31.

post-apostolic Church.²¹⁹ In *A Sober Discourse*, he elaborated on this point, giving an extensive survey of major theologians throughout history who had claimed baptism was necessary to eat the Lord's Supper. Moreover, Kiffen's chief source for his survey was the Rev. Dr. William Cave, an Anglican rector.²²⁰ Cave was a leading patristic scholar, having published his work on the early Church, *Primitive Christianity*, in 1673.²²¹ He was also a vehement Conformist, authoring a major defence of uniformity in 1683.²²² In citing Cave, Kiffen openly ignored the fact that he was drawing from a paedobaptist, who would have despised the position Kiffen was asserting. This indicates just how far Kiffen was willing to go in his limited communion with others, but it also inevitably undermines the logical coherence of his argument.

Kiffen was not the only Restoration closed-communionist to cite paedobaptist theologians to support inter-denominational toleration. Hanserd Knollys did so in *The World that Now is* in 1681. There Knollys surveyed the concept of a 'bishop' throughout history, citing Irenaeus, Chrysostom, Ambrose, Calvin, Beza, and others.²²³ Knollys argued that, contrary to Anglicans' claims, 'bishops' historically were more like Particular ministers, despite the fact that none of the theologians he cited would have supported Particular ecclesiology. Moreover, Knollys' entire motivation for discussing this topic, was to encourage Christian unity. He insisted that, 'sanctified Believers ought not to separate themselves from the true Churches of God', if they 'Worship him in Spirit and in Truth, and walk in the Faith and Order of the Gospel, according to the Rule of the written Word of God, so far as they have attained.'²²⁴ The closed position,

²¹⁹ Kiffen in *ibid.*, A3.

²²⁰ Kiffen, *Sober Discourse*, 69, 72.

²²¹ William Cave, *Primitive Christianity, or, the Religion of the Ancient Christians in the First Ages of the Gospel* (London: J.M., 1673).

²²² William Cave, *A Serious Exhortation, with Some Important Advices, Relating to the Late Cases About Conformity Recommended to the Present Dissenters from the Church of England*. (London: T. Moore & J. Ashburne, 1683).

²²³ Hanserd Knollys, *The World That Now Is; and the World That Is to Come* (London: Thomas Snowden, 1681), 67.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, 96.

therefore, seems to have relied on a series of contradictions: they refused to have communion with people they collaborated with in other faith-based projects. Moreover, they cited the very paedo-baptists they wished to exclude, in support of their position to exclude them. Knollys, Paul or Kiffen never attempted to reconcile these contradictions.

Another contradiction within this debate was the mutually intolerant tone between Paul and Bunyan. Previous Particular communion debates had never become this heated. For example, from Henry Jessey's baptism in 1644, right until his death in 1663, he had firmly upheld open communion, while nonetheless maintaining friendships with closed-communionists.²²⁵ Such accommodation was not evident in this paper war. From the outset, Paul wrote of Bunyan,

You by your fixing of these absurdities upon this innocent Principle and Practice, do not content your self to degrade all Baptized Brethren, of this perswasion; but with too much impudence, do Render them amongst the work of men, meddling with the Secrets of the most High ... as though nothing short, in your rage, would serve you then to defie all the Brethren of the Baptized way, and Blaspheme that dwell in Heaven.²²⁶

Specifically, Paul criticised Bunyan's decision to print his position publicly, without first consulting the London Particulars. After they had read Bunyan's *Confession*, they had asked to see him while he was visiting London, but he had refused, leaving the city.²²⁷ Instead, Bunyan responded to Paul by publishing another work in which he accused 'the rigid Brethren of your way' of 'continual Assaults' against his congregation at Bedford 'if peradventure they might break us in pieces, and draw from us Disciples

²²⁵ Murray Tolmie, *The Triumph of the Saints: The Separate Churches of London, 1616-1649* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 60.

²²⁶ Paul, *Serious Reflections*, 3.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, 59.

after them.’ These attacks had gone on ‘for no less than these sixteen or eighteen years.’ Indeed, ‘with many others they have often tampered, if haply their seeds of Division might take’.²²⁸ Their closed position not only threatened tolerant collaboration with other Nonconformists, but also among Particulars. Ken Simpson posits that, despite eventually agreeing to disagree, Bunyan and Paul could well have now doubted each other’s salvation.²²⁹ Ultimately, in the midst of Paul and Bunyan’s attacks, Kiffen seems to have been a calming influence. Even though he had written the Forward of *Some Serious Reflections*, he had not used Paul’s aggressive tone. When Bunyan had complained about Paul’s accusations, he had qualified that, ‘What Mr Kiffin hath done in the matter I forgive, and love him never the worse’.²³⁰ Kiffen wrote in a much more diffusive manner in *A Sober Discourse* as well. Richard Greaves has observed that, ‘Kiffin quoted and refuted Bunyan without mentioning his name ... Thus Bunyan and Kiffin, though not relinquishing their tenets, ended the controversy on an irenic note.’²³¹

This debate further reveals several important points about religious toleration during the Restoration. Firstly, it demonstrates how toleration could be applied in various contexts differently: even as Particulars resented the ‘loving discipline’ of Conformity, many of them felt it was their responsibility to discipline themselves in congregational settings. Collaboration with wider Nonconformists in certain projects could be a justification for worshipping together for some Particulars, but not others. Both sides evidently supported inter-denominational collaboration among Nonconformists, built on loving forbearance. For closed-unionists, inter-denominational toleration ended before the Lord’s Table. For those like Bunyan, toleration could extend to the Lord’s Supper, because of the broader godliness non-

²²⁸ Bunyan, *Differences*, 8.

²²⁹ Simpson, “‘The Desired Country’”, 227.

²³⁰ Bunyan, *A Defence*, A3.

²³¹ Greaves, *Glimpses of Glory*, 301.

Baptists could display. The very fact this debate was occurring at all, indicates that, more broadly, inter-denominational toleration was already regularly taking place at a congregational level. Whatever rigid distinctions still existed between Particulars and other Nonconformists, like the Presbyterians, must have been breaking down. Ordinary people were worshipping together, and taking the Lord's Supper together, more regularly, sparking the need for more vehement debate. Moreover, the closed position took a heavy blow in this paper-war. Not only had Bunyan effectively argued for open communion, the closed-communionists had inadvertently raised a number of contradictions within their own position.

CONCLUSION

Alongside other Dissenters, Particulars contributed to a shift in English society toward toleration during the Restoration. Whether in magisterial contexts such as the royal court, or ordinary contexts like the marketplace, they utilised whatever they had so they became too valuable to lose. By the end of this period, multiple contexts of toleration were simultaneously interacting with each other: as the king and Parliament joined in magisterial intolerance, and Nonconformists found subordinate toleration futile in stopping it, they focused on other approaches. Their use of persecution motifs achieved two important ends. Firstly, it garnered sympathy for their plight and resentment at Conformists, facilitating ordinary toleration. Yet it also helped Nonconformists join together, overlooking previous antagonisms in the face of oppression. This in turn raised all manner of problems for the Particulars as the communion debates reveal. Moreover, this new collaboration meant Blackwood's unity of necessity, discussed in chapter 2, was gradually becoming the chief mechanism in inter-denominational toleration. As Conformist suppression escalated into the 1680s, this type of unity among

Nonconformists would grow with it. The next chapter examines this dynamic, especially in the Rye House Plot and Monmouth Rebellion.

CHAPTER 4:

THE PARTICULAR BAPTISTS IN SEDITION

When men *renounce* their *Baptisme*, count the *blood* of their *dying Saviour* in the *Eucharist* a *vain thing* ... wresting the Sacred Scriptures to patronize *Rebellion*, there is more hope of a *Barbarian* than of such *Apostates*.¹

The Anglican rector, Thomas Long, preached these words on 26 July 1685, while celebrating the Monmouth rebels' defeat. Long specifically mentioned one of the Particular rebels, Richard Rumbold, who had previously owned the Rye House Inn, from where the Plot derives its name. Long insisted 'Rumbold and his Ruffians' were evidence that, while 'Anabaptists' purported to defend all Protestants from Catholicism, they were not only rebels, but 'Apostates'.² This chapter examines the dynamics of toleration in England between 1678 and 1685. It reveals that there were cycles of intolerance, between a Conformist government and Nonconformists, and how the Particulars' were involved in these cycles. It also explores the Particulars' collaboration with other Dissenters in acts of sedition, to show the limitations of a unity of necessity in inter-denominational cooperation.

The decade prior to 1688 in England can be briefly summarised around a series of events that revolve around whether Catholicism could be tolerated in the English government. In 1678, rumours emerged of a 'Popish Plot' to kill Charles II, in order to place his heir and brother, James Duke of York, on the throne. These rumours heightened concerns about James' Catholicism, resulting in the Exclusion Crisis, where Parliament debated whether to remove James from the line of succession. Charles, who

¹ Thomas Long, *The Unreasonableness of Rebellion* (London: J.C. and Freeman Collins, 1685), 22.

² *Ibid.*, 21.

supported his brother's right to the crown, won this Parliamentary crisis by 1681. Then in 1683, a small band of conspirators led by Charles' illegitimate son, James Duke of Monmouth, plotted to assassinate both the king and heir, and begin an insurrection. When the Plot failed, Monmouth and several other conspirators escaped to the Netherlands. In 1685, upon his father's death and James' coronation, Monmouth and his men returned to the west of England to launch a rebellion, with hopes of him becoming king. Despite raising an army of 5,000 men, this rebellion failed dismally, resulting in the Bloody Assizes in which many of the rebels were executed. In the aftermath James II now seemed impervious to any further threats, and thus began seeking toleration for his Catholic faith in England. This proved unacceptable to the English elites, leading them to invite James' daughter and son-in-law, Mary and William of Orange, to replace him. In a remarkably bloodless coup, William and Mary took the throne in 1688.

Such an overview focuses heavily on the elite, whether king, heir, Parliament, the Anglican Church, or aristocracy. A richer understanding of these events emerges, however, when the participation of Nonconformists, such as the Particulars, is included. It is easy to assume that the Dissenters involved were merely responding to the elite, whether their Whig allies or Tory antagonists. For example, the 1685 rebellion is usually called 'The Monmouth Rebellion', after the aristocrat who 'led' it, despite some doubts surrounding how much he was really in charge.³ At the time, it was commonly called 'The Western Rebellion', partly to associate it with the Nonconformists in the West Country who fought in it.⁴ Indeed, the West had been widely identified with Nonconformity since the Civil War. Therefore, this chapter uses the term 'Western

³ Peter Earle, *Monmouth's Rebels: The Road to Sedgemoor, 1685* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1977), ix; Edward Terrill, *The Records of a Church of Christ Meeting in Broadmead, Bristol, 1640-1687*, ed. Edward Bean Underhill (London: Hanserd Knollys Society, 1847), 71.

⁴ Anon., *A True Account of the Behaviour and Manner of the Execution of Six Persons Viz. Henry Cornish and Elizabeth Gaunt Condemned for High-Treason* (London: E. Mallet, 1685), 2; Anon., *An Answer by an Anabaptist to the Three Considerations Proposed to Mr William Penn by a Pretended Baptist Concerning a Magna Charta for Liberty of Conscience* (London: J. Clowes, 1688), 11.

Rebellion’ rather than ‘Monmouth Rebellion’ wherever possible, to recognise this common term from the period, and offers a greater appreciation of the Particulars’ role in these events.

The importance of the Rye House Plot and the Western Rebellion can easily be missed, caught between what Jacqueline Rose describes as ‘the two great crises of the Restoration’ as ‘that of 1678-82 and that of 1688-9’.⁵ At times, historians have questioned whether the Rye House Plot existed at all, not least because it failed so dismally.⁶ According to B. R. White, it was ‘like so much in this age of plotting, a very muddled affair.’⁷ Peter Hinds reduces it to a ‘loose appellation’ around ‘a cluster of alleged conspiracies’.⁸ Historians sometimes see the Plot as merely a Whig or Tory construct, with Andrew Murphy describing the Plot as ‘a purported scheme’ in his 2001 book’s single paragraph on the Plot and Rebellion.⁹ The main reason for Charles’ intolerance of Dissenters after 1681 then becomes merely their supporting Whig calls for James’ exclusion. That scholars often focus on the parliamentary Exclusion Crisis is understandable – as Murphy states, it ‘displayed the deep divisions among English elites on the subject of religion and monarchy.’¹⁰ Still, Charles prosecuted many Nonconformists for sedition, not just for support of Whigs in Parliament. Samuel S. Thomas attributes wider social antagonism to Dissenters to their support for ‘the Whigs

⁵ Jacqueline Rose, *Godly Kingship in Restoration England: The Politics of the Royal Supremacy, 1660-1688* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 11; See also Andrew R. Murphy, *Liberty, Conscience, and Toleration: The Political Thought of William Penn* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 23–24.

⁶ Alan Marshall, ‘Rye House Plotters (Act. 1683)’, ed. H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison, *O.D.N.B.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

⁷ B. R. White, *The English Baptists of the Seventeenth Century* (London: Baptist Historical Society, 1983), 132.

⁸ Peter Hinds, ‘Roger L’Estrange, the Rye House Plot, and the Regulation of Political Discourse in Late-Seventeenth-Century London’, *The Library* 3, no. 1 (1 March 2002): 5.

⁹ Andrew R. Murphy, *Conscience and Community: Revisiting Toleration and Religious Dissent in Early Modern England and America* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), 133.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

[who] had threatened the monarchy' at Parliament.¹¹ Thomas is correct, but this chapter reveals how some Dissenters threatened the monarch's life itself. Attempted regicide inevitably played a part in broader concerns about Dissenters.

Ever since the Whig historians, there has also been a tendency to focus on the elite when specifically discussing the Plot and Rebellion, though recently that has changed. In his *Life, Progresses and Rebellion of James, Duke of Monmouth*, George Roberts focused upon aristocratic plotters like the Duke of Monmouth, the Earl of Essex, or William, Lord Russell, and suggested they were merely accompanied by 'a minor plot of inferior conspirators'.¹² This undervaluing of the Nonconformist involvement in the Exclusion Crisis, Rye House Plot and Western Rebellion has not gone unchallenged. Tim Harris warns that by over-emphasising Parliamentary politics, other spheres of influence in England have been ignored.¹³ Murphy recognises, 'we are wise, in approaching this "exclusion crisis," not to limit our gaze to the mechanics of parliamentary debate concerning the succession' since it was part of 'a broader social upheaval in which countless thousands took part.'¹⁴ Melinda Zook also insists that once the Parliamentary phase failed, the Whig movement rapidly became 'more determined, and more radical'. This made Dissenters instrumental in creating what she calls a 'revolutionary culture' in England, preparing the way for 1688.¹⁵ Alan Marshall also argues that the 'lower level' of plotters were 'perhaps more dangerous' than their

¹¹ Samuel S. Thomas, *Creating Communities in Restoration England: Parish and Congregation in Oliver Heywood's Halifax* (Boston, MA: BRILL, 2013), 93–94.

¹² George Roberts, *The Life, Progresses, and Rebellion of James, Duke of Monmouth: Volume I* (London: Brown, Green and Longmans, 1844), 147; See also Hinds, 'L'Estrange, Rye House Plot', 6; Marshall, 'Rye House Plotters (Act. 1683)'.

¹³ Tim Harris, *Politics Under the Later Stuarts: Party Conflict in a Divided Society, 1660-1715* (London: Longman, 1993), 82.

¹⁴ Murphy, *Liberty, Conscience, and Toleration*, 91.

¹⁵ Melinda S. Zook, *Radical Whigs and Conspiratorial Politics in Late Stuart England* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010), xii.

aristocratic collaborators.¹⁶ As Peter Earle trenchantly puts it, ‘A rebellion is nothing without rebels’, and most of these were Dissenters.¹⁷

The specific role of Baptists in these events is rarely acknowledged. They are usually delineated as part of wider Nonconformity – the Index of Mark Knights’ *Politics and Opinion in Crisis*, has, ‘baptists *see* nonconformists’.¹⁸ Alternatively, their Baptist identity is only given a brief biographical mention, quickly passed over, and thus their prominence is left unnoticed. Where it is recognised, as with John Marshall, it becomes a reason to dismiss Dissenters’ role in these events entirely, since ‘those who seem to have been involved were almost without exception not Presbyterians but rather a small number of Baptists and Congregationalists.’¹⁹ I recognise, of course, that this omission is hardly surprising: it is easy to miss a small Nonconformist sect, especially when the Nonconformists’ involvement has generally been lost, in the wake of figures like Monmouth, Shaftesbury, Judge Jeffreys, as well as the kings, Charles and James. Yet this chapter reveals that Baptists were at the heart of sedition, raising understandable security concerns for the English government.

This chapter, then, elaborates upon why Charles became intolerant of Dissenters: it was not merely because of their loose affiliation with the Whigs, but because they were now identified as fanatically seditious in their own right. Thus Charles’ intolerance was an act of prosecution, not persecution. Nevertheless, Dissenters reframed this punishment as persecution by a tyrannical government, justifying further resistance. This created a cycle of intolerance, of ever-increasing magisterial and insubordinate intolerance. Dissenters first manifested their insubordination in less-violent ways, such

¹⁶ Marshall, ‘Rye House Plotters (Act. 1683)’.

¹⁷ Earle, *Monmouth’s Rebels*, ix.

¹⁸ Mark Knights, *Politics And Opinion in Crisis, 1678-1681* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 409.

¹⁹ John Marshall, *John Locke, Toleration and Early Enlightenment Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 448.

as petitions, pamphlets, and other publications. Eventually though, they escalated to violent methods, exacerbating retribution by the magistracy. Simultaneously, this insubordinate intolerance fuelled inter-denominational toleration, as Dissenters began collaborating more than ever. This was Christopher Blackwood's unity of necessity: Nonconformists working together against a common enemy, an increasingly 'tyrannical' magistracy. This chapter also shows how fragile such unity was, directly contributing to the failure of both the Plot and Rebellion.

This chapter discusses the Particulars' interactions with 1680s sedition in three sections: the first discusses who of them were involved, the second examines why, and the last section explores how. Firstly, it establishes that Particular and General Baptists engaged in insubordinate intolerance, especially its more violent manifestations. The second section examines how Conformists and Nonconformists perpetuated a cycle of inter-denominational intolerance, and how this spilled over into magisterial and insubordinate intolerance. The last section explores Dissenters' methods of sedition, beginning with less violent methods of insubordinate intolerance. It then shows just how deeply Particulars were involved in the Plot and Rebellion, as well as highlighting the inter-denominational dynamics between the Particulars and their co-seditionists.

1. THE PARTICULARS INVOLVED IN SEDITION

In this section, I establish that Particulars were significantly involved in sedition, especially the Plot and the Rebellion, as were some General Baptists. I also highlight the strong influence of Particular seditionists in the West Country of England, especially in Bristol. At this point, my focus is on these seditionists' prominence within their denomination – I will leave their specific contributions to the Plot and Rebellion until later in the chapter. Many of these Baptist seditionists were not denominational outliers.

The proportion of those involved who were Baptists, and especially Particulars, was considerable, and included people who were prominent members of some of the largest, most important Baptist congregations in the country.

By focusing on the Particulars, I am not suggesting they were the only denomination involved in sedition, but they were more heavily involved than might be easily assumed. Many of the aristocrats involved were Anglicans, and there were also many Presbyterians – indeed, the Rye House Plot was first called ‘the Presbyterian Plot’ by the authorities.²⁰ A full denominational breakdown of the seditious Dissenters is impossible. Nonetheless, Melinda Zook has helpfully created a list of the most prominent ‘Radical Whigs’ who were involved in seditious activities from 1681-85, seventy of whom were involved in the Plot and Rebellion.²¹ For many of these, no denominational delineation can be determined, but at least fourteen of Zook’s list were Particulars, with another being a General Baptist. I have identified a further twenty Particulars and two General Baptists significantly involved in these events, not included in Zook’s list. If Zook and my list are combined, thirty-six Baptists were involved in these events, just over a third of the identified seditionists. These people are listed in Table 4.1 below: those Baptist seditionists I have specifically identified that are not on Zook’s sample receive an asterisk. This table includes whether they were a General Baptist or Particular, from the West Country (including Bristol) or London, if they were a minister, and whether they participated in the Plot or the Rebellion.

<i>Name</i>	<i>General/Particular</i>	<i>West/London</i>	<i>Minister</i>	<i>Publisher</i>	<i>Rye House Plot</i>	<i>Western Rebellion</i>
Samuel Clisson *	P	L				X
Thomas Collier *	P	W	X			X
‘Mr Collins’ *	P	L	X		X	
Henry Danvers	G	L	X		X	
John Darby *	G	L		X		

²⁰ Thomas Bayly Howell, *A Complete Collection of State Trials and Proceedings for High Treason and Other Crimes: Volume IX* (London: Longman, 1816), 975.

²¹ Zook, *Radical Whigs*, 2–3, 196–200.

<i>Name</i>	<i>General/Particular</i>	<i>West/London</i>	<i>Minister</i>	<i>Publisher</i>	<i>Rye House Plot</i>	<i>Western Rebellion</i>
Elizabeth Gaunt *	P	L			X	X
Andrew Gifford *	P	W	X			X
John Gladman *	P	L			X	
George Gosfright *	P	L				X
Benjamin Harris *	P	L		X		
Benjamin Hewling *	P	L				X
William Hewling *	P	L				X
Thomas Hicks	P	L	X		X	X
James Holloway	P	W			X	
Abraham Holmes	P	L			X	X
Blake Holmes *	P	L				X
Josiah Keeling *	P	L			X	
John Keeling *	P	L			X	
Samuel Larke *	P	W	X			X
George Larkin *	P	L		X		
John Manley	P	L			X	X
Thomas Parsons *	G	L				X
William Raddon *	P	L			X	
John Roe	P	W			X	
Richard Rumbold	P	L			X	X
William Rumbold	P	L			X	X
Ann Smith *	P	L				X
Francis Smith	G	L	X	X		
Joseph Tiley	P	W			X	X
Thomas Venner *	P	L				X
Samuel Venner *	P	L				X
Nathaniel Wade	P	W			X	X
William Wade	P	W			X	X
Thomas Walcot	P	L			X	
Constance Ward *	P	L			X	
John Wildman	P	L			X	X

Table 4.1.²²

²² Arnold H.K. Baines, 'Monmouth, Kiffin and the Gosfrights', *Baptist Quarterly* 20, no. 3 (July 1963): 129; 'Devonshire Membership Lists', in Larry J. Kreitzer, ed., *William Kiffin and His World*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Regent's Park College, 2010), 202; Robin Clifton, 'Rumbold, Richard (c.1622–1685)', ed. H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison, *O.D.N.B.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Hannah Hewling-Cromwell, 'Concerning Her Brothers Wm. and Benjamin, Executed at Lyme Regis and Taunton in 1685 Respectively', 1685, TPHlrm/1, Somerset Heritage Centre; Walter Cross, *Caleb's Spirit Parallel'd in a Sermon Preach'd at the Funeral of the Late Mrs. Constancy Ward* (London: J.D., 1697), 8; Rachel Adcock, *Baptist Women's Writings in Revolutionary Culture, 1640-1680* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2015), 193; Melinda S. Zook, 'Nursing Sedition: Women, Dissent, and the Whig Struggle', in *Fear, Exclusion and Revolution: Roger Morrice and Britain in the 1680s*, ed. Jason McElligott (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006), 194–97; Peter Hinds, 'Roger L'Estrange, the Rye House Plot, and the Regulation of Political Discourse in Late-Seventeenth-Century London', *The Library* 3, no. 1 (1 March 2002): 18; Beth Lynch, 'Smith, Francis (d. 1691)', ed. H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison, *O.D.N.B.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, January 2008); Mark Knights, 'Harris, Benjamin (c.1647–1720)', ed. H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison, *O.D.N.B.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, January 2008); Mark Knights, *Politics And Opinion in Crisis, 1678-1681*

For many of these people, little can be gleaned beyond their denominational affiliation, though for some more information is available. Many of the seditious Particulars were from London, with the royal spy James Harris claiming, ‘most of the Dissenters, especially the Baptists’ promoted the Plot throughout the capital.²³ Many were prominent members of their congregations, including several from William Kiffen’s church. George Gosfricht, who was involved in both the Plot and Rebellion, is found in every available membership list for Kiffen’s congregation.²⁴ Gosfricht and his wife Margaret even named their daughter ‘Kiffeana’, indicating their close relationship with their minister.²⁵ William Rumbold also went to Kiffen’s church after 1670, though he was absent from 1683 to 1689.²⁶ Rumbold was asked to join the Plot but refused, although he did not then alert the authorities.²⁷ This may well be because he was the brother of Richard Rumbold, the senior plotter and rebel.²⁸ William Rumbold would also later contribute £100 to the Rebellion.²⁹ Kiffen himself seems to have been completely uninvolved in the Plot and Rebellion. His granddaughter Hannah Hewling-

(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 176; Thomas Bayly Howell, *A Complete Collection of State Trials and Proceedings for High Treason and Other Crimes: Volume IX* (London: Longman, 1816), 365, 381–90, 411–19, 426, 547; Joseph Ivimey, *A History of the English Baptists*, vol. 1 (London, 1811), 237; Joseph Ivimey, *A History of the English Baptists*, vol. 4 (London, 1830), 293; Andrew Gifford, ‘Preface to the Western Martyrology’, ca 1750; John Latimer, *The Annals of Bristol in the Seventeenth Century* (Bristol: William George’s sons, 1900), 417–18; W. MacDonald Wigfield, *The Monmouth Rebellion: A Social History, Including the Complete Text of Wade’s Narrative* (Bradford-on-Avon: Moonraker Press, 1980); James Holloway, *The Free and Voluntary Confession and Narrative* (London, 1684), 4; John Willcock, *A Scots Earl in Covenanting Times: Being Life and Times of Archibald, 9th Earl of Argyll* (Edinburgh: A. Elliot, 1907), 295; Richard L. Greaves, ‘Danvers, Henry (b. in or before 1619, d. 1687/8)’, ed. H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison, *O.D.N.B.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/7134>; Helen King, ‘Chamberlen, Hugh, the Elder (b. 1630x34, d. after 1720)’, ed. H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison, *O.D.N.B.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, January 2011), <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/5062>.

²³ F.H. Blackburne Daniell and Francis Bickley, eds., *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic, of the Reign of Charles II, 1683 (July-September)*, vol. 25: Jul-Sep 1683 (London: His Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1934), 216.

²⁴ ‘Devonshire Square Baptist Church Membership Lists, c.1664-90’, in Larry J. Kreitzer, ed., *William Kiffen and His World*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Regent’s Park College, 2010), 210, 227, 255.

²⁵ Arnold H.K. Baines, ‘Monmouth, Kiffin and the Gosfrights’, *Baptist Quarterly* 20, no. 3 (July 1963): 129.

²⁶ ‘Devonshire Membership Lists’, in Kreitzer, *William Kiffen and His World*, 2010, 1:202.

²⁷ Howell, *State Trials: Vol IX*, 368.

²⁸ Robin Clifton, ‘Rumbold, Richard (c.1622–1685)’, ed. H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison, *O.D.N.B.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

²⁹ *Ibid.*

Cromwell asserted that the Rebellion had been ‘utterly unknown to any Relations’, other than her two brothers, Benjamin and William, who became officers in Monmouth’s army.³⁰ Zook has also identified three seditious Particular women – Constance Ward, Elizabeth Gaunt, and Ann Smith – though she does not include them in her list discussed above.³¹ Both Gaunt and Ward also attended Kiffen’s Devonshire Square Particular congregation.³² Gaunt was burnt at the stake for treason in 1685, having regularly offered sanctuary to seditious. In Ward’s eulogy sermon, published in 1697, one of Devonshire’s ministers lamented Ward having been ‘deprived’ of the ‘Honour’ of ‘Martyrdom’, given that ‘it is well known her Guilt and her sister *Gaunt*’s were of the same kind (Guilt shall I call it, or Glory?)’.³³

Particular and General Baptists were also prominent in the act of publishing seditious texts. Hinds highlights that who published a work, and especially their denominational affiliation, added ‘political import’ to publications in this period.³⁴ John Darby, described by L’Estrange as ‘a bold, cunning and bloody Anabaptist’, published short works against the Anglican Church, as well as the controversial execution speech of William Lord Russell, one of the plotters.³⁵ Darby was a General Baptist, as was Francis Smith, who also published many of John Bunyan’s writings from the 1670s onwards.³⁶ Henry Care was a major Whig publisher, and while he was a Presbyterian, he also regularly cooperated with Particulars. He had dedicated his own book, *The Jewish*

³⁰ Hannah Hewling-Cromwell, ‘Draft Letter to Queen Anne’, 1710, 731/153, Cambridgeshire County Record Office, Huntingdon.

³¹ Melinda S. Zook, ‘Nursing Sedition: Women, Dissent, and the Whig Struggle’, in *Fear, Exclusion and Revolution: Roger Morrice and Britain in the 1680s*, ed. Jason McElligott (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006), 194, 197; See also Rachel Adcock, *Baptist Women’s Writings in Revolutionary Culture, 1640-1680* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2015), 193.

³² ‘Devonshire Membership Lists’, in Kreitzer, *William Kiffen and His World*, 2010, 1:200, 220, 242.

³³ Walter Cross, *Caleb’s Spirit Parallel’d in a Sermon Preach’d at the Funeral of the Late Mrs. Constancy Ward* (London: J.D., 1697), 8.

³⁴ Hinds, ‘L’Estrange, Rye House Plot’, 18.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Beth Lynch, ‘Smith, Francis (d. 1691)’, ed. H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison, *O.D.N.B.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, January 2008).

Calendar, to Kiffen in 1674, describing him as someone with ‘the right understanding of the Sacred Text’.³⁷ George Larkin was Particular printer who published exclusionist propaganda, including the Particular minister Benjamin Keach’s anti-Catholic tract, *Sion in Distress*.³⁸ The most prominent Particular printer was Benjamin Harris, a member of Keach’s congregation.³⁹ Harris was also frequently assisted by William Raddon, another Particular later involved in the Plot.⁴⁰

Several Particular ministers also wrote works with seditious undertones, although they generally avoided direct involvement in violent sedition. The Particular plotter Thomas Walcott testified to having approached ‘an Anabaptist preacher’, ‘Mr Collins’, to gain support among Particular clergy in 1683. While Collins believed ‘the intended assassination and insurrection were both lawful and necessary’, the ministers he approached refused to join him.⁴¹ According to the rebel John Ayloff, in 1685 he had travelled to London before the Rebellion to seek support from ‘Nonconformist ministers’, including Particulars, but they had all refused to speak to him.⁴² Nonetheless, there were some Particular ministers who did become involved in sedition. According to the plotter Robert West, Thomas Hicks was ‘a great ringleader of the Anabaptists’, who had boasted he could establish an army of over 20,000 Baptists, including 1,500 cavalry.⁴³ Having said that, during his own interrogation, Hicks claimed he had discouraged the insurrection. At best, West’s number seems a gross exaggeration.⁴⁴ The

³⁷ Henry Care, *The Jewish Calendar Explained* (London, 1674), A3; Lois G. Schworer, ‘Care, Henry (1646/7–1688)’, ed. H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison, *O.D.N.B.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

³⁸ Benjamin Keach, *Sion in Distress, or, the Groans of the Protestant Church [Sic]* (London: George Larkin, 1681).

³⁹ Mark Knights, ‘Harris, Benjamin (c.1647–1720)’, ed. H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison, *O.D.N.B.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, January 2008).

⁴⁰ Knights, *Politics and Opinion*, 176.

⁴¹ Howell, *State Trials: Vol IX*, 419, 426.

⁴² Nathaniel Wade, ‘Typescript Copies of Narrative of Nathaniel Wade, Rebel, with Correspondence’, 1685, 270, T/PH/wig 2/4, Somerset Heritage Centre.

⁴³ Howell, *State Trials: Vol IX*, 404.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 389.

General Baptist minister, Henry Danvers, was also heavily involved in both the Plot and the Rebellion. Danvers had written a work on liberty of conscience in 1649, and against infant baptism in 1675.⁴⁵ Thus, while most of London's Baptist leadership avoided sedition, it was not a purely lay exercise.

Many Particular ministers from the West Country gladly led their congregants into sedition. Thomas Collier, for example, had been one of the most influential Particulars in the west throughout the 1650s, editing the *Western Association Records* and signing nearly every authoritative letter by that association.⁴⁶ Samuel Larke led the Particulars in Combe Raleigh in Devon. In the 1650s, he had been a Particular leader in London, also advising congregations in Wales.⁴⁷ Upon Monmouth's landing, both Collier and Larke actively recruited for the cause, with Larke ultimately executed for his involvement.⁴⁸ Another Particular minister involved in the Rebellion was Andrew Gifford, from Bristol's Pithay congregation, sister church to Broadmead.⁴⁹ Gifford was often called 'the Apostle to the West' for his extensive evangelism.⁵⁰ His involvement in the Rebellion remained a secret for over sixty years, until his grandson, Rev. Dr. Andrew Gifford Jnr., made it public. Gifford Jnr. also hand-wrote in his copy of the *Western Martyrology*, of how 'my grandfather, was with several others in the City of Bristol, deeply engaged in the affair of the Duke of Monmouth.'⁵¹

As Gifford Jnr's statement suggests, many of the Particular laity from Bristol – and indeed the entire West Country – were heavily engaged in sedition during the early

⁴⁵ Henry Danvers, *Certain Quaeries Concerning Liberty of Conscience* (London, 1649); Henry Danvers, *A Rejoynder to Mr. Wills, His Vindiciae Wherein the Antiquity for Believers and Novelty of Infant Baptism Is Further Confirmed* (London: Francis Smith, 1675).

⁴⁶ B. R. White, *Association Records of the Particular Baptists of England, Wales and Ireland to 1660* (London: Baptist Historical Society, 1971), vols 2.69-101.

⁴⁷ Joseph Ivimey, *A History of the English Baptists*, vol. 1 (London, 1811), 237.

⁴⁸ Joseph Ivimey, *A History of the English Baptists*, vol. 4 (London, 1830), 293.

⁴⁹ White, *The English Baptists*, 133.

⁵⁰ A. Gordon Hamlin, 'Note: Pithay Chapel, Bristol', *Baptist Quarterly* 15, no. 8 (October 1954): 378.

⁵¹ Andrew Gifford, 'Preface to the Western Martyrology', ca 1750.

1680s.⁵² Bristol provided many significant figures in both the Plot and Rebellion, including James Holloway, Joseph Tiley, and the brothers Nathaniel and William Wade.⁵³ Not only did Nathaniel Wade (d.1718) become one of the chief conspirators and a senior officer in the Rebellion, but he asserted that 200 Bristol Particulars would gladly support any insurrection.⁵⁴ Tiley also assured his fellow plotters in 1683 that, ‘there was a considerable party in Bristol, well provided for, and almost impatient for action’.⁵⁵ In his 1683 confession, Holloway claimed another 150 Particulars from Taunton would have also joined them.⁵⁶ The Rebellion supports these estimates. Particular rebels came from at least nine western congregations, including major towns like Taunton and Bridgewater.⁵⁷ Shortly after the Rebellion, John Evelyn recorded that, ‘most of his [Monmouth’s] party were Anabaptist’.⁵⁸ While many western seditionists also came from Presbyterian churches, Earle recognised, ‘there is plenty of evidence of rebels from the more democratic Baptist and Independent churches, and it would be foolish to assume that they were in a minority.’⁵⁹

It is evident that, notwithstanding some of London’s more senior Particular leaders, Particulars were heavily involved in these seditious acts. Their involvement was comprehensive, spanning everything from writing and publication, to helping lead the Plot and Rebellion. These expressions of insubordinate intolerance were not seen as inconsistent with their faith, but became intrinsically linked to it. The reasons for this,

⁵² B.R. White, ‘The Twilight of Puritanism’ in Ole Peter Grell, Jonathan I. Israel, and Nicholas Tyacke, *From Persecution to Toleration: The Glorious Revolution and Religion in England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 311.

⁵³ John Latimer, *The Annals of Bristol in the Seventeenth Century* (Bristol: William George’s sons, 1900), 417–18.

⁵⁴ Howell, *State Trials: Vol IX*, 381.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 395.

⁵⁶ Thomas Bayly Howell, *A Complete Collection of State Trials and Proceedings for High Treason and Other Crimes: Volume X* (Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown, 1816), 1; James Holloway, *The Free and Voluntary Confession and Narrative* (London, 1684), 2.

⁵⁷ Robert Dunning, *The Monmouth Rebellion: A Complete Guide to the Rebellion and Bloody Assizes* (Leicester: Dovecote Press, 1984), 21.

⁵⁸ John Evelyn, *Diary and Correspondence of John Evelyn* (London: Henry Colburn, 1857), 226.

⁵⁹ Earle, *Monmouth’s Rebels*, 6.

and especially how they became entwined with ongoing inter-denominational tensions with Anglicanism, will now be examined.

2. CYCLES OF INTER-DENOMINATIONAL INTOLERANCE

As discussed in Chapter 1, in 1644 the London Particulars had written in their *Confession of Faith* that, ‘the supreme Magistracie of this Kingdome we beleeve to be the King and Parliament freely chosen by the Kingdome, and ... we are bound to yeeld subjection and obedience unto in the Lord.’⁶⁰ This had been reiterated in the 1677 edition of their *Confession*, published by Benjamin Harris.⁶¹ During the Interregnum, the Particulars had developed an insubordinate intolerance for the Cromwells, as discussed in Chapter 2, but those circumstances had been unusual: they had been a Troeltschian church-type in that period. Now they had been firmly relegated to being a sect-type again, seemingly embracing that status throughout Charles’ reign. Chapter 3 began with their promise from 1660 ‘to honour the King’ and ‘be subject unto the higher Powers’, and they had repeatedly repudiated the violently apocalyptic reputation they had garnered in the 1650s.⁶² Their public claims to loyalty, as well as their support for Charles thereafter, raise the question as to why Particulars became so seditious in the 1680s. The most commonly cited reason for Dissenters’ sedition is James’ Catholicism. That is partially correct, and a fascinating example of inter-denominational intolerance in its own right. Yet a focus on anti-papist intolerance often masks other more prevalent reasons for Nonconformist insubordination during this period.

This section argues, therefore, that there were far deeper reasons for Nonconformist sedition in this period. Walsham has noted that cycles of intolerance

⁶⁰ William Kiffen et al., *The Confession of Faith of Those Churches Which Are Commonly (Though Falsly) Called Anabaptists* (London: Matthew Simmons, 1644), sec. 48.

⁶¹ Anon., *A Confession of Faith Put Forth by the Elders and Brethren of Many Congregations of Christians (Baptized Upon Profession of Their Faith) in London and the Country* (London: Benjamin Harris, 1677), 81–82.

⁶² Anon., *The Character of an Anabaptist* (London, 1661).

between Conformists and Nonconformists developed, each antagonising the other in ways that escalated conflict.⁶³ I explore why Particulars were especially susceptible to Anglican antagonism. Anglicans emphasised that Dissenters like the Particulars were not only intolerant of Catholics, but the Conformist Church as well, and even of other Nonconformists. Because of this, Conformists insisted Nonconformity only aided Catholicism's cause, weakening the nation against papist advances. Moreover, Dissenters' inter-denominational intolerance of the Conformist Church, inevitably spilled over into insubordinate intolerance of the Conformist government. Indeed, the treacherous, destabilising effects of Nonconformity, and especially Particulars, were evident historically in the Civil War and Interregnum. Moreover, as I will show, the English Revolution was still frequently aggrandised by Dissenters themselves as 'the Good Ol' Cause'. This validated Conformists suppressing Dissenters – Anglican inter-denominational intolerance spilled over into magisterial intolerance. In turn, Dissenters saw this as unjust persecution by an arbitrary government, which validated them becoming increasingly desperate and violent. Thus they engaged in the Plot and Rebellion, only adding to their treacherous reputation, justifying further suppression. An escalating reciprocity developed, that meant extremely violent expressions of mutual intolerance, from both sides, became virtually inevitable.

James' Catholicism caused the nation tremendous concern, and was a catalyst for the cycle of intolerance. Even before the Popish Plot rumours exacerbated fears around his faith, such concerns were there.⁶⁴ These had been exacerbated by his decision in 1673 to marry the Catholic Mary of Modena.⁶⁵ Michael Mullet describes England's

⁶³ Alexandra Walsham, *Charitable Hatred: Tolerance and Intolerance in England, 1500-1700* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), 181.

⁶⁴ Harris, *Politics Under the Later Stuarts*, 80.

⁶⁵ Mary Hopkirk, *Queen Over the Water; Mary Beatrice of Modena, Queen of James II* (London: Murray, 1953), 18.

‘deep loathing’ of Catholicism by this point.⁶⁶ This went far beyond theological differences and into Catholicism’s perceived political structures as well.⁶⁷ Since the days of Mary Tudor, Catholicism had been aligned in the English consciousness with autocracy and authoritarianism. It was also associated with sedition, thanks to the Gunpowder Plot of 1605.⁶⁸ Paul Seaward remarks, ‘popery meant invasion’, thanks to events like the Spanish Armada of 1588, as well as Charles’ recent alliance with Louis XIV.⁶⁹ One of the rebels, John Coad, stated he had joined to fight against ‘the advance of the Duke of Yorke to the Crowne, Popery and arbitrary governement.’⁷⁰ Coffey highlights the ‘irony’ that ‘a good many who fanned the flames of intolerance’ against Catholics were themselves ‘committed tolerationists’.⁷¹ For Dissenters, toleration had its limits when they believed it threatened national security.

Indeed, many Dissenters claimed the papist invasion had already occurred, long before James’ conversion, in the Anglican Church itself – an allegation that only added to Conformists’ resentment of Nonconformists. Dissenters’ accusations went far beyond Anglicanism’s more liturgical trimmings, or religious issues. Rather, their resentment also went to the national Church’s very conformity, since Dissenters identified uniformity intrinsically with Catholicism.⁷² For Baptists, enforcing involuntary christenings upon infants only proved this, making Anglicanism ‘papist’, and intolerable. This intolerance in turn discouraged Anglican toleration. Baptists were not just religiously wrong, but were intrinsically identified as damaging social and political cohesion. One vicar, Henry Maurice, remarked, ‘The Anabaptists look upon our

⁶⁶ Michael A. Mullett, *James II and English Politics, 1678-1688* (London: Routledge, 1994), 3–4.

⁶⁷ Murphy, *Liberty, Conscience, and Toleration*, 110.

⁶⁸ Paul Seaward, *The Restoration* (New York, NY: St. Martin’s Press, 1991), 61–62.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 108–9.

⁷⁰ John Coad, *A Memorandum of the Wonderful Providences of God to a Poor Unworthy Creature: During the Time of the Duke of Monmouth’s Rebellion and to the Revolution in 1688* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, & Longmans, 1849), 1–2.

⁷¹ John Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration in Protestant England, 1558-1689* (Harlow: Longman, 2000), 186.

⁷² Murphy, *Liberty, Conscience, and Toleration*, 110.

Baptism as void ... because we have Charity for *Anabaptists*, ought we therefore to Tolerate them to Re-baptize those they have seduc'd to believe themselves no Christians?'⁷³ This resulted in Particulars, and indeed all Dissenters, being commonly identified as 'factious', breeding disunity in not only the Church, but also the nation. Judge William Scroggs used that exact word to describe the Particular publishers, Benjamin Harris and Francis Smith, and their publications.⁷⁴

Maurice also insisted this factionalism was not only expressed towards Catholicism and Anglicanism, but between the various Dissenters themselves. He declared, 'when one Dissenter pleads for Toleration in the behalf of all the rest, it is not Conscience, but Faction he would recommend; for the Dissenters differ as much in matters of Conscience among themselves, as they do from us.'⁷⁵ Specifically, Maurice pointed out, 'the Presbyterians have declar'd all the other Sects to be intolerable; the Independents will not endure Anabaptists or Quakers ... the Anabaptists and Quakers exclaim against Presbyterians and Independents as intolerable'.⁷⁶ Conformists believed this factionalism only weakened the nation further against Catholic infiltration – after all, many Anglicans despised Catholicism as much as Nonconformists did.⁷⁷ Thus, for Conformists, just as for Dissenters, toleration had its limits, when they believed it threatened national security.

The most commonly-cited example of Dissenters' anarchic tendencies at the beginning of the Exclusion Crisis was still the English Revolution. Historians have long recognised the Tories' tendency to hearken back to the Civil War. Murphy describes

⁷³ Henry Maurice, *The Antithelemite, or, an Answer to Certain Quaeres by the D. of B. and the Considerations of an Unknown Author Concerning Toleration* (London, 1685), 48, 49.

⁷⁴ Benjamin Harris, *A Short, but Just Account of the Tryal of Benjamin Harris* (London, 1679), 5.

⁷⁵ Maurice, *The Antithelemite*, 4.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁷⁷ Knights, *Politics and Opinion*, 12; Warren Johnston, 'Revelation and the Revolution of 1688-1689', *The Historical Journal* 48, no. 2 (2005): 357; Martin Sutherland, *Peace, Toleration and Decay: The Ecclesiology of Later Stuart Dissent*. (Carlisle: Wipf & Stock, 2007), 78–79.

how Tories, 'skillfully raised the specter of political and religious radicalism' by claiming Whigs only used anti-Catholicism to drive England back to '1642: political rebellion.'⁷⁸ He adds that such criticism 'proved enormously effective rhetorically'.⁷⁹ The Tory playwright, Aphra Behn, is a fine example. Her plays in this period regularly suggested conventicles, sermons and other Dissenter devices were all underhanded methods for subverting the government. She often linked Dissenters with the Interregnum. In the prologue to her 1682 *The False Count*, she remarks, 'In your conventicles you eat young Tories ... You for the Good Old Cause devoutly eat and pray ... Your Conventicling Miracles out-do all that the Whore of Babylon e'er knew.'⁸⁰

Historians sometimes dismiss these Conformist accusations, with Knights describing them as merely a 'boogeyman'⁸¹ However, Zook disagrees with those who dismiss this threat as 'essentially Tory caterwauling'.⁸² Such Tory fears were understandable. Nonconformists themselves frequently hearkened back to the Civil War, including the Particulars. Many of those directly involved in the Plot, Rebellion, or both, had been Cromwellian officers. This included Danvers, John Manley, John Rumsey, and Particulars like John Gladman, Abraham Holmes, Walcot, Rumbold, and Thomas and Samuel Venner.⁸³ Soon after the Plot failed, authorities inspected Broadmead congregants like Jeremy Holwey and Thomas Saunders, precisely because they were veterans.⁸⁴ Moreover, Particular veterans' sons and grandsons joined these acts of sedition. Nathaniel and William Wade's father had been Major John Wade.⁸⁵ Abraham Holmes' son, Blake, fought and died in the Rebellion beside his father.

⁷⁸ Murphy, *Conscience and Community*, 132.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 151.

⁸⁰ Aphra Behn, *The Works of Aphra Behn*, vol. III (London: William Heinemann, 1915), 99–100.

⁸¹ Knights, *Politics and Opinion*, 11.

⁸² Zook, *Radical Whigs*, xix.

⁸³ Howell, *State Trials: Vol IX*, 450.

⁸⁴ Edward Terrill, *The Records of a Church of Christ in Bristol, 1640-1687*, ed. Roger Hayden (Bristol Record Society, 1974), 295, 303.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 307.

Benjamin Hewling's portrait, painted in the early 1680s, is also a fine example (see Illustration 4.1). In it, Hewling wears the armour of a Cromwellian officer, identifying nostalgically with that era.



Illustration 4.1.⁸⁶

Western Dissenters also remembered the Civil War proudly, with Taunton celebrating their liberation from a royalist siege annually on 11 May, even after the Restoration. By 1683, these celebrations had become seditious riots and were subsequently banned.⁸⁷ Thus Jonathan Scott states that the Civil War was utilised for 'nostalgia on the one hand, and nightmares on the other.'⁸⁸ Given Dissenters' ongoing affinity with a revolutionary past, and the reputation Particulars had developed for instability in that period, government suppression was entirely understandable. Walsham has highlighted how

⁸⁶ Anon., *Portrait of Benjamin Hewling*, c 1680, c 1680, Hewling Family Trust, Martin Griffiths: Petersfield, UK.

⁸⁷ Robin Clifton, *The Last Popular Rebellion: The Western Rising of 1685* (London: St. Martin's Press, 1984), 68–29.

⁸⁸ Jonathan Scott, *Algernon Sidney and the Restoration Crisis, 1677-1683* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 9.

English governments steadily moved away from executing Dissenters for heresy and instead framed their crimes politically, as treason.⁸⁹ Portraying 1681 to 1685 as the harshest ‘persecution’ of English Dissenters in history is problematic, if its connection to sedition is not recognised.⁹⁰

The problem lay, however, in the scope of Conformist suppression, which frequently extended to innocent – or at least loosely involved – Dissenters. Distinguishing between religious and political dissent became muddled, as did distinctions between violent acts of sedition and non-violent expressions of protest. Even loose affiliation with insurrectionists could be cause for punishment. After the Plot failed, for example, Kiffen reported that the authorities searched his house, despite him claiming to have never met Lord Russell or Monmouth.⁹¹ Kiffen also claimed to have anonymously received two letters, ‘full of treasonable words and threats’, late at night after the Plot, designed to implicate him. He immediately sent the letters to Lord Chief Justice Jeffreys, never hearing of the matter again.⁹² Many of his fellow Dissenters were not so fortunate. Coffey estimated that nearly 4,000 Nonconformists in London were arrested between 1682 and 1686, receiving over £40,000 of fines.⁹³ In 1683, the Particular minister Thomas Deluane published *A Plea for Non-conformists*, begging for toleration in the midst of this persecution. He would die in prison soon after, alongside his wife and two children.⁹⁴

The West Country’s Particulars were also severely affected – in fact, suppression had begun in rural areas first from 1681, only reaching London in 1682.⁹⁵ Broadmead

⁸⁹ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 261.

⁹⁰ For example, Marshall, *John Locke*, 94.

⁹¹ William Kiffen, *Remarkable Passages in the Life of William Kiffin*, ed. William Orme (London: Burton & Smith, 1823), 52.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 52–53.

⁹³ Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration*, 173.

⁹⁴ Marshall, *John Locke*, 101.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 111.

congregants experienced what they considered the worst bout of persecution in their history.⁹⁶ Authorities sent William and Nathaniel Wade to Newgate for attending Broadmead in August 1680 ‘and beat another until all bloody.’⁹⁷ Soldiers broke into Andrew Gifford’s Pithay meetinghouse in December 1681, confiscating over £200 of equipment, including the pulpit, seats and glass windows.⁹⁸ Nearly twenty Bristol Particulars were sent to prison at that time, directly on the Bristol mayor’s orders.⁹⁹ In total, Gifford was imprisoned four times during Charles’ reign.¹⁰⁰ In 1682, suppression became so severe that Broadmead started holding meetings outdoors at night. On one occasion, while running from authorities, they were forced to cross a river and two congregants drowned.¹⁰¹ In April 1683, James Holloway paid £20 each as bail for several imprisoned Broadmead congregants.¹⁰² Such actions were highly provocative, further exacerbating the Particulars’ growing intolerance of the English Church and state.

Once arrested, the Tories also eroded many traditional legal safeguards for Dissenters.¹⁰³ Charles made it extremely difficult for Dissenters to be selected for jury duty, for example.¹⁰⁴ Juries were also frequently harassed into guilty verdicts: the Quaker, William Penn, was placed on trial in 1681, and when his jury proclaimed him innocent, the judge imprisoned them for nearly a year.¹⁰⁵ Similarly, when the Particular publisher, Benjamin Harris, was placed on trial for sedition in February 1680, Judge Scroggs refused to let him testify on his own behalf, much to Harris’ resentment.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 102.

⁹⁷ Terrill, *Broadmead Records*, 1847, 423.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 434–35.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 441.

¹⁰⁰ Hamlin, ‘Note: Pithay Chapel, Bristol’, 378.

¹⁰¹ Marshall, *John Locke*, 99.

¹⁰² Terrill, *Broadmead Records*, 1974, 235.

¹⁰³ W.T. Whitley, *A History of British Baptists*, 2nd Edition (London: Kingsgate, 1932), 146.

¹⁰⁴ Marshall, *John Locke*, 120.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 107.

Ultimately, Scroggs sentenced Harris to prison, the pillory and a £500 fine.¹⁰⁶ Harris complained about these proceedings in his own *Short, but Just Account of the Tryal* and appealed to Parliament, finally being released in 1682.¹⁰⁷ After the Plot failed in 1683, Kiffen's son-in-law, Joseph Hayes, was tried for treason. The charge was based on Hayes, a banker, merely possessing a bill of exchange for the plotter Sir Thomas Armstrong, which Hayes claimed was forged anyway. During his trial, Hayes told the jury that the authorities had offered to drop the charges if he testified falsely against Armstrong. At that point, the *State Trials* record that Judge Jeffreys 'did here appear enraged', and ordered Hayes to 'not insinuate, as if the government would make any such compacts as you talk of'.¹⁰⁸ Hayes then warned the jury that, if he was to be hanged for treason on such flimsy evidence, the same could one day happen to any of them.¹⁰⁹ He told the jury, 'Gentlemen, I know you are my fellow-citizens and fellow-christians, and of the same reformed religion that I am'.¹¹⁰ Ultimately, the jury declared Hayes not guilty, to Jeffreys' consternation. In Bristol, both Nathaniel Wade and Tiley also acted as lawyers for Broadmead congregants and began to complain that it had become increasingly difficult for them to receive a fair trial.¹¹¹ This sense that long-appreciated legal channels had become stacked against them, encouraged Particulars like Holloway, Tiley, and the Wade brothers to join the Plot.¹¹²

Yet once these Particulars resorted to attempted regicide in the Rye House Plot, this in turn implicated more Dissenters, leading to further retribution by Charles and the

¹⁰⁶ Knights, 'Harris, Benjamin (c.1647–1720)'.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid. Knights misnames the prosecutor as 'James Jeffreys'. That it was indeed George Jeffreys is confirmed by Halliday. Paul D. Halliday, 'Jeffreys, George, First Baron Jeffreys (1645–1689)', ed. H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison, *O.D.N.B.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, May 2009), <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/14702>.

¹⁰⁸ Howell, *State Trials: Vol X*, 317.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 316.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 317.

¹¹¹ Terrill, *Broadmead Records*, 1847, 235, 429.

¹¹² Zook, *Radical Whigs*, xii, 93; White, *The English Baptists*, 133; Earle, *Monmouth's Rebels*, 9.

authorities, especially in London and the West Country.¹¹³ Authorities again invaded the homes of at least eight Broadmead congregants, suspecting them of involvement in the plotters' proposed insurrection. Many of these had weapons seized, but very few seem to have actually been charged.¹¹⁴ Taunton's Tory mayor also dismantled St Paul's Presbyterian chapel, 'and likewise all the seats, pulpit and galleries of the Baptist meeting-house', then, 'burnt it together on the market place. There were about 10 cart loads. We were till three in the morning before it was all burnt and we were very merry before it'.¹¹⁵ This was insufficient for Judge George Jeffreys – while on circuit in Taunton in 1684, he warned local authorities they would lose their posts if they did not punish Dissenters more rigorously.¹¹⁶ Such shared experiences inevitably brought Nonconformists closer together, and they responded by becoming, according to a royal spy's report, 'so secret, so cunning ... with courage even to desperateness.'¹¹⁷

The cycle of intolerance continued, with Conformists using the Plot, and then Rebellion, as further evidence of Dissenters' anarchic tendencies and to justify more suppression.¹¹⁸ John Marshall seems unsure why, 'despite the evidence of the pacifism under severe persecution of the vast majority of the dissenters, associations of heresy and schism with treason and rebellion continued into the early years of the reign of James II.'¹¹⁹ Similarly, Murphy quotes Maurice's *The Antithelemite* as an example of Conformist hyperbole about dissenting violence.¹²⁰ Yet *Antithelemite* was printed was on 12 June 1685, the day after the rebels landed at Lyme Regis.¹²¹ Maurice warned that 'a Presbyterian, or Independent, or Anabaptist, will not hurt ... only when they have no

¹¹³ Earle, *Monmouth's Rebels*, 9; Sutherland, *Peace, Toleration and Decay*, 11.

¹¹⁴ Terrill, *Broadmead Records*, 1974, 291–95, 303.

¹¹⁵ Daniell and Bickley, *C.S.P.D., Charles II*, 25: Jul-Sep 1683:279.

¹¹⁶ Marshall, *John Locke*, 111.

¹¹⁷ King James II, Lord Sunderland, and Anon., 'Logbook & Correspondence' (Somersetshire and London, 12 June 1685), 6845, fo 286, Harleian.

¹¹⁸ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 66.

¹¹⁹ Marshall, *John Locke*, 448.

¹²⁰ Murphy, *Conscience and Community*, 151.

¹²¹ Maurice, *The Antithelemite*, 3–4.

power to do hurt.¹²² The coming weeks in Somerset would only support Maurice's argument. In the Rebellion's aftermath, John Evelyn described the Rebellion's failure as a 'deliverance' from 'an inundation of fanatics', who would 'have caused universal disorder, cruelty, injustice, rapine, sacrilege, and confusion, an unavoidable civil war, and misery without end.'¹²³

Thus while James' Catholicism did act as a catalyst for the cycle of intolerance, it was not the only significant contributor. This cycle was also perpetuated by the mutual religious intolerance of Conformists and Nonconformists, spilling out into political expressions of intolerance, whether magisterial or insubordinate. A culture of escalating retaliation developed. Charles' government punished Dissenters for supporting James' exclusion, seeing it as part of their broader 'factious' culture. Ongoing memories of the Civil War era, on both sides, only perpetuated this perception. Yet this indiscriminate prosecution of Dissenters did not eradicate political sedition, but rather incited it. As the government eradicated legal methods of defence, Dissenters felt desperately compelled to extreme violence, in turn legitimating further Conformist retribution. Ultimately, the events of 1685 can be seen as the culmination of this cycle of intolerance for both sides. The Rebellion was a violent manifestation of Dissenters' inter-denominational and insubordinate intolerance towards not only James, but Anglican Conformity as well. For their part, Conformists expected the sheer scale of the Bloody Assize would strike a deathblow upon Nonconformity more broadly. This expectation proved incorrect, as will be discussed in the next chapter. The Particulars' direct involvement in these acts of sedition will now be explored.

¹²² Ibid., 50.

¹²³ Evelyn, *Diary*, 229.

3. DYNAMICS OF PARTICULAR SEDITION

Inter-denominational dynamics not only occurred between Conformists and Nonconformists, but also between the seditionists themselves, since they came from various denominations. Each Nonconformist expression of sedition can be a case study in Christopher Blackwood's unity of necessity, discussed in Chapter 2. Blackwood had identified that a common enemy often facilitated inter-denominational toleration; he posited, however, that such unity never lasts, because once the enemy is overcome, the allies inevitably return their attention to their own ongoing disagreements.¹²⁴ For Blackwood, success destroys unity of necessity. Blackwood's approach has not been credited in the scholarship, although Ingrid Creppell has discussed similar toleration dynamics without using his terms. I develop these ideas further in this section, showing that such unity of necessity is more cohesive during less extreme expressions of sedition. As sedition escalates, the authorities' retaliation can create tensions between the various parties that ultimately destroy unity of necessity from within: Blackwood had posited that, 'though against a common enemy they are united, yet still in other things they are disunited'.¹²⁵ The Plot, and especially the Rebellion, relied heavily on unity of necessity, and as such a unity unravelled, it directly contributed to the Plot and Rebellion's failure. This section firstly articulates Creppell's framework, and how it generally relates to the Dissenters' expressions of discontent. It then examines these dynamics more specifically, in terms of both non-violent and violent approaches.

In *Toleration and Identity*, Creppell argues that toleration can be motivated by 'confronting the issues and problems of collective life', then 'articulating those common and pressing problems and in building the common will to confront them together.'

¹²⁴ Christopher Blackwood, *Four Treatises: The First Setting Forth the Excellency of Christ; The Second Containing a Preparation for Death; The Third Concerning Our Love to Christ; The Fourth Concerning Our Love to Our Neighbour* (London: T.M., 1653), 87.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

Creppell further defines those problems as ‘often centred on injustices, inequities, or inefficiencies’.¹²⁶ This allows minorities’ ‘identity’ to be revalued: they become defined less by their doctrinal idiosyncrasies and more by their ‘purpose’, how they can distinctly contribute to solving those problems.¹²⁷ While Creppell frames this primarily in terms of magisterial toleration, the same dynamic occurs in inter-denominational toleration as well. This connects well with Blackwood’s unity of necessity. In this section I provide many examples of this dynamic occurring, especially whenever Particulars collaborated with other Nonconformists against the ‘popish’ threat.¹²⁸ Particulars frequently became less defined by alienating doctrines like believer’s baptism, and more by how they could specifically contribute to the shared cause. Whenever their distinct contribution became devalued, this led to conflict with other seditionists.

Seditionists frequently highlighted the threat posed by James specifically, but remained vague about their goals. It was precisely when a project’s goals received more specific definition that it would begin to unravel. Such disagreements even happened between Particulars themselves. For example, the plotters could not decide whether the plan was to merely lead an insurrection or assassinate Charles and James. Neither could the rebels agree whether they wanted Monmouth to become king or to return England to a republic. If at these foundational points they could not agree, any sense that they could establish religious toleration became incredulous, and the hope of success began to die. That disunity of purpose was intrinsic to these actions’ failure was widely recognised. After the Rebellion’s defeat, the Conformist Henry Maurice preached that, ‘the

¹²⁶ Ingrid Creppell, *Toleration and Identity: Foundations in Early Modern Thought* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2003), 12.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 11–12.

¹²⁸ Similar dynamics had occurred in sixteenth-century England, as discussed by Ethan H. Shagan, ed., *Catholics and the ‘Protestant Nation’: Religious Politics and Identity in Early Modern England / Edited by Ethan Shagan.*, *Politics, Culture, and Society in Early Modern Britain* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005).

Dissenters, you'll say, are divided upon this point ... the Conquerours that were United in the Assault, afterwards to fall out at the dividing of the Plunder.'¹²⁹ The vicar Thomas Long also proclaimed:

And would not the *Anabaptist* and *Quakers*, if they had got the upper hand, have done the like by the *Independants*? ... All these *Factions* have been lately *confederated* against the *Lord* and his *Anointed*: What to *pull down* they were *agreed*, but what to *set up* they never were nor can *agree* in.'¹³⁰

The rest of this section is in two parts. The first examines the various non-violent methods for pursuing this unity, the ways that Particulars were involved in them, and how successfully they created unity of necessity. The second part explores the more violent expressions of such unity, the Rye House Plot and the Western Rebellion, in turn. Which Particulars were involved in the Plot will be discussed, before the dynamics of unity of necessity among the plotters are explored. The same process will then be employed for the Rebellion. This reveals how intrinsic the Particulars were to these seditious projects, but also how ineffective unity of necessity quickly becomes, as both the allies' goals need to be more clearly defined, and the opposition's pressure upon them rises.

3.1 Non-violent Expressions of Particulars' Unity of Necessity

From the beginning of the Exclusion Crisis, mechanisms that effectively unified Nonconformists against James began to emerge. At first, these were neither violent nor anti-state, seeking to merely collaborate with Whigs in finding a Parliamentary solution to the problem. There were the various Whig clubs, including at least thirty in London,

¹²⁹ Maurice, *The Antithelemite*, 3.

¹³⁰ Long, *The Unreasonableness of Rebellion*, 27–28.

such as the Green Ribbon Club.¹³¹ Many future Baptist conspirators were part of these clubs, such as Francis Smith, John Gladman, and Henry Danvers.¹³² James Holloway also joined the Horseshoe Club in Bristol. At this point, these clubs were not particularly seditious, but they lay the foundations for members to become so. Here, I examine other methods of latent sedition. These include Nonconformist academies, the Monster Petition of 1680, and the Particulars' use of propaganda.

Latent sedition emerged in the academies, Nonconformist alternatives to the Conformist universities, such as the one run by Charles Morton in the early 1680s. Students at Morton's Academy came from across the Dissenting spectrum, including the Presbyterian Daniel Defoe, the Particulars Benjamin and William Hewling, and the then-Independent Samuel Wesley senior, who would later become father of John and Charles Wesley. Three of those – Defoe and the Hewling Brothers – would later be involved in the Western Rebellion. Wesley would turn to Anglicanism, precisely because his fellow students had been so seditious. In 1703, he recalled witnessing them celebrate the 'Good Old Cause', rejoicing in the regicide of Charles I, and expressing seditious intentions.¹³³ Defoe defended Morton's Academy against Wesley's accusations, claiming that, 'neither in his System of Politicks, Government and Discipline, or in any other the Exercises of that School, was there anything Taught or Encourag'd that was Antimonarchical, or Destructive to the Government, or Constitution of *England*.'¹³⁴ Nonetheless, Defoe's biographer, Maximilian Novak, considers Defoe's defence here incredulous.¹³⁵ In 1681, at the peak of such academies' influence, L'Estrange had

¹³¹ Harris, *Politics Under the Later Stuarts*, 84.

¹³² Tim Harris, *London Crowds in the Reign of Charles II: Propaganda and Politics from the Restoration until the Exclusion Crisis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 100.

¹³³ Samuel Wesley, *A Defence of a Letter Concerning the Education of Dissenters in Their Private Academies* (London, 1704), 4.

¹³⁴ Daniel Defoe, *A True Collection of the Writings of the Author of the True Born English-Man: Corrected by Himself* (London, 1703), 276–77.

¹³⁵ Maximilian E. Novak, *Daniel Defoe: Master of Fictions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 47.

criticised them heavily, insisting ‘no more nurseries allow’d ye for the Planting & Cultivating Sedition and Schism’.¹³⁶ Much like the Whig clubs, academies prepared Dissenters from various denominations for sedition.

Another expression of collaborative political dissent was the Monster Petition, presented to Charles on 13 January 1680 with some 18,000 signatures.¹³⁷ While the petition did not explicitly call for exclusion, it did assert that Catholic sedition remained a serious threat to England’s Church and state. Therefore, as ‘your Majesty’s most humble, dutiful and obedient subjects, in the deepest sense of our duty and allegiance to your Majesty’, the petition asked for a Parliament by 26 January – less than two weeks’ later – to try Catholic agitators.¹³⁸ According to Lois Schwoerer, this petition’s success was due to ‘a well-organized campaign at the grass-roots level’.¹³⁹ Mark Knights’ analysis of the petition’s extant pages also includes a breakdown of the signatories’ denominations. He cautiously identified 736 names that were either definitely or probably Dissenters, and suggested the real number of Dissenters ‘may therefore run into the thousands’.¹⁴⁰ Knights also identified several Particulars: Zephaniah Smith, one of Broadmead’s preachers; Nehemiah Coxe, the minister for the Petty France congregation, along with at least ten of his congregants; Lawrence Wise; Benjamin Hewling Jnr; and several others. Ultimately, Knights claims, ‘The baptists clearly played a very important part in the campaign.’¹⁴¹ Schwoerer also identifies ‘a large component of Baptists’ among the signatories.¹⁴² At least forty-six Nonconformist

¹³⁶ Mark Goldie, ‘Roger L’Estrange’s *Observer* and the Exorcism of the Plot’, in *Roger L’Estrange and the Making of Restoration Culture*, ed. Anne Dunan-Page and Beth Lynch (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 79; Roger L’Estrange, ed., *The Observer in Dialogue; London*, no. 66 (October 1681), italics and capitalisation original.

¹³⁷ Mark Knights, ‘London’s “Monster” Petition of 1680’, *The Historical Journal* 36, no. 1 (1 March 1993): 40.

¹³⁸ ‘London Monster Petition’, quoted in *ibid.*, 43.

¹³⁹ Lois G Schwoerer, *The Ingenious Mr. Henry Care, Restoration Publicist* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 96.

¹⁴⁰ Knights, ‘London’s “Monster” Petition of 1680’, 49–50.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 56.

¹⁴² Schwoerer, *The Ingenious Mr. Henry Care, Restoration Publicist*, 96.

leaders signed it from across many denominations, leading Knights to conclude, ‘any divisions among the dissenters were not simply marked along denominational lines.’¹⁴³ From the Nonconformists’ perspective, the petition was a declaration of loyalty, protecting Charles from papist threats that would undermine him. Nevertheless, the king immediately proclaimed the petition unlawful, because he saw it as implicitly undermining the right of kings to determine succession. While its signatories considered themselves patriots, Charles redefined them as seditious.¹⁴⁴

Particulars joined other Dissenters in writing and publishing seditious propaganda, also designed to unite Protestants from all denominations against the Catholic threat. The reasons why they despised Catholicism were discussed earlier in Section 2 of this chapter – here, the focus is on how Nonconformists, and especially Particulars, utilised it to facilitate unity of necessity. Murphy has stated that ‘anti-popery is best understood, then, as a polemical weapon’, utilised by Nonconformists to instil fear of Catholicism.¹⁴⁵ Their publications were used to unite Protestants, in a way that they still considered loyal to the government.¹⁴⁶ Throughout the 1660s and 1670s, L’Estrange had largely been able to suppress such publications, with about 1,000 works published each year throughout the 1670s. Yet this figure increased in 1679 to 1,730, as well as weekly Whig serials.¹⁴⁷ Whitley attributed this primarily to Baptist printers exploiting the lapse of the Licensing Act.¹⁴⁸ The Particular, Benjamin Harris, printed the first Whig weekly magazine, *Domestick Intelligence*, which ran from 1679 to 1681.¹⁴⁹ In 1679, Harris also published *An Appeal from the Country to the City* by Charles Blount. Ostensibly written ‘for the preservation His Majesties Person, Liberty, Property and the

¹⁴³ Knights, ‘London’s “Monster” Petition of 1680’, 50.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 46.

¹⁴⁵ Murphy, *Liberty, Conscience, and Toleration*, 108.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 111.

¹⁴⁷ Tim Harris, *Restoration: Charles II and His Kingdoms, 1660-1685* (London: Allen Lane, 2005), 70.

¹⁴⁸ Whitley, *A History of British Baptists*, 143.

¹⁴⁹ Zook, *Radical Whigs*, 26.

Protestant Religion', it warned that York and the Catholics would ruin the city of London if he became king, subsequently calling for Monmouth to become the heir instead.¹⁵⁰ Harris published a work by William Bedloe, who claimed to have discovered the Popish Plot.¹⁵¹ Harris' own *The Protestant Tutor* was published in 1679. While it purported to be little more than a grammar textbook, it was also emphatically anti-Catholic, including a picture of Catholics starting the Great Fire of London. It was also dedicated to Monmouth's son.¹⁵² These publications were frequently suppressed by authorities, and publishers like Harris charged with sedition. This was entirely understandable from the state's perspective: as Walsham has stated, polemical pamphlets and other propaganda attacking religious minorities 'contributed to corroding cordial relations', ultimately 'precipitating tangible physical attacks' upon such minorities.¹⁵³ Similarly, despite all their protestations of loyalty, Dissenters' publications inevitably provided the theoretical justifications for much of the later, more violent expressions of sedition.

Several prominent Particular ministers wrote works designed to draw Protestants together against Catholicism. Again, these ministers did not see this as seditious, and most of them would later avoid violent expressions of political dissent. Nonetheless, their writings strongly criticised Catholics in government. Richard Greaves has pointed out that throughout most of Bunyan's career, he had ignored Catholicism, but during the 1680s he wrote more frequently against it.¹⁵⁴ Other Particular ministers often highlighted the connection between anti-poperly and apocalypticism.¹⁵⁵ Throughout the

¹⁵⁰ Charles Blount, *An Appeal from the Country to the City, for the Preservation of His Majesties Person, Liberty, Property, and the Protestant Religion* (London: Benjamin Harris, 1679), 25.

¹⁵¹ William Bedloe, *A Narrative and Impartial Discovery of the Horrid Popish Plot* (London: Robert Boulter, John Hancock, Ralph Smith, and Benjamin Harris, 1679).

¹⁵² Benjamin Harris, *The Protestant Tutor Instructing Children to Spel and Read English, and Ground Them in the True Protestant Religion* (London: Benjamin Harris, 1679).

¹⁵³ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 147.

¹⁵⁴ Richard L. Greaves, *John Bunyan and English Nonconformity* (London: Hambledon Press, 1992), 127.

¹⁵⁵ Johnston, 'Revelation and the Revolution', 356.

Reformation, Catholicism had been viewed by many Protestants through apocalyptic lenses.¹⁵⁶ Particulars, long attracted to apocalypticism because of the Fifth Monarchists, described English Catholics as being instrumental to the end of the world.¹⁵⁷ Hanserd Knollys wrote three popular expositions of Revelation between 1679 and 1681, all of which were strongly anti-Catholic: *An Exposition of the 11th Chapter of Revelation*, *Mystical Babylon Unveiled*, and *The World that Now is*.¹⁵⁸ *Mystical Babylon Unveiled* was particularly scathing, identifying Rome itself with Babylon, the Catholic Church with the whore of Revelation 18, Catholic priests with the false prophet of Revelation 16, and the Pope with the beast of Revelation 17. In his Preface to that work, Knollys explicitly mentioned the Popish Plot, ‘that Damnable and Hellish Plot’, and specifically referred to the core anti-papist themes of autocracy, invasion, and terrorism.¹⁵⁹ Similar themes permeated the work of Benjamin Keach during this period. He also likened Catholicism to the whore and Babylon in his *Tropes and Figures* in 1682.¹⁶⁰ In 1666, Keach had written *Zion in Distress* to lament the persecution of Dissenters, but in 1681 he wrote a second edition, specifically in response to the Popish Plot:

Ah vile *Conspiracy!* Ah cursed *PLOT!*
 So deeply laid! How canst thou be *Forgot?*
 Hells grand *Intreagues* ne’er introduc’d a *Brat*
 Into the World, so horrible as that.
 Since *Rome* the western cheated *Monarchs* rid,
 A *Rampant WHORE*, the horned Beast bestrid.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁶ Seaward, *The Restoration*, 61–62.

¹⁵⁷ Mark Bell, ‘Freedom to Form: The Development of Baptist Movements during the English Revolution’, in *Religion in Revolutionary England*, ed. Christopher Durston and Judith D. Maltby (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), 85.

¹⁵⁸ Hanserd Knollys, *The World That Now Is; and the World That Is to Come* (London: Thomas Snowden, 1681); Hanserd Knollys, *An Exposition of the 11th Chapter of Revelation Wherein All Those Things Therein Revealed, Which Must Shortly Come to Pass, Are Explained* (London, 1679); Hanserd Knollys, *Mystical Babylon Unveiled* (London, 1679).

¹⁵⁹ Knollys, *Mystical Babylon Unveiled*, B1.

¹⁶⁰ Benjamin Keach, *Troposchemalogia, Tropes and Figures, or, a Treatise of the Metaphors, Allegories, and Express Similitudes* (London: John Darby, 1682), bk. 2.303.

¹⁶¹ Keach, *Sion in Distress*, B3.

Certainly, such writings were not especially Particular, with many other Dissenters writing against Catholicism at the time.¹⁶² Yet that only heightens the sense of unity of necessity among them – Particulars were successfully aligning themselves with others, against this common foe. In fact, these Particulars often avoided topics that were idiosyncratically Baptist – in his *Tropes and Figures*, an encyclopaedic work of over 500 pages, the closed-unionist Keach avoided defining baptism itself purely in terms of baptising adults.¹⁶³ Moreover, these Particular writings proved extremely popular, indicating their readership spanned across denominational lines: Keach's revised *Zion in Distress* was re-published over five times within the next two years, for example. Publication, writing, and reading of broadly-Protestant literature thus encouraged what Johnston describes as 'trans-denominational anti-Catholicism'.¹⁶⁴

Their collective concerns about Catholicism had successfully drawn various Nonconformist groups together, establishing inter-denominational collaboration against another denomination. However, their non-violent attempts to eradicate that threat had proven ineffective. Indeed, by 1682, they were being heavily suppressed. Whig periodicals like Harris' *Domestick Intelligence* were forced to stop, as were many other forms of Nonconformist literature. Academies came under pressure, with Morton leaving for Harvard by 1685. Another petition was out of the question. Magisterial prosecution now reached that point of 'desperateness' for Dissenters, as described by the royalist spy earlier in Section 2 of this chapter. This heightened the sense that the threat from Dissenters' enemies, be they Catholic or Conformist, was definite and quickly becoming insurmountable. Therefore, Particulars joined various

¹⁶² Frances E. Dolan, *Whores of Babylon: Catholicism, Gender, and Seventeenth-Century Print Culture* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999).

¹⁶³ Keach, *Tropes and Figures*, bks 1.189-190.

¹⁶⁴ Johnston, 'Revelation and the Revolution', 386.

Nonconformists, and even Whig Anglicans, in pursuing far more subversive, violent approaches.

3.2 Violent Expressions of Particulars' Unity of Necessity

In this section, I examine the Rye House Plot and then the Western Rebellion, focusing on two things: the prominent roles played by Particulars and the unity of necessity dynamics in each event. I begin by showing Particulars were instrumental to the Rye House Plot becoming a viable enterprise, but their disagreements about the projected outcomes proved their undoing. Indeed, I show that it was this lack of a clear, unified goals that contributed to a Particular, Josiah Keeling, betraying the conspiracy. With the Rebellion, I again establish just how involved the Particulars were, before examining the nuances of their subordinate toleration of Monmouth, and the denominational dynamics at play in the siege of Bristol.

According to Nathaniel Wade's later *Confession*, the conspirators began discussing insurrection as early as May 1681. This was barely two months after Charles had closed the Oxford Parliament, ending the parliamentary phase of the Exclusion Crisis. John Romsey approached Wade about plans to start 'an Insurrection designed at Taunton' in June that year, though this was soon scuttled.¹⁶⁵ To this point, such plans seem to have been little more than talk, but the conspirators came together again in May 1682, from across the denominational spectrum. They included Particulars like Wade, Holloway and Rumbold; Presbyterians like Robert Ferguson; and Whig Anglicans like Shaftesbury, Monmouth, and Ford Lord Grey. This time, they proposed an insurrection for November 1682, though it was again postponed due to lack of preparation.¹⁶⁶ Eventually, it was delayed until April 1683, and by then involved either the

¹⁶⁵ 'Nathaniel Wade's Narrative', in W. MacDonald Wigfield, *The Monmouth Rebellion: A Social History, Including the Complete Text of Wade's Narrative* (Bradford-on-Avon: Moonraker Press, 1980), 170.

¹⁶⁶ 'Wade's Narrative', in *ibid.*, 153.

assassination of Charles and James, or a broad insurrection, or both. These plans ultimately became the Rye House Plot.

Particulars played a prominent part in the planning and near-implementation of this Plot. Supplies for the November 1682 uprising, including gunpowder and four small cannons, were stored at Holloway's house.¹⁶⁷ Wade provided around £200-£300 to help fund the venture.¹⁶⁸ He and Holloway also prepared much of the strategy for the insurrection, partly because they felt nobody else had competently done so. By this point, these two Particulars had already developed a plan for securing Bristol, dividing the insurrectionists into various groups across the city. They now developed similar tactics for London, dividing the city into twenty sections, and assigning the insurrectionists – which they estimated would be at least 4,000 people – accordingly.¹⁶⁹ Richard Rumbold provided the location for Charles and James to be killed, and organised with another senior leader among the plotters, Robert West, for the weapons and munitions for the fifty men who would take part in the assassinations.¹⁷⁰ Meeting in a tavern beforehand, West and Rumbold spoke in code about the plan, with different 'quills' representing various guns, and 'ink' and 'sand' represented ammunition. Rumbold claimed he had six blunderbusses, twenty muskets, and thirty pistols prepared for the project.¹⁷¹ According to West's later testimony, Rumbold was expected to lead the assassination attempt. He and a select group of the senior plotters would also choose his team of assassins.¹⁷² Far from being subservient to the more aristocratic conspirators like Monmouth or Grey, Particulars like Rumbold, Wade and Holloway were largely responsible for the planning, provisioning and expected-implementation of the Plot.

¹⁶⁷ 'Wade's Narrative', in *ibid.*, 154.

¹⁶⁸ Howell, *State Trials: Vol IX*, 369.

¹⁶⁹ 'Wade's Narrative', in Wigfield, *The Monmouth Rebellion*, 155.

¹⁷⁰ Holloway, *Confession*, 4.

¹⁷¹ Howell, *State Trials: Vol IX*, 367.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 390.

Yet these conspirators often lacked coherent goals, which ultimately contributed to the Plot's failure. The Particulars disagreed among themselves regarding the extent of their insubordinate intolerance, with Wade and Holloway debating with Rumbold about whether regicide should be part of the plan. Wade and Holloway vehemently opposed the assassinations, with Wade describing it as 'an Action so ungenerous and barbarous'.¹⁷³ Holloway considered it 'a base Dishonourable and Cowardly Action', inconsistent with 'any pretending themselves Protestants.'¹⁷⁴ They only wanted to incite insurrection as an expression of protest, thus avoiding the need to assassinate the king and heir entirely. Holloway insisted, 'the General Design being only to get the King off his evil Counsels, who had advised him to put a stop to Proceedings against Popish plotters by Dissolving of Parliaments, &c. and to bring all Popish Offenders to Justice'.¹⁷⁵ Moreover, Wade insisted that any assassinations would prove counter-productive: 'the effects of it would be the ruin of them and their Party', since if Monmouth succeeded in becoming king, he would have to execute them 'for the murder of his Father and Uncle.'¹⁷⁶ On the other hand, Rumbold contended that the assassinations 'would prevent a rebellion, whereby abundance of blood must be shed.'¹⁷⁷ Rumbold managed to convince another Particular, Thomas Walcot, that the assassinations should take place, despite Walcot originally having similar reservations to Wade and Holloway. According to Robert West, Walcot even agreed to join the attack on the royal bodyguards at the Rye House, to facilitate the assassinations.¹⁷⁸ Nonetheless, the plotters generally remained divided in their intentions, damaging not only the effectiveness of their attempt, but also their own confidence that they could succeed in the future.

¹⁷³ 'Wade's Narrative', in Wigfield, *The Monmouth Rebellion*, 155.

¹⁷⁴ Holloway, *Confession*, 4.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 3.

¹⁷⁶ 'Wade's Narrative', in Wigfield, *The Monmouth Rebellion*, 155.

¹⁷⁷ Howell, *State Trials: Vol IX*, 368.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 390, 411.

Ultimately, it was a Particular conspirator, Josiah Keeling, who alerted the authorities to the Plot, partly because of such doubts. A former London constable, Keeling had been invited into the conspiracy to help recruit soldiers. Yet once the rendezvous at the Rye House Inn failed, Keeling became convinced the entire Plot was doomed to failure, and turned himself in.¹⁷⁹ Keeling was probably also attracted by a £120 per annum reward from the authorities for alerting them to any seditious activity.¹⁸⁰ Yet he seems also to have been torn by similar apprehensions as Wade and Holloway, later stating that, ‘I had no peace, nor satisfaction, nor content’ until he revealed the Plot to the authorities.¹⁸¹ Moreover, his discomfort around the regicide had begun to be perceived by his fellow conspirators. Keeling began to fear for his own life, compelling him to report the Plot to the authorities.¹⁸² It was not the authorities that ended the Plot – evidently, they had no idea the Plot existed.¹⁸³ Rather, the plotters’ own disunity drove one of their own to inform on them. These Particular plotters had shared the same broad inter-denominational intolerance of Catholicism. This had unified them and motivated them into insubordinate intolerance. However, as the details had needed to be decided upon, disagreement about the specific goals of the Plot, and the limits of their insubordinate intolerance, directly led to its end.

The Western Rebellion represents a more extreme example of both the Particulars’ involvement and the lack of any unity of necessity among the seditionists. After the Plot had failed, some of those involved were caught and executed, including the Particulars Holloway and Walcot.¹⁸⁴ Many others, however, had managed to escape to the Netherlands, through the assistance of the Particular, Elizabeth Gaunt, who had

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., 365, 383, 391, 547.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 977.

¹⁸¹ Ibid., 535.

¹⁸² Ibid., 409.

¹⁸³ Earle, *Monmouth's Rebels*, 43.

¹⁸⁴ Holloway, *Confession*, 7; Hinds, ‘L’Estrange, Rye House Plot’, 19.

offered them refuge and means to leave England.¹⁸⁵ Soon after Charles II died in early 1685, the Particulars became instrumental in instigating, financing, preparing, coordinating, and fighting the Rebellion. A meeting with Nathaniel Wade and Joseph Tiley in part helped to convince Monmouth to join the Earl of Argyle in rebelling against James II.¹⁸⁶

For the rest of this section, I show that without the Particulars, Monmouth may well have never left the Netherlands. When the rebels reached England, Particulars were among the most senior officers, including Kiffen's grandsons, Benjamin and William Hewling. I then look at the Particulars' toleration dynamics, by first showing their subordinate toleration of Monmouth himself. I also discuss how the Particulars framed their denominational distinctiveness, not so much in doctrine, but in their importance to the rebel cause. This was an intrinsic facet of their significant contribution to the siege of Bristol, effectively offering Monmouth the city for the taking. When this offer was rejected, and their importance disregarded, it marked the beginning of the end for the Rebellion.

Monmouth and Argyle lacked the funds necessary to launch the Rebellion and may well have cancelled it if not for a wealthy Particular widow, Ann Smith. Monmouth had pawned all he had for £5,500, hardly enough for such an expedition.¹⁸⁷ All hope seemed lost, until according to Wade, 'it happened that Mr. Smith dyed and left his Wife the greatest part of his Estate, which being very considerable, and she willing to part with the most of it on this occasion, put new life into the business.'¹⁸⁸ Indeed, she

¹⁸⁵ Thomas Bayly Howell, *A Complete Collection of State Trials and Proceedings for High Treason and Other Crimes: Volume XI* (Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown, 1816), 415–16.

¹⁸⁶ Ford Lord Grey, *The Secret History of the Rye-House Plot: And of Monmouth's Rebellion* (London, 1754), 93–94.

¹⁸⁷ Richard L. Greaves, *Secrets of the Kingdom: British Radicals from the Popish Plot to the Revolution of 1688-1689* (Stanford University Press, 1992), 285.

¹⁸⁸ 'Wade's Narrative', in Wigfield, *The Monmouth Rebellion*, 157.

invested £8,000 of the £9,000 that Argyle used for his Scottish invasion.¹⁸⁹ Smith also donated another £1,000 to buy a frigate – up until then, the rebels had only had two small boats. Clifton estimates her donation of nearly £10,000 to the Rebellion was probably most, if not all, her remaining finances.¹⁹⁰ Smith was closely associated with one of the Particular rebel officers, Abraham Holmes – in fact, Holmes had asked Smith to help Argyle escape England in 1682.¹⁹¹ In a letter after his capture, Argyle apologised to Ann Smith for having named her in his interrogations, saying, ‘The Lord God be with you, bless, comfort, and reward you, for all your kindness to all the saints.’¹⁹² Smith’s donation also financed the fitting of Monmouth’s ships, a responsibility assigned to Wade, who subsequently collected all the weapons, ammunition and other supplies for the rebels’ invasion.¹⁹³

Many Baptists joined Monmouth and Argyle on the ships that invaded Britain. Danvers was sent to gain support in London, while the Rebellion was taking place in the west.¹⁹⁴ Gaunt made several trips back-and-forth between London and Amsterdam until July, assisting preparations.¹⁹⁵ Richard Rumbold joined Argyle in the invasion of Scotland.¹⁹⁶ Eighty-two men also joined Monmouth on the ships sailing for Lyme Regis. At the end of the campaign, when William Hewling was arrested, authorities found a list of the eighty-two in his pocket.¹⁹⁷ Many on that list became rebel officers, including

¹⁸⁹ Grey, *The Secret History*, 112; ‘Nathaniel Wade’s Narrative’, in Wigfield, *The Monmouth Rebellion*, 158. Grey claimed it was £7000, Wade £8000.

¹⁹⁰ Robin Clifton, ‘Smith, Ann (fl. 1682–1686)’, ed. H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison, *O.D.N.B.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/67257>.

¹⁹¹ John Willcock, *A Scots Earl in Covenanting Times: Being Life and Times of Archibald, 9th Earl of Argyll* (Edinburgh: A. Elliot, 1907), 295.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, 413.

¹⁹³ ‘Wade’s Narrative’, in Wigfield, *The Monmouth Rebellion*, 159.

¹⁹⁴ Richard L. Greaves, ‘Danvers, Henry (b. in or before 1619, d. 1687/8)’, ed. H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison, *O.D.N.B.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/7134>.

¹⁹⁵ Zook, ‘Nursing Sedition’, 197.

¹⁹⁶ Earle, *Monmouth’s Rebels*, 45.

¹⁹⁷ Caroline Harriet Stopford-Sackville, George Sackville, and Germain Sackville, eds., *Report on the Manuscripts of Mrs. Stopford-Sackville of Drayton House, Northamptonshire* (London: H.M.S.O., 1904), 23.

several Particulars. Along with Particular plotters like Holmes, Wade, Tiley, and Parsons, there were several others, including George Gosfright, the man who had named his daughter 'Kiffeana'. Gosfright was also related by marriage to Lucy Walter, Monmouth's mother, making him one of the main 'witnesses' to Walter and Charles II's wedding, essential for establishing Monmouth's legitimacy as heir.¹⁹⁸ The Gosfrights were probably Dutch and spent much of their time in Amsterdam, their house having been often used to accommodate exiles from England.¹⁹⁹ Another Baptist on the rebels' ship was Hugh Chamberlain, one of the army's surgeons.²⁰⁰ The Chamberlain family were well-known for being both surgeons and Sabbatarian Baptists, a small offshoot of the Baptist movements.²⁰¹ Hugh Chamberlain had been Charles II's personal physician, before the king decommissioned him in 1682 as part of his campaign against Dissenters – magisterial intolerance eventually turned Chamberlain from royal servant to rebel.²⁰²

William Kiffen's grandsons, Benjamin and William Hewling, also played a prominent role. Benjamin was not one of the rebels on the ship but had left earlier to prepare for the Rebellion in Somerset – he would also be made a cavalry captain for about 100 horse.²⁰³ He and his brother William had moved to Amsterdam to pursue further studies, some time before April 1683, though not because of any involvement in the Plot.²⁰⁴ According to their sister, they had gone there 'to learn the language' (that is,

¹⁹⁸ Baines, 'Monmouth, Kiffin and the Gosfrights'.

¹⁹⁹ Ole Peter Grell and Andrew Cunningham, *Medicine and Religion in Enlightenment Europe* (Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2007), 232.

²⁰⁰ Helen King, 'Chamberlen, Hugh, the Elder (b. 1630x34, d. after 1720)', ed. H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison, *O.D.N.B.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, January 2011), <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/5062>.

²⁰¹ Helen King, 'Chamberlen Family (per. c.1600–c.1730)', ed. H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison, *O.D.N.B.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, January 2004), <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/58754>.

²⁰² Manuscript, in F.H. Blackburne Daniell, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic, of the Reign of Charles II, 1682 (January-December)*, vol. 23: Jan-Dec 1682 (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1932), 546.

²⁰³ 'JF' in 'Introduction', in Hannah Hewling-Cromwell, 'Concerning Her Brothers Wm. and Benjamin, Executed at Lyme Regis and Taunton in 1685 Respectively', 1685, TPHrm/1, Somerset Heritage Centre.

²⁰⁴ Benjamin Hewling Jr., 'Letter to Hannah Hewling', in Kiffen, *Remarkable Passages*, 143–44.

Dutch) to help them in the family's mercantile business.²⁰⁵ How they became involved in the Rebellion is unknown, though clearly they had become closely connected to Amsterdam's Particular community, as had the other conspirators.²⁰⁶ The two brothers were nineteen and twenty-two years old, making them exceptional among the Rebellion's officers, most of whom were over thirty years old. Monmouth made William Hewling a lieutenant under the Particular Joseph Tiley, who he made a captain.²⁰⁷

Ultimately, Particulars in the rebel army were given considerable authority, with Nathaniel Wade, Thomas Venner, and Abraham Holmes becoming the Rebellion's most senior officers, placed above Monmouth's only remaining aristocratic supporter, Lord Grey. When Grey retreated in battle early in the campaign, Monmouth placed Grey directly under the 'advice' of Venner.²⁰⁸ Despite having no formal military experience, Wade became the acting commander of Monmouth's own red regiment. Earle described Wade as 'one of the great military successes of the rebellion.'²⁰⁹ W. MacDonald Wigfield said of Wade that, 'he seems to have been a born soldier, efficient and trusted alike by Monmouth and by the men he led'.²¹⁰ By Sedgemoor, Wade and Holmes were in charge of two of the four foot regiments, each comprising at least 500 men, collectively at least a quarter of the entire rebel army.²¹¹ The Particulars were not just prominent in the Rebellion, they were major financial supporters, organisers, and leaders throughout the entire campaign.

²⁰⁵ Hewling-Cromwell, 'Draft Letter to Queen Anne'.

²⁰⁶ 'JF' in 'Introduction', in Hewling-Cromwell, 'Concerning Her Brothers', i.

²⁰⁷ Nathaniel Wade, 'The Confession of Nathaniel Wade', 1685, 274, MS6845, Harleian.

²⁰⁸ 'Wade's Narrative', in Wigfield, *The Monmouth Rebellion*, 163.

²⁰⁹ Earle, *Monmouth's Rebels*, 30.

²¹⁰ Wigfield, *The Monmouth Rebellion*, 38.

²¹¹ 'Wade's Narrative', in *ibid.*, 163.

Unity of necessity dynamics were also evident throughout the campaign, but became increasingly strained as time wore on, especially once they reached Bristol.²¹² While this was sometimes driven by denominational differences, it did not manifest in doctrinal disagreements. Firstly, just as in the Plot, the rebels vehemently disagreed on the desired outcomes for the Rebellion. Specifically, they argued about whether the goal of the Rebellion was for Monmouth to become king or for England to become a republic again. This was largely a debate about the nature of their subordinate toleration. Indeed, where rebels supported Monmouth's claim to the throne, they were engaged in both insubordinate intolerance and subordinate toleration simultaneously: their repugnance towards James II motivated them to settle for Monmouth. Monmouth was hardly the ideal monarch for a Puritan army. He was still officially considered illegitimate, notwithstanding unsubstantiated rumours of his mother having married Charles. Edward Vallance has also described Monmouth's 'rakish behaviour' and 'lukewarm attachment to Protestantism'.²¹³ Wade stated that before the Rebellion, 'we had many complaints with him', given that Monmouth had not defended any of 'us who had suffered with him' to his father, Charles, after the Plot failed.²¹⁴ It seems the rebels supported Monmouth only out of a lack of any real alternative.²¹⁵ The rebels' landing declaration had deliberately avoided describing Monmouth as king, focusing instead on James II's alleged crimes.²¹⁶ Whether they should name Monmouth king was continually debated among the rebels early in the campaign, dividing the Particulars. Wade vehemently argued against it in the rebels' council on 19 June.²¹⁷ Yet the person

²¹² Earle, *Monmouth's Rebels*, 35.

²¹³ Edward Vallance, *The Glorious Revolution: 1688, Britain's Fight for Liberty* (London: Little, Brown, 2006), 56.

²¹⁴ 'Wade's Narrative', in Wigfield, *The Monmouth Rebellion*, 158.

²¹⁵ Earle, *Monmouth's Rebels*, ix.

²¹⁶ James Scott Monmouth, *The Declaration of James Duke of Monmouth ... for Delivering the Kingdom from the Usurpation & Tyranny of James Duke of York* (London, 1685).

²¹⁷ Wade, 'Narrative of Nathaniel Wade', 14; 'Anonymous account of the Monmouth Rebellion written by a participant', in 'Typescript Articles and Extracts Regarding the Monmouth Rebellion', 1715, 3, TPHwig/2/7, Somerset Heritage Centre, <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/a2a/records.aspx?cat=168-phwig&cid=2-7#2-7>.

who read out the proclamation that Monmouth was king, the very next day in Taunton, was none other than Wade's fellow Bristol Particular, Joseph Tiley.²¹⁸ Disagreements around Monmouth's crown inevitably created confusion and disunity among the rebels, even for those from the same denomination.

Denominational differences still played a significant part in the Rebellion, but less in terms of doctrine, and more in terms of roles and rewards. As Creppell has stated, unity of necessity allows a minority's contribution or 'purpose' to become more important than their doctrinal idiosyncrasies.²¹⁹ This was evident in the Rebellion. Obviously, every rebel joined with hopes of success, but what is often forgotten in the midst of their defeat is how success was defined by each of them. As well as pursuing the end of a Catholic monarch and of government harassment, each Nonconformist denomination hoped to gain favouritism in Monmouth's court. To do so, they had to show that their faction could distinctly contribute to victory. If their contribution was negated, that weakened their hopes of reward. The Bristol Particulars represent an excellent example of this, because they alone had prepared everything the rebels needed to take Bristol. In this regard, the Bristol siege represents the fleeting attempt by some Particulars to restore the denomination to the upper echelons of power. This phase of the Rebellion can best be explained in terms of: Bristol's value for the rebels; how effectively the Particulars had organised to take it; why the rebels did not take it, despite these preparations; and the impact this failure had on the Rebellion, and the Particulars.

Military historians agree that the taking of Bristol would have completely changed the rebels' fortunes. Wigfield described the decision to abandon its capture as 'the real turning point of the rebellion' and argues that taking that city would have given

²¹⁸ 'Wade's Narrative', in Wigfield, *The Monmouth Rebellion*, 166.

²¹⁹ Creppell, *Toleration and Identity*, 11–12.

the rebels ‘the greatest chance of success in the whole venture.’²²⁰ David C. Chandler also insists that at Bristol, ‘the Revolt in the West had reached its high-water mark’.²²¹ Bristol was the second largest city in England at the time and the largest and most influential port, amply supplied by trade. To this point, the Rebellion had not been lacking in volunteers – the army was by then some 4,000 men – but rather a lack of supplies for them. Many had been sent away for lack of shoes.²²² Gaining Bristol would have helped provide necessary supplies and would have also improved the troops’ quickly-deflating morale. It would have joined the two regions where Monmouth was most popular: Somerset to the south and Cheshire to the north. Monmouth would have also gained much-needed credibility, even prestige, and could well have drawn more nobles to his banner.²²³

Recognising its importance, Bristol Particulars had worked tirelessly to give the rebels the best chance of taking it. It had been their defining contribution to the campaign from its outset, with Lord Grey introducing Wade and Tiley to Monmouth because they had ‘the best account of the western counties where they lived.’²²⁴ Much of their preparations for insurrection in Bristol dated back to the Plot. As the rebels neared Bristol, Wade and Tiley were closely consulted on every point. Monmouth had originally intended to attack Bristol from the south, but they convinced him to cross Keynsham Bridge, to the south-east of Bristol, so the rebels could attack instead from the east.²²⁵ Monmouth feared royal troops would have damaged the bridge, a concern that indeed proved correct. However, Tiley had already prepared for that eventuality, was able to repel the small party of royal troops guarding it, and quickly fix the

²²⁰ Wigfield, *The Monmouth Rebellion*, 51.

²²¹ David G. Chandler, *Sedgemoor, 1685: From Monmouth’s Invasion to the Bloody Assizes* (Staplehurst: Spellmount, 1999), 31.

²²² ‘Wade’s Narrative’, in Wigfield, *The Monmouth Rebellion*, 167.

²²³ Chandler, *Sedgemoor*, 27.

²²⁴ Grey, *The Secret History*, 98.

²²⁵ ‘Wade’s Narrative’, in Wigfield, *The Monmouth Rebellion*, 166.

bridge.²²⁶ From there, Wade claimed, ‘we intended to fall upon [Bristol] that night, having those in our camp that perfectly understood the city.’²²⁷ Upon the rebels’ arrival, the Particular minister, Andrew Gifford Snr, sent his son Emmanuel out to their camp. He told Monmouth that the royal army had left Bristol largely unguarded, relying instead on its walls for protection. However, he assured Monmouth that the Particulars had secretly destroyed a section of the city’s eastern wall, so the rebels could sneak in without casualties and take the city.²²⁸ Emmanuel also informed Monmouth that his father had ‘collected a considerable sum, and ... ammunition’ in preparation for their arrival.²²⁹ For the Particulars, this level of involvement represented a massive risk, but also a tremendous investment in the Rebellion. Their hopes, for the success of the Rebellion, but also the rewards they could receive afterwards were intrinsically linked to this moment.

Monmouth’s decision not to accept their offer of assistance, therefore, was considered as nothing less than an act of betrayal by the Particulars.²³⁰ Certainly, Monmouth had several reasons for not entering the city. Earlier that day, his troops had captured some royal soldiers, who had greatly exaggerated how many soldiers were stationed in Bristol.²³¹ Monmouth believed them, despite Gifford’s assurances. Also, that night a ship in Bristol’s harbour had accidentally caught aflame, and the rebels thought the troops ‘had sett the suburbs on fire least wee should have possessed ourselves of it’.²³² Monmouth decided that it would only add to the nobility’s distaste for him if he was responsible for Bristol being burnt to the ground. Finally, he had heard that some 10,000 Quakers were waiting to join his army in Bridgewater (which proved incorrect)

²²⁶ Ibid., 50.

²²⁷ ‘Wade’s Narrative’, in *ibid.*, 167.

²²⁸ Gifford, ‘Preface to the Western Martyrology’; Ivimey, *A History of the English Baptists*, 1811, 1:432.

²²⁹ Gifford, ‘Preface to the Western Martyrology’.

²³⁰ Terrill, *Broadmead Records*, 1974, 71.

²³¹ ‘Wade’s Narrative’, in Wigfield, *The Monmouth Rebellion*, 167.

²³² ‘Wade’s Narrative’, in *ibid.*, 166–67.

and decided to find them. Yet these reasons were insufficient as far as the Particulars were concerned. Emmanuel Gifford subsequently refused Monmouth's invitation to join the rebel army, informing him that 'his commission was at an end.'²³³

From then on, the Particulars became increasingly disengaged from the Rebellion and especially from Monmouth, having realised the opportunity that had been missed. Chandler suggests that by choosing not to take the city, the rebels were 'effectively surrendering', though Monmouth did not realise it at the time.²³⁴ Yet their imminent defeat was also evidently because the Particulars felt betrayed by Monmouth, and that their contribution to the cause had been maligned.²³⁵ When the troops arrived at Bridgewater, the officers held a council of war, and several Baptist military leaders called for the rebels to disband. Two of them, Venner and Parsons, promptly fled to the Netherlands, and many other rebels began deserting.²³⁶ Soon things became so desperate that Monmouth ordered the highly risky attack at Sedgemoor, which brought the Rebellion to a decisive end. Monmouth's decision to not accept the Particulars' chief contribution to the campaign was instrumental to the rebels' defeat. The Particulars felt so unappreciated and betrayed, that unity of necessity broke down, along with the entire Rebellion itself.

This section shows the value of unity of necessity, but also its limitations. The first part of this section showed how valuable unity of necessity can be in less extreme situations, such as in the early 1680s when Particulars joined clubs and academies or engaged in publication. These were very effective at joining various groups against the common enemy, James Duke of York. Thus inter-denominational intolerance of Catholicism facilitated inter-denominational collaboration among Protestant

²³³ Terrill, *Broadmead Records*, 1974, 71.

²³⁴ Chandler, *Sedgemoor*, 31.

²³⁵ Gifford, 'Preface to the Western Martyrology'.

²³⁶ 'Wade's Narrative', in Wigfield, *The Monmouth Rebellion*, 169.

Nonconformists – a unity of necessity. However, once the situation shifted to extreme insubordinate intolerance, in the Plot and then the Rebellion, unity of necessity became insufficient to facilitate success. The Plot failed because its conspirators could not agree on their preferred goal, destroying any credibility that they could create any kind of unity should they succeed. The Rebellion failed for much the same reason, with the rebels divided on whether Monmouth should be king. It also failed because, as Creppell argues, unity of necessity requires that each key minority's contribution be appreciated, and the Particulars' key contribution at Bristol was not.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has shown that dynamics of toleration dominated the period from 1679-1685 in ways toleration historians rarely appreciate. It has also highlighted just how Particulars contributed to these dynamics in significant ways. While this is often attributed to Dissenters' anti-Catholicism, it was also fuelled by a cycle of intolerance between Conformists and Nonconformists. In retaliation for Dissenters' disregard for James, Charles and his Anglican allies engaged in severe prosecution, including of Particulars. This drove Nonconformists to not only seek relief, but to resent those authorities. Such resentment only justified why authorities had begun the prosecution in the first place, encouraging them to be more severe. This led to Dissenters turning to desperate, extreme measures. While Particulars had engaged in less violent expressions of discontent, many of them now felt compelled to regicide and Rebellion. This developed a unity of necessity among Dissenters, in turn bringing about inter-denominational toleration. Yet as more extreme measures were employed, this unity of necessity broke down, as did the Plot and Rebellion itself. If the Rebellion was the most extreme expression of the Dissenters' insubordinate intolerance, the most severe form of

magisterial intolerance would soon follow – the Bloody Assize. Paradoxically, though, this event would prove to fulfil the Dissenters' goals more effectively than anything else, as the last chapter of this thesis will reveal.

CHAPTER 5:

THE PARTICULAR BAPTISTS IN REVOLUTION

I bless God I am not ashamed of ye cause for which I lay down my life, & as I have ingaged in it & fought for it, so I am now going to seal it with my blood. The lord still carry on the same cause which has been long on foot, & tho wee dye in it & for it, I question nott but in his own good time he will raise up other instrument, more worthy to carry itt on to ye glory of his name and ye advancement of his church & people.¹

Benjamin Hewling wrote this in a letter on 29 September 1685, before his execution for his part in the Western Rebellion. Three years later, John Tutchin published this letter in *Dying Speeches, Letters, and Prayers*, to show God's approval for the Glorious Revolution.² The 'Bloody Assizes', which tried the rebels, aroused subordinate toleration and insubordinate intolerance toward James II, including among Particulars. Indeed, this caused divisions within the Particulars, that would ultimately require drastic measures to heal. These Assizes directly influenced the Dissenters' relationship to James II's reign and the Glorious Revolution itself.

The period from 1685 to 1689 in England can be summarised briefly. The Rebellion ended in July 1685, the captured rebels were tried until September, with most of them found guilty. Many were executed into October that year. In March 1686, James ceased prosecuting Dissenters and began tolerating them instead. In April 1687, James

¹ 'Benjamin Hewling, Letter to his Mother (30 September 1685)', in Benjamin Hewling, 'Papers Concerning Benjamin Hewling and Mr Battiscomb, Executed at Lyme Regis for Participation in Monmouth's Rebellion', September 1685, 731/153, Cambridgeshire County Record Office, Huntingdon.

² 'Benjamin Hewling, Letter to his Mother (30 September 1685)', in John Tutchin, *The Dying Speeches, Letters, and Prayers, &c. of Those Eminent Protestants Who Suffered in the West of England* (London, 1689), 39.

issued his *Declaration of Indulgence*, and he and his collaborators began attempting to repeal Conformist regulations in Parliament. Over the coming year, James met strong resistance, especially from Anglicans, culminating in William of Orange's invitation to come to England. William arrived in December 1688, and James fled the country. Parliament made William king in February 1689, passing the Act of Toleration in April that year to the Dissenters' relief.

Mark Knights identifies two competing historical assessments of James' relationship with Dissenters.³ The first, represented by Steve Pincus in *1688*, upholds the classic view that James was a Catholic autocrat, who Dissenters distrusted.⁴ Dissenters joined Whigs and Tories to stop James, fearing his supposed religious liberty would cost them their civil liberties.⁵ However, Scott Sowerby in *Making Toleration*, argues Dissenters supported James' attempts for comprehensive religious toleration.⁶ These 'Repealers' hoped Parliament would repeal Conformity, replacing it with a new Magna Carta for religious liberty.⁷ Contrary to Pincus' portrayal, Sowerby argues that Repealers were not 'outliers' of their denominations, but often leaders from the Presbyterians, Quakers, and Baptists.⁸ Yet after the Glorious Revolution, Dissenters' support for James was erased from the historiography.⁹ Responses to Sowerby have been mixed, with several historians supporting his overall argument.¹⁰ Pincus, however,

³ Mark Knights, 'Scott Sowerby. *Making Toleration: The Repealers and the Glorious Revolution*', *The American Historical Review* 119, no. 3 (1 June 2014): 981.

⁴ Steve Pincus, *1688: The First Modern Revolution* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 180, 188.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 208.

⁶ Scott Sowerby, *Making Toleration* (London: Harvard University Press, 2013).

⁷ *Ibid.*, 31.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 34.

⁹ Gary S. De Krey, 'Reformation and "Arbitrary Government": London Dissenters and James II's Polity of Toleration, 1687-1688', in *Fear, Exclusion and Revolution: Roger Morrice and Britain in the 1680s*, ed. Jason McElligott (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006), 14; Scott Sowerby, 'Forgetting the Repealers: Religious Toleration and Historical Amnesia in Later Stuart England', *Past & Present*, no. 215 (2012): 120.

¹⁰ Mark Goldie, 'Making Toleration: The Repealers and the Glorious Revolution, by Scott Sowerby', *English Historical Review* 129, no. 539 (August 2014): 971; De Krey, 'Reformation and "Arbitrary Government"', 14.

dismisses claims by such ‘revisionists’.¹¹ He argues instead that James ‘insisted on absolute sovereignty within his own dominion’ and was ‘seeking to Catholicize his Protestant country’.¹² Therefore, James was not at all a ‘precocious defender of religious liberty’.¹³ While Pincus concedes a few Nonconformists supported James, most ‘did not rush to embrace their liberator’.¹⁴

In fact, the tension between Pincus and Sowerby’s analyses can be partially resolved, by recognising the strong polarity James engendered among the Dissenters, especially Particulars. In an oft-forgotten article for *The Baptist Quarterly* in 1991, S.H. Mayor argued, ‘James’ overtures had the effect of splitting the Dissenters’, and ‘it was the Baptists who were most divided’.¹⁵ Sowerby admits such Nonconformist divisions occurred, though he portrays James’ adversaries as merely ‘unenthusiastic’.¹⁶ I argue both James’ supporters and antagonists were very enthusiastic, especially among the Particulars. Moreover, their various responses were heavily influenced by the same event: the Bloody Assizes. For those supporting James, the Rebellion and Assizes typified the ‘cycle of intolerance’ discussed in Chapter 4. Exhausted, they looked to James to break it, once and for all. Meanwhile, many of James’ opponents had witnessed loved ones’ executions, giving a personal undercurrent to their insubordinate intolerance. These two groups found themselves within the one denomination, challenging denominational unity.

If the Rebellion and Assizes’ impact upon the Glorious Revolution is not recognised, analysis of 1688 can become difficult.¹⁷ For example, in Sowerby’s introduction he argues – correctly – that, ‘Revolutions are frequently caused by

¹¹ Pincus, *1688*, 6.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid., 209.

¹⁴ Ibid., 199–200, 208.

¹⁵ S.H. Mayor, ‘James II and Dissenters’, *Baptist Quarterly* 34, no. 4 (October 1991): 183–84.

¹⁶ Sowerby, *Making Toleration*, 131.

¹⁷ Melinda S. Zook, *Radical Whigs and Conspiratorial Politics in Late Stuart England* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010), xiv; Pincus, *1688*, 4.

movements of reform that are stymied by repressive governments. When an oppositional movement forms against a government, a loyalist countermovement typically rises up to defend the government.’¹⁸ Yet he suggests the Glorious Revolution was unusual, in that James never became repressive at all. This overlooks that ‘an oppositional movement of reform’ arose against James at his reign’s inception: the Western Rebellion, which Sowerby dismisses as ‘feeble’ and ‘easily parried’.¹⁹ Yet in the Assizes, James did represent a ‘repressive government’ and Tories ‘a loyalist countermovement’, extremely effectively. No review of Sowerby’s book mentions this oversight.²⁰ Yet by recognising the Rebellion and the Assize, Sowerby’s conundrum here becomes much easier to solve.

Emphasising the toleration dynamics in the Assizes can be valuable for various other reasons. For example, such examination draws the focus away from James’ Catholicism as the main cause of Dissenters’ resentment, revealing other dynamics at play.²¹ While James’ faith did fuel England’s suspicions, it was not the only factor.²² Pincus highlights how James’ accession was generally celebrated with ‘enthusiastic toasts’ and not ‘anti-Catholic paranoia’.²³ Recognising the Assizes adds further dimensions to why James soon became seen as a cruel, tyrannical monarch, as this chapter will reveal. When discussing popular intolerance of minorities, Walsham has

¹⁸ Sowerby, *Making Toleration*, 15–16.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 4, 260.

²⁰ William Gibson, ‘Making Toleration, The Repealers and the Glorious Revolution’, *Journal of Religious History* 37, no. 3 (September 2013): 421–22; John Spurr, ‘Scott Sowerby. Making Toleration: The Repealers and the Glorious Revolution’, *Journal of British Studies* 52, no. 4 (October 2013): 1074–76; Gary S. De Krey, review of *Making Toleration: The Repealers and the Glorious Revolution*, by Scott Sowerby, *The Journal of Modern History* 86, no. 4 (2014): 893–95; Knights, ‘Making Toleration’; Edward Vallance, ‘Making Toleration: The Repealers and the Glorious Revolution’, *Parliamentary History* 34, no. 2 (June 2015): 266–67.

²¹ Edward Vallance, *The Glorious Revolution: 1688, Britain’s Fight for Liberty* (London: Little, Brown, 2006), 103–6; Andrew R. Murphy, *Conscience and Community: Revisiting Toleration and Religious Dissent in Early Modern England and America* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), 126.

²² Alexandra Walsham, *Charitable Hatred: Tolerance and Intolerance in England, 1500–1700* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), 267; Sowerby, *Making Toleration*, 45.

²³ Pincus, *1688*, 95.

highlighted how ‘doctrinal error’ often became intolerable once it was combined with ‘social or moral deviance’.²⁴ This chapter argues a similar dynamic could happen with subordinate relationships as well: the evidence suggests many could have tolerated James’ Catholicism, until it became identified with the Bloody Assizes. Furthermore, because the Assizes’ victims were largely commoners, examining them shows how they were involved in the Revolution, alongside the widely recognised elites, such as MPs and bishops.²⁵ Tim Harris believes this focus on the elite is one way toleration historians’ analysis ‘remains deficient’.²⁶

When examining the Assizes, some historians are wary of the primary source material, such as John Tutchin’s notoriously hagiographical *Western Martyrology*.²⁷ For example, Zook asserts that Tutchin constructed most of it long after 1685, to establish the ‘Whig myth’.²⁸ However, my analysis shows that many pages from Tutchin’s earlier editions from 1689 originate from the period. Walsham states that while such accounts ‘betray clear traces of rhetorical emendation if not invention’, there is little doubt they represent a common mentality among executed Dissenters.²⁹ This chapter builds on her work in this regard, as well as others like Brad S. Gregory and Andrea McKenzie.³⁰

This chapter has three sections. The first explores the Assizes, establishing that they were not merely a Whig construct, as Zook has suggested. Rather, they represent an extreme example of the cycle of intolerance, discussed in Chapter 4. Moreover, while magisterial intolerance was clearly evident, the condemned rebels’ very deaths became expressions of insubordinate intolerance as well. The second section explains how

²⁴ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 145.

²⁵ Pincus, *1688*, 180.

²⁶ Tim Harris, *Revolution: The Great Crisis of the British Monarchy, 1685-1720* (London: Allen Lane, 2006), 14; See also De Krey, ‘Reformation and “Arbitrary Government”’, 29.

²⁷ Such hesitations are well summarised by Brad S. Gregory, *Salvation at Stake: Christian Martyrdom in Early Modern Europe*, Harvard Historical Studies ; 134 (London: Harvard University Press, 1999), 16.

²⁸ Zook, *Radical Whigs*, 137.

²⁹ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 168.

³⁰ Gregory, *Salvation at Stake*; Andrea Katherine McKenzie, *Tyburn’s Martyrs: Execution in England, 1675-1775* (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2007).

James' decision to support Dissenters affected the Particulars. It examines how Particular Repealers supported James and why they did so, and how and why other Particulars resisted him. The last section discusses the Particulars' response to the Glorious Revolution, and how they healed the divisions left after James' departure.

1. THE PARTICULARS IN THE BLOODY ASSIZES

This section examines toleration dynamics in the Bloody Assizes, and especially the mutual intolerance of James and the condemned rebels. From the outset, I establish the source material's validity, comparing the Whig martyrologies with extant documents from 1685. I then analyse the trials and punishments as expressions of magisterial intolerance against religious fanaticism, before I utilise writings by Particulars like Elizabeth Gaunt, Richard Rumbold, Samuel Larke, and William and Benjamin Hewling, to show how the condemned rebels reframed these punishments. I end by showing how they employed longstanding Christian martyrdom and prophetic motifs to reverse the meaning of their executions, turning magisterial victory into a portent of divine wrath. Again, this was not intellectual, but pragmatic intolerance: 'beliefs boldly enacted', as Gregory describes.³¹

Some recent historians have remained cautious when examining the Bloody Assizes, because of the lack of source material. Peter Earle, for example, laments that many of the usual legal documents historians would use are unavailable, probably because they were destroyed after the Glorious Revolution.³² This leaves John Tutchin's Whig martyrologies, which many consider unreliable. In 1995, Zook stated, 'the martyrologies were propaganda, produced for commercial and political purposes. As reliable source material for the historian of the 1680s they are nearly useless.' She

³¹ Gregory, *Salvation at Stake*, 2.

³² Peter Earle, *Monmouth's Rebels: The Road to Sedgemoor, 1685* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1977), 165–66.

argued that, ‘the dying words and execution accounts ... are extremely suspicious and probably creative fictions.’³³ However, while Tutchin certainly did write some sections, he was not so much the author of these works, but rather their compiler and editor. These books are not just constructed recordings of dying words and execution accounts by fictitious spectators. Rather, they contain letters written by the executed rebels and eyewitness accounts by their families, which have come to light since Zook wrote her article in 1995.

Tutchin published seven martyrologies in 1689 alone and analysing these reveals his sources more accurately represent the rebels than has been assumed. Here, I provide an extensive analysis of these works, to establish their legitimacy as sources for the Assizes. Tutchin published his first martyrology, *The Protestant Martyrs*, in January 1689.³⁴ In its last five pages, he directly copied execution accounts of Alice Lisle, the Duke of Argyle, and the Particulars Elizabeth Gaunt and Richard Rumbold, which had already been published in 1685.³⁵ The publication of such dying speeches was common practice in this period.³⁶ Tutchin also briefly summarised the dying speech of John Hicks, which he probably received from his own wife, Elizabeth, Hicks’ daughter.³⁷ In February 1689, Tutchin published *The Bloody Assizes*, with now forty pages detailing over twenty more rebels’ execution accounts.³⁸ This expansion of sources indicates how

³³ Melinda S. Zook, ‘“The Bloody Assizes:” Whig Martyrdom and Memory after the Glorious Revolution’, *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies* 27, no. 3 (1995): 380.

³⁴ John Tutchin, *The Protestant Martyrs: Or, the Bloody Assizes* (London: J. Bradford, 1689).

³⁵ Anon., *A True Account of the Behaviour and Manner of the Execution of Six Persons Viz. Henry Cornish and Elizabeth Gaunt Condemned for High-Treason* (London: E. Mallet, 1685); Elizabeth Gaunt, *Mrs Elizabeth Gaunt’s Last Speech Who Was Burnt at London, Oct. 23. 1685* (London, 1685); George Croom, *The Tryals of Henry Cornish, Esq: And John Fernley, William Ring, and Elizabeth Gaunt for Harboursing and Maintaining Rebels* (London: George Croom, 1685); Richard Rumbold et al., *The Last Words of Coll. Richard Rumbold, Mad. Alicia Lisle, Alderman Henry Cornish, and Mr. Richard Nelthrop Who Were Executed in England and Scotland for High Treason in the Year 1685.* (London, 1685); Tutchin, *The Protestant Martyrs*, 11–16; See also Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England, 1550-1720* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 423.

³⁶ McKenzie, *Tyburn’s Martyrs*, 38.

³⁷ J.G. Muddiman, ed., *The Bloody Assizes* (London: Hodge, 1929), 6.

³⁸ John Tutchin, ed., *The Bloody Assizes: Or, a Compleat History of the Life of George Lord Jefferies* (London, 1689).

Tutchin's work evolved: other rebels' families offered him their accounts of the executions, because of his first book's success. Walsham has shown that such martyrdom narratives were 'repeatedly read and recounted' by Nonconformist families, to strengthen them amidst 'fresh bouts of intimidation and pressure', perpetuating 'black legends' about the state's illegitimacy.³⁹ Tutchin published two larger collections of *Dying Speeches, Letters and Prayers*, in May and June 1689. These were replete with rebels' last letters to their families, and accounts that Tutchin directly attributes to family members. For example, volume one of his *Dying Speeches* includes letters by Benjamin and William Hewling, and other records treasured by their family since the Assizes in September 1685.⁴⁰ The original manuscripts are available in the Somerset Heritage Centre and the Cambridgeshire County Record Office.⁴¹ They were also incorporated by the brothers' grandfather, William Kiffen, into his memoirs.⁴² A comparison of the original texts and Tutchin's indicates they were studiously copied, as seen in Table 5.1.

³⁹ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 174.

⁴⁰ Tutchin, *Dying Speeches*, 29–40.

⁴¹ Hewling, 'Papers'; Hannah Hewling-Cromwell, 'Concerning Her Brothers Wm. and Benjamin, Executed at Lyme Regis and Taunton in 1685 Respectively', 1685, TPHlm/1, Somerset Heritage Centre; William Kiffen, 'Letter to Hannah Kiffen-Hewling', September 1685, 731/153, Cambridgeshire County Record Office, Huntingdon.

⁴² William Kiffen, *Remarkable Passages in the Life of William Kiffin*, ed. William Orme (London: Burton & Smith, 1823).

Excerpt from Letter by Benjamin Hewling, 1685	Text in Tutchin's <i>Dying Speeches</i> , 1689
<p>I bless God I am not ashamed of ye cause for which I lay down my life, & as I have ingaged in it & fought for it, so I am now going to seal it with my bloud the lord still carry on the same cause which has been long on foot, & tho wee dye in it & for it, I question nott but in his own good time he will raise up other instrument, more worthy to carry itt on to ye glory of his name and ye advancement of his church & people... they can kill but the body & blessed be god ye soul is out of there reach, for I question not but there malice wishes ye condemnation of yt as well as the destruction of the body, which has too evedently appeared by there diseeitfull flatering promises⁴³</p>	<p>I Bless God I am not ashamed for the Cause for which I lay down my Life ; and as I have Ingaged in it, and Fought for it, so I am now going to Seal it with my Blood. The Lord carry on the same Cause that hath been so long on foot ; and though I die in it, and for it, <i>I question not but in his own good time, he will raise up other Instruments more worthy to carry it on for the Glory of his Name, and the Advancement of his Church and People...</i> they can but kill the Body, and Blessed be God, the Soul is out of their reach ; for I question not but their Malice wishes the Damnation of the Soul, as well as the Destruction of the Body ; which hath evidently appeared by their deceitful flattering Promises.⁴⁴</p>

Table 5.1.

The texts are virtually identical, suggesting that such letters within Tutchin's martyrologies, at least, can be reliable sources of how the rebels themselves perceived the Assizes. They are consistent with Gregory's assessment that, 'we can use the sympathetic descriptions of martyrs' public words and actions with a high degree of confidence.'⁴⁵ Literature similar to that for the Hewlings can be found in the *Dying Speeches* collections, from ministers like the Particular Samuel Larke and the Presbyterian John Hicks, who also had close ties to the Particulars. Tutchin's own

⁴³ 'Benjamin Hewling, Letter to his Mother (30 September 1685)', in Benjamin Hewling, 'Papers Concerning Benjamin Hewling and Mr Battiscomb, Executed at Lyme Regis for Participation in Monmouth's Rebellion', September 1685, 731/153, Cambridgeshire County Record Office, Huntingdon.

⁴⁴ 'Benjamin Hewling, Letter to his Mother (30 September 1685)', in John Tutchin, *The Dying Speeches, Letters, and Prayers, &c. of Those Eminent Protestants Who Suffered in the West of England* (London, 1689), 39–40.

⁴⁵ Gregory, *Salvation at Stake*, 21.

commentary was often hyperbolic.⁴⁶ Yet the letters themselves are frequently banal, largely discussing each rebel's concern for their family.⁴⁷ Similarly, in the original publication of Gaunt's final writings in 1685, she defended her harbouring rebels as Christian hospitality to the oppressed.⁴⁸ Tutchin did not need to describe her that way, Gaunt herself already had.

Zook states that 'Tutchin wanted to turn the messages of the public execution upside down ... to delegitimize the government and further emphasize the righteousness and legitimacy of the Whig cause.'⁴⁹ This is true, but the condemned rebels had similar objectives. This section has established that, for all his faults, Tutchin did accurately record many of the documents produced by the rebels, and their families, during the Assizes. Indeed, it was in his best interests to do so: as Gregory states, 'Facts, not fabrication, best served propaganda.'⁵⁰ They may have lost the Battle of Sedgemoor, but they still attacked James' government, through their interpretation of their executions. They did this by portraying themselves as godly, admirable Puritans, suggesting that James and Jeffreys were wrong to execute them. This represented the culmination of the Puritan 'persecution' motif, already discussed in chapters 3 and 4. This section will look at how they did so, but first it examines the mechanics of the Assizes' trials and executions.

1.1 Magisterial Intolerance in the Assizes

While martyrologies did use hyperbole to describe Jeffreys and the Assizes, the trials lent themselves to such portrayals. Such severity already defined Jeffreys' career, as

⁴⁶ Muddiman, *The Bloody Assizes*, 56–57.

⁴⁷ 'Hicks letter to his wife (23 September 1685)', in John Tutchin, *The Second and Last Collection of the Dying Speeches, Letters, and Prayers &c. of Those Eminent Protestants Who Suffered in the West of England* (London, 1689), 14–15. See also 'Samuel Larke to his wife', 10–11; McKenzie, *Tyburn's Martyrs*, 164.

⁴⁸ Gaunt, *Last Speech*.

⁴⁹ Zook, 'The Bloody Assizes', 389.

⁵⁰ Gregory, *Salvation at Stake*, 21.

discussed in chapter 4. The only two extant records from the Bloody Assizes, Elizabeth Gaunt's and Alice Lisle's, show Jeffreys was often vitriolic during their trials, and that he actively sought guilty verdicts.⁵¹ Judges frequently assisted prosecutors in seventeenth-century trials.⁵² Still, Jeffreys' approach quickly became perceived as inappropriate process, especially by the rebels' families, but also more broadly. Roger Morrice described Jeffreys as 'very seveare'.⁵³ In this brief section, I examine the method used in the trials and the scale and manner of executions. Irrespective of the fact the rebels were guilty of treason, the trials and executions combined to perpetuate resentment among those involved, both locally in the west, and among the Nonconformist community.

The large number of guilty verdicts at the Assizes bred resentment for James' government. For comparison, the 1670s had thirty treason trials; the 1690s had twenty-six; but there were 1,337 treason cases in the 1680s, most of them in 1685.⁵⁴ Such numbers reflect the difference in approaches between Charles and James: since the Restoration, executions had steadily declined.⁵⁵ Charles had cautiously used execution when faced with sedition, taking a more conciliatory approach; James did not do so here. Part of that can be explained by the fact Charles never had to deal with treason on the scale of the Western Rebellion. There were over 1,300 people tried in the 1685 Assizes, and trying them individually would have taken over two years.⁵⁶ Not wishing to wait that long, Jeffreys ordered the chief prosecutor, Henry Pollexfen, to assure the

⁵¹ Thomas Bayly Howell, *A Complete Collection of State Trials and Proceedings for High Treason and Other Crimes: Volume XI* (Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown, 1816), 299ff, 409ff; An excellent analysis of the trial can be found in Antony Whitaker, *The Regicide's Widow: Lady Alice Lisle and the Bloody Assize* (Stroud: Sutton, 2006).

⁵² David G. Chandler, *Sedgemoor, 1685: From Monmouth's Invasion to the Bloody Assizes* (Staplehurst: Spellmount, 1999), 84.

⁵³ Roger Morrice, *The Entering Book of Roger Morrice, 1677-1691*, ed. Mark Goldie, vol. III (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2007), 81–82.

⁵⁴ Cynthia Ann Gladstone, 'High Crimes the Law of Treason in Late Stuart Britain' (University of Texas, 2003), 296.

⁵⁵ McKenzie, *Tyburn's Martyrs*, 5.

⁵⁶ Robin Clifton, 'Smith, Ann (fl. 1682–1686)', ed. H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison, *O.D.N.B.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 231–32, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/67257>.

captives of the King's mercy if they pleaded guilty. Jeffreys could then try the rebels in groups, rather than individually. One rebel, Henry Pitman, described how Jeffreys began the Assizes by trying twenty-eight prisoners who had refused Pollexfen's offer. Jeffreys not only pronounced them guilty, but sentenced them to be immediately hung, drawn and quartered. He then assured the remaining prisoners he would only send them to the West Indies, so long as they pleaded guilty. Many took up Jeffreys' offer, including Pitman himself.⁵⁷ In all, Jeffreys tried 317 men at Dorchester, condemning sixty-one of them to death. In Taunton, he tried over 500 men in two days, many of whom received death sentences.⁵⁸

The subsequent executions were also notoriously severe. Jeffreys executed fourteen rebels in Devon, seventy-four people in Dorset, and 240 in Somerset.⁵⁹ Zook dismisses the macabre descriptions of executions found in the martyrologies, arguing Tutchin had not witnessed any since he was incarcerated at the time.⁶⁰ However, drawing from a variety of other, local sources, J.G. Muddiman argues that most of the executed corpses were cut up, preserved, then hung throughout the West for over six months.⁶¹ Many locals even sought government compensation for the exorbitant cost of the salt and pitch needed to preserve the body parts.⁶² Consequently, by October 1685, Muddiman describes the region as resembling 'a vast anatomical museum.'⁶³ Walsham argues that Conformists had frequently utilised dismemberment, precisely in order to

⁵⁷ Henry Pitman, *A Relation of the Great Sufferings and Strange Adventures of Henry Pitman, Chyrurgion to the Late Duke of Monmouth* (London: Andrew Sowle, 1689), 4–5.

⁵⁸ Patricia Croot, *The World of the Small Farmer: Tenure, Profit and Politics in the Early-Modern Somerset Levels* (Hertfordshire: University Of Hertfordshire Press, 2017), 186.

⁵⁹ Maurice Page, 'Lord Jeffreys' Assize - an Important Omission', in 'Transcripts, Notes and Correspondence Relating to the Monmouth Rebellion, Battle of Sedgemoor, and the Bloody Assizes', 1933, DDBLM/25/1/5, Somerset Heritage Centre, <http://www1.somerset.gov.uk/archives/menu7.htm>.

⁶⁰ Zook, 'The Bloody Assizes', 394.

⁶¹ Whitaker, *The Regicide's Widow*, 40; Muddiman, *The Bloody Assizes*, 41.

⁶² W. MacDonald Wigfield, *The Monmouth Rebels, 1685* (Taunton: Somerset Record Society, 1985), viii.

⁶³ Muddiman, *The Bloody Assizes*, 41.

‘reclassify’ Dissenters and to ‘dispel the aura of sanctity’ such executions could convey.⁶⁴

The number of executions was partly because the rebels’ hyper-religious approach confirmed the state’s assessment that they were indeed dangerous fanatics. Less radical rebels were pardoned, including ones far more senior and heavily involved in the Rebellion. For example, the Particular rebel, Nathaniel Wade, willingly provided the authorities with an extensive confession. As a result, he not only received pardon, as will be discussed later, but acted as James’ tour-guide when the king visited the battle site in August 1686.⁶⁵ Others successfully paid for pardons.⁶⁶ The Kiffen-Hewling family could have paid for the brothers’ punishment to be downgraded. Kiffen offered £3,000 to save them, but the state refused his offer.⁶⁷ He used his long-standing influence at court, organising for John Churchill and Laurence Hyde to petition James for mercy. Despite both having the king’s ear, with Churchill being largely responsible for the victory at Sedgemoor, such petitions were to no avail.⁶⁸ The Hewlings were considered too dangerous. Benjamin himself wrote that, ‘I might have saved my life ... by implacking of hors, but I abhor soch a way of dilerances’; he would ‘rather to suffer affliction with ye people of god then to enioy life with sin’.⁶⁹ Gaunt was the last person burnt at the stake in England, a method associated with dangerous heretics.⁷⁰ The authorities were determined to execute Particulars like the Hewling brothers, Larke and

⁶⁴ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 77.

⁶⁵ John Tincey, *Sedgemoor, 1685: Marlborough’s First Victory* (Barnsley: Casemate Publishers, 2005), vii.

⁶⁶ John H. Author Langbein, *The Origins of Adversary Criminal Trial*, Oxford Studies in Modern Legal History The Origins of Adversary Criminal Trial (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 76.

⁶⁷ Kiffen, *Remarkable Passages*, 54.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 147; Hannah Hewling-Cromwell, ‘Draft Letter to Queen Anne’, 1710, 731/153, Cambridgeshire County Record Office, Huntingdon.

⁶⁹ Hewling, ‘Papers’.

⁷⁰ Melinda S. Zook, ‘Nursing Sedition: Women, Dissent, and the Whig Struggle’, in *Fear, Exclusion and Revolution: Roger Morrice and Britain in the 1680s*, ed. Jason McElligott (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006), 198.

Gaunt, and any other Nonconformist rebels who represented themselves as religious zealots, precisely because such fanaticism made them dangerous.

Only after James himself travelled through the West in 1686 were the corpses taken down and buried.⁷¹ By then it was too late – the combination of the seeming ‘injustice’ of the trials and executions, plus the grim display of the bodies, had caused deep resentment towards James in the West, and among Dissenters. Such acrimony had also been developed by the rebels’ own actions before their deaths, as the next section will reveal.

1.2 Insubordinate Intolerance by the Rebels

Ostensibly, there was a very simple reason the trials had been so swift, and so many of the sentences had been execution: the rebels were guilty of treason. Yet the rebels effectively portrayed their trials and executions as unjust, using well-known Christian martyrdom motifs. William, Lord Russell had utilised this as well, after the Rye House Plot in 1683, when on the gallows he had criticised the state.⁷² Such speeches were traditionally meant to follow a formula, whereby the condemned confessed their guilt, vindicating the state.⁷³ L’Estrange had criticised Russell’s speech for violating these conventions, and Conformists were well aware that such executions could prove counter-productive to their cause.⁷⁴ Authorities regularly warned the condemned from criticising the state at the gallows.⁷⁵ As Walsham suggests, Dissenters had a penchant for ‘hijacking’ executions from the state’s intended purposes.⁷⁶ Gregory argues, ‘martyrs intensified every other disagreement.’⁷⁷ The 1685 rebels now escalated this reversal-of-

⁷¹ Zook, *Radical Whigs*, 141.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 122.

⁷³ Zook, ‘The Bloody Assizes’, 388.

⁷⁴ Peter Hinds, ‘Roger L’Estrange, the Rye House Plot, and the Regulation of Political Discourse in Late-Seventeenth-Century London’, *The Library* 3, no. 1 (1 March 2002): 22; Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 79.

⁷⁵ McKenzie, *Tyburn’s Martyrs*, 34.

⁷⁶ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 169.

⁷⁷ Gregory, *Salvation at Stake*, 6.

meaning, utilising the concept of *theosis*, whereby people replicate the sufferings of Christ in the hope of divine union in the afterlife.⁷⁸ Such martyrdom motifs have often been utilised by persecuted minorities.⁷⁹

The rebels consistently portrayed themselves as godly and admirable during their incarceration, implying it was unjust.⁸⁰ Before his execution, Rumbold ‘was most serious and fervent in Prayer the few hours he lived.’⁸¹ Kiffen described in a letter to Benjamin Hewling’s mother how in the prison, ‘This morning severall of them sett This day apart for prayer.’⁸² This demeanour resulted, according to Hannah Hewling, ‘in turning the hearts of all’ her brothers’ guards.⁸³ Rebels also publicly embraced their impending executions happily and fearlessly.⁸⁴ Rumbold ‘received his Sentence with Undaunted Courage and Chearfulness.’⁸⁵ Benjamin told his sister, ‘We have no cause to fear Death, if the Presence of God be with us’.⁸⁶ She described how, ‘God having wrought so Glorious a work’ in her brothers, ‘revealing Christ in them, that Death is become their Friend.’⁸⁷ Kiffen wrote that as Benjamin awaited his execution, he was ‘very well and chearfull and ready for ye will of god whatever it may be’.⁸⁸ This cheerfulness reached mystical euphoria, as their execution and divine-union drew near. William Hewling’s last letter to his family reads, ‘I am going to launch into eternity.’⁸⁹ Hicks wrote to his wife, ‘Now let our Souls meet together in one most Blessed God ...

⁷⁸ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 165–69; Gregory, *Salvation at Stake*, 132.

⁷⁹ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 27.

⁸⁰ Gregory, *Salvation at Stake*, 130.

⁸¹ Rumbold et al., *Last Words*, 2.

⁸² Kiffen, ‘Letter to Kiffen-Hewling’.

⁸³ Hannah Hewling-Cromwell, in Kiffen, *Remarkable Passages*, 60; See also McKenzie, *Tyburn’s Martyrs*, 173.

⁸⁴ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 169; McKenzie, *Tyburn’s Martyrs*, 164.

⁸⁵ Rumbold et al., *Last Words*, 2.

⁸⁶ Tutchin, *The Second and Last Collection*, 35.

⁸⁷ “Hannah Hewling to her Mother (September 1685), in Tutchin, *Dying Speeches*, 34.

⁸⁸ Kiffen, ‘Letter to Kiffen-Hewling’.

⁸⁹ William Hewling, in Kiffen, *Remarkable Passages*, 63.

that we may meet to enjoy him fully to Eternity, and be satisfied with his Love for ever'.⁹⁰ As McKenzie states, 'the gallows was perceived as a portal to the other world.'⁹¹

Eternity was, of course, a common Puritan hope when facing any kind of death, but execution as a martyr allowed this euphoria to rise to another degree. Morrice recounted how before the flames, Gaunt declared she felt 'no terrour or dread... whether she dyed in the fire by those faggots, and then tooke up one and kissed it'.⁹² Kiffen wrote of how William Hewling at his execution 'seemed to bee carryed so far above ye fear of death yt he was filled with a Joy by ye beamings in of ye light of gods countenance uppon him'.⁹³ Kiffen also recounted Benjamin Hewling's dying request to lead the spectators in singing a psalm, with the noose around his neck.⁹⁴ Similar details of holy joy are found in the reports of Sampson Larke's execution.⁹⁵ This all engendered sympathy and admiration, in turn suggesting their deaths were an unjust act by the state. Moreover, the rebels were probably not merely pretending, but genuinely believed their expectations for the afterlife.⁹⁶ This only added to the admiration it engendered.

Martyrs require an authoritarian antagonist, an enemy of God, and the rebels frequently described James, Jeffreys, or the state generally, in highly negative terms. Thus executions designed by the state to express magisterial intolerance of religious fanatics were reframed as acts of insubordinate intolerance, fuelling ongoing insubordination. The rebels accused the state of all manner of improprieties, believing Jeffreys was under direct instructions from James to be as severe as possible.⁹⁷ Hicks claimed, 'my Nonconformity cuts me, and obstructs the Kings Mercy from being

⁹⁰ 'Another letter', in Tutchin, *The Second and Last Collection*, 16.

⁹¹ McKenzie, *Tyburn's Martyrs*, 227.

⁹² Morrice, *Entring Book*, 2007, III:47; See also McKenzie, *Tyburn's Martyrs*, 164.

⁹³ Kiffen, 'Letter to Kiffen-Hewling'.

⁹⁴ Kiffen, *Remarkable Passages*, 77.

⁹⁵ Muddiman, *The Bloody Assizes*, 98.

⁹⁶ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 165; Gregory, *Salvation at Stake*, 15.

⁹⁷ Robin Clifton, *The Last Popular Rebellion: The Western Rising of 1685* (London: St. Martin's Press, 1984), 239.

Extended to me, as I am told'.⁹⁸ Gaunt claimed Jeffreys had refused to recognise testimony that 'I am sure would have invalidated the evidence' against her. She insisted that in harbouring rebels, she 'did but relieve an unworthy, poor distressed family, & lo I must dye for it'. Therefore, when at the Last Judgement, Christ 'comes to make inquisition for [her] blood, it will be found at the door of the furious Judge'.⁹⁹ Rebels also likened authorities to the early Greco-Roman emperor, Nero. John Coad, a rebel sent to Jamaica, described Jeffreys as 'that bloody Nero' when recounting his trial.¹⁰⁰ Larke's final letter was framed around 2 Timothy 4:6-8, where the Apostle Paul had described his impending execution by Nero.¹⁰¹ They explicitly identified James with an insane Roman despot.

Martyrs also identify antagonists to mask any unflattering realities about themselves: here, they ceased to be treasonous rebels, and became virtuous martyrs battling an ungodly regime.¹⁰² Rumbold exclaimed in his final records that he had fought to defend England's 'Just Rights and Liberties, against Popery and Slavery', insisting it was 'absurd' for 'Men of Sence' to not resist James.¹⁰³ Gaunt described the Rebellion as God's 'righteous cause... tho it be now faln and trampled on'.¹⁰⁴ William Hewling told his sister after his trial, 'the cause did appear to him very glorious, notwithstanding all he had suffered in it.'¹⁰⁵ In his final letter to family and friends, Benjamin Hewling recognised his conviction for treason 'may be thought by some of you as ignominious but not so by me', since his crime was defending 'the protitstant religion against popery & for our liberty against arbitrary power'.¹⁰⁶

⁹⁸ 'Hicks to his nephew', in Tutchin, *The Second and Last Collection*, 14.

⁹⁹ Gaunt, *Last Speech*, 2.

¹⁰⁰ John Coad, *A Memorandum of the Wonderful Providences of God to a Poor Unworthy Creature: During the Time of the Duke of Monmouth's Rebellion and to the Revolution in 1688* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, & Longmans, 1849), 14.

¹⁰¹ Tutchin, *The Second and Last Collection*, 10.

¹⁰² Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 28.

¹⁰³ Rumbold et al., *Last Words*, 2.

¹⁰⁴ Gaunt, *Last Speech*, 1.

¹⁰⁵ Kiffen, *Remarkable Passages*, 61.

¹⁰⁶ Hewling, 'Papers'.

Finally, the rebels incited loved ones to continue subversively resisting James' government. Their 'predictions' were designed to dissipate doubt after the Rebellion's failure, offering assurances of some miraculous victory in the future. Zook dismisses the prophetic element of Tutchin's martyrs as his own deliberate construct.¹⁰⁷ Yet Benjamin Hewling's quote in Table 5.1 indicates this is exactly what the rebels said. They expected James would prove them right, by acting despotically, leading to divine retribution, with Dissenters becoming agents of God's wrath.¹⁰⁸ Gaunt asserted that James would soon begin 'weighing out your violence' and 'impoverishing & every way distressing those you have got under you'. Yet she declared that 'you shall never ... accomplish your enterprizes', since God 'will be upon you ere you are aware'. Though their resistance seemed to have 'not been anoynted, yet it shall revive, & God will plead it at another rate than ever he hath done yet, with all its opposers and malicious haters'. She warned Dissenters that the Lord would 'not omit the least duty that comes to hand, or lyes before them, knowing that now Christ hath need of them, & expects they should serve him' in continuing to fight James.¹⁰⁹ Rumbold also proclaimed that, 'though God ... hath not seen it fit ... to make Us the Instruments for the Deliverance of his people, yet ... He will speedily Arise for the Deliverance of his Church and People. And I desire all of you to prepare for this with speed.'¹¹⁰ Still, some rebels warned such resistance must remain hidden for now. Hicks warned his wife, 'it will be no fit Season for you to Vindicate that for which I am called to suffer; be silent, and leave it to God; I advise to all Prudence in this case: have your own reserv'd thoughts'.¹¹¹ Those remaining needed to bide their time, quietly undermining James wherever possible, until an opportunity to destroy him arose.

¹⁰⁷ Zook, 'The Bloody Assizes', 385.

¹⁰⁸ McKenzie, *Tyburn's Martyrs*, 229.

¹⁰⁹ Gaunt, *Last Speech*, 1–2.

¹¹⁰ Rumbold et al., *Last Words*, 3.

¹¹¹ 'Another Letter', in Tutchin, *The Second and Last Collection*, 17.

Ostensibly, the Assizes represented a devastating victory for James over Nonconformists, making him seem invincible.¹¹² Zook argues Dissenters were left with ‘little to glorify, nothing to celebrate, and nowhere to place hope.’¹¹³ The Particulars had lost many long-respected elders and several young leaders. ‘Anabaptists’ had only become further identified with anarchy. Western Particular congregations were heavily undermined, especially in Taunton and Lyme, with some barely existing at all.¹¹⁴ Yet Zook recognises that after the Assizes, ‘radical activity reached a low ebb, but it did not die.’¹¹⁵ The condemned rebels were instrumental in this. James and his government’s vicious approach to the Assizes proved a serious miscalculation.¹¹⁶ Certainly, these Assizes were not nationally condemned until 1689.¹¹⁷ But the impact they had on Dissenters, especially in the West – those who had known the deceased – was significant. James discovered this when touring the West in 1687, seeking support for packing parliament. According to Burnet, despite James being ‘very obliging ... most particularly to the Dissenters,’ and acting ‘very graciously on all that had been of the Duke of Monmouth’s party’, he ‘received such cold and general answers, that he saw, he could not depend on them.’¹¹⁸ Such a reaction to James was evident among Nonconformists nationwide. Yet paradoxically, others soon believed James was their greatest hope for toleration, including some former rebels. The next section examines these diametric responses, especially within the Particulars.

¹¹² Pincus, *1688*, 116.

¹¹³ Zook, *Radical Whigs*, 138.

¹¹⁴ Barry H. Howson, *Erroneous and Schismatical Opinions: The Questions of Orthodoxy Regarding the Theology of Hanserd Knollys* (Boston, MA: Brill, 2001), 46.

¹¹⁵ Zook, *Radical Whigs*, xiii.

¹¹⁶ Clifton, *The Last Popular Rebellion*, 240–41.

¹¹⁷ A.F. Havighurst, ‘James II and the Twelve Men in Scarlet’, *Law Quarterly Review* 69, no. 276 (1953): 527.

¹¹⁸ Gilbert Burnet, *Bishop Burnet’s History of His Own Time*, vol. II (London: Clarendon Press, 1823), 428–29; George Floyd Duckett, *Penal Laws and Test Act: Questions Touching Their Repeal Propounded in 1687*, vol. 2 (London: T. Wilson, 1882), 5.

2. PARTICULARS AND JAMES' REPEAL CAMPAIGN

James' moves for religious liberty were not an indifferent issue, with various Particulars supporting or resisting him. Moreover, the Rebellion and Assizes clearly influenced both sides. His antagonists saw these events as evidence of his intolerance for all Dissenters and his autocratic tendencies. His supporters saw 1685 as the ultimate example of the cycle of intolerance, hoping the King was the one who could break that cycle. After briefly explaining James' plans, this section examines the motivations and methods of both sides, looking at the Repealers first, and then James' antagonists.

James' campaign for religious liberty occurred in several stages, beginning less than a year after the Assizes. In March 1686, he offered pardons to some remaining rebels, and pardoned more of them in June. Of course, pardons were not uncommon in England.¹¹⁹ But in June he also issued patents, which acted as personal licences of indulgence for Dissenters. Then in April 1687, he offered his first Declaration of Indulgence, inaugurating his repealing campaign. He sought to repeal the Penal Laws for avoiding Anglican services, and the Test Act requiring government officers take the Anglican Eucharist and refute the Catholic Mass.¹²⁰ This campaign presented problems, both in what he wanted to accomplish, and how he planned to do it.¹²¹ While Dissenters desired religious liberty for themselves, many did not want that extended to Catholics. Moreover, James needed to 'pack' Parliament, manipulating the election process for MPs. This involved three steps: firstly, closing his first Parliament, which resisted repeal; secondly, testing whether new candidates would support it; and finally, manipulating the mechanisms of election, such as councils or aldermen, to ensure repealing candidates were elected. Given Parliament protected England from a king's excesses, this seemed to risk civil liberties for the sake of religious freedom. The central

¹¹⁹ McKenzie, *Tyburn's Martyrs*, 4.

¹²⁰ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 266.

¹²¹ Murphy, *Conscience and Community*, 138.

issue, then, was whether James could be trusted. For some Dissenters, the Assizes proved that at heart a Catholic monarch like James was tyrannical and thus undermining Parliament would inevitably backfire. For others, the promise of finally breaking the cycle of intolerance for all religious minorities, seen so recently in the Rebellion and Assizes, was worth the risk. The latter will now be explored.

2.1 The Particular Repealers

The prominence of Particulars within James' Repealers is striking.¹²² They existed as a group from April 1687 to October 1688, and of the fifteen senior Repealers, Sowerby identifies ten of them as Baptists, including nine ministers.¹²³ One of the regulators was none other than the former rebel, Nathaniel Wade, who Sowerby misidentified as a Congregationalist. Therefore, eleven regulators – nearly seventy-five per cent – were Baptists, including Nehemiah Coxe, William Collins, James Jones, Benjamin Dennis, Richard Adams, and Thomas Plant, all ministers of very prominent Particular congregations. These were not opportunistic outliers, but widely respected members of the Particulars, and wider Nonconformist community. Cox and Collins served the Petty France Particular church, with over 500 congregants. James Jones' congregation in Southwark had over 200 people.¹²⁴ Cox had written four published Particular works since 1677.¹²⁵ Jones had written six since 1683, five of which pleaded for religious liberty.¹²⁶ In 1674, Plant had published an account of two debates between Baptists and

¹²² Andrew R. Murphy, *Liberty, Conscience, and Toleration: The Political Thought of William Penn* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 195.

¹²³ Sowerby, *Making Toleration*, 136.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵ Nehemiah Coxe, *Vindiciae Veritatis* (London, 1677); Nehemiah Coxe, *A Discourse of the Covenants* (London: J.D., 1681); Nehemiah Coxe, *A Sermon Preached at the Ordination of an Elder and Deacons in a Baptized Congregation in London* (London, 1681); Nehemiah Coxe, *A Believers Triumph Over Death Exemplified* (London, 1682).

¹²⁶ James Jones, *The Admonisher Admonished* (London, 1683); James Jones, *Modesty and Faithfulness in Opposition to Envy and Rashness: Or, an Answer to a Malitious Pamphlet, Called, a Second Argument for a More Full Union Amongst Protestants* (London, 1683); James Jones, *A Token of Christian Love* (London, 1683); James Jones, *The Grand Case of Subjection to the Higher Powers in Matters of Religion* (London: George Larkin, 1684); James Jones, *Nonconformity Not Inconsistent with Loyalty* (London: George Larkin, 1684); James Jones, *A Plea for Liberty of Conscience*

Quakers, also involving Kiffen and William Penn.¹²⁷ A March 1687 News-sheet claimed Plant led a congregation of 2,000 members.¹²⁸ The Particular printer, George Larkin, also published the Repealers' main propaganda News-sheet, *Publick Occurrences*.¹²⁹

The Repealers travelled across England to engender support and were more successful than often recognised. They pressured over 2,300 officeholders to resign from English councils, regulating more than half the boroughs.¹³⁰ Councils in at least twenty-seven English towns came under Repealer control, despite resistance by powerful local Conformists.¹³¹ James was so keen to enlist the Particulars in this campaign that they began asking for other forms of religious legitimisation, including having their weddings recognised and their tithes distributed to their own ministers.¹³² Many Baptists also became prominent members of local government, in Maidstone, Marlborough, Oxford, Abingdon, Wilton, London, and elsewhere.¹³³ Cox, Dennis, Adams, Wade, and Jones reported in June 1688 that two boroughs would do exactly what Cox ordered them to.¹³⁴ Benjamin Dennis planned to run to become the MP for Dunwich.¹³⁵

These Particulars were not only advocating for inter-denominational toleration, but they practised it with other Repealers. The most senior Repealers were the Quaker, William Penn, and a Catholic, Robert Brent. Brent originally suggested to James that Baptists be employed, and they answered directly to him.¹³⁶ The Particular Repealers'

(London: George Larkin, 1684).

¹²⁷ Thomas Plant, *A Contest for Christianity, or, a Faithful Relation of Two Late Meetings Between the Baptists and the Quakers* (London: Francis Smith, 1674).

¹²⁸ 'Newdigate Newsletter, 8 March 1687', in Larry J. Kreitzer, ed., *William Kiffen and His World*, vol. 4 (Oxford: Regent's Park College, 2015), 66.

¹²⁹ Sowerby, *Making Toleration*, 39.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 117.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 33.

¹³² John Miller, *Cities Divided: Politics and Religion in English Provincial Towns 1660-1722* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 227.

¹³³ Sowerby, *Making Toleration*, 143.

¹³⁴ Duckett, *Penal Laws and Test Act*, 2:226–27.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 2:246.

¹³⁶ Sowerby, 'Forgetting the Repealers', 96–97.

June 1687 report assured their King: ‘The Roman Catholiques, Independents, Anabaptists, and Quaquers, that are numerous in many places, are generally in your Maj[es]ties interest’. Despite ‘the many rumours, and suggestions to divide and create jealousies among them’ by opponents, the Repealers were sure most Particular congregations were ‘unanimously agreed to elect such members of Parliament, as will abolish these Tests and Lawes.’¹³⁷ Dennis appointed people from various denominations, including Catholics, to boroughs throughout England.¹³⁸ Another Particular Repealer appointed a Quaker and five Catholics at the Bury St Edmunds council.¹³⁹ In Bedford, the Particular John Eston sought election to Parliament alongside William Foster, a man once infamous for persecuting Dissenters, who John Bunyan had described as Judas.¹⁴⁰ This inter-denominational cooperation was driven by unity of necessity, each denomination tolerating each other for the sake of overcoming a common enemy: intolerant Conformity itself.

The Particular regulators’ experience in Bedford reveals just how successfully they garnered support from their brethren. Cox drew from his Particular contacts in the area, having been born there and trained by Bunyan himself.¹⁴¹ Eston received the Particular congregation’s blessing, reporting in November 1687 that, ‘I find them all to be unanimous’ in supporting the repeal, adding ‘they hope to steere their friends and followers accordingly.’¹⁴² Seven Particular congregants joined the Bedford council, sending James a letter of thanks for his Indulgence.¹⁴³ For his part, Eston assured James

¹³⁷ ‘Report of the King’s Agents’, in Duckett, *Penal Laws and Test Act*, 2:219.

¹³⁸ Pat E. Murrell, ‘Bury St. Edmunds and the Campaign to Pack Parliament, 1687–8’, *Historical Research* 54, no. 130 (1 November 1981): 206.

¹³⁹ Sowerby, *Making Toleration*, 143.

¹⁴⁰ Peter Walker, *James II and the Three Questions: Religious Toleration and the Landed Classes, 1687-1688* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2010), 193.

¹⁴¹ Roger Morrice, *The Entering Book of Roger Morrice, 1677-1691*, ed. Mark Goldie, vol. VI (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2007), 53.

¹⁴² John Eston, ‘Letter to Henry Mordaunt, 22 November 1687’, in Duckett, *Penal Laws and Test Act*, 2:59.

¹⁴³ Sowerby, ‘Forgetting the Repealers’, 111; H.G. Tibbutt, ed., *The Minutes of the First Independent Church (Now Bunyan Meeting) at Bedford 1656-1766*, vol. 55, The Publications of the Bedfordshire Historical Record Society (Bedford: Bedfordshire Historical Record Society, 1976), 288, 292–96.

that, ‘My zeal against the Tests and penal-Laws is so fervent, that I cannot but strenuously endeavour’ to help elect MPs ‘as will certainly damn them’.¹⁴⁴ Eston also wrote, ‘Is the misery of this Kingdome, that so much Democrasie is mixed in the Government’, lamenting that ‘ye Souvraign power should be in any manner limited by yr suffrages of the common people,’ when ‘ye most part of them’ were ‘guided, not by reason, but by deliberation like mere animals.’¹⁴⁵ Eston seems here to advocating James having more arbitrary power, not less.

Despite such emphatic support for James’ Repealers, their success was hardly universal. The various religious groups now in these councils and boroughs could not agree: long-standing inter-denominational intolerances made them ineffective. James ordered the Repealers to encourage these groups to collaborate, which proved difficult.¹⁴⁶ Conformists were also resistant: Eston complained, ‘the Churchmen are implacable against us’, begging for the King ‘to deter our Adversaries, who thrust at Him through our sides.’¹⁴⁷ In Bristol, many councillors were Tories who had defended the city during the rebels’ siege in 1685.¹⁴⁸ Surprisingly, James sent Nathaniel Wade, instrumental in that siege, as his representative. Wade took over the council, and immediately replaced many of these Tories with Dissenters. When on 4 February 1688, he opened the new council by announcing James’ plans for repeal, the few remaining Tories walked out to be replaced by Nonconformists.¹⁴⁹ Wade then compelled them to write a statement of allegiance to James, something even this winnowed group refused to sign. Wade, though technically ineligible to vote, voted anyway in a desperate attempt to get it approved, but it still failed.¹⁵⁰ Even before discussing potential

¹⁴⁴ Eston, ‘Letter 22 November 1687’, in Duckett, *Penal Laws and Test Act*, 2:60.

¹⁴⁵ Eston, ‘Letter 6 December 1687’, *ibid.*, 2:61.

¹⁴⁶ Sowerby, *Making Toleration*, 146.

¹⁴⁷ Eston, ‘Letter 6 December, 1687’ in Duckett, *Penal Laws and Test Act*.

¹⁴⁸ John Latimer, *The Annals of Bristol in the Seventeenth Century* (Bristol: William George’s sons, 1900), 446.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 447.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 447–48.

candidates for Parliament, Bristol resisted the Repealers. Such experiences were indicative of wider Tory intransigence to the campaign.

Conformists also attempted to sway Dissenters away from supporting repeal. The Tory Thomas Comber pretended to be a Baptist, ineffectively, in his anonymous attack on William Penn and the repeal.¹⁵¹ Lord Halifax's 1687 pamphlet, *Letter to a Dissenter*, was saturated with inter-denominational, magisterial and subordinate toleration dynamics. He began by establishing his own tolerance, promising his 'kindness to you is not lessened by difference of Opinion' or 'confined to this or that Sub-division of Protestants'. He called for Protestant unity of necessity, against a despotic-Catholic foe: 'Protestants of all sorts ... it is fitter for them now to be reconciled. Our Dis-union is not only a Reproach, but a Danger to us.'¹⁵² Similarly, Comber said, '*Dissenters ... who have Votes in chusing Parliament Men*', must ensure 'our *Liberties*, our *Laws*, and our *Lives* may be preserved from ill designing men'.¹⁵³ Halifax conceded Conformists' part in the long-standing cycle of intolerance, and that Dissenters had seen 'the Exclusion and Rebellion laid to your Charge', which was why 'you were desirous to make yourselves less uneasie and obnoxious to Authority.'¹⁵⁴ Yet he insisted James represented a poor ally, citing the Rebellion and Assizes as evidence. 'How dangerous it is to build upon a foundation of Paradoxes', whereby 'the men of *Taunton*', punished severely by James in the Assizes, were suddenly considered 'above all other eminent in Loyalty.' 'For the present,' Halifax warned, 'we are apt to be

¹⁵¹ Anon., *An Answer by an Anabaptist to the Three Considerations Proposed to Mr William Penn by a Pretended Baptist Concerning a Magna Charta for Liberty of Conscience* (London: J. Clowes, 1688), 1.

¹⁵² George Savile Halifax Marquis of, *A Letter to a Dissenter, Upon Occasion of His Majesties Late Gracious Declaration of Indulgence* (London, 1687), 7.

¹⁵³ Thomas Comber, *Three Considerations Proposed to Mr. William Pen Concerning the Validity and Security of His New Magna Charta for Liberty of Conscience by a Baptist* (London, 1688), 3.

¹⁵⁴ Halifax, *A Letter to a Dissenter, Upon Occasion of His Majesties Late Gracious Declaration of Indulgence*, 1.

incredulous'.¹⁵⁵ After all, 'It is not so long since, as to be forgotten, that the *Maxime* was, *It is impossible for a Dissenter, not to be a R E B E L.*'¹⁵⁶

That the cycle of intolerance had to be broken lay at the heart of the repeal movement. England had experienced half a century of religious conflicts, leaving many exhausted.¹⁵⁷ Such harassment still occurred as late as February 1686, when eight of Kiffen's congregants were arrested for being 'riotously assembled in an unlawfull Conventickell'.¹⁵⁸ Thomas Plant's congregants were indicted for attending an illegal meeting in May that year.¹⁵⁹ This cycle, seen most horrifically in the Rebellion and Assizes, had clearly scarred the Repealers. Several of them received pardons for involvement in the Rebellion, engendering gratitude and relief.¹⁶⁰ Morrice recalled, 'The Anabaptists did Adresse' to James 'their very thankfull acknowledgements for his Majesties Gracious Pardon,' promising they would 'venture their lives and fortunes for his Majestie.' While he kept them 'long upon their knees', James assured them of not only his forgiveness, but of his ongoing protection, 'at which they were very merrey.'¹⁶¹ Their response was published in the *London Gazette*. It described their astonishment, 'that Your Majesty hath not only permitted us to Live, but likewise, by Your Most Gracious Proclamation, engaged Your Self to Protect us, and all the rest of Your subjects, in the Exercise of our Religion'.¹⁶² Consequently, Repealing Particulars repudiated any allegiance to the Rebellion. When antagonists criticised James' enormous army, one Baptist responded, 'Is the *Western Rebellion*, flipt out of your

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 2.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 6.

¹⁵⁷ Murphy, *Conscience and Community*, 147.

¹⁵⁸ 'Middlesex Sessions of Gaol Delivery', in Larry J. Kreitzer, ed., *William Kiffen and His World*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Regent's Park College, 2010), 308.

¹⁵⁹ 'Certificate of Conviction, 30 May 1686', in Kreitzer, *William Kiffen and His World*, 2015, 4:89.

¹⁶⁰ Morrice, *Entring Book*, 2007, III:46, 130.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., III:165.

¹⁶² 'The Humble Address of Several of Your Majesties Subjects', *London Gazette*, 18 April 1687, 2235 edition.

mind? ... I see no way to escape the disorders that are either felt or feared, but by giving His *Majesty* full satisfaction'.¹⁶³

Of the 200 positive responses to James' Indulgence from various Nonconformists, both Catholic and Protestant, eight were by Baptists.¹⁶⁴ The very first was written by the Particulars, 'who, for a long time, have been great Sufferers, by the severe Execution of Penal Laws'. They thanked James for having 'not only delivered from our past Distresses, and our Families from Ruin', but also finally allowing them 'the Free Exercise of our Religion'. They hoped that 'Peaceable Subjects of all sorts (though Differing in some Sentiments about Religion,)' would support James, and God would 'be pleased to convince the whole World of the Wisdom and Truth of Your Majesties Sentiments, That Conscience is not to be Forc'd'. This was subscribed by not only Cox and his fellow Repealers, but 'many others of the same Persuasion with us'.¹⁶⁵ De Krey refutes suggestions that these responses were just flattery, as Whig historians claimed.¹⁶⁶ Even Kiffen, who warned Dissenters against supporting James, found that because 'of their former sufferings, and the hopes of finding all things as was promised', his warnings 'could not prevail.'¹⁶⁷

Plant and Dennis provided a more personal argument for toleration in their 1688 book, *The Mischief of Persecution Exemplified*.¹⁶⁸ They told the story of John Childs, the former Bedford Particular minister, who in 1683 had abandoned the denomination after Conformist harassment.¹⁶⁹ Childs had ultimately felt deep remorse for his apostasy,

¹⁶³ Anon., *Answer by an Anabaptist*, 11.

¹⁶⁴ Harris, *Revolution*, 218.

¹⁶⁵ 'The Humble Address of Divers of Your Majesties Subjects in and about the City of London, Commonly Called Anabaptists', *London Gazette*, 14 April 1687, 2234 edition.

¹⁶⁶ De Krey, 'Reformation and "Arbitrary Government"', 16.

¹⁶⁷ Kiffen, *Remarkable Passages*, 84.

¹⁶⁸ Thomas Plant and Benjamin Dennis, *The Mischief of Persecution Exemplified, by a True Narrative of the Life and Deplorable End of Mr. John Child, Who Miserably Destroy'd Himself Octob. 13, 1684* (London, 1688).

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 8, 20; John Childs, *A Second Argument for a More Full and Firm Union Amongst All Good Protestants Wherein the Nonconformists Taking the Sacrament After the Manner of the Church of England, Is Justified*. (London, 1683), 13–14; Jones, *Modesty and Faithfulness*, 1.

despairing for his soul. In an act of denominational toleration, many prominent Particular ministers had gone to Childs, to offer God's forgiveness and their own, to no avail.¹⁷⁰ Childs became 'a Man fear'd into Conformity, by the Severity he saw on others ... going on to do violence to his Conscience'.¹⁷¹ He thus became a cautionary tale of how intolerance destroyed people's souls. The only solution was 'a more full and firm Union among all who love the Lord Jesus in Sincerity', whether Anglican, Nonconformist, or Catholic.¹⁷² Plant and Dennis insisted, 'God is our Witness, our naked Design being only to Arraign the Practice of Persecution it self.'¹⁷³ James was 'outdoing all Kings and Princes ... in the Fact of his Clemency'. By ending the penal laws, he would 'for ever deliver this Nation from the Convulsions and Evils it has labour'd under in former Years'.¹⁷⁴ They promised, 'we most willingly fall in with his Majesty's gracious Designs, and shall, to our utmost, endeavour to carry them on, not knowing a greater Service we can be capable of, rendring to God, to our Prince, our Country, or Religion.'¹⁷⁵

Such comprehensive expressions of support for James among senior Particulars, might suggest they represented the denomination's majority. Certainly, the long-held historiographical assumption that they were outliers is incorrect, just as Sowerby has argued. Equally, historians should avoid the opposite extreme, of assuming uniform support for repeal among the Particulars or dismissing evidence of Particular resistance as retrospective whitewashing after the Revolution.¹⁷⁶ When Particular Repealers fell on their knees before James, Morrice noted, 'I do not know of any others but such

¹⁷⁰ Plant and Dennis, *The Mischief of Persecution*, 10–32.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 44.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, iv.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, 43.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 45.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 46.

¹⁷⁶ Sowerby, 'Forgetting the Repealers', 115.

Anabaptists ... that are resolved to returne express thanks'.¹⁷⁷ Indeed, James ultimately abandoned his Particular allies, precisely because they had failed to live up to their ambitious expectations.¹⁷⁸ Severe polarity about James always existed within the Particulars. The other side will now be explored.

2.2 The Particular Antagonists

Many Dissenters remained cool to James' offer. Not one extant letter of thanks, by the Particulars or anybody else, ever supported repealing the Test Act. Many Dissenters supported eradicating the Penal Laws, but not changing how government was run.¹⁷⁹ Some were determined to never support James and to subvert his cause wherever possible. These can be difficult to find, because they often stopped publishing during James' rule: Kiffen, Knollys, and Keach, who published anti-Catholic works before and after James' reign, were conspicuously silent in this period. Their preferred tactic was to hide away – until James forced William Kiffen and several other London Particulars to join the repealing campaign. Why they resisted him, and how they did so, will now be discussed.

Particular antagonists had several motivations for their resistance with the Assizes being a major factor. James' packing of Parliament caused concern, though he was hardly the first monarch to attempt such manipulation.¹⁸⁰ Halifax's assurances that Tories would tolerate Dissenters eventually were nice, but hardly credible given Conformists had long perpetuated intolerance. Certainly, James' Catholicism was a major barrier. At a London aldermen dinner in October 1687, which James forced Kiffen to pay £50 to attend, Kiffen discovered that 'the Pope's Nuncio and several other Priests' were also attending: 'Had I known they had been invited, I should hardly have

¹⁷⁷ Roger Morrice, *The Entering Book of Roger Morrice, 1677-1691*, ed. Mark Goldie, vol. IV (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2007), 17.

¹⁷⁸ Sowerby, *Making Toleration*, 225.

¹⁷⁹ De Krey, 'Reformation and "Arbitrary Government"', 17.

¹⁸⁰ Walker, *James II and the Three Questions*, 2.

parted with my fifty pounds towards that feast.’¹⁸¹ The Assizes also provided an acute stimulus and focus for Dissenters’ antagonism. Just after the Assizes, Kiffen feared, ‘This great storm being over, it did, in a great measure, effect that which was intended by them who raised it. For now, there appeared no difficulty in the way, but Popery might be set up.’¹⁸² Sowerby suggests Kiffen hesitated becoming an alderman for James, because it involved swearing an oath or wearing a formal gown, something Dissenters sometimes objected to.¹⁸³ However, Kiffen had been an alderman several times before the rule of James II and would be one afterwards. The reasons for Kiffen’s hesitation are clear: his granddaughter Hannah recounted that, when James asked him to join London’s council to help his Repeal campaign, Kiffen had ‘begegged his majesty’s pardon’, because he was ‘deprest by trouble’.¹⁸⁴ Indeed, he had specifically told James this was because of his grandsons’ executions.¹⁸⁵ This highlights something easily forgotten in more abstract analyses of toleration: intolerance is rarely just a matter of principle, but is inevitably entwined with more personal, relational motivations, in ways that cannot be disentangled. Walsham has identified the need to sometimes ‘distinguish between hostility to individuals’ and hostility to their beliefs.¹⁸⁶ That is certainly true, but so is the reverse: sometimes the hostility to an individual and their ideology are so intrinsically linked, it becomes impossible to distinguish where one hostility begins and the other ends.

James nonetheless forced Kiffen to become an alderman in mid-August 1687, creating a crisis of subordinate toleration.¹⁸⁷ At first, Kiffen evaded it, as did another

¹⁸¹ Kiffen, *Remarkable Passages*, 87.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 83.

¹⁸³ Sowerby, *Making Toleration*, 144–45.

¹⁸⁴ Hewling-Cromwell, ‘Draft Letter to Queen Anne’; See also, Kiffen, *Remarkable Passages*, 85.

¹⁸⁵ Hewling-Luson, in Isaac Kimber and Edward Kimber, eds., *The London Magazine, or, Gentleman’s Monthly Intelligencer* (London: C. Ackers, 1775), 630; De Krey, ‘Reformation and “Arbitrary Government”’, 18.

¹⁸⁶ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 21; She also gives many examples of the inter-personal motivations for religious intolerance in *ibid.*, 129–31, but does not include such an example of insubordinate intolerance, as in the Kiffen case here.

¹⁸⁷ George Agar Ellis, *The Ellis Correspondence*, vol. 1 (London: Henry Colburn, 1829), 338.

Particular, John Shorter.¹⁸⁸ Kiffen ‘used all the means I could to be excused’, avoiding taking office for over six weeks.¹⁸⁹ Only after threats that he would be sent to Newgate Prison and fined thousands of pounds, to ‘the ruin of myself and family’, did he finally give in.¹⁹⁰ Shorter was effectively forced to become the Lord Mayor, in charge of the Court of Aldermen.¹⁹¹ Two more Baptists joined that court in October 1687.¹⁹² Kiffen’s next response was to make the best of it, tolerating the role imposed upon him. Avoiding ‘any act of power in that court’ wherever possible, he used this new unwanted authority for ‘the welfare of the city and the good of the orphans, whose distressed condition called for help’.¹⁹³ Kiffen and the other new London councilmen wrestled with how to use their new-found authority for the Protestant cause, without too effectively supporting James.¹⁹⁴ This reveals the sense of internal dilemma within toleration dynamics: they often involved aiding someone considered intolerable, for the sake of the greater good.

In all, James replaced Tory aldermen with seventeen Dissenters, expecting them to be more compliant to his repealing campaign – this proved incorrect.¹⁹⁵ Instead, they found ways of expressing their resistance to James, that were subtle but nonetheless effective. As Walsham remarks, when hard-pressed, Dissenters often responded ‘by becoming as cunning as a fox.’¹⁹⁶ They resisted, precisely by maintaining the *status quo*. For example, James had exempted them from the Test Act, but Shorter insisted he and the aldermen fulfil it anyway. He took the oath of allegiance to James, but also took the oath of supremacy, which explicitly undermined Catholicism.¹⁹⁷ Shorter also took the

¹⁸⁸ Morrice, *Entring Book*, 2007, IV:119.

¹⁸⁹ Kiffen, *Remarkable Passages*, 85; Morrice, *Entring Book*, 2007, IV:123.

¹⁹⁰ Kiffen, *Remarkable Passages*, 85–86.

¹⁹¹ Morrice, *Entring Book*, 2007, IV:121.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, IV:130.

¹⁹³ Kiffen, *Remarkable Passages*, 87.

¹⁹⁴ De Krey, ‘Reformation and “Arbitrary Government”’, 21.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 18.

¹⁹⁶ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 195.

¹⁹⁷ De Krey, ‘Reformation and “Arbitrary Government”’, 22.

Anglican Eucharist himself in November 1687.¹⁹⁸ This was not entirely unusual: many Nonconformists did so to take official positions and Shorter was from Bunyan's open-communion congregation.¹⁹⁹ It was also an entirely legal, and necessary process for London's Lord Mayor under normal circumstances. However, Morrice recorded that Shorter's actions were 'much noted, at Whitehall', leaving James 'highly offended'.²⁰⁰ That Shorter 'behaved himself more decently than was expected of him', as Burnet put it, infuriated James.²⁰¹ James expected Shorter to replace Anglican preachers in the daily council worship with Dissenters, but also Catholics. Shorter placed Dissenters in the afternoons' pulpit but kept Anglicans in the mornings.²⁰² Shorter and the Particular aldermen tolerated Anglicanism to express their intolerance of Catholicism. Shorter may have been an open-communionist, but Kiffen definitely was not. The oath of supremacy was hardly ideal for Particulars either, legitimating the very denomination they rejected. Toleration is often about making the choice between two unacceptable options: in this case, Catholicism or Conformity. Not only did these Particulars ally themselves with Anglicans, they subtly repudiated Catholicism, maintaining the annual celebration of the Gunpowder Plot's failure. After James invited the Nuncio to the aldermen banquet, discussed earlier, they minuted that he had come without their knowledge. From this, Burnet says, James soon deduced that 'the Dissenters were an ill-natured sort of people, that could not be gained.'²⁰³

These men even expressed defiance in their most emphatic statement of allegiance. In October 1687, London's aldermen joined others in publishing a statement of gratitude for the Indulgence in the *Gazette*. They described themselves as James'

¹⁹⁸ Morrice, *Entring Book*, 2007, IV:163.

¹⁹⁹ 'London, Sept 6, 1688', in George Agar Ellis, *The Ellis Correspondence*, vol. 2 (London: Henry Colburn, 1829), 161.

²⁰⁰ Morrice, *Entring Book*, 2007, IV:170.

²⁰¹ Burnet, *History of His Own Time*, II:431.

²⁰² John Bramston, *The Autobiography of Sir John Bramston* (London: J. B. Nichols & Son, 1845), 315; Morrice, *Entring Book*, 2007, IV:169; De Krey, 'Reformation and "Arbitrary Government"', 22.

²⁰³ Burnet, *History of His Own Time*, II:430.

‘most Loyal and Dutiful Subjects’, thanking him for his ‘fullest Assurances’ that Dissenters would have ‘the free and uninterrupted Exercise of their Religion’. However, they emphasised those assurances also included that ‘their Civil Rights and Possessions’ would also ‘be protected and preserved’.²⁰⁴ This implied that civil liberty, protected by Parliament, should not be manipulated to achieve religious liberty, despite this being precisely what James had appointed them to do. Far from being an endorsement of James’ plan, this statement withheld approval for it, adroitly expressing both loyalty and disobedience simultaneously.²⁰⁵

As pressure mounted upon them throughout 1688, the aldermen continually avoided doing what James wanted. Specifically, London aldermen were meant to appoint liverymen, who in turn elected the city’s MPs. James ordered for the aldermen to discharge over 700 Tory liverymen, to be replaced by Repealers.²⁰⁶ They evaded doing so wherever possible, frequently absenting themselves from aldermen meetings entirely. By May, only fourteen of the twenty-six alderman still attended, Kiffen always being absent.²⁰⁷ He finally escaped the Court of Alderman in mid-September, 1688.²⁰⁸ That same month, John Shorter died from a horse-riding accident and was replaced by another Particular, John Eyles.²⁰⁹ Less than a month later, William of Orange landed.

Particulars were instrumental in how James’ repealing campaign played out. As Sowerby has indicated, senior Particular leaders dominated James’ Repealers and received strong support from their brethren around the country. These were driven by the desire for the days of prosecutions, assassinations, rebellions and assizes to finally end. Other Particulars, like Kiffen, wanted that too, but did not believe James truly

²⁰⁴ ‘From the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of London’, *London Gazette*, 10 October 1687, 2285 edition.

²⁰⁵ De Krey, ‘Reformation and “Arbitrary Government”’, 22.

²⁰⁶ Kiffen, *Remarkable Passages*, 87–88.

²⁰⁷ De Krey, ‘Reformation and “Arbitrary Government”’, 27–28.

²⁰⁸ Morrice, *Entring Book*, 2007, IV:307.

²⁰⁹ Ellis, *The Ellis Correspondence*, 1829, 2:150; Bramston, *Autobiography*, 315; ‘EYLES, John (d.1703)’, in Basil Duke Henning, *The House of Commons, 1660-1690* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1983).

wanted to bring it about. Such denominational polarisation inevitably caused division within the Particulars, as the next section will reveal. By the end of 1688, though, whether James could bring toleration became a moot point. He abandoned his Repealers for the Anglicans in a desperate attempt to save his crown – all to no avail. The new England that William’s reign inaugurated raised new challenges for Particulars, around whether the divisions caused by James could be healed and their new place within England as a whole.

3. PARTICULARS AFTER THE GLORIOUS REVOLUTION

From the Particulars’ perspective, the Revolution was not necessarily going to be ‘Glorious’. There may be retribution for their Repealers’ support for James. Despite Anglicans’ lofty promises, a return to the Conformist intolerant norm was possible, even probable. S.H. Mayor surmises, ‘Nonconformists were alarmed, not knowing’ whether ‘the disaster of Monmouth's rebellion would be repeated ... When William landed, with the memory of Monmouth still vivid.’ Consequently, Dissenters ‘were very cautious’, and ‘reacted in a very varied manner’ to William’s arrival.²¹⁰ At best, the Revolution represented opportunities for Particulars. This section discusses how Particulars joined other Dissenters in manoeuvring for general religious toleration, even legitimisation in England. They supported William in various ways and joined Whigs in constructing lessons for the nation from the Assizes, around both the perils of James’ Catholicism and those of ongoing Conformity. The Particulars also had to wrestle with their own internal, denominational toleration: how could they put the divisions of the last few years behind them? These issues would remain their focus, well into the 1690s.

²¹⁰ Mayor, ‘James II and Dissenters’, 188.

3.1 The Particulars and the New National Toleration

When pursuing magisterial toleration from William, the Particulars extended him emphatic subordinate toleration. Despite the valorising of William afterwards, all his early supporters tolerated him as king, evidently making do: he was not English, even if Mary was; James was still the rightful monarch, and his newborn son the lawful heir. Mobs in the tens-of-thousands protested in support of James after William's invasion.²¹¹ Many in the army still supported James and the amount of defectors is often exaggerated.²¹² The Battle of the Boyne, which eradicated any likelihood of James' return, would not take place until June 1690. Nonetheless, the vast majority of Particulars supported the Dutch Prince from his invasion's very beginning. This included former Repealers, who now felt betrayed by James.²¹³ A large series of loans and donations were made to the new king in January 1689, with over 1,300 people giving between £25 and £1,000, including prominent Particulars.²¹⁴ The former Particular mayor, John Eyles, donated £18,000.²¹⁵ Kiffen himself donated £500 and presented a welcome address before William early in 1689.²¹⁶ Kiffen also became a London Lieutenant in March 1690, connecting William with London's officials, further expressing his allegiance to the new king.²¹⁷ Particulars explicitly supported the new regime, before its permanency or even nature had been established.

Many Particular leaders also began writing again, joining a wider explosion of anti-Jacobite literature by those silenced since the Assizes.²¹⁸ Benjamin Keach and

²¹¹ Pincus, *1688*, 8.

²¹² *Ibid.*, 234.

²¹³ Larry J. Kreitzer, ed., *William Kiffen and His World*, vol. 3 (Oxford: Regent's Park College, 2013), 154.

²¹⁴ Lois G. Schworer, 'Women and the Glorious Revolution', *Albion* 18, no. 2 (1 July 1986): 202; Pincus, *1688*, 232.

²¹⁵ 'EYLES, John (d.1703)', in Henning, *The House of Commons, 1660-1690*.

²¹⁶ Mark Bell, *Apocalypse How?: Baptist Movements during the English Revolution* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2000), 132; Howson, *Erroneous and Schismatical Opinions*, 45–46; Morrice, *Entring Book*, 2007, IV:459.

²¹⁷ Kreitzer, *William Kiffen and His World*, 2013, 3:155.

²¹⁸ Zook, *Radical Whigs*, 156.

Hanserd Knollys drew from well-worn themes linking Catholicism with Revelation's monsters, suggesting the Revolution was of apocalyptic importance.²¹⁹ Knollys published *An Exposition of the Whole Book of Revelation* in late 1688.²²⁰ Keach wrote a sequel to his 1681 work, *Sion in Distress*, called *Distressed Sion Relieved*, which gave the rebel and 'worthy Preacher' John Hicks a stirring eulogy.²²¹ In his 1689 *Antichrist Stormed*, Keach exegeted Revelation 11:1-12, where God's two witnesses prophesy for 1,260 days, are then killed by the beast, only to rise again three-and-a-half days later. Keach deduced that these days began in 425CE, when bishop Celestine had taken control of Rome – 1260 years later, was 1685.²²² The witnesses were God's faithful people, and the witnesses' executions referred to 'civil Deaths or slaying' at the hands of a Catholic state.²²³ Their resurrection three-and-a-half years later, in 1689, represented 'a time of great confusion and desolation upon the Enemies of God' and 'of great glory and refreshment unto God's people ... so that all the Saints and Protestant Churches may be United into one Body and Communion.'²²⁴ This vindicated the rebels' cause, including 'that godly Woman and Martyr Mrs. Gaunt, &c', making their deaths part of God's wider cosmic plan.²²⁵ Particulars framed the Revolution around the Rebellion and Assizes, independent of Tutchin or anybody else.

Particulars also collaborated with Tutchin in an important form of Whig propaganda, the martyrologies, helping shape public perceptions of the Revolution.²²⁶ Since the 1670s, the dying speeches genre had experienced a 'veritable explosion' of

²¹⁹ Warren Johnston, 'Revelation and the Revolution of 1688-1689', *The Historical Journal* 48, no. 2 (2005): 352–54.

²²⁰ Hanserd Knollys, *An Exposition of the Whole Book of the Revelation* (London, 1689).

²²¹ Benjamin Keach, *Distressed Sion Relieved, or, the Garment of Praise for the Spirit of Heaviness* (London, 1689), 34.

²²² Benjamin Keach, *Antichrist Stormed, or, Mystery Babylon the Great Whore, and Great City, Proved to Be the Present Church of Rome* (London, 1689), 137.

²²³ *Ibid.*, 139.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, 144.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, 145.

²²⁶ Zook, 'The Bloody Assizes', 384.

popularity, according to McKenzie.²²⁷ The chief Particular contributor was the Hewling brothers' sister, Hannah Hewling, who had recently married Henry Cromwell's son. She joined Tutchin before he published *Dying Speeches* in June 1689, barely six months after his first book, *The Protestant Martyrs*. Tutchin did provide polemical commentary at the beginning of the Hewling section of *Dying Speeches*, sarcastically using 'these two Gentlemen' as examples of 'Pure Popish Mercy'.²²⁸ After that, though, he passed the narrative to Hannah Hewling-Cromwell, who drew from her family's literature and memories from the Assizes. There, Hewling-Cromwell did not simply recount her brothers' story, but pursued her own agenda. Michelle Dowd provides a helpful narrative framework to interpret these writings, arguing that 'narrative dynamically engages with its historical moment': the 'story' (the actual sequence of events) is not eradicated in the 'discourse' (how those events are represented), but rather the two interact with each other.²²⁹ The martyrologists relied heavily on documents from 1685, but also constructed narratives. As already stated, their aims matched those of the rebels, but these were refined to match the new political and religious circumstances. Thus, their narrative construction included polemical commentary and outright fabrications, as well as omissions from the stories. This section will now look at what martyrologists sought to achieve and how they did so.

Firstly, as with Keach, the martyrologists sought to reframe any lingering social stigma attached to the rebels by turning them into God's martyrs.²³⁰ They did this partly out of ongoing loyalty to the deceased. Certainly, Hewling-Cromwell wanted her brothers to be perceived as innocent. In a letter to her sister in early 1689, she wrote,

²²⁷ McKenzie, *Tyburn's Martyrs*, 32.

²²⁸ Tutchin, *Dying Speeches*, 143.

²²⁹ Michelle M. Dowd, *Women's Work in Early Modern English Literature and Culture* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 8.

²³⁰ Mark Goldie, 'The Theory of Religious Intolerance in Restoration England', in *From Persecution to Toleration: The Glorious Revolution and Religion in England*, ed. Ole Peter Grell, Jonathan I. Israel, and Nicholas Tyacke (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 358–59.

‘The Parliament are taking the attainder of my Lord Russell: so I hope they will soon proceed to the rest.’²³¹ Removing the attainder officially changed Russell’s status from traitor to hero, something the family also wanted for Benjamin and William. In *Dying Speeches*, she included many of her brothers’ letters, and her eyewitness accounts of their tranquil courage throughout their incarceration and executions. She described Benjamin’s ‘own Cheerful expectation ... complaining of nothing in his present Circumstances’.²³² However, this was not the entirety of Benjamin’s story. She knew Benjamin had written to Jeffreys two hours before his execution, begging for his life. He had claimed to have only been in the West, not to join the Rebellion, but merely to visit Bath’s health spas upon medical advice. He had supposedly planned to go to ‘London before the Insurrection’ but was unable to, ‘having found the roads so troublesome to travell’. When the rebels found him, ‘I confesse my mistaken gratitude’ to his brother William ‘overbalanc’d my Loyalty’ to James.²³³ This was obviously a desperate lie to save his skin. That Benjamin had indeed engaged in ‘implacking of hors’ in a final moment of panic does not discount the courage he usually displayed. Gaunt after her trial had herself been ‘very pensive, seeming much desirous of Life at first’, and hoping for a pardon, before drawing divine strength to bravely continue.²³⁴ Nonetheless, Benjamin’s letter to Jeffreys represented a complicating qualification to Hewling-Cromwell’s carefully-constructed narrative of her brother’s courageous faith, so she omitted it.

Martyrologists also emphasised the antagonists in their narratives, motivated by both personal vengeance but also the issues of the moment. There were primarily two antagonists: James, representing the despotic Catholicism that England should

²³¹ H. Cromwell, ‘For Mrs Rebekah Hewling’, in Kiffen, *Remarkable Passages*, 150.

²³² Tutchin, *Dying Speeches*, 35.

²³³ Hewling-Cromwell, ‘Concerning Her Brothers’, 8.

²³⁴ Anon., *A True Account*, 2.

permanently reject; and Jeffreys, symbolising the horrors of ongoing intolerant Conformity. James was heavily criticised in the martyrologies, but it was Jeffreys who received the most vehement commentary. This contributed to the wider battle around William's religious settlement: he might still revert to the Conformist intolerance of England's past; or allow some limited toleration of minorities, just with overall Anglican supremacy; or maybe even legitimate all major Protestant denominations, including Anglicans and Presbyterians, and even Quakers and Particulars.²³⁵ There were strong lobbyists for each of these options, with the Particulars and other Dissenters hoping for not only toleration, but legitimisation. To help achieve that, the martyrologists portrayed not just Catholicism, but intolerant Conformity, as an evil that must be purged.

Jeffreys' fiery reputation helped the martyrologists portray Conformist intolerance as having entirely lost its way. Conformists had long criticised Nonconformists' 'heat' or extremism, both in worship and in their 'enthusiasms'. Anglicanism, in contrast, represented moderation both liturgically and emotionally. Ethan H. Shagan shows how Tories' moderate 'self-governance' not only justified their denomination, but their ability to govern others.²³⁶ Furthermore, anti-tolerantists claimed punishing Dissenters was purely educative.²³⁷ They admitted that if it ever gave way to irrational anger it would become tyrannical.²³⁸ In Jeffreys, the martyrologists claimed, this had indeed taken place: Conformity had lost its moderation. Hence Jeffreys was the focus of nearly half of Tutchin's second book, *The Bloody Assizes, or the Compleat History of the Life of George, Lord Jefferies*.²³⁹ Tutchin described how

²³⁵ Johnston, 'Revelation and the Revolution', 355–56.

²³⁶ Ethan H. Shagan, *The Rule of Moderation: Violence, Religion and the Politics of Restraint in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 20.

²³⁷ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 2.

²³⁸ Goldie, 'The Theory of Religious Intolerance', 350.

²³⁹ Tutchin, *The Bloody Assizes*, 1–31.

both James and Jeffreys had their ‘thirst quenched with Protestant Blood’.²⁴⁰ Jeffreys’ immoderate Tory behaviour had resulted in the Assizes, an atrocity that England should avoid happening again.²⁴¹

The martyrologists also knew martyrs had credibility to effect public opinion and used their rebels-now-turned-martyrs to represent broad Protestant legitimisation. Gregory argues, ‘martyrdom helped solidify group identities.’²⁴² In his *Dying Speeches*, Tutchin expanded Hick’s dying sermon from two to seven pages, adding, ‘after all the hottest Disputes, and most vehement Debates, and violent Contests between Conformist and Non-conformist, there are of both Parties will be glorified in Heaven hereafter’.²⁴³ The martyrologists de-emphasised distinctions between Dissenters, defining every martyr as ‘Protestant’: not Presbyterian, Quaker, or even Anabaptist.²⁴⁴ Indeed, the entire project was an inter-denominational act, with writers from across the English Nonconformist spectrum. Together, they not only attacked Catholicism, but undermined uniformity as well.

A cultural shift away from strict Conformity can also be seen in the Act of Toleration and its consequences. Certainly, portraying the 1689 Parliament as ideologically unified in supporting toleration is a construct.²⁴⁵ Anglican Tories proved less supportive of religious liberty than Halifax had promised, considering toleration a begrudging concession, once legitimisation was disregarded.²⁴⁶ Proposals for broad Protestant legitimisation were firmly squashed in Parliament.²⁴⁷ Walsham notes the Act gave not the ‘slightest hint or whisper’ of toleration being a ‘natural right’.²⁴⁸ In fact, it

²⁴⁰ Ibid., 28.

²⁴¹ Vallance, *The Glorious Revolution*, 155–56.

²⁴² Gregory, *Salvation at Stake*, 7.

²⁴³ Tutchin, *Dying Speeches*, 15.

²⁴⁴ Zook, ‘The Bloody Assizes’, 385.

²⁴⁵ Pincus, *1688*, 224.

²⁴⁶ Murphy, *Conscience and Community*, 158.

²⁴⁷ Miller, *Cities Divided*, 244; John Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration in Protestant England, 1558-1689* (Harlow: Longman, 2000), 4.

²⁴⁸ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 267.

fell far short of what James himself had promised the Particulars and Dissenters generally. The Test Act remained, restricting closed-unionists from government positions. The Penal Acts were suspended, but not removed.²⁴⁹ Dissenters had to register their congregations with Anglican bishops, keep paying tithes, and leave their doors unlocked during worship.²⁵⁰ Nonetheless, overall the Act represented a significant step forward for Dissenters like the Particulars, specifically exempting Baptists from christening their children.²⁵¹ More broadly, the Toleration Act gradually fostered religious diversity, with over 3,000 Nonconformist licences issued by 1710.²⁵² Moreover, the 1689 Declaration of Rights specifically identified as part of James' crimes his treatment of those accused of treason and rebellion, including the Western rebels.²⁵³ While the question of whether the martyrologists had any direct influence upon the 1689 Parliament seems impossible to gauge, certainly their overall goals were ultimately achieved: Catholic government was rejected, and Conformity curtailed, replaced by a magisterially tolerated, Protestant inter-denominational toleration.

3.2 The Particulars' Denominational Toleration

James' reign had placed an unprecedented stress upon the Particulars' own denominational unity. There had been piecemeal expressions of ongoing collaboration throughout that time. Together Cox and Knollys had organised a royal grant to open Knollys' new meeting place in December 1687.²⁵⁴ That same month, Kiffen's Devonshire Square congregation accepted two members from the Petty France Particulars, upon the recommendation of their minister, the Repealer William Collins.²⁵⁵

²⁴⁹ Sowerby, *Making Toleration*, 235; Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 19.

²⁵⁰ Murphy, *Conscience and Community*, 127; Howson, *Erroneous and Schismatical Opinions*, 46.

²⁵¹ Sowerby, 'Forgetting the Repealers', 107–8; Howson, *Erroneous and Schismatical Opinions*, 46.

²⁵² Raymond Brown, *The English Baptists of the Eighteenth Century* (London: Baptist Historical Society, 1986), 2; Murphy, *Conscience and Community*, 160.

²⁵³ Vallance, *The Glorious Revolution*, 177.

²⁵⁴ Morrice, *Entring Book*, 2007, IV:199.

²⁵⁵ 'Devonshire Square Membership List', in Kreitzer, *William Kiffen and His World*, 2010.

Still, when the Revolution began, the Particulars' presiding narrative became that of Kiffen, Keach, and Hewling-Cromwell: James had been a Catholic despot, and an agent of Satan. This inevitably implied the Repealers had collaborated with the devil. Potentially, then, these prominent leaders and their followers could have faced denominational retribution, even rejection. The Particulars did neither, instead forgiving and reconciling the Repealers, extending them denominational toleration in various ways.

The denomination completely omitted discussing the Repealers' role in James' campaign wherever possible. When Kiffen described his own resistance to James' 'plot', he claimed James had enlisted 'several Dissenters – but indeed they were but few and for the generality, of the meaner sort.'²⁵⁶ Even the nineteenth-century Baptist historian, Joseph Ivimey, disputed Kiffen's term 'meaner sort', given that 'Dr. Coxe, Mr. William Collins, Mr. Thomas Plant, Mr. Benjamin Dennis, and others, who were among them, were certainly persons of great respectability.'²⁵⁷ Sowerby argues Particulars 'airbrushed out this embarrassing phase of their denomination's history, acknowledging only the most minimal and innocuous contacts between the Baptists and King James II.'²⁵⁸ I agree with Sowerby's assessment of the Particulars' actions, but not of their motivations. They may have wanted to avoid social embarrassment or retribution, but that does not explain their internal embracing of the Repealers. Sowerby implies they did so because Particulars had always supported James, but, as shown earlier, this was evidently not the case. The alternative explanation is that they forgave them, an act not unheard of in Christian communities.

²⁵⁶ Kiffen, *Remarkable Passages*, 84.

²⁵⁷ Joseph Ivimey, *A History of the English Baptists*, vol. 1 (London, 1811), 472.

²⁵⁸ Sowerby, 'Forgetting the Repealers', 110.

This conciliatory approach seems evident from the Particular Baptists' 1689 General Assembly, which Kiffen was instrumental in organising.²⁵⁹ Invitations were sent to Particular congregations across England and Wales in July 1689, a few months after Parliament passed the Toleration Act. The invitation began by asking all Particulars to thank 'Almighty God ... for our deliverance from that dismal dispensation, which threatened us from the continual and unwearied attempts and designs of the enemy of our sacred religion and civil liberties'. Yet they also recognised their denomination was in dire circumstances internally and had called the Assembly to rectify that.²⁶⁰ Over a hundred congregations accepted this invitation. The Western Association brought three congregations from Dorset, including Lyme; seven from Devonshire; twelve from Somerset, including Bridgewater, and Taunton; and Bristol, represented by Andrew Gifford. Leaders from every major London Particular congregation attended, including Kiffen, Knollys and Keach, but also former-Repealers like William Collins, Benjamin Dennis and Richard Adams.²⁶¹

Assembly delegates attempted to determine 'the causes of that Spiritual Decay, and loss of Strength, Beauty and Glory in our Churches'.²⁶² They lamented that Particulars had recently faced 'so dismal an Hour of Sorrow and Persecution, in which the Enemy doubtless designed to break our Churches to pieces'.²⁶³ They identified disunity as their core problem, so chose to focus on reconciliation, determining several solutions. Inter-congregational toleration was re-implemented, via decentralisation of authority: 'we disclaim all manner of Superiority, Superintendency over the Churches.' Specifically, 'we have no Authority or Power, to prescribe or impose any thing upon the

²⁵⁹ Kreitzer, *William Kiffen and His World*, 2013, 3:154.

²⁶⁰ Anon., *A Narrative of the Proceedings of the General Assembly of Divers Pastors, Messengers, and Ministring-Brethren of the Baptized Churches Met Together in London, from Septemb. 3 to 12, 1689* (London, 1689), 9.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 19–25.

²⁶² *Ibid.*, 3.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, 4.

Faith or Practice of any of the Churches of Christ.’ They could only offer ‘counsel and Advice’. Wherever ‘one church differs from another Church ... we cannot, shall not, impose upon any particular church therein, but leave every Church to their own liberty’.²⁶⁴ For the Particulars, religious liberty started in their own congregations. They also extended this to those outside, via inter-denominational toleration: ‘Baptized Believers’ were given ‘liberty ... to hear any sober and pious Men’ from other congregations should they be unable to attend their own Particular congregation.²⁶⁵ Ultimately, the Assembly ended ‘in uniting our Hearts together in the Spirit of Love, and sweet Concord, in our Debates, Consultations, and Resolves ... there being scarcely one Brother who dissented from the Assembly in the Sentiments of his Mind’.²⁶⁶ Their toleration had restored the Particulars to Blackwood’s unity of charity, whereby unity also upheld diversity, by respecting congregations’ autonomy.

After the Assembly, the Particulars publicly responded to wider accusations that they had ‘in the late Times, for our Liberties-sake, complied with the Popish Party, to the hazard of the Protestant Religion, and the Civil Liberties of the Nation’. They asserted, somewhat disingenuously, that ‘to the utmost of our Knowledg, there was not one Congregation that ... gave Consent’ for ‘any of their Members’ to support repeal.²⁶⁷ Instead, ‘some few Persons (from their own Sentiments)’ from among Particular congregations had worked for repeal, ‘but met with little or no Encouragement by any of our Members.’²⁶⁸ Yet the Particulars also noted even these few had done so because of ‘the great Sufferings’ they had endured from ‘the Ecclesiastical Courts, as also by the frequent Molestations of Informers against our Meetings, by means whereof many Families were ruined in their Estates, as also deprived of all our Liberties, and denied

²⁶⁴ Ibid., 10.

²⁶⁵ Ibid., 13.

²⁶⁶ Ibid., 4.

²⁶⁷ Anon., *Innocency Vindicated, or, Reproach Wip’d Off* (London: John Darby, 1689), 1.

²⁶⁸ Ibid., 1–2.

the common Justice of the Nation'.²⁶⁹ The Particulars also offered a public prayer of allegiance for William, praying he would 'be a blessed instrument, in his Hand, to deliver us from Popery and Arbitrary Power'. They also promised to work with 'the rest of our Protestant Brethren' to protect religious toleration and national liberty.²⁷⁰ Sowerby considers this an 'evasive statement' designed only to avoid wider intolerance of Particulars.²⁷¹ To some extent this is correct, but framed within the larger outcomes of the Assembly, it seems as much an attempt at denominational toleration, for them all to forgive and forget the recent past. In chapter 2, I showed that reconciliation of the excommunicated into the congregation was a key facet in unity of charity. Ignoring the Repealers' past represents a denominational expression of the same principle.

Denominational toleration is also evident in how Particular congregations implemented the Assembly's outcomes. Thomas Plant was accepted as minister for the Barbican Particular congregation.²⁷² His services had 200 attenders, and Plant was paid about £100 per annum, a good salary.²⁷³ There were exceptions to the conciliatory approach, especially Nathaniel Wade: while generally accepting William, he refused to ride in a Bristol cavalcade to celebrate the new King rescuing them from James.²⁷⁴ He would be frequently called 'Traitor Wade' by many in Bristol from then on.²⁷⁵ Generally, the Particular leadership role-modelled the new denominational toleration. Keach and the former-Repealer, Benjamin Dennis, went on a national evangelistic campaign together in late 1689.²⁷⁶ In October 1689, William Kiffen literally turned a new page on his Devonshire Square congregation's membership-roll, inaugurating a fresh era beside

²⁶⁹ Anon., *A Narrative of the General Assembly*, 2.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 27.

²⁷¹ Sowerby, 'Forgetting the Repealers', 110.

²⁷² Morrice, *Entring Book*, 2007, VI:164.

²⁷³ Robert Kirk, 'Account of Visit to London', in Kreitzer, *William Kiffen and His World*, 2015, 4:70.

²⁷⁴ W. MacDonald Wigfield, *The Monmouth Rebellion: A Social History, Including the Complete Text of Wade's Narrative* (Bradford-on-Avon: Moonraker Press, 1980), 122–23.

²⁷⁵ Latimer, *Annals of Bristol*, 433.

²⁷⁶ *The American Baptist Magazine, and Missionary Intelligencer* (James Loring, and Lincoln & Edmands, 1821), 162.

his new co-pastor, the ex-Repealer Richard Adams. Their congregants had ‘given up themselves to the Lord to walk in his wayes in Fellowship together’.²⁷⁷ Adams’ appointment was facilitated by leaders formerly from both sides, including Knollys and William Collins.²⁷⁸ This renewed congregation had over 350 members, many of whom had either been heavily involved in either the Rebellion or the Repeal. These included: John and Constance Ward, who had helped rebels escape after the Rebellion; Elizabeth Gaunt’s husband, William; George Gosfright, who had returned from exile in Amsterdam; William Rumbold, whose brother had been executed for supporting Argyle; John Eyles, the former mayor of London; and ‘Sr Hanah Hulen’, the Hewling brothers’ mother, as well as ‘Sr Hanah Cromwell, her daughter’. Beside them in the congregation were not only Adams, but the former-Repealers James Jones and Benjamin Dennis.²⁷⁹ Many of these congregants remained together throughout the 1690s and into the eighteenth century. The Devonshire Square congregation became an example of congregational toleration for the entire Particular denomination to emulate.

Ironically, in the new era of national toleration of the eighteenth century, Particulars’ denominational toleration dissipated significantly. As Martin Sutherland states, ‘Later Stuart dissent decayed from within.’²⁸⁰ This may be partially due to losing many of their denomination’s founders, who had established and sought to practice unity of charity: Bunyan died in 1688, Knollys in 1691, Kiffen in 1701, and Keach in 1704. Yet Particulars had also defined themselves by unity of necessity for the last thirty years, being bound together against Conformist harassment since the Restoration. Having ‘thrived on persecution’ for so long, Walsham specifically mentions that

²⁷⁷ ‘p.68, Devonshire Square Baptist Membership Lists, c.1664-90’, in Kreitzer, *William Kiffen and His World*, 2010, 1:252.

²⁷⁸ Kreitzer, *William Kiffen and His World*, 2013, 3:161.

²⁷⁹ ‘Devonshire Square List’, in Kreitzer, *William Kiffen and His World*, 2010, 1:242,254-256, 260–61, 268, 272.

²⁸⁰ Martin Sutherland, *Peace, Toleration and Decay: The Ecclesiology of Later Stuart Dissent*. (Carlisle: Wipf & Stock, 2007), xvii.

Baptists struggled with their identity in the wake of the Act of Toleration, alongside other dissenting groups.²⁸¹ Finding how to remain unified without a common enemy became difficult.²⁸² This was true of the various dissenting denominations, who abandoned their earlier collaboration, now that the common threat of Conformist prosecution had dissipated.²⁸³ Blackwood's assessment of the inevitably temporary nature of his unity of necessity proved correct. Similar relational breakdowns took place within the Particulars themselves in the eighteenth century: they engaged in divisive debates about marriage, Christology, predestination, hymn-singing, and yet again, open or closed communion. Senior leaders lamented this disunity, begging the denomination to not argue about trivialities.²⁸⁴ A full analysis of the division among seventeenth-century Particulars is beyond the scope of this thesis. Nonetheless, it does not diminish the Particulars' achievements in toleration, in various contexts, in the latter half of the 1680s.

CONCLUSION

When the Bloody Assizes, and especially the Particulars' involvement in them, is included in discussions of James' reign and downfall, much becomes clearer. By examining the early sources hidden within later martyrologies, historians can discover the rebels' own contribution to Dissenters' responses to James. The dying rebels created both desperate hope and seditious resentment among Particulars, which emerged when James offered magisterial toleration. Whether in the bold assertions of Repealers like Cox or Eston, or in the quiet intransigence of Kiffen and Shorter, Particulars played an integral part in the events of 1686-1689. Moreover, their prophetic commentaries and

²⁸¹ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 214.

²⁸² *Ibid.*, 213–14, 307; John Spurr, *English Puritanism, 1603-1689* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 149–50.

²⁸³ Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, 313.

²⁸⁴ Brown, *The English Baptists of the Eighteenth Century*, 9.

contribution to the martyrologies is indicative of the nation's shift toward religious toleration, even if not full legitimisation. Nonetheless, they did find a deeper toleration within their own denomination, a unity of charity, seeing it as their only hope for survival and enacting it in their very congregations. Indeed, the Particulars responded to the magisterial toleration they had received in the Glorious Revolution, by embracing subordinate, inter-denominational, denominational, and congregational toleration. The implications of this, and the previous sixty years of them engaging in such dynamics, I will explore in my Conclusion.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has, fundamentally, been built upon three claims. Firstly, that dynamics of toleration occur not only in a magisterial context, but in multiple other spheres: such as the ordinary, denominational and congregational. Secondly, that examining a specific religious minority, such as the Particular Baptists, draws the focus away from abstract theories around toleration by the elite. Instead, it allows toleration to be understood from the perspective of the people being tolerated themselves. Finally, I argued that, notwithstanding the benefits of a thematic approach, and the risk of falling into an anachronistic teleology, approaching toleration from a chronological perspective would be profitable. Here, I will highlight some of the key insights gained by that chronological approach, before re-framing my thesis more thematically.

Approaching the topic chronologically has allowed several facets of the era to be more clearly appreciated. Firstly, attitudes prevalent in any given period can be more effectively understood by framing them within their historical causes. Chapter 3's discussion of the widespread antagonism against Particulars at the Restoration, for example, made more sense in the light of Chapter 2's findings about the Particulars' destabilising influence during the Interregnum. Exploring the transition from the Interregnum to the Restoration, also helps qualify claims of a teleological development during this period: the Particulars lost much of the influence they had enjoyed prior to 1660, and did not regain it after 1689. This adds nuance to any suggestion of a straightforward progression to religious toleration during the seventeenth century. Examining the period chronologically also highlighted the nature of precedent within religious communities. Shifts in the Nonconformists' context had direct impact on longstanding Particular policies. The Presbyterians' shift from the Dons to the Ducklings, from seeking to be Conformity to embracing a Nonconformist identity,

changed the way Particulars had to approach the longstanding open and closed communion debate. At the same time, returning to a precedent could heal the movement after times of crisis, as can be seen at the 1689 General Assembly, where the autonomy of each congregation yet again was emphasised to facilitate unity. Finally, the increasingly militant insubordination of the Dissenters in the 1680s is best understood by framing it within the English Revolution: utilised as a warning by Conformists, but as nostalgia by Nonconformists.

Having approached this topic chronologically throughout this thesis, I conclude by examining each toleration context thematically – magisterial, subordinate, and so on – showing my findings on each. Ultimately, my thesis still supports the longstanding claim that toleration in England generally migrated from intolerance to toleration, but adds depth, breadth and nuance, highlighting the complexities of toleration experienced in everyday Nonconformist life. Moreover, it supports Alexandra Walsham and other recent toleration historians, in showing that pragmatism drove toleration far more than intellectual arguments usually did.

Notwithstanding my emphasis on ordinary toleration throughout this thesis, I still recognise the tremendous value of examining toleration from a magisterial and intellectual perspective. In fact, by focusing on one Nonconformist denomination, aspects of the magistracy's toleration and intolerance are better understood. In terms of magisterial toleration, the Particulars proved difficult for rulers to collaborate with. Having accepted them with open arms, Oliver and Henry Cromwell found the young, brash movement difficult to subordinate to their wills. James II tried to work with the Particulars in his repealing campaign, but was also disappointed by them: his Particular supporters showed enthusiasm, but were completely inadequate; others he sought to help him, only to find they undermined him at every turn. At the same time, showing

them intolerance proved utterly counter-productive as well, given their highly effective use of the martyrdom motif. The Restoration Parliament, and eventually Charles II, discovered this, as every attempt to suppress Nonconformists brought them closer together, and engendered increasing public sympathy. James discovered this as well in the aftermath of the Bloody Assize. The sheer inability to keep the Particulars out of trouble, whether by toleration or intolerance, is perhaps another reason why they were so frustrating to these rulers. The most effective solution turned out to be that which William and the 1689 Parliament stumbled upon: effectively, domesticating the Particulars under a limited toleration, that denied them the defiant energy of being prosecuted, and but also any involvement in government without taking the Anglican Eucharist.

The Particulars' approach to subordinate toleration was highly dependent upon who governed the country. Specifically, their primary measure of a ruler was how he affected them. When faced with the choice between Charles I and the Parliamentarians, they supported the group most willing to offer them toleration. They supported Cromwell, so long as he and his sons gave them influence and protected the Commonwealth that provided them acceptance – when he jeopardised the state's peace and liberty, he steadily lost their support. In the Restoration, they curried favour from Charles II and his court against the Parliament's Clarendon Code. When the Exclusion Crisis resulted in Charles joining the Tories in punishing them, several Particulars attempted regicide. When James came to the throne, they specifically identified him with a Catholic despotism that threatened their liberty, consequently joining a full-scale rebellion. The decision to support or subvert his repeal campaign essentially revolved around the same issue. On one hand, this is hardly surprising. Yet it is still important to note, precisely because it is so emphatically pragmatic. The Particulars consistently

provided theoretical reasons for why they tolerated a ruler. Their doctrinal statements spoke of obedience to the King and to Scripture. They claimed to support Cromwell because of God's Providence in making him victorious, because of his godly practice and Protestant doctrine. Yet they also tolerated the licentiousness of Charles II and the Duke of Monmouth, and even (in the Repealers' case) the Catholicism of James II, when offered protection. Their subordinate toleration was not decided by doctrine, but pragmatism. Rather, doctrine primarily gave theoretical justifications for their pragmatism.

This pragmatic emphasis is evident more broadly, in ordinary toleration between the Particulars and the English population. Returning to Chapter 1's analysis of the most common reasons for concern about the new breed of 'Anabaptists' in that period: most of these were highly tangible and pragmatic, rather than theological. People were worried about the risks of 'dipping', both for physical and moral health. Tied to this was the danger Particulars presented to gender norms, deeply embedded in the fabric of society, such as that of a daughter like Elizabeth Poole, or a rector's wife like Dorothy Hazzard. Most of all, the public was terrified by the Particulars' alleged connections to violent Munsteritism, with its apocalyptic, anarchic undertones. Such concerns were only exacerbated in their destabilising influence upon Interregnum Ireland, and later in the Rye House Plot and Western Rebellion. For all the effort Particulars made to give theoretical reasons for toleration, from arguments about liberty of conscience, to showing their Calvinist affinity through their Confessions, such tactics do not seem to have been the prime motivators for ordinary toleration. Rather, toleration came about through the practices identified in Chapter 3: doing business with those around them; serving in local government; and acts of philanthropy, especially in times of crisis.

Of course, the sympathy Particulars and other Nonconformists managed to engender by using the martyrdom motif also helped greatly. At the start of the Restoration, the population seems to have been thoroughly unsympathetic to the ‘Anabaptists’, largely blaming them for their prominent role in the veritable mess of the 1650s. Many supported the Clarendon Code early on. Yet prosecution proved counter-productive, as Particulars joined other Dissenters in turning it into persecution. Writings like Bunyan’s Vanity Fair trial in *The Pilgrim’s Progress* greatly assisted this occurring. Such sympathy occurred even in localised contexts, such as in the incident where Agnes Beaumont was punished by her father for her Particular faith. Most of all, it occurred in the Bloody Assizes, even if it had to wait until 1689 and the martyrologists in order for it to do so.

Prosecution of the Particulars also had significant beneficial implications for inter-denominational toleration. Christopher Blackwood’s unity of necessity proved to be the most potent motivation for denominations to collaborate throughout this thesis’ chosen period. Precisely as Blackwood had warned, while it proved a powerful mechanism in the Civil War, drawing together the New Model Army against Charles I, once the threat dissipated in the Cromwellian era, unity quickly dissipated. In the wake of the vicious rivalries that had defined the Presbyterians, Independents and Particulars in the 1650s, it was unity of necessity that drew them together in the Restoration. The Cavalier Parliament’s decision to drive all non-Anglicans into the ‘Dissenter’ category, served only to bring about the rise of the Presbyterian ‘Ducklings’. The Clarendon Code united all Nonconformists together in a way doctrine never could. The Bloody Assizes also facilitated a broad ‘Protestant’ commitment, as seen again in the martyrologies. Yet, I also showed that unity of necessity proves an inadequate tool for unity, for reasons beyond those identified by Blackwood. In the seditious acts of the 1680s, unity of

necessity broke down once the goals had to become more clearly defined than simply stopping a common enemy. Moreover, extending Ingrid Creppell's work, I showed that unity of necessity relies on each minority's role and purpose within the group to be valued – when the Particulars felt their contribution in the Bristol siege had been rejected, many of them rejected Monmouth, and the Rebellion soon fell apart. Unity of necessity is a highly attractive incentive for inter-denominational toleration at the beginning, but rarely bears the weight inevitably placed upon it.

Blackwood's preferred alternative, unity of charity, always failed to bring about inter-denominational toleration. When Particulars most explicitly advocated for it in the Interregnum's national Church experiment, it proved impossible to achieve. Its emphasis on maintaining unity amidst diversity, by respecting each congregation's autonomy, was rejected. Presbyterians wanted to meld congregations together, effectively supporting – at best – an open-communion form of Particular Baptist congregations. This proved utterly intolerable for closed-communionists. They advocated broad collaboration and toleration of each congregation's right to worship as it saw fit, yet this was quickly seen as narrow-minded and divisive. Furthermore, as an inexperienced and idealistic movement, they proved incapable of practising this form of inter-denominational toleration themselves, as seen in the fiery actions of Thomas Patient and Blackwood himself in Ireland. At the Restoration, unity of charity was utterly rejected, although there are hints of it in the way Bunyan, Paul and Kiffen discussed collaborating with other Dissenters in various projects of the period. In its full sense, however, unity of charity would never be tried in England at an inter-denominational level again. Certainly, an argument could be made that such an approach was, in some respects, what the Act of Toleration inadvertently achieved: each denomination worshipping separately in their congregations. Yet, what Nonconformity

failed to realise after 1689 was the collaborative aspect in unity of charity, whereby the different denominations worked together at a macro level. Instead, many groups, including the Particulars, seem to have descended into competitive sectarianism. An interesting area for further study might be to examine the unity of charity dynamics in more recent multi-denominational contexts, even today.

Where unity of charity did have some success, as mentioned earlier, was in the Particular denomination itself. Even before Blackwood explicitly articulated the term in his 1653 *Four Treatises*, unity of charity dynamics were evident prototypically in the early stages of the movement. It came into its own in the Interregnum, as can be seen in the records of the various Associations of congregations: in their decisions, they generally supported the individual congregation's right to made decisions, so long as charity, unity, reconciliation remained a key motivation. I did not have access to suitable denominational records for determining if unity of necessity was a major factor for Particulars during the 1660s and early 1670s. This could be an area for further research. Certainly, though, denominational toleration evidently became strained during the late 1670s, as the debates between Bunyan and Paul indicate. Where disunity most explicitly emerged during this thesis' period, during James' repeal campaign, the Particulars eventually saw it as instrumental in their demise. At their General Assembly of 1689, they returned to this principle as a denomination, with their leaders promising to not centralise control, but instead to advise each congregation. The question of why unity of charity managed to work – however tenuously – in a denominational context, rather than an inter-denominational one, is difficult to answer entirely. The most likely reason, it seems, is that the Particulars shared a core practice as identity marker: believer's baptism. Nonetheless, I recognise I have not had space here to adequately explore this area, and suggest it is a topic worthy of further exploration in the future.

Having looked at each context thematically, it is important to also highlight that my thesis has shown how toleration occurs in multiple, overlapping contexts as well. Several examples can be cited. The regicide in Chapter 1 clearly demonstrated how this multi-layered approach occurred, with magisterial, subordinate, inter-denominational, and congregational dynamics simultaneously. The open and closed communion debates of the 1670s offer another example: there, magisterial intolerance fostered Nonconformist inter-denominational toleration via unity of necessity, leading to disagreement in the Particular denomination. A central issue in these debates was the limits of the emerging inter-denominational unity, especially in terms of congregational toleration: whether a church could accept non-Baptists at the Lord's Table, even where congregants were collaborating with such people in broader religious contexts. Ironically, these deliberations about inter-denominational toleration led to denominational intolerance, as Bunyan and Paul's writings revealed. I will not reiterate the many implications of each example here. Rather, my point here is that each example is indeed far more multi-faceted, from a toleration perspective, than can often be assumed, revealing new dimensions for scholarly study. For example, they show the inherent inconsistency of toleration interactions: the minority seeks magisterial toleration for their own denominational intolerance; one will tolerate an action by a magistrate that they cannot tolerate from their congregants. This further alleviates the temptation to identify toleration by neat theoretical principles, and recognises the influence – and to some extent autonomy – of each party in such interactions. It also highlights the unpleasant sense of compromise that sometimes permeates toleration dynamics, where by in being compelled to tolerate one party, dearly beloved principles and people can seem betrayed.

Several other important domains for future research exist. At several points in this thesis, I have discussed congregational toleration dynamics, especially excommunication. In reviewing my thesis, I was surprised to find this was not more fully developed, especially in the last three chapters. This is partially because I have not had access to enough congregational records for the period after the Restoration, but also because other important topics took up each chapter's space. A reappraisal of the dynamics of congregational life, including excommunication, in light of toleration dynamics, would be beneficial for toleration scholarship. Furthermore, comparative analyses, examining the differences between congregational toleration and, say, magisterial toleration, would be an interesting topic to explore further.

With regard to my other suggestions for further study, I return to my Introduction's discussion of the differences between toleration and acceptance. When discussed there, it served as merely a comparison to clarify the nature of toleration itself: that toleration is about something being evil, or wrong, whereas acceptance is recognising something is good. However, I specifically highlighted Andrew R. Murphy's astute warning against assuming early modern toleration 'generalizes fairly easily and unproblematically to divisive contemporary social and political issues such as gender, race, ethnicity, and sexuality and provides a basis for multicultural and "identity" politics.'¹ Kaplan's suggestion that religious toleration helped bring about later civil rights, such as those enjoyed by many women today, is to some degree correct.² However, it is highly problematic for two reasons. Firstly, because it retains a hint of the very secularist teleology Kaplan himself so effectively refutes: chronologically, facets of the women's rights movement were already beginning to

¹ Andrew R. Murphy, *Conscience and Community: Revisiting Toleration and Religious Dissent in Early Modern England and America* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), 14.

² Benjamin J. Kaplan, *Divided by Faith: Religious Conflict and the Practice of Toleration in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2007), 4.

emerge in the seventeenth century.³ Indeed, many of these are evident in the Particulars' literature, such as in their women prophets like Anna Trapnel and Sarah Wight.⁴ I briefly discussed such dynamics in Chapter 1, but a great deal more could have been said. The second problem with linking religious liberty and other civil rights is that religious toleration was explicitly framed in terms of something being wrong. When Particulars responded to criticism of women having voice in their movement, they generally did not defend it in terms of tolerating women, as if that was wrong. Rather, they repeatedly stated that women's voice was good, something to be accepted. Because God had endorsed such women, they posited, who were they to question such divine endorsement?⁵ Much more can be said, and should be said, on this important distinction.

Toleration remains an important topic for further study, precisely because it is about how people deal with differences of opinion. Moreover, those opinions rarely remain esoterically confined to the mind, but inevitably effect behaviour and lifestyle. In turn, this will usually lead to relational tension, as people with these different opinions tangibly interact. While in seventeenth-century England this was framed primarily in terms of religious diversity, it could be more broadly defined as ideological diversity, irrespective of any reference to a divine being. In highlighting multiple

³ Phyllis Mack, *Visionary Women: Ecstatic Prophecy in Seventeenth-Century England* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1992); Patricia Crawford, *Women and Religion in England, 1500-1720* (London: Routledge, 1993); Johanna I. Harris and Elizabeth Scott-Baumann, 'Introduction', in *The Intellectual Culture of Puritan Women, 1558-1680*, ed. Johanna I. Harris and Elizabeth Scott-Baumann (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); Susan Wiseman and Isobel Grundy, eds., *Women, Writing, History, 1640-1740* (Athens, GE: University of Georgia Press, 1992); Leland Ryken, *Worldly Saints: The Puritans as They Really Were* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1990); J.I. Packer, *A Quest for Godliness: The Puritan Vision of the Christian Life* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1990); Amanda Capern, *The Historical Study of Women: England, 1500-1700* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008); Rachel Adcock, *Baptist Women's Writings in Revolutionary Culture, 1640-1680* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2015).

⁴ Sarah Wight, *The Exceeding Riches of Grace Advanced by the Spirit of Grace, in an Empty Nothing Creature*, ed. Henry Jessey (London: J.M., 1652); Anna Trapnel, *The Cry of a Stone* (London, 1654); Jane Turner, *Choice Experiences of the Kind Dealings of God Before, in, and After Conversion* (London: Henry Hills, 1653).

⁵ 'A Word from the Author to the Reader', in Turner, *Choice Experiences*; Henry Jessey, 'To his Christian Friends', in Wight, *The Exceeding Riches of Grace*; Henry Jessey, 'Touching this Treatise the Judgement of H. Jessey', in Mary Cary, *The Little Horns Doom & Dvvnfall or a Scripture-Prophesie of King James, and King Charles, and of This Present Parliament, Unfolded* (London, 1651).

contexts for toleration dynamics, this thesis recognises the responsibility for a tolerant society does not exclusively rest upon the magistracy. It is something all of us must be responsible for. Everyone is inexorably drawn in to determine how toleration is played out: for example, when something is too evil to tolerate, such as, perhaps cruelty or neglect; or when a group's autonomy to meet should be defended, even if their ideas are socially unpopular, or repugnant. I am not suggesting here that these deliberations are easy. Nor do I believe that examining the past provides simple answers. What my thesis shows is that toleration dynamics are incredibly complex and are frequently practised imperfectly. Nonetheless, wrestling with toleration is unavoidable, both for a society, but also for each individual or group as we live in the everyday, together.

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