

ANGELIC PRESENCE IN JOHN FOXE'S *ACTES AND MONUMENTS*

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## Abstract

This thesis examines the development of angelology during the English Reformation as understood and mediated in John Foxe's *Actes and Monuments*. Foxe deploys angels in various intriguing ways throughout his four editions and across two decades of the formative years of reform to explain and help shape evolving theological orthodoxy and give sense to a soteriological landscape shifting to meet increasingly apocalyptic eschatological frameworks.

The thesis critically assesses the place, role and significance of angelic presence in the emerging Protestant schema by plotting their utility to Foxe in his *Actes and Monuments*, not least in the exposition of Lollard, Henrician and Marian martyrdoms that feature angelic agency as central to their narrative. It examines three other tenets: Foxe's increasing use of apocalyptic constructs to define the historical framework of sixteenth-century society approaching End Times; the efficacy of placing angelic presence at the centre of confessional debates on the validity of reform programmes – contention over the real presence a principal example; and the maturation of traditional belief patterns relating to angelic protection and the guardian angel within the Protestant belief systems.

The thesis concludes that Foxe employs angels strategically to reinforce these belief systems, with his identification of martyrs who embrace angelic intervention as a validating mechanism. For Foxe, angels guide and console his readers. Angels also serve as didactic tools to oppose Catholic teachings, promote Protestant reform, and locate reform progress firmly within an apocalyptic and revelatory framework.

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## INTRODUCTION

One of the most important publications born out of the English Reformation was John Foxe's the *Actes and Monuments*.<sup>1</sup> The *Actes*, a multi-edition Protestant English history and martyrology in which the accounts of Christian martyrs are detailed is replete with angelic references. Yet to date, analysis of angelic presence has been limited to discussions over a handful of sources, with no exhaustive exploration of the angelology across the four editions. This thesis, therefore, seeks to address the gap. Between 1563 and 1583, Foxe expanded and republished his work in response to the acquisition of new material and criticisms from Catholic enemies, completing four editions over these twenty years. This period of history is important to the redevelopment of ideas surrounding angels. Religious orthodoxy was in flux, and the precise role and duty of the angel were undecided. Thus, the *Actes* constitutes an emerging and growing document that has the potential to shed light on the function and utility of angels over the formative decades of reform in England. It provides a unique opportunity to explore the role of angelic presence as a confessional mechanism within the martyrdom treatise employed by the Marian martyrs and John Foxe.

The aims and objectives of this thesis are to examine the use of angels and angelic presence across the four editions of John Foxe's *Actes and Monuments*; to explore whether angelic presence was, for Foxe and the Marian martyrs, a valuable tool in promoting the Protestant faith and, where possible, to compare and contrast the Catholic and Protestant application of angelic presence. Close attention is given to the individuals who authored the sources. Primarily there is John Foxe, the historian, social commentator and editor of the accounts

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<sup>1</sup> *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or *TAMO* (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 01.03.20].

included within the *Actes and Monuments*. Foxe's presence is a constant, detected in the positioning of the material, the commentary notes and amendments made from one edition to the next. Foxe's ubiquitous presence is also considered alongside the voices of the martyrs he recorded.

Of the three hundred Protestants martyred during the reign of Queen Mary (1553-1558), material from thirty of the contemporary martyrs is considered in this thesis. This group has been identified because of the application of angelic presence found in their correspondence, declarations of faith and defences. Consequently, there is a mixture of official records and sources of a more personal nature, revealing much about these individuals' beliefs, hopes, and fears at a particularly significant point in English History. Across the source material, scriptural precedent is an important component, with Foxe and the martyrs citing biblical passages to validate the contemporary accounts, linking their experiences to those recorded in the Bible. Another critical element is the teleological thread linking the three chapters of this thesis together. The first establishes the significance of apocalyptic thought and the book of Revelation to both Foxe, his outlook, and the Marian martyrs' accounts. Here, links are established between the earlier reformers, the Lollards and Henrician martyrs, to Foxe and the Marian martyrs. Angels assume a crucial role in the apocalyptic narrative. Consequently, angelic presence features predominantly within the accounts. The idea that Foxe and the Marian martyrs were living in end times is a prominent theme throughout each chapter. Chapter two considers how angels were utilised to promote adherence to the reformed religious outlook. Key to this is the notion of angels playing a significant role in the confessional debates over the Real Presence of Jesus Christ within the Eucharist. This chapter relies on convocation records, offering a more official and polemical contrast to the third

chapter, which focuses more on the personal devotion of the martyrs and the relationships forged between the prisoners whilst they awaited their fate.

This short overview is intended as a brief introduction to the key themes and general direction of the thesis. A full chapter overview and a discussion of the methodology, the sources, and terminology will follow after considering the history of ideas on angels and a literature review.

### **Angelic Heritage**

The religious reforms of the sixteenth century marked the rejection of many long established systems of thought which had underpinned belief in angels. Through patristic, philosophical, mystical and scholastic influences, belief in angels came, as David Keck has demonstrated, to ‘permeate medieval Christian society’.<sup>2</sup> Angels are grounded in scripture and played a significant role in both the Old and New Testaments. Diarmaid MacCulloch provides a useful description of the etymology of the word angel. ‘The word ‘angel’ echoes the Greek for ‘messenger’, which in the Hebrew scripture, the Tanakh (called the Old Testament by Christians), appears as *mal’ak*; so an angel is the accredited agent of communication used by the deity’.<sup>3</sup> In the fifth century, Augustine raised the prominence of angels into theology, and addressed many issues that would later stir the interest of medieval minds. In *The City of God*, Augustine deliberates over the duality between heaven and earth; ‘two loves have built two cities, self-love in contempt of God has built the earthly city; love of God in contempt of oneself has built the heavenly city’.<sup>4</sup> In doing so, Augustine contemplated the similarities between mankind and the angels, arguing, ‘we ought to seek God through our joint

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<sup>2</sup> David Keck, *Angels and Angelology in the Middle Ages* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1998), p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Diarmaid MacCulloch, *All Things Made New* (Penguin: London, 2011), p. 23.

<sup>4</sup> St Augustine of Hippo., ‘City of God’, in Steven Chase, (ed.), *Angelic Spirituality, Medieval Perspectives on the Ways of Angels* (Paulist Press: New York, 2002), p. 77.

possession of a good will, through which we are united with them, sharing with them our life, our being, and our presence in the worship of the one God, even if we are not able to see the holy angels with the eyes of our flesh'.<sup>5</sup> Gregory the Great in the seventh century also highlighted the paradoxical nature of angelic ministry: 'in the same way the sun may be covered by a cloud and is not seen from the earth, yet it still burns from heaven'.<sup>6</sup> A collection of texts known as the Dionysian corpus, most likely written in the fifth or sixth century, marked another significant milestone in the understanding of angels. The *Celestial Hierarchy* provided the first framework for subsequent thinkers to work from, and as Steven Chase has argued, 'expanded the treatment of angels both theologically and spiritually'.<sup>7</sup> The *Hierarchy* locates the author in the first century with Pseudo Dionysius presenting himself as Paul's convert, referred to in Acts 17.34, giving the corpus an apostolic authority.<sup>8</sup> Bernard McGinn's study of *Christian Mysticism* places great emphasis upon the contribution made by Pseudo Dionysius to the tradition of Christianity. McGinn argued, 'Dionysius's difficult thought had great impact on the history of Christian theology and mysticism, not only in regard to the positive and negative ways to God and the nature of mystical theology but also on such matters as the role of angels and the use of symbols'.<sup>9</sup> Pseudo Dionysius' *Celestial Hierarchy* defined the organisational pattern of angels. The angelic orders were arranged 'in a descending or ascending order, for example, seraphim (love), cherubim (knowledge), thrones (forever in the divine presence), dominions, (benevolent rule), powers (courage), authorities (lift up inferior angels), principalities (manifest transcendent principles), archangels (interpreters of divine enlightenment), and angels (revelation to the world).<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Augustine, 'City of God,' p. 81.

<sup>6</sup> Gregory the Great., 'Forty Homilies on the Gospels, Homily 34- 1', in Steven Chase, (ed.), *Angelic Spirituality, Medieval Perspectives on the Ways of Angels* (Paulist Press: New York, 2002), p. 96.

<sup>7</sup> Ewert Cousins, in Steven Chase, (ed.), *Angelic Spirituality, Medieval Perspectives on the Ways of Angels* (Paulist Press: New York, 2002), preface.

<sup>8</sup> Acts 17. 34.

<sup>9</sup> Bernard McGinn, *The Essential Writings of Christian Mysticism*, (Random House: New York, 2006), p. 284.

<sup>10</sup> Ewert Cousins, preface.

Dionysius' influence determined the direction and treatment of angels with a number of commentaries on the *Celestial Hierarchy* written during the high middle ages, by thinkers such as John Scotus Eruigena, Alan of Lille and Hugh of St Victor.<sup>11</sup> By the thirteenth century, angelology had become a required, formal part of the theological curriculum at the University of Paris, and Bonaventure, Aquinas, Lombard and their fellow scholastics were required to develop complex angelological systems.<sup>12</sup> The subsequent commentaries either developed the work of Dionysius or provided alternative arrangements of the angelic orders and hierarchies, defining the human spiritual journey to God.

Aside from the scholastic synthetisation of angelic belief, another tradition generated a generous output of material. It was a widely held belief that God provided humans with their very own guardian angel, a point evidenced in scripture. In the Old Testament, Moses confirmed that the faithful were bestowed a protector to guide each individual to act in accordance with divine or moral law; 'the angel which redeemed me from all evil...and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth'.<sup>13</sup> In the New Testament, the book of Matthew affirmed the association of children and guardian angels when Christ stated, 'See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven'.<sup>14</sup> In the Acts of the Apostles, it is suggested that God had sent Peter, his guardian angel. Peter exclaimed, 'Now I know without a doubt that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from Herod's clutches and from everything the Jewish people were hoping would happen'.<sup>15</sup> The most significant scriptural basis of the guardian angel is located in the apocryphal book of Tobias, where the archangel Raphael

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<sup>11</sup> For the English translation of these commentaries, see Steven Chase, *Angelic Spirituality*.

<sup>12</sup> David Keck, *Angels and Angelology in the Middle Ages*, (Oxford University Press: New York, 1998).

<sup>13</sup> Genesis 48. 18.

<sup>14</sup> Matthew 18. 10.

<sup>15</sup> Acts 12. 11.

appeared to comfort and heal the youthful Tobias.<sup>16</sup> Collectively, these scriptural examples paved the way for a rich and developed outpouring of mediaeval visionary literature, often detailing personal relationships between an individual and their guardian angel.

A good example of this is Saint Umilta of Faenza., the foundress of two monasteries for Vallombrosan nuns in the early thirteenth century. According to her numerous sermons, Umilta was blessed with two guardian angels, Sapiel and Emmanuel.<sup>17</sup> In the sermon, *On the Holy Angles*, Umilta describes the importance of her relationship with her guardian angels:

I love all the angels of heaven, but two are the most cherished darlings of my joy who give me comfort day and night and offer me their gifts from the bountiful wealth of their riches. My Lord assigned them to me as guardians so they might protect me from all harm. They have attended perfectly to this divine injuncture as they have placed me, as it were, within the protection of their strong fortress. On my right and my left hand both angels hold me close, so that I cannot fall except through my own foolishness. While I hold myself firmly to them, my enemies are unable to harm me.<sup>18</sup>

This particular extract is rather conservative when considered alongside Umilta's usual use of the human senses. In this extract, Umilta states that God assigned her guardian angels to keep her safe. Umilta admits any transgressions she made would be due to her error and not down to the absence of protection or guidance from her angels, likening the protection of her guardian angels to that of a strong fortress. Umilta's unwavering faith is rewarded both day and night and continuously by the companionship and guardianship of Sapiel and Emmanuel. The relationship Umilta portrayed was one her followers should aspire to. Umilta described her interactions with Sapiel and Emmanuel as 'angelic gifts', which aside from the protection afforded to her, documented her visionary experiences and exchanges. At one of her meetings, Umilta described one such exchange. Umilta recounted, 'her name that verbal

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<sup>16</sup> Tobias 3. 25.

<sup>17</sup> Chase, *Angelic Spirituality*, p. 148.

<sup>18</sup> Umilta of Faenza, 'Sermon Four: On the Holy Angels,' in Steven Chase, (ed.), *Angelic Spirituality, Medieval Perspectives on the Ways of Angels* (Paulist Press: New York, 2002), p. 151.

expression does not begin to be the equal of her supernatural magnitude, I cannot tell you of her fullness, my mouth makes only the sounds of a spluttering baby'.<sup>19</sup> Umilta is acutely aware of her inferiority as a human being in relation to that of Sapiel and Emmanuel. In another sermon, Umilta employs the human senses to highlight her failings in both receiving and repeating a divinely inspired message:

Put your sword in your right hand at the first gate, the gate of my mouth. Constrain it against vain words, hold it closed against lazy speech, so that when such foolish words do wish to exit, they will be not allowed to escape. Sharpen my tongue with a piercing edge so that it may cut away vices and plant virtues to the praise and glory of the highest king and his divine mother. Place two seals of love upon my eyes with your holy fingers to correct their vision, so that they will not look with longing upon the things of this world.<sup>20</sup>

Mariateresa Fumagalli Beonio-Brocchieri has argued that Umilta used the human senses as 'physical instruments chosen for the elevation of the sensible and loving soul'.<sup>21</sup> These latter affirmations are physical and rely on the senses for receiving and describing the experience of an angelic gift or interaction. This material evidences a move from the traditional, scriptural exploration of angels and a shift towards expanding the treatment and understanding of angelic beings in relation to the individual spiritual journey towards God.

Although the patristic, philosophical, mystical and scholastic influences expanded the remit and scope of thinking, preoccupation with angels was underpinned by the close association of angels with the human lifecycle. This relationship is evidenced in the Old and New Testaments: for example, angelic presence plays a significant role in announcing several biblical births. Three angels announced to Abraham that his wife Sarah would have a baby.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Umilta of Faenza, 'Sermon Four, On the Holy Angels,' p. 152.

<sup>20</sup> Umilta of Faenza, 'Sermon Eleven, On the Holy Angels,' p. 154.

<sup>21</sup> M. M. Beonio-Brocchieri, 'The Feminine Mind in Medieval Mysticism', in Ann Matter and John Coakley, (eds.), *Creative Women in Medieval and Early Modern Italy: A Religious Artistic Renaissance*. (University of Pennsylvania Press: Philadelphia, 1994), p. 23.

<sup>22</sup> Genesis 18. 10.

Angels report births of babies to Ismael and Samson and in the New Testament, John the Baptist.<sup>23</sup> The most notable announcement was the Annunciation, with angels announcing the birth of Jesus Christ to the shepherds in Bethlehem. As soon as it is revealed that the Savior was born, the angel is joined by a ‘multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill towards men’.<sup>24</sup> This angelic exclamation formed the basis of the hymn, *Gloria in Excelsis*, which was intrinsic to the liturgy. Biblical stories evidenced God’s provision of the guardian angel. This developed an overall understanding that angels were present from birth and thought to join in alongside mankind in prayer, forming a continuous link between the temporal and heavenly realms.

Angels were also closely associated with the end of human life, most famously represented in the *Ars morendi* texts with images of celestial beings presiding over the death bed and fighting for the soul of the dying. This association stemmed from Christ’s reference to the parable of Lazarus and his soul being carried by angels to Abraham’s bosom. This reference formed the basis of the intermediary place of Purgatory and the idea that intercession would admit the human soul to be redeemed after death.<sup>25</sup> David Albert Jones suggested ‘there is a common view when human beings die, they become angels’.<sup>26</sup> Again, this stems from Christ stating that ‘neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection’.<sup>27</sup> Although Jones did not reference when this belief became popular, he clearly states that within Christianity, Judaism and Islam, ‘angels are not the souls of dead’.<sup>28</sup> Despite this, there remains a close link between humanity and angels, highlighted by the association of angelic protection at key milestones of

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<sup>23</sup> Genesis 16. 11, Judges 13. 3 and Luke 1. 13.

<sup>24</sup> Luke 2. 13-14.

<sup>25</sup> Luke 16. 22.

<sup>26</sup> Jones, *Angels: A Very Short Introduction*, (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2011), p. 68.

<sup>27</sup> Luke 20. 36.

<sup>28</sup> Jones, *Angels: A Very Short Introduction*, p. 68.

the human lifecycle. This brings us fittingly to the final chapter of the Bible, the Book of Revelation, where angels assume several vital roles: An angel guides St John the Divine, angels preach the gospel, angels blow the trumpets signifying imminent judgement, and an angel binds Satan, throwing him into the pit for a thousand years. Angels also warn against the worship of false idols. Angels, therefore, play a significant role from the beginning of the human life cycle, throughout, and at the end of life and feature in God's plan in End Times. This important relationship between the human lifecycle and celestial beings is also reflected culturally, with angels depicted in iconography, mortuary sculptures and art, from Giotto's *Crying Angels* weeping for Christ to Raphael's *Saint Madonna* depicting the child-like cherubim, still relevant and replicated today.<sup>29</sup>

The early sixteenth century saw a disconnection from this rich and established system of thought and expression. Angels were not a major casualty of the Reformation: however, beliefs and the general understanding of what an angel was and did were rethought. The hierarchy of angels, defined by Pseudo Dionysius, is a good and significant example, as it formed the basis for many of the duties and attributes given to angels. The *Celestial Hierarchy* had no place in the Protestant outlook without scriptural grounding. Another important belief lost was that angels escorted the souls of the dead to Purgatory after death. This greatly impacted the traditional understanding that angels were intermediaries between humanity and God. Although this suited the Protestant notion of God as the sole mediator, it significantly reduced the visibility and presence of angels both spiritually and culturally. The long and established tradition of the Guardian Angel also suffered, with medieval expositions on angels such as those written by Umilta of Faenza deemed out of favour due to their

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<sup>29</sup> For a modern interpretation of the Renaissance Cherubim, see Jeff Koons' kitsch and sickly sweet sculptures, *Cherubs*.

speculative nature. Another tradition damaged was the rich iconography, a prevalent feature of medieval religious culture. Angels continued to be venerated by Catholics; for Protestants, visual representations of angels prompted the possibility of idolatry. The removal of beautiful paintings, statues and the whitewashing of the walls of churches across England resulted in the loss of visual representations of angelic presence and the common understanding that angels were continuously observing and protecting man.

### Literature Review

While the study of angels and angelology was a feature of patristic and early medieval historiography, it is a new phenomenon by modern standards. In 1959, C.A Partrides' study, *Renaissance Thought on the Celestial Hierarchy: The Decline of Tradition*, traced the medieval obsession with angels from its high point in the twelfth century to a steady decline in the fifteenth.<sup>30</sup> Partrides' thesis suggests that the reduced significance of angels at this time was due to the rationalisation of man's position within the universe, evidenced by a decline in the appreciation of the celestial hierarchy schemas constructed by Pseudo Dionysius, with scholars such as Lorenzo Valla and Erasmus employing hermeneutics to expose the errors in these readings.<sup>31</sup> The 1990s marked a period of substantial interest in the study of angels, heralded by David Keck's publishing *Angels and Angelology in the Middle Ages*.<sup>32</sup> Keck provides a modern-day 'summa angelologia' of developing angelic tradition, questioning why medieval people came to regard angels so highly and how this came to be. Using Keck's words, his approach relied on using a 'wide net' to capture angelic references from a vast range of sources: from scripture to art, metaphysical commentaries on the *Celestial*

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<sup>30</sup> C.A Partrides, 'Renaissance Thought on the Celestial Hierarchy: The decline of Tradition', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 20: 2 (1959), pp. 155-166.

<sup>31</sup> Partrides, 'Celestial Hierarchy', p 162.

<sup>32</sup> David Keck, *Angels and Angelology in the Middle Ages*.

*Hierarchy* to poetry based on the political, social and cultural observations by many of the greatest thinkers.<sup>33</sup> Keck concluded that these very different expressions combined to the point that ‘angelology became habitual and unavoidable’.<sup>34</sup> Steven Chase’s *Angelic Spirituality: Medieval Perspectives on the Ways of Angels*, published in 2002, represents a more metaphysical enquiry when compared with Keck’s offering.<sup>35</sup> Despite the shared subject matter, Keck and Chase differ in their aims and objectives. Where Keck’s focus is on understanding how angels came to impact medieval society, by addressing the tradition and expressions which evolved over the centuries, Chase’s research constitutes a practical guide, giving readers the necessary tools to decipher the hidden meanings within the commentaries on Pseudo Dionysius’s *Celestial Hierarchy*.<sup>36</sup> Chase’s primary source collection includes a several accounts published in English for the first time along, with an excellent introductory chapter discussing apophatic and cataphatic theology: the negative and positive approaches to defining God. This dichotomy complements the commentaries on the *Celestial Hierarchy*, where notions of good and evil, light and dark, are important components to understanding what an angel is and is not. A good example is Chase’s 1995 case study of Richard of St Victor, in which notions of the ‘fallen’ are placed in direct opposition with God’s elect.<sup>37</sup>

Ten years later, Isabel Iribarren and Martin Lenz explored the significance and function of angels in their capacity as platforms of contemplation.<sup>38</sup> Although the focus and period of this study are more akin to the research of Keck and Chase, in the final chapter of *Angels in*

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<sup>33</sup> Keck, *Angels and Angelology*, p.5.

<sup>34</sup> Keck, *Angels and Angelology*, p. 212.

<sup>35</sup> Steven Chase, *Angelic Spirituality: Medieval Perspectives on the ways of Angels*, (Paulist Press: New York, 2002).

<sup>36</sup> Chase, S. *Angelic Spirituality*. The first half of the book is taken up by Chase’s consideration of the history and influence of the Celestial Hierarchy. The remaining chapters are commentaries on the *Celestial Hierarchy*, translated into English.

<sup>37</sup> Chase, *Angelic Spirituality*, p. 72; Steven Chase, *Angelic Wisdom: The Cherubim and the Grace of Contemplation in Richard of St Victor*. (University of Notre Dame Press: Indiana, 1995)

<sup>38</sup> Isabel Iribarren and Martin Lenz (eds.), *Angels in Medieval Philosophical Inquiry: Their Function and Significance* (Ashgate: Aldershot, 2008).

*Medieval Philosophical Inquiry*, Iribarren and Lenz offer a useful lens to view the transition from the speculative philosophical enquiries of the high middle ages, through the renaissance and into the early modern period. Iribarren and Lenz summarise the focus and influences of the three periods: ‘with scholastic angelology, we have philosophy plus Bible, with Renaissance authors we see Neoplatonist philosophy without Bible; and in early Reformation thought we find the Bible spiced up with an overbearing imagination without philosophy’.<sup>39</sup> This is an impressively neat summary of complex ideas. It is also an accurate observation when considered alongside the primary sources consulted within this thesis; both John Foxe and the Marian martyrs frame their accounts firmly within a scriptural precedent. John Knott also reiterates the use of scriptural precedent in his *Discourses of Martyrdom*. Here, Knott referred to the Bible during this period as providing a ‘treasury of archetypes’.<sup>40</sup> The treasury of archetypes Knott refers to both legitimised the examples in which angels were employed by Foxe and the martyrs and added scriptural authority to their overall arguments.

In 2003, Diarmaid MacCulloch suggested that angels became for the reformers ‘ideologically appropriate friends of humanity’, thereby assuming the role previously played by Saints in medieval popular devotion.<sup>41</sup> MacCulloch does not, however, reference this ‘smooth transition’ in a more recent piece of writing on angels. In his 2017 book, *All Things Made New*, MacCulloch devotes one chapter to angels and the Reformation, in which he suggests that it was not surprising that the religious reforms marked the onset of challenging times for belief in angels.<sup>42</sup> Indeed, MacCulloch argues that the ‘Dionysian tradition had entangled them in the pretensions of the old clerical hierarchy, and popular devotion had embedded

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<sup>39</sup> Iribarren and Lenz (eds), *Angels in Medieval Philosophical Inquiry*, p. 200.

<sup>40</sup> J. R., Knott, *Discourses of Martyrdom in English Literature*, (Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 7.

<sup>41</sup> Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Reformation: Europe’s House Divided*, (Allen Lane: London, 2003), p. 581.

<sup>42</sup> Diarmaid MacCulloch, *All Things Made New*, (Penguin: London, 2011), p. 28.

them deep in the cult of saints, so Protestants needed to do a great deal of furious rethinking about them'.<sup>43</sup>

One of the ways angelic presence was legitimised after the religious reforms is explained in Alexandra Walsham's seminal study, *Providence in Early Modern England*.<sup>44</sup> The doctrine of Providence confirmed that 'God had foreseen every eventuality and all that came to pass accomplished predetermined ends'.<sup>45</sup> In this theory, it is God's providence which made incidents of angelic intervention acceptable within the Protestant outlook because angels could be deemed examples of God's providential care. Notably, Walsham includes three examples of angelic intervention recorded within *Actes and Monuments* in an essay published in 2010, 'Invisible Helpers: Angelic Intervention in Post-Reformation England'.<sup>46</sup> Walsham explores how Providence legitimised these incidents, which otherwise would have been looked upon with suspicion.

In 2006, Alexandra Walsham and Peter Marshall published an edited collection of essays, *Angels in the Early Modern World*. This represents one of the most exhaustive surveys on reformed angelic tradition. The edited collection offers a range of views on the cultural, theological and intellectual ramifications of belief in angels between 1500 and 1800.<sup>47</sup> Despite the depth and breadth of this work, John Foxe and the *Actes* is unreferenced. In the introductory chapter, both Walsham and Marshall comment that in the early modern world view, there was an abundance of angels; 'the sheer scope and scale of the contents page is testament to this'.<sup>48</sup> On the other hand, it is acknowledged that angels were not universally

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<sup>43</sup> MacCulloch, *All Things Made New*, p. 28.

<sup>44</sup> Alexandra Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England*, (Oxford University Press, 2001).

<sup>45</sup> Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England*, p.10.

<sup>46</sup> Alexandra Walsham, 'Invisible Helpers: Angelic Intervention in Post-Reformation England', *Past & Present*, 208: 1 (2010), pp. 77 – 130.

<sup>47</sup> Peter Marshall and Alexandra Walsham, *Angels in the Early Modern World* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2006).

<sup>48</sup> Marshall and Walsham, *Angels in the Early Modern World*, p. 2.

accepted; in fact, the opposite is true: 'they were often a focus of contention and anxiety, a source of frictions and tensions that can help expose the fault-lines that crisscrossed early modern religion, society, politics and knowledge'.<sup>49</sup> A good example of this contention is the visual representations of angels. Joad Raymond's essay explores how John Milton, in his epic poem, *Paradise Lost*, included descriptions of angels which were borderline heretical from a Protestant perspective.<sup>50</sup> This can be contrasted against the Catholic penchant for venerating the guardian angel, as explored by Trevor Johnson in his essay, 'Guardian Angels and the Society of Jesus'.<sup>51</sup> Scriptural grounding ensured that Protestants could remodify traditions on angels to suit the reformed outlook. However, this approach was also problematic because Protestants were prone to levelling criticism at the Catholic examples of angelic spirituality, as evidenced by Foxe in the *Actes*.<sup>52</sup>

Two years later, Feisal Mohammed published, *In the Anteroom of Divinity: The Reformation of the Angels from Colet to Milton*.<sup>53</sup> Diarmaid MacCulloch referred to Mohammed's work, published in 2008, as 'an extended version of an essay from Marshall and Walsham's book'.<sup>54</sup> MacCulloch concedes that Mohammed added much to the debate around the Dionysian influence, or rather the 'good Protestants' following Calvin in their scepticism of the Areopagite's fantasies.<sup>55</sup> In the introduction, Mohammed clearly distinguishes between the angelology of the mediaeval period and that after the religious reforms. He argues,

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<sup>49</sup> Marshall and Walsham, *Angels in the Early Modern World*, p. 2.

<sup>50</sup> Joad Raymond, 'With the tongues of angels': angelic conversations in *Paradise Lost* and seventeenth-century England', in Peter Marshall and Alexandra Walsham, *Angels in the Early Modern World* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2006), pp. 256-281.

<sup>51</sup> Trevor Johnson, 'Guardian Angels and the Society of Jesus,' in Peter Marshall and Alexandra Walsham, *Angels in the Early Modern World* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2006), pp. 191-213.

<sup>52</sup> 'Queene Mary. Examination and aunsweres of Cutbert Simson Martyr. His letters. *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1563 edition) (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 19 November 2020]. 1563 edition, p.1820, for the material relating to his martyrdom it is p. 1731 onwards. 1570 edition, p. 2270; 1576 edition, p. 1892; 1583 edition, p. 2057.

<sup>53</sup> Feisal Mohammed, *In the Anteroom of Divinity: The Reformation of the Angels from Colet to Milton*, (University of Toronto Press: Toronto, 2008).

<sup>54</sup> Diarmaid MacCulloch, *All Things Made New* (Penguin: London, 2011), p. 30.

<sup>55</sup> Diarmaid MacCulloch, *All Things Made*, p. 31.

'Reformed angelology is by definition much less developed than its Dionysian counterpart, taking its cues from scripture in determining that God wishes us only to know the scantest of details on the activities of our celestial cousins'.<sup>56</sup> Consideration is given to some of the biggest literary names of the period: John Colet, Edmund Spenser, Richard Hooker, John Donne and John Milton, all of whom deliberated over the *Celestial Hierarchy*. Mohammed even references John Foxe as a commentator of the English Reformation, not in reference to angelic presence.<sup>57</sup> Ultimately, Mohammed sees value in exploring the reformed views on angels as they 'offer a valuable barometer of views on the form of human society and devotion tending most toward divinity'.<sup>58</sup>

In 2011, Joad Raymond published an edited collection of essays entitled, *Conversations with Angels*. Similarly to Marshall and Walsham, this text covers much ground with essays exploring themes on angels within the subjects of natural philosophy, magic and representation. One particular article stands out, written by Peter Marshall. Marshall explores belief around guardian angels, suggesting 'there was a broad consensus amongst Elizabethan theologians that belief in guardian angels was at best; a very uncertain opinion, at worst a popish relic'.<sup>59</sup> However, the debate over the existence of guardian angels remained a topic of discussion across confessional lines. Marshall argues angels 'were certainly something that implicitly or directly, people were often invited to think about ... and should be seen as a small but solidly placed milestone on the road from Reformation to Enlightenment'.<sup>60</sup> The

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<sup>56</sup> Feisal Mohammed, *In the Anteroom of Divinity: The Reformation of the Angels from Colet to Milton*, (University of Toronto Press, 2008) p 14.

<sup>57</sup> Feisal Mohammed, *In the Anteroom of Divinity*, p 31.

<sup>58</sup> Feisal Mohammed, *In the Anteroom of Divinity*: p 14.

<sup>59</sup> Peter Marshall, 'The Guardian Angel in Protestant England', in Raymond, J. (ed.), *Conversations with Angels. Essays towards a History of Spiritual Communication, 1100-1700*, (Hampshire. Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p. 297.

<sup>60</sup> Peter Marshall, 'The Guardian Angel in Protestant England', p. 316.

final chapter of this thesis is devoted entirely to representations of angelic guardianship within the *Actes*, providing evidence of earlier iterations of angelic protection.

Laura Sangha's monograph, *Angels and Belief in England 1480-1700*, published in 2012, is an important and recent contribution to the study of angels and angelic belief. Building on the work of David Keck, Sangha uses the term 'angelic motif' to suggest that angels or belief in angels can be used as a unit of historical enquiry and employs this method to 'examine contemporary structures of belief and the nature of religious change'.<sup>61</sup> Underpinning Sangha's approach is the argument that although 'continuity was an integral element of religious cultures, it is important not to prioritise this at the risk of obscuring equally important change'.<sup>62</sup> Sangha is critical of MacCulloch's assertion of angels assuming the role previously played by Saints, arguing that the hypothesis is not entirely adequate as angels were continually re-imagined in a variety of political, cultural and confessional sites.<sup>63</sup> As Sangha points out within her introductory chapter, 'an angel was a culturally constructed motif that reflected the anxieties and preoccupations of the society that created it'.<sup>64</sup> This is an important point, as the sources surveyed within this thesis all share the common feature that they were born of out of a polemical fight and generated in response to the circumstances the authors of the accounts found themselves in. Sangha's monograph also includes important analysis of a handful of the contemporary martyrdom accounts within Foxe's *Actes and Monuments*.<sup>65</sup> Sangha's appeal for a decisive assessment of the angelic motifs within the *Actes* is taken up fully in this thesis.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Laura Sangha, *Angels and Belief in England, 1480-1700*, (Pickering & Chatto Limited, 2012). p.9.

<sup>62</sup> Sangha, *Angels and Belief*, p.3.

<sup>63</sup> Sangha, *Angels and Belief*, p.3.

<sup>64</sup> Sangha, *Angels and Belief*, p. 9.

<sup>65</sup> Sangha, *Angels and Belief*, see p. 66, p. 70, p. 71.

<sup>66</sup> Sangha, *Angels and Belief*, p.71.

One final publication worth mentioning is Valery Rees' cultural history of angels, *From Gabriel to Lucifer*, published in 2016.<sup>67</sup> Rees explores the history of angels across an impressively long timeline. From the Gnostics to modern new-age interpretations, Rees' enquiry is far-reaching and covers the role of angels across multiple cultures and religions. Although a valuable contribution, Rees' approach is exemplified in her consideration of angels during the Reformations. Here, she devotes several pages to a range of theologians and philosophers cutting across the confessional divide. Despite her detailed review, Rees fails to articulate the impact the religious reforms had on belief in angels.<sup>68</sup> Instead, Rees tends to give an overview of various publications she surveys without relating the content and arguments within to the events and climate they responded to.

Only a handful of secondary readings considered in this literature review address the angelic content within *Actes and Monuments*. Further, these are isolated cases focussing on one or two of the accounts recorded by Foxe. It is this lacuna, an absence of systematic interrogation of the angelology within the *Actes and Monuments* that will be addressed within this thesis. Before moving to a survey of Foxe historiography, one final note on the texts relating to reformation angels in England; Jonathan Edward Gordon Macy's unpublished PhD, *Angels in the Anglican tradition, 1547 – 1662*, was made available in 2004.<sup>69</sup> Although Macy traces a thorough evolution of Anglicanism in England and with that, the orthodox view on angels, John Foxe and the *Actes* remain unreferenced. Macy's timeline and enquiry suggest that not including a consideration of the *Actes* was an oversight. The *Actes and Monuments* spanned the formative years of the religious reforms in England. The Privy

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<sup>67</sup> Valery Rees, *From Gabriel to Lucifer, A Cultural History of Angels*, (I.B. Taurus: London, New York, 2016).

<sup>68</sup> Rees, *From Gabriel to Lucifer*, pp. 68-78.

<sup>69</sup> J. E. G. Macy, 'Angels in the Anglican Tradition, 1547 – 1662', (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of St Andrews, St Andrews, 2004).

Council endorsed the text with the final edition dedicated to Queen Elizabeth. It was one of the most important texts to come out of sixteenth century England and has been commonly thought of as ‘the book’ of the Reformation. Nevertheless, Macy’s research offers a valuable point of comparison which will be helpful when considering the models, framework, thought, and opinion extracted from the four editions of the *Actes and Monuments* and compared to the official sources examined within his thesis.

### **John Foxe and the *Actes and Monuments***

Nicholas Harpsfield and Thomas Stapleton, Foxe’s Catholic contemporaries and critics, both challenged Foxe on the accuracy of his reporting. Stapleton’s first publication was a translation of Bede’s *History of the English Church* into English in 1565.<sup>70</sup> The year of publication demonstrates a particular urgency to produce an ‘approved’ Catholic version of English Church history and an alternative to the *Actes*. In the introductory pages dedicated to Queen Mary, Stapleton references the ‘pretended faith of the Protestants’ several times and offers an introductory chapter on the differences between the Catholic faith and the ‘late pretended faith of the Protestants’ to precede his translation of Bede’s history.<sup>71</sup> Harpsfield was also very quick to respond to the first edition of the *Actes*, published in Latin, *Dialogi sex* in 1566.<sup>72</sup> Here, Harpsfield argued that Foxe erroneously commemorated pseudo-martyrs and raised questions over their legitimacy; this would be typical of the Catholic response towards Foxe and the *Actes*.<sup>73</sup> Catholic criticisms of the *Actes* continued in direct opposition

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<sup>70</sup> Thomas Stapleton, ‘*History of the Church in England*’, EEBO at [shorturl.at/pKN18](http://shorturl.at/pKN18), [accessed 4 Jan 2020].

<sup>71</sup> Thomas Stapleton, ‘*History of the Church in England*’, p. 3 onwards.

<sup>72</sup> Nicholas Harpsfield, *Dialogi sex contra summi pontificatus, monasticae vitae, sanctorum Sacrarum imaginum oppugnatores et pseudomartyres* (Antwerp, 1566).

<sup>73</sup> Warren Wooden, *John Foxe*, (Twayne Publishers, Masechuttes, 1983), pp 69-70.

to the sustained popularity of the text, evidenced by the subsequent editions even after Foxe died in 1587, with a further five editions published up until 1684. This is in part due to the editing of the subsequent editions and subsequent inclusion within other collections, which were larger, with a more general focus. Stephen Reed Cattley, with the support of George Townsend, the Archdeacon of Allerton and the Evangelical clergyman Josiah Pratt Junior published the first volume of the ‘new and complete edition’ of the *Actes and Monuments* in 1837 with the final volume published in 1841.<sup>74</sup> The Cattley-Townsend edition received much criticism. The harshest critic was S. R. Maitland, who, in a series of letters which were published in the newspaper, the *Christian Observer*, publically objected to Foxe’s bias as a historian and the low standards of the editorial job produced by Stephen Reed Cattley and George Townsend. Thanks to the digitisation of the *Actes and Monuments*, historians no longer have to rely on the abridged versions nor navigate and account for errors made in the compilation of the material.

The 1960s marked a renewed interest in the *Actes and Monuments* and Foxe’s influence on English History. American scholar William Haller published his influential thesis, *John Foxe’s Book of Martyrs and the Elect Nation*, in 1963. Here, Haller suggested that Foxe went to great lengths to demonstrate that God had bestowed a special favour to England, suggesting that the idea of English Protestant identity and England as an elect nation was born out of the *Actes*.<sup>75</sup> Within the introductory pages, Haller wrote:

Whether Foxe’s view of religion and the Church was right and his report of the facts of history true has always been a subject of disagreement, but there has never been any doubt as to the historical importance of a book which the shapers of opinion, the masters of policy, and – except for adherents of the old religion – Englishmen in general in the reign of Elizabeth accepted as an expression of the national faith second in authority only to the Bible and as an unanswerable

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<sup>74</sup> Peter Nockles, ‘The Nineteenth Century Reception’, in *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or TAMO (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 22.11.19].

<sup>75</sup> William Haller, *John Foxe’s Book of Martyrs and the Elect Nation*, (The Bedford Historical Series: London, 1967).

defence of England's ideological position in the contemporary struggle for national independence and power.<sup>76</sup>

Here, Haller identified several themes which are by now familiar. Foxe's objectivity remained a question; impaired by his opposition to Catholic practises, this undoubtedly impacted and shaped reporting and the presentation of the accounts he included and commented on. Haller argued that this point did not distract from the importance of the book historically; it shaped opinion and policy and, at one point, was second in status to only the Bible. Haller presented the reception of the *Actes* as evidence that the text is generally 'accepted as an expression of the national faith'.<sup>77</sup> Indeed, Haller argued that Foxe's 'apocalyptic conception of England' was a valid historical perspective and one which he devolved upon Elizabeth.<sup>78</sup> It was this method which made the English 'in spite of their religious differences, more conscious of England as an entity by itself and of themselves as a people set apart from all others'.<sup>79</sup> Haller was correct in that Foxe used the apocalypse as a historical perspective. Haller's overview of the *Actes* still stands up today. His understanding of the martyrology as an evolving text and appreciation that Foxe was writing in response to the climate and time he was living in is something commentators such as Maitland failed to appreciate or reference. In the same year, Foxe garnered further attention from Helen White in her book, *Tudor Books of Saints and Martyrs*, though White's research caused less of a stir.<sup>80</sup> White devoted two chapters to the *Actes*, with an argument focussed on Foxe's attempt to distance himself from the medieval hagiographical tradition. The inference was that Foxe went to great lengths to frame his history and the lives of those included in a way which was distinct from the mediaeval and Catholic past. White suggested

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<sup>76</sup> William Haller, *John Foxe's Book of Martyrs and the Elect Nation*, p. 14.

<sup>77</sup> Haller, *John Foxe's Book of Martyrs and the Elect Nation*, p. 14.

<sup>78</sup> Haller, *John Foxe's Book of Martyrs and the Elect Nation*, p. 225.

<sup>79</sup> Haller, *John Foxe's Book of Martyrs and the Elect Nation*, p. 225.

<sup>80</sup> Helen White, *Tudor Books of Saints and Martyrs*, (Madison, Wisconsin, 1963).

that the *Actes* 'is full of the contempt of the sixteenth-century Reformers, for the miracle and the miracle-monger'.<sup>81</sup> White argued:

The awakening consciousness and the struggling of the encumbered will are more likely to be presented in dramatic episodes than in ecstatic description. And this is the easier because the forms of devil and angel are clearer and more familiar to the reader of the Golden Legend than to the superstition-fearing rationalists of a later generation.<sup>82</sup>

Much in the way Haller appeared to generalise a popular response to the *Actes*, White's observation neglects the nuances in Foxe's treatment of the supernatural. The material considered within this thesis suggests that Foxe navigated these instances with care. On the whole, Foxe gave a positive commentary on the supernatural, as long as it reinforced or evidenced the Protestant cause.

In response to Haller, the 1970s saw several historians criticise the *Elect Nation* premise. This swathe of protest can be characterised by Katharine Firth's argument, in which she suggested Haller concocted the idea of Foxe's 'apocalyptic nationalism'.<sup>83</sup> Richard Bauckham and V. Norskov Olsen also challenged Haller's reading of the popular response to the *Actes*.<sup>84</sup> Despite Bauckham's criticism of the *Elect Nation* thesis, he conceded that 'Haller was clearly correct in recognising the important role apocalyptic ideas played in English Protestant thought and attempting to relate this to the events of the English Reformation.'<sup>85</sup> For Bauckham, Haller's research is less problematic when Foxe is placed in the proper context

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<sup>81</sup> White, *Tudor Books of Saints and Martyrs*, pp. 164-167.

<sup>82</sup> White, *Tudor Books of Saints and Martyrs*, p 50.

<sup>83</sup> Katharine, Firth. *The Apocalyptic Tradition in Reformation Britain 1530-1645*, (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1979).

<sup>84</sup> V. Norskov Olsen, *John Foxe and the Elizabethan Church*, (Berkeley: California., 1973), Richard Bauckham, *Tudor Apocalypse: Sixteenth century Apocalypticism, Millenarianism, and the English Reformation*. (Appleford: Sutton Courtenay Press, 1978).

<sup>85</sup> Bauckham. *Tudor Apocalypse*. p. 13.

among other writers on apocalyptic themes'.<sup>86</sup> Bauckham described the sixteenth century in England as a period of widespread apocalypticism, whilst Katharine Firth has argued it was particularly the period of Marian exile 1553-1559, which she describes as: 'the most important six years for the development of the apocalyptic tradition in Britain'.<sup>87</sup> This is clearly evidenced by the influx of commentaries on Revelation. Bauckham distinguished two periods during the reign of Elizabeth I in which works on prophecy were published in unusually high numbers.<sup>88</sup> Significant texts include John Bale's *Image of bothe Churches* published in 1547, which Foxe drew heavily from, followed by Heinrich Bullinger's *A 100 Sermons* in 1573, published in both English and Latin. Both texts identify the papacy as the Antichrist. This concept was further enhanced with the subsequent publication of William Fulke's commentary on Revelation, based upon a collection of sermons delivered in Leicester in 1569 but published in 1573. Patrick O'Banion highlights the pastoral use of the Book of Revelation within Bullinger and Fulke's works but also extends this to George Gifford and Thomas Cartwright's commentaries on Revelation.<sup>89</sup> O'Banion suggests these commentaries were specifically marketed to the 'common sort' of Christians and to pastors who desired to preach to such people effectively.<sup>90</sup> Katharine Firth has characterised the second swathe of commentaries published in the early seventeenth century by John Napier, Joseph Mede, Thomas Brightman and Thomas Cartwright as highly complicated mathematical and etymological systems of thought.<sup>91</sup> Although the titles of these texts tend to include the words 'plaine and easy,' the readings can be characterised by their intellectual and somewhat deductive approach to exegesis. Each author sought to use the

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<sup>86</sup> Bauckham. *Tudor Apocalypse*. p. 13.

<sup>87</sup> Bauckham. *Tudor Apocalypse*. Introduction and Firth. *The Apocalyptic Tradition* p. 69 and p. 11.

<sup>88</sup> Bauckham. *Tudor Apocalypse*. p 84, Bauckham notes the first period followed the Northern rebellion and Pius V's Bull of Excommunication 1569-70, then prolonged by reaction to the St Bartholomew's Day Massacre 1572. The second period followed the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588.

<sup>89</sup> P, O'Banion, 'The pastoral use of the Book of Revelation, in Late Tudor England'. *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*. 57: 4, (2006), p 696.

<sup>90</sup> O'Banion, P. 'The Pastoral Use of the Book of Revelation', p. 696.

<sup>91</sup> Firth. *The Apocalyptic Tradition*. p 179.

numbers referenced within Revelation to surmise a future date of Christ's second coming, rather than concentrating on the pastoral elements within the text. It is worth noting that Firth and O'Banion place Brightman's work in opposing categories. Bauckham's view that the *Actes* and Foxe as an author should be placed within the proper context among other writers of the apocalyptic genre is an opinion fully taken up within this thesis. The apocalypse as a historical narrative is the correct frame of reference for any study focused on the *Actes and Monuments* and is all too often discussed in cursory terms within studies or just completely omitted. Therefore, Bauckham agreed with Haller on at least one point.

Haller's thesis has remained an important point of reference. In 1983, Warren Wooden called for a decisive review of Foxe and the *Actes and Monuments*.<sup>92</sup> Wooden argued against the elect nation thesis and instead emphasised that Foxe had prioritised tracing the significance of England to the history of the True Church, i.e. the universal church.<sup>93</sup> Wooden considered Foxe an artist and was particularly shocked that literary scholars had overlooked him for so long. Describing Foxe's writing as 'remarkably plastic', Wooden suggests this approach ensured the *Actes* appealed to a range of audiences.<sup>94</sup> The only discernible criticisms Wooden levels are directed at the 'modern student' for being put off so easily by the reliability of the *Actes* due to the many hands involved in translating the Latin sources, the uncertainty over whose words they are reading and the fact that it was a partisan history.<sup>95</sup> Wooden concluded the public abandonment of Foxe needed to be reconsidered and called for a new consideration of the *Actes*.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> W. Wooden, *John Foxe* (Twayne Publishers: Massachusetts, 1983) 76.

<sup>93</sup> W. Wooden, *John Foxe*, p. 35.

<sup>94</sup> W. Wooden, *John Foxe*, p. 76.

<sup>95</sup> W. Wooden, *John Foxe*, p. 76.

<sup>96</sup> W. Wooden, *John Foxe*, pp. 113-116.

Wooden's call for a new direction was not taken up by Diarmaid MacCulloch, who in 1991 reverted to the debate around English nationalism. MacCulloch challenged the idea that religious reforms in England were implemented by a minority and unsupported by the majority in an article entitled, *The Myth of the English Reformation*. MacCulloch suggested that the Protestant advances made during the reign of Edward VI and the early 1550s were significantly played down to 'claim that the true representative of the Catholic church within the borders of England and Wales was not the minority loyal to the bishop of Rome, but the church as by law established in 1559 and 1662'.<sup>97</sup> Christopher Hill's thoughts on the debate are representative of a more middle ground: he argued 'we need not waste printers' ink over the question who first thought of England as the (or a) chosen nation. Some have claimed this role for John Foxe, whom everybody read, but Foxe was at least as much an internationalist as a nationalist'.<sup>98</sup> The late Patrick Collinson emphasised that Foxe was a Universalist. Of the elect nation thesis, Collinson argued, 'there is less about the elect nation than one remembered, and one suspects that 'the elect nation' of the title may have been a mistake, since, unless I have read carelessly, the phrase which appears in the text is 'an', not 'the' elect nation'.<sup>99</sup> Collinson does suggest that Haller misread Foxe's intention suggesting that the *Actes* was not just a history: 'He does say that Foxe and the Elizabethan preachers conceived of the Church as one with the nation, the nation itself a mystical communion of chosen spirits, 'a people set apart from all others.'<sup>100</sup> This suggests that Haller presented the *Actes*, not simply as a history of England, but also a consideration of the future of the English nation. This observation is more in line with recent scholarship which views Foxe as

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<sup>97</sup> Diarmaid MacCulloch, 'The Myth of the English Reformation', *Journal of British Studies*, 30: 1 (1991), p. 33.

<sup>98</sup> Christopher Hill, *The English Bible and the Seventeenth-Century Revolution*, (The Penguin Press, Middlesex, 1993), p.266.

<sup>99</sup> Patrick Collinson. *This England*. (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2001), p.193.

<sup>100</sup> Collinson. *This England*, p.193.

a ‘Protestant internationalist, far more concerned about erecting the true church than pushing a brand of patriotism.’<sup>101</sup>

Aside from Haller’s thesis, Collinson focuses on the idea of Foxe’s imagined community. This embraces two closely associated themes: Foxe was writing about a particular community and for his audience. The question of who this audience was and how they consumed the *Actes* remains crucial to the historiography of Foxe. For Haller, this community was Elizabeth’s faithful subject. Haller wrote, ‘if any of them did not or perhaps could not read the book for themselves, they could at least look at the pictures and listen while their preachers retailed the book to them’.<sup>102</sup> In terms of the reception of the *Actes* there remained an appetite, especially in the face of uncertainty over a possible external Catholic threat; this much is reflected in the subsequent editions and abridgements of the *Actes* even after Foxe’s death. The popularity of the *Actes* and the subsequent abridgements suggest that the book remained relevant, but audiences preferred a more accessible version. Collinson suggests that audiences may have read the *Actes* in multiple ways and points to the late Lisa Jardine and Tony Grafton’s study of Gabriel Harvey’s marginalia and their argument of a single text giving rise to ‘a plurality of possible responses, not a tidily univocal interpretation’.<sup>103</sup> This is a useful theory and entirely applicable to the *Actes*, for the very reason that Foxe as an editor collated stories about a community, which were to be consumed by a community he had in mind. The question remains whether this community was a nation or the Godly nation and whether this community subsequently envisioned itself as a nation based on the stories included within the *Actes*. Collinson is critical of Claire McEachern, who claimed English

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<sup>101</sup> Sangha, *Angels and Belief*, p. 72.

<sup>102</sup> Haller, *John Foxe’s Book of Martyrs and the Elect Nation*, p. 222.

<sup>103</sup> Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine, “‘Studied for action’: How Gabriel Harvey read his Livy”, *Past and Present*, 1: 129 (1990), p. 32.

nationhood was a sixteenth-century phenomenon and Conor Cruse O'Brien, who suggested nationalism and religion were mutually exclusive.<sup>104</sup> According to Collinson, McEachern's assertion that nationhood is based on religious values and ideology of Elizabethan England ignores wider influences. Collinson's criticism of O'Brien is more personal; he directly references O'Brien's agnosticism and personal dismay at the influence of holy nationalism on his country, Ireland.<sup>105</sup> For Collinson, the notion of a community being born out of the subsequent readings of the *Actes*, was built on conflict. The contemporary community Foxe recorded in his history was a persecuted minority. This challenges the idea of a universal church or even an English Church. It is not particularly inclusive. Despite this, over the four editions published in Foxe's lifetime, Collinson suggests that 'the inclusive unity of the whole Protestant nation was something he (Foxe) chose, or, dare we say, pretended to believe in'.<sup>106</sup> Collinson suggests that Foxe played a numbers game and incrementally 'the little flock has become the people'.<sup>107</sup> It is important to point out here that Collinson is not referring to the reception of the *Actes* or the extent of Protestantism taking hold of England. Instead, he refers to Foxe's presentation of the community he imagined or hoped would read his book.

In another essay entitled *Truth, lies and fiction in sixteenth-century Protestant historiography*, Collinson refers to Foxe as 'shorthand' for sixteenth-century historiography. Collinson focuses on the criticisms levelled at Foxe by his religious opponents.<sup>108</sup> Given Collinson's suggestion that Foxe pretended to believe in an inclusive Protestant nation, one would think Collinson is critical of Foxe's authenticity and credibility as a historian; this is

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<sup>104</sup> Claire McEachern, *The Poetics of English Nationhood, 1590–1612* (Cambridge University Press, 1996), esp. p. 5; Conor Cruse O'Brien, *God Land: Reflections on religion and nationalism* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1988), esp. p. 40.

<sup>105</sup> Collinson, *This England*, p.203.

<sup>106</sup> Collinson, *This England*, p.204.

<sup>107</sup> Collinson, *This England*, p.208.

<sup>108</sup> Collinson, *This England*, p.216.

not the case. Collinson suggests that for all histories published in the sixteenth century, the ‘distinction between ‘history’ and ‘story’ was still blurred’.<sup>109</sup> In both this and another chapter in *This England*, Collinson suggests Foxe used a particular technique when it came to navigating around complex subject matters which would leave him open to criticism from his readers and religious opponents. Collinson suggests that Foxe ‘was willing ... to defer to the indifferent judgment of his readers’.<sup>110</sup> This particular convention is found in early church histories recorded by Eusebius, from whom Foxe took great inspiration. John Knott also identified this technique in his 1999 book, *Discourses of Martyrdom in English Literature, 1563 – 1694*.<sup>111</sup> Knott traced the themes and conventions in the *Actes* and the subsequent impact on those people who would go on to challenge the authority of the church, such as John Milton.<sup>112</sup> One of the conventions Knott identified, and which adds weight to Helen White’s analysis, is the apparent intentional reduction of the supernatural elements Foxe found in the material. In an earlier essay, Knott gave an example of early Christian martyrdom, described by Foxe, in which the protagonist Eulalia was said to be accompanied by angels. Knott argued:

Foxe could accept the seemingly miraculous tolerance of pain where he could not the appearance of angels and other manifestations of the supernatural or the creation of a shrine for the veneration of her bones, because he could not understand it as evidence of a fortitude made possible by the sustaining power of God.<sup>113</sup>

The passage Knott refers to is as follows:

The sayde Prudentius and Ado, also Equilinus adde moreouer, writings of a white doue issuing out of her mouth at her departing, and of the fire quenched by her body, also of her body, couered miraculously wyth snow, with other things more, whereof let euery reader vse hys owne iudgement.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Collinson, *This England*, p.220.

<sup>110</sup> Collinson, *This England*. p. 197.

<sup>111</sup> John Knott, *Discourses of Martyrdom in in English Literature, 1563-1694*. (Cambridge University Press, 1993), p.42.

<sup>112</sup> Knott, *Discourses of Martyrdom*, p. 10.

<sup>113</sup> John Knott, ‘John Foxe and the Joy of Suffering’, *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 27: 3, (1996), p. 723

<sup>114</sup> The first Booke conteyning the X. first persecutions, of the Primitiue Church. *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1583 edition) (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 01.03.11]. p.117.

Indeed, within the account, there is no mention of angelic presence, and as Knott rightly points out, Foxe finishes his account and leaves judgment in the hands of his audience. Chapter three of this thesis considers several examples of Foxe giving detailed introductions and even positive commentaries to some accounts with an apparent supernatural context. Notably, Collinson was critical of Knott's assertion that Foxe minimised supernatural motifs.<sup>115</sup> Collinson argued that this 'undervalues the marvellous tokens and signs that Foxe occasionally reported, as it were despite himself, and that may well have held a more prominent place in popular Protestant memory and imagination than Foxe himself allowed.'<sup>116</sup> The sources surveyed within this thesis back up Collinson's appraisal. There are several cases where angelic intervention is suggested. These instances are fully explored and developed within the final chapter.

Modern historiography has largely turned away from exploring the historical accuracy of the *Actes and Monuments*. Warren D. Wooden's 1983 call for reconsideration and revival of interest in the *Actes* has been taken up over the last three decades. Scholars can now navigate their way through the various editions and confidently conduct literary and sociological investigations without running the risk of inviting criticism for solely relying on Foxe and the *Actes* as a primary source. This development was thanks to the support of the British Academy in 1993 when a proposal for funding to produce an accessible and digital version of all four editions was accepted. A series of conferences resulted in the recruitment of scholars to manage the project, led by director, the late Professor David Loades, with four edited collections of essays published over ten years. The inaugural conference was held in

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<sup>115</sup> Collinson, *This England*, p. 229.

<sup>116</sup> Collinson, *This England*, p. 229.

Cambridge in 1995, which resulted in the publication of *John Foxe and the English Reformation*.<sup>117</sup>

Patrick Collinson described four key strands to emerge from the first edited collection of the series as 'bibliographical, textual, source critical and receptionist, having to do with the text as directed at and received and appropriated by its readership, in itself a category or categories needing investigation and definition'.<sup>118</sup> Collinson saved the final paragraph of his review to compliment Thomas Freeman. The latter would succeed David Newcombe as the project research officer of the John Foxe project. Freeman published an extensive review of the papers and streamlined Collinson's four focus strands into three. The first being the 'composition and manufacture of the *Actes*, the influence of continental writers and craftsmen of the book and the influence of Foxe's contemporaries and subsequent generations'.<sup>119</sup> Freeman is enthusiastic in his concluding remarks and suggests that this collection of essays is a considerable advance in the understanding of the *Actes and Monuments*, particularly to the iconography, printing and influence on later generations.<sup>120</sup> Freeman was particularly complimentary of Margaret Aston and Elizabeth Ingram's contributions. Aston and Ingram surveyed the illustrations within the *Actes* over the four editions and found that they belonged to a more extensive continental, German iconographic tradition, one which associated equal importance to written text and illustrations.<sup>121</sup> Aston and Ingram argued 'Despite the essential Englishness of so much of the imagery in Foxe's book, the *Actes and*

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<sup>117</sup> David Loades (Ed.) *John Foxe and the English Reformation* (Cambridge University Press: 1997).

<sup>118</sup> Patrick Collinson, book review: 'John Foxe and the English Reformation'. *The English Historical Review*, Apr., 1999, Vol. 114, No. 456 (Apr., 1999), pp. 390-392.

<sup>119</sup> Thomas Freeman, 'New Perspectives of an Old Book: The Creation and Influence of Foxe's Book of Martyrs', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. 49, No. 2, April 1998 p. 317.

<sup>120</sup> Freeman, 'New Perspectives of an Old Book', p. 327.

<sup>121</sup> Freeman, 'New Perspectives of an Old Book', pp. 318.

*Monuments* was emphatically not cut off from Continental iconography'.<sup>122</sup> Also significant is the suggestion that the woodcuts formed part of the 'authenticating process' – 'the picture verifies the adjacent text; there is a go and see for yourself challenge to doubters'.<sup>123</sup> This premise is supported by a sketch purportedly drawn by Foxe of a man performing his penance from which a block was subsequently cut.<sup>124</sup> This is particularly interesting because it evidences just how much control Foxe exerted over the project. The traditional view on the iconography of the *Actes and Monuments* was that the woodcuts increased Foxe's audience beyond the literate elite.<sup>125</sup> There is some value to this. Elizabeth Evenden and Thomas Freeman both concede that the woodcuts made the *Actes and Monuments* more accessible, but the images also formed part of John Day's strategy to 'impress and gratify elite readers as well as to ensure continued patronage for the work's printer'.<sup>126</sup> Adam Morton also places value in looking beyond the meaning depicted within an image and cites the *Actes and Monuments* as a prime example. Morton suggested, 'Images were not simply expressions of ideas and ideologies: they were objects which were expensive to produce and raised significant technical problems for printers'.<sup>127</sup> Morton continued, 'Ultimately, pragmatics had a crucial degree of significance in shaping the work which blanket descriptions of it as "propaganda" do not do justice'.<sup>128</sup> Indeed, as Ruth Luborsky attributed three distinct categories to the iconography of the woodcuts which are clearly linked to their intended purpose.<sup>129</sup> The first category is the 'Announcement,' in which the page 'announces a change

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<sup>122</sup> Margaret Aston and Elizabeth Ingram, 'The Iconography of the Acts and Monuments', in D. Loades (ed) *John Foxe and the English Reformation*, (Scholar Press: Aldershot: 1997) p.137.

<sup>123</sup> Margaret Aston and Elizabeth Ingram, 'The Iconography of the Acts and Monuments', p. 71.

<sup>124</sup> Margaret Aston and Elizabeth Ingram, 'The Iconography of the Acts and Monuments', pp 71-72.

<sup>125</sup> Wooden. *John Foxe*, preface.

<sup>126</sup> E. Evenden, and T, Freeman, *Religion and the Book in Early Modern England. The Making of John Foxe's 'Book of Martyrs'*. (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2013), p. 231.

<sup>127</sup> A. Morton, 'Images and the Senses in Post-Reformation England,' *Reformation*, 20: 1 (2015), p. 90.

<sup>128</sup> Morton, 'Images and the Senses in Post-Reformation England', p. 90.

<sup>129</sup> Luborsky, R. 'The Illustrations: Their Pattern and Plan,' in David Loades (ed.) *Foxe: An Historical Perspective*, (Routledge: New York, 2018), pp. 67-84.

in the major text or a summary of it'.<sup>130</sup> Using Luborsky's schema, the title page of the *Actes and Monuments* belongs to this category. To date, the only consideration found detailing the significance of the angelic imagery of the title page has been put forward by Darren Oldridge in 2016.<sup>131</sup> Here, Oldridge considers the title page of the *Actes* belonging to a tradition of visual literature which broadly reinforced the Confessional divide.<sup>132</sup> Full consideration is given to these debates within chapter one.

Tom Betteridge delivered another pertinent essay. Betteridge conducted a textual analysis of the four editions and suggested that each one was distinct: the 1563 edition could be considered prophetic; the 1570 edition was apocalyptic, and the 1583 edition monumental.<sup>133</sup> Betteridge argues the *Actes and Monuments* is a text, or a group of texts, that reflects and embodies tensions and conflicts in Elizabethan culture through the textual process of producing a truthful account of the past, a history'.<sup>134</sup> Thomas Freeman found some value in these distinctions, but argued that Betteridge was overstating the case.<sup>135</sup> In another significant essay, Susan Felch examined the different prefaces to the *Actes* to determine how Foxe shaped the reader's interpretation of that particular edition.<sup>136</sup> Again, this method has been adopted in this thesis, specifically to plot the development of Foxe's apocalyptic thinking. Another contribution by Andrew Penny considered the development of Foxe's interest in prophetic interpretation with the addition of 'A Papists count of Antichrist' included from the 1570 edition onwards.<sup>137</sup> Although many of the essays neglect the

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<sup>130</sup> Luborsky, R. 'The Illustrations: Their Pattern and Plan,' p. 68.

<sup>131</sup> Darren, Oldridge. *The Supernatural in Tudor and Stuart England*, (Routledge, London, 2016).

<sup>132</sup> Oldridge. *The Supernatural in Tudor and Stuart England*, p.99-100.

<sup>133</sup> Tom Betteridge, 'From Prophetic to Apocalyptic: John Foxe and the Writing of History,' in David Loades (ed.) *John Foxe and the English Reformation*, (Scholar Press, Aldershot, 1997) pp. 212-213.

<sup>134</sup> Tom Betteridge, 'From Prophetic to Apocalyptic', p. 212.

<sup>135</sup> Freeman, 'New Perspectives of an Old Book', p. 320.

<sup>136</sup> Freeman, 'New Perspectives of an Old Book', p. 326.

<sup>137</sup> Andrew Penny, 'John Foxe, the Acts and Monuments and the Development of Prophetic Interpretation', in David Loades, (ed) *John Foxe and the English Reformation*, (Scholar Press: Aldershot, 1997) p. 256.

biographical information on Foxe, they are representative of a fresh enquiry which would generate further debate and publications.

In 1997, a second conference held in Oxford resulted in the second publication of essays for the John Foxe Project, edited by David Loades. The book was entitled *John Foxe, an Historical Perspective*.<sup>138</sup> The introductory chapter and conclusion written by David Loades and David Newcombe both fittingly state the case for an accessible and digital version of the *Actes and Monuments*. The first milestone of the project evidences this appeal. Patrick Collinson agreed to have his personal 1583 edition of the *Actes* scanned which resulted in the production of the first accessible and online version of the *Actes and Monuments*; the first output of the John Foxe Project.<sup>139</sup> The twelve essays cover a broad range of themes, showing some continuity from the first instalment of the series. The production, reception and influence of the *Actes* are arguably the overarching topics, with several essays falling within these categories. Brett Usher, in his essay, *Backing Protestantism: The London Exchequer and the Foxe Circle*, contributes important new evidence on the financial backing Foxe received in order to publish the *Actes*.<sup>140</sup> Usher examines financial records from the Exchequer, which evidence members of the London elite and Livery Companies bankrolling both Marian exiles and the secret London Protestant congregation of the 1560s.<sup>141</sup> Particular attention is given to the relationship between Dr Henry Bull, John Day and Foxe, with Usher building on the work of Susan Wabuda, who demonstrated that Bull was technically responsible for editing the letters of the Marian martyrs and, therefore an influential

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<sup>138</sup> David Loades, (ed.) *John Foxe An Historical Perspective* (Routledge: New York, 2018).

<sup>139</sup> Loades, *John Foxe An Historical Perspective*, Introduction.

<sup>140</sup> Brett Usher, 'Backing Protestantism: The London Godly, the Exchequer and the Foxe Circle'. in David Loades, David (Ed.), *John Foxe, an Historical Perspective*. (Routledge: New York, 2018), pp 105 – 134.

<sup>141</sup> Usher, 'Backing Protestantism', p. 106.

collaborator.<sup>142</sup> Usher concludes the ‘coalescence around the Foxe circle if a truly wealthy godly elite reinforces the impression gleaned from other sources that money was a very powerful factor in the spread of English Protestantism’.<sup>143</sup> It is notoriously difficult to discern the voice of Foxe from those he collaborated with. Several sources in this thesis reference ‘the congregation’ more than once. Therefore Usher and Wabuda’s research is an important contribution to understanding the nuances in authorship and influence. Alec Ryrie’s findings in the *Unsteady Beginnings of English Protestant Martyrology* go some way in corroborating Usher’s conclusion, though with a different focus. Ryrie explores the development of the Protestant martyr model and links this to the ‘generally apocalyptic mindset of early Protestantism’.<sup>144</sup> Ryrie suggested ‘the silence of such moderate evangelical voices in our historiography should perhaps remind us that the study of the English Reformation continues to be shaped by Foxe, by a martyrological outlook that had no interest in recording the voices of compromise.’<sup>145</sup> It is safe to assume that the radical evangelicals had more resources available to them, compared to their moderate counterparts, which went some way towards supporting Foxe’s vision, as Usher suggested. Two other essays touch upon the apocalyptic psyche: David J. Keep’s, *John Foxe’s Last Word*, examines ‘the place of the apocalypse’ within the *Actes and Monuments* and the ‘historical element’ of Foxe’s commentary on Revelation, *Eicasmī*.<sup>146</sup> It is worth pointing out that Keep used one of the much criticised nineteenth-century editions edited by Josiah Pratt to conduct his research. Patrick Collinson was extremely critical of this particular essay and commented harshly, ‘Dr

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<sup>142</sup> Susan Wabuda, ‘Henry Bull, Miles Coverdale, and the Making of Foxe’s Book of Martyrs,’ *Studies in Church History*, vol. 30 (1993), pp. 245-58.

<sup>143</sup> Usher, ‘Backing Protestantism’, p. 123.

<sup>144</sup> Alec Ryrie ‘The Unsteady Beginnings of the English Protestant Martyrology,’ in David Loades (ed.) *John Foxe, An Historical Perspective*. (Routledge: New York 2018) p. 65.

<sup>145</sup> Ryrie, ‘The Unsteady Beginnings of the English Protestant Martyrology’, pp. 65-66. Ryrie suggests moderate evangelicals, included Thomas Becon, Miles Coverdale, Richard Tracy and Richard Grafton. Foxe was the first to tackle contentious questions rather than compromising or entirely avoiding them.

<sup>146</sup> David Keep, ‘John Foxe’s Last Word’, in David Loades (ed.) *John Foxe, an Historical Perspective*. (Routledge: New York, 2018), p.95.

Keep seems to think that he is the first person to have made the acquaintance of this book and to have noticed that Foxe was an apocalyptic writer'.<sup>147</sup> Despite Collinson's criticism, Keep's essay provides important context for the first chapter of this thesis, in the links made between the *Actes and Monuments* and the *Eicasmī*. Returning to the reception of the *Actes*, though retaining the focus on apocalyptic thought, Parry's, *Elect Church or Elect Nation? The Reception of the Acts and Monuments* suggests that the different editions of the *Actes* were responses to the political events of that specific time. In recognising this, Parry suggests that 'William Haller's argument that Foxe's A & M promoted a view of the English as a peculiar people set apart from the rest of mankind,' with a special providential destiny, emerges as less questionable than has been claimed by recent historians'.<sup>148</sup> The idea of each edition taking on its own identity and Foxe's evolving thought and response to the climate around him is an important consideration and has been raised before. Parry backs Tom Betteridge's distinction between the prophetic and apocalyptic editions. However, Susan Felch's study of the different prefaces goes unreferenced.<sup>149</sup> These findings are all relevant to this thesis because they add weight to the approach in seeking out, locating and plotting angelic references across the four editions. Each edition has been treated in its own right to ensure that any nuances in the treatment of angels across the four editions have been captured and commented on. This approach would not have been possible without the digitalisation of the *Actes and Monuments*. Indeed, in the same year Thomas Freeman in his article, *Text, Lies and Microfilms: Reading and Misreading Foxe's Book of Martyrs*, made the following plea:

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<sup>147</sup> Patrick Collinson, book review: 'John Foxe and the English Reformation'. *The English Historical Review*, 115: 460 (2000), pp. 195-196.

<sup>148</sup> Glyn Parry, 'Elect Church or Elect Nation: The Reception of the Acts and Monuments', in David Loades (ed.) *John Foxe, An Historical Perspective*. (Routledge: New York, 2018), p. 168.

<sup>149</sup> Parry, 'Elect Church or Elect Nation', p. 172.

It is time, indeed it is past time, that all the Victorian editions of the Acts and Monuments be consigned to oblivion and that scholars studying what Foxe wrote actually read what Foxe wrote and not an unreliable version of it.<sup>150</sup>

Freeman's concluding remark offers a neat juncture into a discussion of the third John Foxe colloquium, which took place in Ohio in the spring of 1999. The output of this conference was another collection of essays, *John Foxe and His World*, this time edited by Christopher Highley and John N. King and published in 2002.<sup>151</sup> The interdisciplinary approach of the conference broadened the focus of the book. There are, of course, the themes one would expect to see; the reception history of the *Actes* tackled by Patrick Collinson and David Loades, both to whom this volume of essays is dedicated. Patrick Collinson's article, *John Foxe and National Consciousness*, has already been discussed concerning the debate around William Haller's *Elect Nation* thesis. Collinson's essay is the first of fifteen and is complimented by David Loades' *Afterword: John Foxe in the Twenty-First Century*. Loades pays considerable attention to both the circumstances in which the *Actes* was compiled whilst Foxe was alive and its reception both in Foxe's lifetime and after his death. Loades suggests the *Actes* was such an important piece of propaganda; he likens it to *The Origin of Species* or *Das Kapital*, of which 'the direct impact ... lasted for almost 100 years, and its influence lingered on, undergoing a strong revival about 250 years after its author's death'.<sup>152</sup> Loades traces this timeline and uses the term 'propaganda' to articulate how the text wielded much influence and yet divided opinion. Loades suggests that the current revival of intellectual interest in Foxe and the *Actes* has a long way to run and that the newly digitised version will not only facilitate its development but also contribute to inspire further scholarly inquiry.<sup>153</sup> Indeed, John N King in his introduction, echoes Loades on the reception of

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<sup>150</sup> Thomas Freeman, 'Text, Lies and Microfilms: Reading and Misreading Foxe's Book of Martyrs,' *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 30: 1 (1999), p. 46.

<sup>151</sup> Christopher Highley and John King (eds), *John Foxe and His World*. (Routledge, 2017).

<sup>152</sup> David Loades, 'Afterword: John Foxe in the Twenty: First Century', in Christopher Highley and John King (eds.), *John Foxe and His World*. (Routledge: New York, 2017), p. 281.

<sup>153</sup> Loades 'C. Highley and J.King', p. 289.

the *Actes*, but also in relation to the new avenues of research the digitised version will make possible. King argues the *Actes* will ‘remain a site for collaboration, and disagreement, among historians, literary scholars, students of religion, and others who share a common concern for historiographical investigation based upon source study and archival research.’<sup>154</sup> The remaining essays within the book demonstrate just this, both in terms of the diverse group of collaborators made up of historians, graduate students and literary scholars and in terms of the work they produced. The essays delve into the history of the book, visual representations, the Catholic challenges and finally, women and gender. One article includes source material with a handful of angelic references. In ‘Campion dead bites with his friend’s teeth: Representations of an Early Modern Catholic Martyr’. Scott Pilarz observes the flourishing of letters, poems, paintings and plays after Campion’s death was ‘characteristically Jesuit’ and constituted a ‘deliberate contribution’ to the discourse of martyrdom; one which is often overlooked.<sup>155</sup> Pilarz includes an extract from a poem written by Henry Walpole after witnessing the martyrdom of Edmund Campion. One of the stanzas includes the following reference: ‘His prison now, the citie of the Kynge, his racke and torture joies and hevenlie blysse, for men(s) reproche wyth angels he doth synge, a sacred songe, wich everlasting ys’.<sup>156</sup> Pilarz does not comment directly on the angelology within the poem, and misses the significance of the role angels play within the poem. Angels are clearly used by Walpole to demonstrate and signify inclusivity, a Catholic version of Foxe and the Protestant view of the angels considered in this thesis. One more angelic reference follows, taken from a play written by Edmund Campion. In one of the scenes, an angel visits Thomas Becket before his death and reveals the future of the English Church.<sup>157</sup> Pilarz analyses the

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<sup>154</sup> Highley and King, *John Foxe and His World*, p. 9.

<sup>155</sup> Scott Pilarz, “Campion dead bites with his friend’s teeth”: Representations of an Early Modern Catholic Martyr’, in Christopher Highley and John King (eds), *John Foxe and His World*. (Routledge: New York, 2017), p. 217.

<sup>156</sup> Henry Walpole quoted by Pilarz, “Campion dead bites with his friend’s teeth”, p. 224.

<sup>157</sup> Pilarz, “Campion dead bites with his friend’s teeth”, p. 228.

meaning and purpose of the speech but again does not touch upon the significance of the angel as an orator.

The final collection of essays published as a result of the John Foxe Project is entitled *At Home and Abroad*, edited by David Loades.<sup>158</sup> Notably, five conferences generated four books and over forty-five essays, an enormous achievement and a welcome contribution to the study of Foxe, the *Actes and Monuments* and the formative years of religious reform in England. The collection is thematically divided into sections dealing with considerations of Foxe and the *Actes* from both English and Continental perspectives. A final section is devoted to methodology with an appendix including an English translation of a previously untranslated Latin text.<sup>159</sup> Brett Usher's focus of the hard-line Marian Protestant supporters surveyed in *John Foxe and His World* shifts to radical circles in Essex during the reign of Edward VI.<sup>160</sup> The book also includes an update on the John Foxe project by Mark Greengrass, Joy Lloyd, and Sue Smith, who provided an overview of the Online Variorum Edition of *Actes and Monuments*.<sup>161</sup> The meat of the book is reserved for biographical or contextual research on Foxe's time in England and his network, a welcome addition given the previous collection of essays lack of biographical detail.<sup>162</sup> It seems appropriate that the final collection of essays provide much needed context on Foxe and his life before the *Actes*.

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<sup>158</sup> David, Loades, (ed.), *John Foxe At Home and Abroad*, (Ashgate: Hants and Burlington, 2004).

<sup>159</sup> John S. Wade, 'Thanksgiving from Germany in 1559: An Analysis of the Content, Sources and Style of John Foxe's *Germaniae ad Angliam Gratulatio*.' In David Loades (ed.), *John Foxe at Home and Abroad*, (Ashgate: Hants and Burlington, 2004), pp.157-222.

<sup>160</sup> Brett Usher, 'Essex Evangelicals under Edward VI: Richard Lord Rich, Richard Alvey and their Circle', In David Loades (ed.), *John Foxe at Home and Abroad*, (Ashgate: Hants and Burlington, 2004), pp. 51-61.

<sup>161</sup> Mark Greengrass, Joy Lloyd and Sue Smith, 'Twenty-First Century Foxe: The Online Variorum Edition of Foxe's *Actes and Monuments*, In David Loades (ed.), *John Foxe at Home and Abroad*, (Ashgate: Hants and Burlington, 2004), pp. 257-269

<sup>162</sup> Fritze, book review: 'John Foxe at Home and Abroad', pp. 1108-1109.

In surveying many of the key secondary readings on both Reformation angels and John Foxe and his outlook, it is clear there is no overview devoted to the angelology within the *Actes and Monuments*. This thesis will fill this gap and answer Laura Sangha's call for an exhaustive investigation.<sup>163</sup> By examining the evolution of angelic presence over the four editions of the *Actes*, the significance of angelic belief is placed within the context of the early years of reform in England. The utility and model of angelic presence as a confessional mechanism are mapped out. Finally, Foxe's surprisingly positive commentary on angelic presence is explored within the context of his utilising the familiar notion of angels to promote the formation of a reformed religious orthodoxy in England; whilst advocating a distinctly anti-Catholic polemical rhetoric.

### **Sources and Methodology**

Thanks to the meticulous work of David Loades, Mark Greengrass and Thomas Freeman, four digital editions of the *Actes and Monuments* have been available online since 2011. In a discussion on the availability of digital texts, Peter Marshall recently stated, 'it is now becoming possible to survey the textual and semantic landscape of early modern England in ways our scholarly predecessors could not have imagined'.<sup>164</sup> The utility of a parallel digital version of the four editions has now superseded the problematic nineteenth-century abridged editions. By virtue of this functionality, the role of angelic presence is explored from several viewpoints. Primarily the martyr accounts featured reveal much about the prisoners' spiritual outlook, which, for some, angelic belief was an important component. Notably, a handful of sources are taken from earlier Lollard martyrs. This material forms a critical juncture

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<sup>163</sup> Sangha, *Angels and Belief*, p.71.

<sup>164</sup> P. Marshall. 'The Naming of Protestant England,' *Past and Present*, 229: 1 (2012) p. 90-91.

between the medieval treatment of angels and the sixteenth-century religious reforms that prompted changes in the utility and function of angels. Any earlier accounts (though framed within a reformation perspective) are not included as this would go beyond the scope of the research focus; the Marian martyrs, their accounts and Foxe's commentary. The Lollard material is included based on the synergy between the sources. For example, some accounts reference the same scriptural reference and therefore present an opportunity to contrast these examples of angelic presence from a pre and post-reformation perspective. The scale and scope of this thesis were also factors in using the Lollard material, which included angelic references as a cut-off point. The project would have been too big if older material had been incorporated. Foxe's commentary forms an essential component of this research project. His voice appears in the prefaces, introductions to the accounts, and the marginal notes to the accounts included.

Foxe was careful in the placement and ordering of material from one edition to the next. The accounts Foxe and his team worked with were collected and compiled from various sources: official convocation records to the personal letters of the martyrs, first-hand accounts and second-hand. Much of the material was not directly written by Foxe. Every effort has been made to determine or distinguish Foxe's voice from the collaborators he worked with, using secondary readings on the production and making of the text. Secondary readings on the relationships and dynamics between Foxe, the printer John Day and Henry Bull who played a formative role in the editing of the martyrdom accounts have been consulted.<sup>165</sup> Further, the online commentary function of the *Actes and Monuments Online* (TAMO) provides a useful resource for further contextual information on the source material, how the material was

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<sup>165</sup> Usher, 'Backing Protestantism', pp. 105-125.

acquired and in many cases, identifying where Foxe was responding to criticism.<sup>166</sup> These resources have been crucial to the framing of the source material.

The methodology for this project has been determined by the volume of sources identified. Using the search function of the *Actes and Monuments* online, searches for the word 'angel' and associated variations on the spelling, aungel, augel, angell, angelle, aungelle across the four editions retrieved hundreds of hits. Foxe often referred to demons and the devil under various names, including 'angel'. For the sake of clarity, these examples have been removed from the source pool as this thesis is focused on angels and not demons. The sources are primarily taken from the contemporary accounts recorded during the reign of Queen Mary and consist of letters, sermons, prayers and inquisition records. All relevant source material across the *Actes'* four editions was catalogued and plotted within a bespoke database, including annotation and analysis.

All primary source material is cited using contemporary sixteenth-century spelling, which varies across editions due to four different print runs. This approach allowed for identifying trends in the application and use of angelic presence by Foxe and the Marian martyrs. It also revealed networks of association amongst the prisoners. This process provided an analytical framework that established clear chapter outlines. Source material containing angelic references from the four editions was plotted and compared to outline any changes and developments in positioning, purpose and innate theological underpinning. This approach revealed underlying tensions, motivations and trends in applying angelic presence. The data showed just a handful of examples in which angelic presence was developed or given

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<sup>166</sup> *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or TAMO (1583 edition). Editorial commentary and additional information. (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 22 January 2018].

additional emphasis compared to a particular source's first instance. This suggests that the model of angelic presence remained consistent. Where significant, any amendments to the sources are commented on case-by-case. A 'significant' amendment would be classified as additional commentary to the text from Foxe from one edition to the next, the addition of a title or scriptural reference. Insignificant changes that are not commented on include variations on the spelling of angel. This frequently changed from edition to edition and is likely due to the printing process. For consistency, all sources are taken from the 1583 edition unless the cited source does not appear within the final edition. It is commented on within the source discussion if this is the case.

### **Terminology**

One of the prominent themes emerging from both the primary sources and secondary readings is the significance of the apocalypse to early sixteenth-century society. This is important context, as the Book of Revelation profoundly influenced John Foxe. The *Actes and Monuments* belong to a broader genre of writing and mode of thinking in which Revelation and the Apocalypse provided a historical framework. Peter Marshall argued ‘the history of the world came to be interpreted as an apocalyptic struggle between the forces of light and darkness, Protestantism and Catholicism into which events like the French Wars of Religion, or the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588, were easily slotted’.<sup>167</sup> This is true of Foxe, who viewed English history as having proved over and over again that the Catholic Church was the false Church. This process or way of thinking can be defined as apocalyptic thought and viewed as a schema or the context the *Actes and Monuments* was constructed from and in response to. The events and accounts captured by Foxe evidence the belief that people were living in the end times described and signposted in the Book of Revelation. Angels play a crucial role within the narrative of the Book of Revelation; this point is best

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<sup>167</sup> Marshall, Peter, *The Reformation, A Very Short History*. (Oxford University Press: 2009), p.59.

exemplified in the title page of the *Actes*, in which angels adorn the scene of the final judgement. The title page represents the framework or schema from which Foxe took inspiration. God directs the duties performed by angels, an example of Providence or God's providential care. Alexandra Walsham describes the key role God played in this process: 'God was no idle, inactive spectator upon the mechanical workings of the created world, but an assiduous, energetic deity who constantly intervened in human affairs.'<sup>168</sup> Due to the religious reforms and the expectation that sixteenth-century society was living in an era of end times, the concept of God's providence took on a special significance. The doctrine of Providence and the scriptural grounding of angels ensured that reformers did not reject the more supernatural examples of angelic presence such as those recorded in the *Actes*. The term 'angelology' is used frequently throughout this research project. Joad Raymond pointed out that this term was not commonly used; 'various words were coined in English in the seventeenth century, derived directly from the Greek, to denote angel-related matters'.<sup>169</sup> For example, 'Thomas Heywood invented 'angelomachy' in 1635 to describe war between angels.'<sup>170</sup> The word angel is derived from the Greek for 'messenger,' which in the Hebrew scripture appears as mal'ak; an angel is the accredited agent of communication used by the deity.<sup>171</sup> No matter the derivation, the idea of angels acting as a conduit or messenger between the earthly and heavenly realms remained distinct. Despite not being used contemporarily, the term angelology, which in modernity relates to the study of angels or, more specifically, the 'branch of theology concerned with angel doctrine, remains a useful term to describe the examples of angelic presence within the *Actes and Monuments*..<sup>172</sup> This is not to imply that there was a conceptually distinct body of work, rather, that 'angelology'

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<sup>168</sup> Alexandra Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England*. (Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 2.

<sup>169</sup> Raymond, *Milton's Angels*, p. 19.

<sup>170</sup> Raymond, *Milton's Angels*, p. 19.

<sup>171</sup> MacCulloch, *All Things Made New*, p. 23.

<sup>172</sup> Raymond, *Milton's Angels*, p. 19.

has been employed to unite a disparate collection of approaches and expressions. Another reference concerning angelic belief is the term ‘lens’ or, as Laura Sangha has used throughout her research, ‘motif’.<sup>173</sup> This best describes how angelic presence can be employed, as Sangha suggests, as a ‘unit of historical enquiry’.<sup>174</sup> Sangha argues that angels were a ‘shared cultural ‘space’, within which contemporaries engaged in theological discourse and worked through complex ideas as well as an important rhetorical tool for those attempting religious reform’.<sup>175</sup> Indeed, Raymond argues, ‘beliefs about angels were a form of knowledge, intersecting with and supporting other forms of knowledge’.<sup>176</sup> The pervasive belief of angels ensures that they are a useful tool to explore the early years of reform, revealing much about belief systems, assumptions and hopes of individuals during the formative years of reform in England.

Another term requiring attention is ‘Protestant’. This term has been linked to debates around the speed of conversion from Catholicism to Protestantism in England.<sup>177</sup> If misused, there is a risk in using the term anachronistically. Alister McGrath provides the following definition in his book, *Reformation Thought*: Protestantism is ‘a term used in the aftermath of the Diet of Speyer (1529) to designate those who ‘protested’ against the practises and beliefs of the Roman Catholic Church. Before 1529, such individuals had referred to themselves as ‘evangelicals’.<sup>178</sup> The term ‘Protestant’ was inherited and, as Diarmaid MacCulloch observed, ‘invented in a foreign country to describe a foreign situation’.<sup>179</sup> Alec Ryrie’s delineation of ‘early protestants’ for the years the 1520s and early 1530s, and ‘protestant

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<sup>173</sup> Sangha, *Angels and Belief*, p.3.

<sup>174</sup> Sangha, *Angels and Belief*, p.3.

<sup>175</sup> Sangha, *Angels and Belief*, p.3.

<sup>176</sup> Raymond, *Milton’s Angels*, p. 21.

<sup>177</sup> G.R Elton., *Reform and Reformation: England 1508-1558*. (Harvard University Press, 1971.), p. 371.

<sup>178</sup> Alister McGrath, *Reformation Thought*, (Blackwell Publishing, 1999), p 284.

<sup>179</sup> D. MacCulloch, ‘Henry VIII and the Reform of the Church’, in D. MacCulloch (ed.), *The Reign of Henry VIII: Politics, Policy and Piety*. (Macmillan Press, Basingstoke, 1995) p. 168.

apologists' for the 1540s is useful when discussing some of the accounts written during the reign of Henry VIII and indeed for the period when Foxe was in exile in Basle.<sup>180</sup> Peter Marshall's article, *The Naming of Protestant England*, provides important detail on the evolution of the term. Marshall observed that 'in the first year of Elizabeth's reign, and beyond, textual sightings of 'Protestants' seem more likely to occur in Catholic sources than in reformed ones'.<sup>181</sup> A search for the word 'Protestant' using the *Actes and Monuments* search function reveals the term appears across the four editions. Marshall noted within the 1563 edition, the term Protestant does not appear 'in association with the Marian martyrs themselves'.<sup>182</sup> Even more recently, in his book, *Heretics and Believers*, Marshall refers to the Protestants during the time of Mary's reign as 'evangelical'.<sup>183</sup> Diarmaid MacCulloch suggested the first signs of the word 'Protestant' 'becoming naturalised in English discourse only appear tentatively in the bitter polarisations of Mary's reign, after 1553'.<sup>184</sup> MacCulloch also suggests using the term 'evangelical' precisely because it is vague.<sup>185</sup> Peter Marshall is writing in response to the suggestion of a specific date and time where the word Protestant superseded the label 'Evangelical'. Marshall argued, 'attempts to anchor the settled form and usage of the words in the reign of Mary, far from being scrupulously cautious, may, in fact, be substantially premature'.<sup>186</sup> Marshall also warns against 'any over-ready identification of a broad 'Protestant' middle ground as the default position of English religious culture'.<sup>187</sup> Marshall concludes, 'until 1600, and beyond, its meanings remained defiantly plastic and open to manipulation.... and in short 'is a perfect

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<sup>180</sup> Alec Ryrie, 'The Problems of Legitimacy and Precedent in English Protestantism 1539-1547', in Bruce Gordon (ed.) *Protestant History and Identity in Sixteenth-Century Europe*. (Ashgate, 1998), p. 79.

<sup>181</sup> Marshall. 'The Naming of Protestant England', p. 97.

<sup>182</sup> Marshall. 'The Naming of Protestant England', p. 97.

<sup>183</sup> Marshall, Peter. *Heretics and Believers, A History of the English Reformation*. (Yale University Press, 2018) p. 383.

<sup>184</sup> MacCulloch, *Henry VIII and the Reform of the Church*, p. 168.

<sup>185</sup> MacCulloch, *Henry VIII and the Reform of the Church*, p. 168.

<sup>186</sup> Marshall. 'The Naming of Protestant England', p. 97.

<sup>187</sup> Marshall. 'The Naming of Protestant England', p.127.

metaphor for the uncoordinated and unexpected character of the English Reformation itself'.<sup>188</sup> There is still value in employing the term Protestant to broadly distinguish between the two confessional sides. For example, Eamon Duffy uses the term throughout *The Stripping of the Altars*.<sup>189</sup> Despite this, the Marian martyrs did not identify as Protestants. As Marshall argues, evangelical was an 'authentically contemporary term'...and 'captures well what united a broad spectrum of dissidents and reformers – an emphasis on a transformative encounter with the gospel'.<sup>190</sup> The authenticity of the term 'evangelical' is not in dispute, even though the term is applied by Foxe to just one of the cases considered.<sup>191</sup> On the other hand, the term 'martyr' is used throughout, both by Foxe and the Marian prisoners in their letters and declarations. This is how they identified; consequently, this term is used throughout this thesis. For clarity, distinctions are made between the martyrs and defined the monarch at the time. The examples of earlier martyrdom accounts are introduced on a case-by-case basis. The term 'Protestant' is employed sparingly and utilised to illustrate broad strokes in the analysis.

### Examples of Source Work

Thomas Bilney was influential to a number of first generation reformers and credited as converting Hugh Latimer to the reform movement; he was martyred during the reign of Henry VIII in 1531.<sup>192</sup> Foxe included a number of accounts focussed on Bilney, including his arrest, the articles levelled against him, his final refusal to recant, martyrdom and five

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<sup>188</sup> Marshall. 'The Naming of Protestant England', pp.127-128.

<sup>189</sup> E. Duffy. *The Stripping of the Altars, Traditional Religion in England, 1400-1580*, (Yale University Press, 1992).

<sup>190</sup> Marshall. 'The Naming of Protestant England', p. 92.

<sup>191</sup> K. Henry. 8. Rochester and more beheaded. Charterhouse Monkes. *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or TAMO (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 01.03.11(e.g.)].1570 edition, p. 1256; 1576 edition, p. 1066; 1583 edition, p.1093.

<sup>192</sup> Haller. *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*. p. 26.

letters to the Bishop Cuthbert Tonstall.<sup>193</sup> Bilney has been described by William Haller as one of Foxe's protomartyrs.<sup>194</sup> The accounts of Bilney's interrogation provide a reference point for the contemporary source material. In a letter, Bilney alludes to scripture providing answers to the mystery of salvation:

Truely I say, whosoeuer entreth in by the doore Christ, into the sheepfolde: which thing all such shall do as seeke nothing els but the glory of God, and saluation of soules. Of all such it may be truely said, that whom þe Lord sendeth, he speaketh the woord of God.<sup>195</sup>

Bilney advocates the reading and contemplation of scripture and goes on to refer to the 'word of God' as the conduit to 'openyng thy senses,' as human motivation is ultimately the 'glory of God and the 'saluations of souls'<sup>196</sup> Foxe references Revelation chapter three, as Bilney continues:

And why so? Because he representeth the aungel of the church of Philadelphia, vnto whom Saynt John writeth, saying: This sayth he, which is holy and true, which hath the keyes of Dauid, whiche openeth and no man shutteth, shutteth and no man openeth.<sup>197</sup>

In citing the angel of the Church of Philadelphia, Bilney suggests that he, just like the members of the church of Philadelphia, were heirs to salvation promised within St John's preaching, as instructed by the angel. This letter suggests that in contemplating scripture and living a life according to its moral teachings, the individual would ultimately be saved: 'thou has entred in by me which am the dore: For whosoever: entreth in by me which am the dore shalbe saved'.<sup>198</sup> Drawing on both Revelation 3. 7:13 and Isaiah 22. 22, Bilney linked the

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<sup>193</sup> 'Interrogatories whereupon Maister Thomas Arthur, and Maister Bilney were accused and examined,' in Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1583 edition) (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.johnfoxe.org> [Accessed: 14 December 2018], 1583 edition p. 1023.

<sup>194</sup> Haller. *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*, p.26.

<sup>195</sup> 'An other letter or epistle of M. Bilney, to Cuthbert Tonstall B. of London,' in Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1583 edition) (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.johnfoxe.org> [Accessed: 14 December 2018], 1563 edition, p. 522; 1570 edition, p. 1183; 1576 edition, p 1003; 1583 edition, p. 1030.

<sup>196</sup> 'An other letter or epistle of M. Bilney, to Cuthbert Tonstall B. of London. in Foxe, 1583 edition', p. 1030.

<sup>197</sup> 'An other letter or epistle of M. Bilney, to Cuthbert Tonstall B. of London. in Foxe, 1583 edition', p. 1030.

<sup>198</sup> 'An other letter or epistle of M. Bilney, to Cuthbert Tonstall B. of London. in Foxe, 1583 edition', p 1030.

salvation of the soul to the preaching of the bible. The angels of the seven churches are closely associated with the preaching of Jesus Christ's gospel. Further, Bilney's message is good news; it is universal and inclusive to those who want to enter into the 'sheepfolde. Bilney's message relies on a scriptural precedent and the familiarity of an angel delivering the message. In the 1563 edition, Foxe endorsed Bilney's thoughts: 'Who entreth in by the dore & who not'.<sup>199</sup> This note is missing from the subsequent editions and was replaced by another comment advising that Bilney's letter would serve as a response to criticisms levelled at Foxe by Dr Saunders.<sup>200</sup> Laura Sangha has argued that 'angels had the potential to make the hard doctrine of a novel faith more palatable to the laity'.<sup>201</sup> Angels served a dual function. From the sinner's perspective, the angel would join Christ and God in their judgement of the human race. On the other hand, angels also signified the eternal heavenly estate to those who were chosen in the Company of God and Christ. Indeed, the book of Revelation provides many examples of how angels were on hand to guide and protect humanity on their journey towards salvation.

### **Contemporary source**

In a two and a half-page exhortation written to his congregation in December of 1555, John Philpot was deeply critical of his contemporaries' choices when it came to their religious beliefs. Philpot opened his letter with the following statement:

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<sup>199</sup> Foxe's marginal notes, in 'An other letter or epistle of M. Bilney, to Cuthbert Tonstall B. of London', in Foxe, *The Actes or TAMO*, 1583 p.1030.

<sup>200</sup> Foxe's marginal notes, in 'An other letter or epistle of M. Bilney, to Cuthbert Tonstall B. of London', in Foxe, *The Actes or TAMO*, 1583 p.1030.

<sup>201</sup> Sangha, 'Revelation and Reckoning: Angels and the Apocalypse in Reformation England', p.250.

It is a lamentable thing to behold at this present in England, the faithles departing both of men & women frō þ<sup>e</sup> true knowledge & vse of Christes sincere religion, which so plētifully they haue bene taught & do know, their own consciences bearing witnes to the veritie thereof.<sup>202</sup>

Philpot argues the ‘faithless’ had consciously turned away from Protestantism, a choice based on the change in political and religious climate. Philpot argues the ‘faithless’ had consciously turned away from Protestantism, a choice based on the change in the political and religious climate. Philpot’s arguments continue in this vein for some time, with plenty of scriptural citations to evidence his case. Before he broaches the subject of Predestination, he quotes directly from the book of Daniel stating, ‘Daniell chose rather to be cast into the denne of Lions to be deuoured, thē to obey þe kings wicked cōmandements’.<sup>203</sup> Like Tyms, Philpot makes use of the parallel he found in Daniel’s story to highlight his own experience of Marian England. The Prophet Daniel was imprisoned because his religious beliefs directly challenged the government and King; he would rather die than recant his faith - precisely the situation Philpot found himself in. Philpot’s assertion that salvation was attainable through the rule of God and not man is entirely in line with his earlier references to the choices made by the unfaithful. Philpot swiftly attacks those who use the idea of Predestination for their ends:

Some other there be þt for an extreme refuge in their euil doings, do rū to gods predestinatiō & electiō, saying: þt if I be elected of god to saluation, I shalbe saued, whatsoever I do. But such be great tempters of GOD and abhominable blasphemers of GODS holy election, and cast them selues downe from the pinnacle of the temple in presumption, that God may preserue them by his aungels through predestineation. Suche verily may reckon

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<sup>202</sup> ‘Philpots letters, Queene Mary. *A letter which he sent to the christian congregation exhorting them to refrayne from the Idolatrous seruice of the papists, and to serue God after his word*’, in Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1583 edition) (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.johnfoxe.org> [Accessed: 14 December 2018], 1570 edition, p.2043; 1576 edition, p. 1751; 1583 edition, p. 1855.

<sup>203</sup> ‘Philpots letters’, 1583 edition, p. 1856.

themselves to be none of Gods elect children that will doe euill that good may ensue: whose damnation is iust, as S. Paule sayth.<sup>204</sup>

This was troubling; if salvation is predestined, then 'I shall be saved, whatever I do'. Philpot is arguing against those that abuse the doctrine for their ends. Still, his argument also indicates a more significant tension concerning the deterministic nature of the doctrine and that of free will. If salvation was divinely foretold, logically, mankind was not capable of possessing free will, and therefore the unfaithful could not consciously turn away from God, as Philpot argued earlier. Foxe also offers his insight in the marginal notes, 'Agaynst such as sinne wilfully upon hope of Election'.<sup>205</sup> Angelic presence has its part to play in Philpot's reasoning. Philpot cites the teachings of St Paul, arguing that damnation must be certain for the individuals who knowingly disregard the doctrine. Philpot's argument reveals much about his perception of his contemporaries' understanding of the role and duty of angels at this particular time in Marian England. The martyr suggests that the faithless, those who abused Predestination's deterministic nature, would simply presume that angels would protect them through the new doctrine. This alone indicates the idea of angels intervening remained a commonly held belief because Philpot, without any scriptural grounding, associated angelic presence with Predestination. The many scriptural examples of God intervening in the lives of man facilitated a continuation of this belief and the development of a new function or duty. Philpot suggests that 'bad' Protestants, or 'backsliders,' as John Cowburn refers to them, would revert to a lazy assumption of continuous protection through angels.<sup>206</sup> Philpot's admission that some people misappropriated the notion of predestination for their ends suggests that the doctrine was not yet widely accepted or understood, even amongst groups

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<sup>204</sup> 'Philpots letters', 1583 edition, p. 1856.

<sup>205</sup> Foxe's marginal notes in 'Philpots letters', 1583 edition p.1856.

<sup>206</sup> Cowburn, J. *Free Will, Predestination, & Determinism*, (Marquette University Press, 2007), p.104.

who shared the same reforming principles. The association of angels and predestination is enhanced further with Foxe's marginal citation of Daniel Chapter 6. Having chosen his faith and ultimately imminent death over switching allegiance to the King, Daniel is saved by the ministry of angels: 'My God sent his angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in his sight'.<sup>207</sup> Daniel is saved by his faith in God; his service is rewarded with the protection of angels and his ultimate salvation. The King is convinced of Daniel's God and issues a decree making his people and kingdom Christian. Philpot's letter is prescriptive. He links angels to Predestination because of their familiarity and scripturally grounded role as messengers, as endorsers of a divine message and because of the prominent role angels played in the judgement of souls.

The examples considered show that angels served many functions. Pastorally, angels were on hand to prepare and guide individuals through the difficult elements of a new doctrine. It strengthened the resolve of early Protestants by providing assurances that deliverance from the Catholic authorities would be imminent. Angels were also on hand to judge and sentence sinners to eternal damnation. The findings add weight to Laura Sangha's research in her survey of the commentaries on Revelation. Of the many commentaries, Sangha argued:

The message was not solely one of fire and brimstone because, as it has been shown, sources also reflected genuine attempts to supply comfort and consolation for the harsher truths to offer, mollifying understandable fears about the ultimate fate of the dead with the bright hope of eventual salvation and the promise of better things to come.<sup>208</sup>

The *Actes* material suggests that angels' multifunctional role facilitated conversations around Predestination. Sangha points to Alexandra Walsham and Ian Green, who have both suggested sixteenth-century commentators tended to 'gloss' over more complex discussions,

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<sup>207</sup> Daniel 22.

<sup>208</sup> Sangha, 'Revelation and Reckoning: Angels and the Apocalypse in Reformation England', p.257.

especially Predestination.<sup>209</sup> The study of English sixteenth-century catechisms by Ian Green found that Protestant reformers avoided the issue of Predestination or implied that salvation was available to every Christian who embraced the Gospel.<sup>210</sup> Green's theory is relevant to several examples included within this and remaining chapters, where numerous appeals instruct readers to embrace scripture. This is where the similarities end. Green's premise is based upon the different source material. Catechisms were basic educational instructional texts with a question-and-answer format; they were simplistic and aimed at an unlearned audience. Foxe captured the exchanges between Marian martyrs and their inquisitors or within the communications from the Marian prisoners to their friends and families in which deeply contested theological positions were debated, justified and evidenced. Angels were not necessarily a response to the complexities of understanding and embracing a new religious dogma. Still, the duality in function and role certainly eased the anxieties and assisted in knowing what was to be expected.

The two examples cited indicate how the source material has been used in this thesis. Sources have been examined across the four editions with any changes in utility and function elaborated on and marked out. As Bilney and Philpot's declarations show, the source material is deeply polemical, combative and yet angelic presence served pastorally.

### **Thesis Structure**

This thesis is structured into three chapters based on distinct themes drawn from the primary source material. Each chapter considers sources across the four editions produced in Foxe's lifetime. The first edition was published in 1563, the second in 1570, the third in 1576 and the final in 1583. The first chapter sets the scene for the thesis, exploring Foxe's

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<sup>209</sup> Walsham, *Providence*, chapter 3.

<sup>210</sup> Ian Green. *The Christian's ABC: Catechisms and Catechizing in England c. 1530-1740* (Oxford, 1996), chapter 8.

eschatological outlook and influences. The second chapter works explicitly with convocation records, defences and petitions and, using angels as a lens, examines the competing stances on religious orthodoxy from Protestant and Catholic perspectives. The final chapter works with the personal letters, prayers and sermons of the Marian prisoners and explores many examples of angelic protection. Source material includes a range of official court records and personal communications between the prisoners.

### **Chapter 1 - Apocalyptic Angels**

The *Actes and Monuments* is littered with references to Revelation, where angels assume a crucial role in the story of humanity's salvation. For John Foxe, Revelation was key to the past and present, providing an explanation for the upheavals of the Reformation and the rejection of Catholicism. The chapter explores how John Foxe increasingly relied upon the apocalypse to frame his telling of history. As this chapter frames the apocalyptic and providential themes that connect the remaining chapters, it is essential to the thesis. Next, a close examination of Lollard, Walter Brute's defences provides a bridge from the Catholic past to the contemporary Marian martyr accounts. Consideration is given to the iconography of the title page, where angels frame the scene of judgement day, cementing the association between angels and judgement. Throughout the thesis, judgement remains a common theme, marking the onset of a significant change in which angels are directly linked to the ushering in of a new time. Although angels are depicted as dispensers of divine justice in the martyrdom accounts, some examples indicate an approach where the angel of the apocalypse takes on a pastoral role. There is a clear connection between angelic presence and some key tenets of Protestant theology. This suggests potential anxiety or concerns regarding impending judgement were alleviated by the comforting familiarity of angels.

## Chapter 2 - Sacramental Angels

Angels are a 'shared' space; their Scriptural grounding ensured they remained legitimate exemplars and models of thought for both sides of the confessional divide during and after the Reformation in England. This notion is particularly relevant to this second chapter as, within the selected sources, both the Catholic inquisitor and Protestant martyr debate contested concepts of angelic and divine presence. This chapter examines the convocation and interrogation records in which angelic presence is utilised within one of the most significant debates of the Reformation, the 'real presence' of Jesus Christ within the Eucharist. The chapter begins with the accounts in which angelic presence is employed to promote religious adherence. Consideration then moves to interpretations of the Eucharist, giving an overview of how angels were used to deny the Real Presence of Christ within the Sacrament. The Catholic position is explored through the lens of notorious Catholic Inquisitor Bishop Bonner. His sermon, entitled, *The dignity of Priestes*, offers a fascinating insight into the role of the priest during mass, which Bonner compares to the duty of an angel. Corporeality is a key theme within this chapter and is discussed in relation to Christ, angels and the human soul. An extension of this theme is found in the sources detailing the human soul and angels' feeding' on divine grace. These sources complement those on the Eucharist and share similarities in language and tone. Again, the discussion relates to the route toward facilitating the highest form of contact with God.

## Chapter 3 – Angelic Protection

The final chapter considers the sources relating to angelic protection. A political theme emerges from the accounts, where the martyrs link angelic presence to the defence of England. Numerous sources cite Psalm 34:7 'The *angel of the LORD pitches his tent around those who fear Him*'. The scriptural credentials ensured its subsequent adoption into Protestant thought; however, only where the angel is described within the parameters of

God's providential care. Similarly, the Pauline teachings on 'innumerable angels' provide evidence of this trend. Several sources indicate innumerable angels represent the reward for adhering to Protestantism. The material suggests that persecution generated a hopeful contrast between the collective experience of the Marian martyrs and the multitude of angels standing behind them. Several sources indicate angelic intervention in secondary accounts of providential events or first-hand testimonials describing dreams and visions. The reports generate significant commentary from Foxe and Philip Melanchthon in which the supernatural elements are legitimised through God's providential plan. Much of the source material stems from the personal correspondence of the prisoners to their family, friends and, in some cases, to each other. This presents an opportunity to explore the application of angelic presence amongst these networks. The narrative provided by Peter's escape from prison remained a significant point of inspiration within the martyrdom accounts. Some of the letters suggest the martyrs copied and forwarded letters to those imprisoned in the East Midlands, evidencing the spreading and circulation of ideas. Some letters are written from a position of care, with a Godly plan laid out for children, ensuring their salvation. Here, angelic protection is aligned with the notion of imminent judgement. The final section details the cases in which the Marian martyrs are given angelic attributes by their fellow prisoners, ranging from character traits, demeanour, and physical appearance. Collectively, these sources evidence a broad sense of understanding and belief in the protection available through the ministry of angels.

## Chapter 1 – Apocalyptic Angels

Apocalyptic thought and themes are present throughout the *Actes and Monuments*. This first chapter will explore the accounts that directly reference the Book of Revelation or reference an expectation of judgment and an imminent apocalypse. It will set the scene for the remaining chapters and thesis as a whole, as running throughout the collection of sources is a prominent eschatological undercurrent. Numerous scriptural roles are attributed to angels in apocalyptic stories, particularly in the Book of Revelation. The source material evidence repetition of biblical passages, which consequently set out several distinct themes and avenues of investigation. Lollard, Henrician and Marian accounts are closely examined in the context of post-revisionist perspectives that broadly recognise certain continuities with the past as well as the introduction of new elements.<sup>1</sup> This approach has been most recently exemplified by Laura Sangha's research both in her monograph, *Angels and Belief in England* and a more focused article, 'Revelation and Reckoning: Angels and the Apocalypse in Reformation England'.<sup>2</sup> In the article, Sangha examined seventeenth-century commentaries on the book of Revelation and sought to discover 'what the survival and mutation of belief about angels and the book of Revelation can tell us about continuity and change in people's expectations of what awaited them after death'.<sup>3</sup> Sangha concludes that the seventeenth-century commentaries on Revelation challenge the notion that the Reformation was a 'largely destructive process, which destroyed the sophisticated structures of traditional belief without offering much to replace these'.<sup>4</sup> This chapter will build on

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<sup>1</sup> Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety*; Walsham, *Providence*; Marshall and Walsham, *Angels in the Early Modern World*.

<sup>2</sup> Sangha, *Angels and Belief in England*. p. 2; Sangha, 'Revelation and Reckoning: Angels and the Apocalypse in Reformation England', pp. 248-257.

<sup>3</sup> Sangha, 'Revelation and Reckoning: Angels and the Apocalypse in Reformation England', p. 249.

<sup>4</sup> Sangha, 'Revelation and Reckoning: Angels and the Apocalypse in Reformation England', p. 257.

Sangha's research and expand the source pool beyond the seventeenth-century commentaries on Revelation.

To begin, the chapter will consider John Foxe and his framing of the apocalypse and whether angelic presence and the prospect of an imminent apocalypse were valuable tools in advancing a message of Protestant orthodoxy. Foxe's influence on and use of the apocalypse provides the context for many examples of eschatological and revelatory discourse in *Actes* and *Monuments*. Next, the focus turns to the accounts of the martyrs, starting with a close reading of Walter Brute's defences and letters. Brute was tried for heresy in October 1393. All but the 1563 edition of the *Acts* includes the report of his trial.<sup>5</sup> Since Brute's complaints against the Catholic Church were repeated by later reformers, these earlier examples can be compared to those of the Marian martyrs. The next section unpicks and compares the examples where Marian martyrs link angelic presence to the idea of ushering in a period of transformational change. This theme also considers the visual representations of angelic presence within the *Actes*, the title page where angels are depicted blowing their trumpets and announcing the second coming. Next, an examination of the association of angels and judgment. Here, several sources are based on Revelation 14:10, in which the angels alongside Christ are witnesses to the sin of humankind. Traditionally, one of the chief duties of the apocalyptic angel is to serve as an instrument of divine punishment. Throughout the *Actes*, the Marian martyrs link angels to traditional notions of fire and brimstone. These examples are warnings issued by the prisoners to remind or warn families, friends and fellow Protestants of imminent judgement and punishment if they were to recant. The final section

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<sup>5</sup> 'The story and proces agaynst Walter Brute', *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1583 edition), (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 11. August 2019] 1570 edition, p. 587; 1576 edition, p. 481 and 1583 edition, p. 499.

explores the instances in which individuals and communities cite angelic presence using similar phraseology to protest their faith, in the context of judgement.

### Foxe and the Apocalypse

Foxe's preoccupation with the apocalypse is evident throughout his publishing history. Between the third and fourth editions of the *Actes*, Foxe wrote and published a black comedy entitled *Christ Triumphant*. Closely following the narrative of Revelation in his play, Foxe depicted Christ in a glorious and final triumph over the Devil.<sup>6</sup> It is worth pointing out that the posthumous publication of *Eicasmī*, Foxe's commentary on the Book of Revelation coincided with the influx of commentaries on Revelation, which Katherine Firth, Richard Bauckham and Laura Sangha have written about extensively.<sup>7</sup> The *Eicasmī*, published in 1587, was Foxe's exegesis of Revelation and according to Elizabeth Evenden and Thomas Freeman, was so historically orientated, it rested heavily upon the foundations of the *Actes and Monuments*.<sup>8</sup> Sadly, Foxe died before his commentary was finished. Katherine Firth suggested that the clarity of Foxe's scholarship began to decline along with his health.<sup>9</sup> Despite Firth's observation, one can not help but wonder if Foxe had been healthy and lived, would the *Eicasmī* have subsequently been considered the final instalment of the *Actes*. In terms of the *Christ Triumphant*, the preface summarises the play as follows:

A fruitefull Treatise, wherein it is described the most glorious Triumph, and Conquest of Christ Jesus our Saviour, over Sinne, Deathe, the Law, the strength and Pride of Sathan, and the World, with all other enemyes whatsoever against the poore Soule of Man.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> This subject will be explored later on in the chapter.

<sup>7</sup> Bauckham. *Tudor Apocalypse*, p 84; Firth. *The Apocalyptic Tradition*, p 179; Sangha, *Revelation and Reckoning*. pp. 248-256.

<sup>8</sup> Evenden, Freeman, *Religion and the Book in Early Modern England*, pp. 317-318.

<sup>9</sup> Firth, *The Apocalyptic Tradition*, p. 106.

<sup>10</sup> John Foxe, *Christ Iesus triumphant A fruitefull treatise, wherin is described the most glorious triumph, and conquest of Christ Iesus our sauour, ouer sinne, death, the law, the strength and pride of Sathan, and the world, with all other enemyes whatsoever agaynst the poore soule of man: made too be read for spirituall comfort*. (John Day: London, 1579).

There are some important themes to be noted here, the triumph of good over evil, the notion of enemies, death and end times all triggered by the pride of Satan and, consequently, humankind's sin. Because of these external challenges, 'the poore soule of man' is offered the special protection of the Christ Triumphant. Howard B Noland suggested that 'From the perspective of a reformer, the linking of the apocalyptic with comedy emphasises the victory over evil within the apocalypse; or in other words, the fulfilment of the promise of redemption'.<sup>11</sup> This emphasis was expanded upon significantly within the *Eicasmī*. According to Collinson, *Eicasmī* provides further evidence that Foxe's approach to church history was, in fact, based on universal piety and not a national identity. Collinson argued, 'Foxe explicitly denied that the Church belonged to any single nation, but was to be found wherever true religion and piety were found'.<sup>12</sup> Evidence of Foxe's developing apocalyptic outlook can be found in the title pages to the *Actes*. Here, Foxe singles out the local geographical focus of his history, stating 'specially this Realme of England and Scotland'.<sup>13</sup> Foxe also references the church explicitly within the first line of each introduction. This could be interpreted as the universal church or the Church of England. The first line of the 1563 edition reads, '*Actes and Monuments* of these latter & perilous days, touching matters of the Church' and includes one separate reference to England and Scotland.<sup>14</sup> The 1570 and 1576 editions are both amended to 'The first volume of the Ecclesiastical history containing the *Actes and Monuments*.' Both title pages include two references to England and Scotland

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<sup>11</sup> Noland, Howard B. "John Foxe's Apocalyptic Comedy, Christ Triumphans," In *The Early Modern Cultures of Neo-Latin Drama*, (eds.), Philip Ford and Andrew Taylor, (Leuven University Press: Leuven (Belgium), 2013), pp. 75–84.

<sup>12</sup> Collinson. *This England*. p 193.

<sup>13</sup> All four title pages are included within the home page of the Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 09 October 2019].

<sup>14</sup> 1563 title page Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO.

with the addition of ‘all other foreine nations’.<sup>15</sup> It is the final edition which clearly demonstrates the trajectory and development of Foxe’s thinking:

Actes and Monuments of matters most special & memorable, happenying in the Church, with an Universal history of the same, wherein is set forth at large the whole race & course of the church.<sup>16</sup>

Foxe reclaims the universal church from its medieval and Catholic past. The church is now genuinely universal due to its ubiquitous and shared history. Again there is the reference to England and Scotland. It is too simplistic to suggest the title pages infer God had bestowed a special favour on the British Isles due to this. Foxe is merely reporting the shared history and the collective memories of suffering and persecution, which were still relatively recent at the time of publication.

On the other hand, the addition of revelatory constructs to the *Actes and Monuments* suggests an interest on Foxe’s part in the significance of the nation within the history he constructed. One of the key concepts throughout Revelation is the idea of the nation, the fall of Babylon and the New Jerusalem. The references to ‘nation’ arguably have a new significance when using the apocalypse as a historical perspective. If Foxe adopted a more apocalyptic outlook, does this indicate a change in his thinking of England as an elect nation, as Haller suggested?<sup>17</sup> Or, on the contrary, if it evidenced a more universal outlook as Collinson has suggested.<sup>18</sup> The 1583 title page included a reference unique to this edition:

Newly revised & recognised, partly also augmented, and now the fourth time agayne published and recommended to the studious Reader, by the Author (through the helpe of Christ our Lord) John Foxe, which desireth thee good Reader to helpe him with thy Prayer. Apoc VII.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> 1570 title page Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO.

<sup>16</sup> 1583 title page Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO.

<sup>17</sup> Haller, *John Foxe’s Book of Martyrs and the Elect Nation*. p.14.

<sup>18</sup> Collinson. *This England*, p.196.

<sup>19</sup> 1583 title page to the *Actes and Monuments*.

Foxe appealed to his readers to reflect on Chapter 7 of Revelation. The first three verses are:

And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and sea, Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.<sup>20</sup>

This particular chapter is significant to the chronology of Revelation as it works as a sort of interval before the angels sound the seven trumpets signalling the Final Judgement. Here, the angels are literally holding back God's judgement which is represented by the wind, creating a period of peace and tranquillity whilst the tribes of Israel are protected from God's wrath. God's universal grace is emphasised as John witnesses 'all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands'.<sup>21</sup> The passage closes with angels standing around the throne, accompanied by the elders and four beasts as they worship God: 'Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen'.<sup>22</sup> Beneath Foxe's citation of Revelation is a Latin quotation, 'Salus Sediti Super thronus & agno' which translates to 'safely seated on the throne and to the lambe'.<sup>23</sup> In appending these elements to the title page of the 1583 edition, it is possible that Foxe intended to re-frame or emphasise the apocalyptic framework of the *Actes*. The overarching message within the verses is that God's salvation was universal, and the end was imminent. The reference is instructive with a pastoral purpose in that it was a clear indicator of what was to come and what to prepare for. When considered alongside the depiction of

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<sup>20</sup> Revelation 7: 1-3.

<sup>21</sup> Revelation 7:9.

<sup>22</sup> Revelation 7. 11-12.

<sup>23</sup> 1583 title page to the *Actes and Monuments*.

the Last Judgement, which adorned all four editions, the presence of angels becomes even more prominent.<sup>24</sup>

These findings add some weight to Betteridge's classification of the editions of the *Actes*, in which he framed the 1570 edition as 'apocalyptic'. Betteridge argued the 'change from 'prophetic' to 'apocalyptic' history between 1563 and 1570 was a change driven by the defeats suffered by the godly in the 1560s, produced a different history, historiography and historian in the 1570 version of *A and M* from those constructed in 1563'.<sup>25</sup> The concluding sections of the first two editions, along with case studies on Bishop Hooper and the treatment of Mary and Elizabeth, all evidence, Betteridge argues, 'changes in the nature of Foxe's history'.<sup>26</sup> There are further examples of Foxe including more of a focus on the Apocalypse within the subsequent editions of the *Actes*. Absent from the 1563 edition but included within the remaining three versions is a short exegesis of Revelation.<sup>27</sup> Significantly, the latter two editions included a section entitled '*the mysticall numbers in the Apocalips opened*'. Here, Foxe drew upon the prophetic numbers referenced within Revelation in an attempt to devise and validate his division of history'.<sup>28</sup> He described the significance of the mystical numbers in similar terms to seals being broken or trumpets being blown, in that the first unlocks the remaining sequence of events: 'Now this one claspe beyng opened, the other numbers that follow, are plaine and manifest to the intelligent reader to be vnderstood'.<sup>29</sup> Despite the brevity of the section, (it only runs to two pages), it was significant to how Foxe

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<sup>24</sup> The artwork of the title page will be considered further on in the chapter.

<sup>25</sup> Betteridge, 'From Prophetic to Apocalyptic', p. 213.

<sup>26</sup> Betteridge, 'From Prophetic to Apocalyptic', p. 214.

<sup>27</sup> John Foxe, 'Exegesis of Revelation', *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1583 edition), (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 11 November 2018], 1576 edition, p. 125; 1583 edition, p. 124.

<sup>28</sup> Foxe, 'Exegesis of Revelation', 1583 edition, p. 124.

<sup>29</sup> Foxe, 'Exegesis of Revelation', 1583 edition, p. 124.

devised his timeline of Christian history. For example, Foxe described the binding of Satan; a duty performed by St Michael in several ways:

After the which yeare, according to the preordinate counsel of God, when his seueritie had bene sufficiently declared vpon his own house, it pleased him to shew mercy againe, & to bind vp Sathan the old serpent, according to the xx. chap. of the Reuelation for the for the space of a thousand yeares, that is, frō this time of Licinius, to the time of Iohn Wickleffe, and Iohn Husse.<sup>30</sup>

Interestingly, Foxe omits the role of St Michael, and within this reading, the binding of Satan is simply a direct intervention from God. In a subsequent reference, he includes an unnamed angel performing the same duty:

for that the binding vp of Sathan, and closing hym in the bottomles pit by the Angell, importeth as much that hee was at libertye, raging and doying mischiefe before. And certesse those so terrible and so horrible persecutiōs of the primitiue time vniuersally through the whole world, during the space of three hundreth yeares of the Church, do declare no lesse. Wherein it is to be thought and supposed, that Sathan all that time, was not fastened and closed up.<sup>31</sup>

Both passages omit or scale down St Michael's role in binding Satan and could be examples of the Protestant tendency to reduce the visibility of angelic duties or specific angels performing a well-known task. Laura Sangha cites the 1552 and 1559 editions of *The Book of Common Prayer* as evidence of this approach, pointing to the references of the angelic name Raphael which were completely omitted due to the Protestant rejection of the apocryphal book of Tobit.<sup>32</sup> Later in this chapter, further Marian martyrs' accounts also evidence such omissions and reductions in the visibility of angels or angelic duties. For Foxe, the omission or reduced agency of St Michael in these extracts does not impact the meaning of the passage. Foxe still connects the defeat of Satan to world history, with the intention of

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<sup>30</sup> Foxe, 'Exegesis of Revelation', 1583 edition, p 124.

<sup>31</sup> Introduction to Book 5, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1583 edition), (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 4 September 2018], 1570 edition, p. 152; 1576 edition, p. 125; 1583 p. 421.

<sup>32</sup> Sangha, *Angels and Belief in England*, p. 48.

creating a timeline closely linked to protest through the preceding thousand-year period, concluding with Jan Hus and John Wycliffe.

The contemporary Marian martyr accounts evidence a pronounced influence of apocalyptic thinking. These sources often include commentary from Foxe, framing the content within and, in some cases giving additional context or scriptural citations if the quotes were unreferenced. It is also worth considering the earlier accounts which link angels to the expressions of apocalyptic thought. Katharine Firth suggested that ‘in Lollard eyes, the Apocalypse was a revelation of the character of Antichrist, whose picture, painted with the colours of cruelty, immortality and false doctrine was a timeless vision of all that opposed Christ or was raised in his place’.<sup>33</sup> Foxe thought the defences of late fourteenth century Lollard Walter Brute added to his history, ‘therein may appeare diuers thinges worthy to be read and considered’.<sup>34</sup> The accounts of Brute and several other earlier reformers are included in each chapter of this thesis, serving as a bridge to the Marian contemporary accounts.

### **Walter Brute**

Walter Brute was a Welsh layman, scholar and follower of Wycliffe; he was denounced as a Lollard in 1390 and recanted his faith in 1393.<sup>35</sup> The account of Brute does not appear in the 1563 edition of the *Actes and Monuments*. In her article, 'Who was Walter Brut', Maureen

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<sup>33</sup> Firth, *The Apocalyptic Tradition in Reformation Britain 1530-1645*, p 7.

<sup>34</sup> M.Aston, ‘Lollardy and the Reformation: Survival or Revival?’ in M. Aston, (ed.). *Lollards and Reformers: Images and Literacy in Late Medieval Religion* (Bloomsbury Academic: London: 1984), pp. 219–242; The story and proces agaynst Walter Brute, 1583 edition, p. 499.

<sup>35</sup> Rex, R. *Which is Wyche? Lollardy and Sanctity in Lancastrian London*. In, Thomas Freeman ‘Over their Dead Bodies: Concepts of Martyrdom in the Late Medieval and Early Modern England’, in *Martyrs and Martyrdom in England 1400-1700*, (The Boydell Press: Woodbridge, 2007) p. 105. Richard Wyche is included within the final chapter of this thesis, though it is worth noting that Richard Rex argues Wyche was in fact a political martyr and not a Lollard at the time of his death.

Jurkowski suggests Brute was 'the most interesting' of all of the Lollards.<sup>36</sup> Jurkowski questioned Brute's heritage, exploring the suggestion that he may be the same Brute who taught astronomy at Oxford. The John Foxe project team raised this line of enquiry; however, the question remains unanswered.<sup>37</sup> What happened to Brute beyond his trial is another question which remains unanswered.<sup>38</sup> The *Actes* reveals Brute was charged as a heretic, principally because he challenged the indulgence issued by Pope Urban VI to Henry Spenser, Bishop of Norwich for the part he played in the Norwich Crusade of 1383.<sup>39</sup> Foxe recorded Brute's trial from the 1570 edition of the *Actes* onwards and included questions put forward and the defences given. Brute's defences span several sources and encompass an array of subjects, including Transubstantiation, the Power of Priests, Indulgences, Idolatry and an imminent apocalypse. Significantly, Brute includes references to angelic presence throughout his writings. Interestingly, Brute was allowed to respond to the allegations against him before his trial; this alone indicates that he was someone of standing.<sup>40</sup> According to Foxe, the Bishop presiding over the examination was unsatisfied with the original defence submitted. Consequently, Brute was asked to expand and provide further detail.<sup>41</sup> Brute's thinking was deeply apocalyptic. The Lollard relied heavily on the book of Revelation to shore up his arguments and often paraphrased key passages.

In one of his first defences, Brute argued that Rome was corrupt and referred to the seat of the Catholic Church as the 'daughter of Babylon'.<sup>42</sup> Following witness testimony of Brute's

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<sup>36</sup> M, Jurkowski, 'Who was Walter Brut,' *The English Historical Review*, 127: 525 (2012), pp. 285-302.

<sup>37</sup> Editorial commentary and additional information, 1570 edition, p 587; Jurkowski. 'Who was Walter Brut', pp. 285-302.

<sup>38</sup> Editorial commentary and additional information. 1570 edition, p 587.

<sup>39</sup> 'The story and proces agaynst Walter Brute', 1583 edition, p. 499.

<sup>40</sup> Jurkowski, 'Who was Walter Brut', p 286.

<sup>41</sup> 'The story and proces agaynst Walter Brute', 1583 edition, p.503

<sup>42</sup> 'The story and proces agaynst Walter Brute', 1583 edition, p.502.

alleged wrongdoings, Foxe includes the accused's statement of faith. In one example, Brute describes how an angel confirmed the fall of Babylon:

And thirdly of one mightye Aungell tooke vp a myll stone that was a very great one, and did cast it into the Sea, saying: with suche a violence as this is, shall that great Cittye Babylon be ouerthrowne, and shall no more bee founde.<sup>43</sup>

The action of the angel casting the millstone into the sea is prefixed with 'and thirdly.' However, none of the other scriptural events cited, such as the whore of Babylon fornicating with the Kings on Earth, Simon Magus and his subversive magic, nor the 1290 days referenced within Daniel include a numbered prefix.<sup>44</sup> This suggests that Brute presented the angel casting the millstone into the sea as the culmination of several events, which then triggered the fall of Babylon. The angel symbolises God's intervention, a common theme throughout this thesis. Brute's defence was confidently based on the premise that the book of Revelation held significant value in evidencing the corruption of Rome within his lifetime. This confidence can be contrasted against subsequent leading Reformation thinkers such as Zwingli and Calvin, who both expressed reservations over the validity of the Book of Revelation. Nevertheless, the expectation was that certain events were symptoms of a significant change, and the Second Coming should be anticipated.<sup>45</sup>

Shortly after this citation, Brute again referenced the angel in explaining the intricate and hidden meaning behind the beasts of the apocalypse, notably within a section in which he appears concerned with the accuracy of linking 'current' events to those referenced within Revelation. Brute began a new paragraph stating, 'Likewise is the proces of the Apocalips

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<sup>43</sup> 'The story and proces agaynst Walter Brute', 1583 edition, p.502.

<sup>44</sup> 'The story and proces agaynst Walter Brute', 1583 edition, p.502.

<sup>45</sup> A., Cunningham, and O.P Grell, *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*, (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2004) p. 51.

applied to the same imagined Antichrist, too much erroneously'.<sup>46</sup> Brute quotes extensively from Revelation and describes a slew of characters from the Beasts of the Sea and Earth, to the woman drinking the blood of the saints and martyrs. The reference to the angel with the millstone is interesting because it signifies Brute utilising angelic presence in his explanation of the chapter: 'And the angell expounding and telling him (the beast) the mistery of the woman'.<sup>47</sup>

In a defence concerning the power of priests, the agency of angelic presence appears to be more peripheral:

Because the aungel which shewed vnto Saint Iohn the destructiō of the mightie harlot sitting vpon many waters, with whō the kinges of the earth haue committed fornication, and al they which dwell vpon the earth are made dronke with þe wyne of her whoredome, sayd vnto him: And the woman which thou sawest, is the great citie which hath dominion aboue kings &c. And in dede in þe daies of Saint Iohn the whole world was subiect to the temporall Empire of the Citie of Rome, and afterwarde it was subiect to the spiritual Empire or dominion of the same.<sup>48</sup>

Brute's angel reveals in a vision to John the true extent of humankind's sinful nature. Brute links the destruction cited within Revelation to what he deemed the disastrous reign of the papacy in Rome. From Foxe's perspective, this was helpful evidence in demonstrating the long heritage of abuse by the Catholic Church. Again, this notion is reinforced by Foxe's marginal notes in which he agrees with Brute that Babylon was, in fact, the city of Rome. Foxe wrote, 'The citie of Rome, Babilon Apoc 18'.<sup>49</sup> It is also worth noting that Brute relied upon a scriptural angel to articulate his point more than once. Further on within the same defence, Brute describes angels ministering to Christ. Here, Brute outlined the system as he saw it:

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<sup>46</sup> 'The story and proces agaynst Walter Brute', 1583 edition, p.506.

<sup>47</sup> 'The story and proces agaynst Walter Brute', 1583 edition, p.506.

<sup>48</sup> 'The story and proces agaynst Walter Brute', 1583 edition, p.523.

<sup>49</sup> 'The story and proces agaynst Walter Brute', 1583 edition, p.523.

although that in the heauens the company of angels minister vnto him, he himselfe ministred or serued in earth, that he might teache vs humilitie, by which a man ascendeth into heauen, euen as by pride a man goeth downe into the bottomlesse pyt.<sup>50</sup>

Brute forms an eschatological framework and narrative to evidence all that was wrong with the Medieval Church. Within his schema, angels were on hand to restore balance, waiting to greet the faithful in heaven. Note the parallel of angels ministering to Christ in Heaven as Christ ministered to mankind on Earth. For Brute, angels played an essential role in the judgment of souls and salvation. Nevertheless, Brute was also keen not to overstate the agency of angels in the act of judgement:

He sitteth at the right hand of God the father almighty, vntill his enemies be made his footstoole. He being in very deed so muche better then the Aungelles, as he hath obteyned by inheritance a more excellent name then they.<sup>51</sup>

Although not cited within the source, Brute's statement is likely to be based on Hebrews 1. 3, which reads, 'After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs'.<sup>52</sup> Brute follows his explanation of angelic inheritance with, 'From thence he shall come to iudge the quick and the dead, accordingly to theyr workes, because the father hath geuen all iudgemēt to the sonne'.<sup>53</sup> Here, Brute limits the agency of angels, reducing the role angels played in the final judgement. In another example, Brute again emphasises the inferiority of angels:

By whych things it plainly appeareth, that credence is to be geuen neither to Iohn, nor yet to angell, if he teach any thing that is not agreeable to Christes doctrine. For Christ is aboue the Aungells, because that God infinitely passeth them in wisdome.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> 'The story and proces agaynst Walter Brute', 1583 edition, p.523.

<sup>51</sup> 'The story and proces agaynst Walter Brute', 1583 edition, p.502.

<sup>52</sup> Hebrews 3. 4.

<sup>53</sup> 'The story and proces agaynst Walter Brute', 1583 edition, p. 502.

<sup>54</sup> 'The story and proces agaynst Walter Brute', 1583 edition, p. 510.

Again, scriptural authority gave Brute the precedent he needed to highlight the lower status of angels compared to Christ. Quoting a passage from Revelation, Brute suggested that man should not place such confidence in anything other than God as: ‘Hee that commeth from heauen, is aboue all folkes: that which hee hath seene and heard, the same doth he witness, and yet his witnessing doth no body receiue’.<sup>55</sup> The apparent tension of the status of angels in comparison to Christ is an attempt on Brute’s part to demonstrate the long history of mankind misinterpreting and misrepresenting the word of God. Brute uses the example of Moses issuing the Ten Commandments after receiving his divinely inspired message from God to demonstrate the longevity of this error. According to Brute, it was not long before the early Christians ‘invented gloses by drawing the comaundementes of God backe to their own deedes’.<sup>56</sup>

This sentiment is again repeated further on in his defence:

Wherefore his doctrine must be obserued aboue all other doctrines, whether they be of Angels or of men, because that he could not nor would not erre in his teaching. But in mens doctrins there chanceth oftentimes to be error, and therefore we must forsake theyr doctrines, if clokedly or expresly they be repugnaunt to the doctrine of Christ. Mens doctrins being made for the peoples profit must be allowed and obserued, so that they be grounded vpon Christes doctrine, or at least be not repugnant to his words.<sup>57</sup>

Hierarchy is central to Brute’s general understanding of Revelation and his spiritual outlook. Brute’s use of angelic presence within his defences takes the form of two approaches. The first is that angels are key actors in many of the events recorded in Revelation, especially in conjunction with the idea of judgment. Brute cites multiple examples of angels playing an active role as witnesses to the judgment of souls, guiding John in his vision and casting Satan

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<sup>55</sup> ‘The story and proces agaynst Walter Brute’, 1583 edition, p. 510.

<sup>56</sup> ‘The story and proces agaynst Walter Brute’, 1583 edition, p. 511.

<sup>57</sup> ‘The story and proces agaynst Walter Brute’, 1583 edition, p. 502.

into the Sea. When Brute discusses angelic duties in relation to Christ, his approach shifts and angelic agency is consequently reduced.

Katharine Firth has suggested the Lollard Apocalypse was a 'universal and timeless vision of all that opposed Christ'.<sup>58</sup> Foxe's use of Brute's testimonials adds weight to Firth's argument. For example, the Lollard's arguments against the abuses of the Catholic Church indulgences and the fact that many of the processes and rituals were not scripturally grounded were important evidence of a precedent for Foxe to report on. The reforming zeal of fourteenth-century Lollardy had its place in the *Actes*. Still, the significance that Brute attached to the apocalypse appealed to Foxe and his outlook. Brute's defences neatly fed into the long heritage of abuse, or as Firth argues, a timeless vision of opposition to Christ. Andrew Cunningham and Ole P. Grell describe 'a general anxiety which found expression in and was stimulated by apocalyptic expectations and speculations which at certain times reached fever pitch within certain Protestant denomination groups in particular geographical locations'.<sup>59</sup> Even though Cunningham and Grell refer to sixteenth-century contemporary readings, the writings of Brute and other fourteenth-century reformers referenced in this and subsequent chapters provide important parallels to this 'general anxiety. Richard Bauckham, for example, argued that 'the Reformer's revival of Lollard tracts was clearly influential in apocalyptic interpretation as well as in other areas of theology'.<sup>60</sup> The research of the late A.G Dickens and Anne Hudson also suggest a link between the Lollard movement and the sixteenth-century religious reforms. Both Dickens and Hudson suggested the Lollards or Lollardy was a precursor to subsequent sixteenth-century English Protestantism.<sup>61</sup> More recently, Thomas

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<sup>58</sup> Firth. *The Apocalyptic Tradition in Reformation*. p.7.

<sup>59</sup> Cunningham, A., and Grell, O.P., *The Four Horsemen*, p. 51.

<sup>60</sup> Bauckham. *Tudor Apocalypse*. pp. 26-27.

<sup>61</sup> A.G, Dickens., *The English Reformation* (Pennsylvania State University Press: USA, 1993); Anne Hudson, *The Premature Reformation* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1988).

Freeman has reaffirmed the link between the Lollard movement and sixteenth-century

English Protestantism:

For English Protestants, whether dissenting or conforming, the work (*Actes and Monuments*) provided a bridge, connecting themselves, via the Lollards, the Henrician martyrs and the Marian martyrs, with the apostles and the martyrs of the early Church.<sup>62</sup>

It is through their protests against the Catholic Church and the use of Revelation as evidence of their complaints that the Marian and Henrician martyrs and the Lollards are connected.

Based on Brute's exegesis, historical and contemporary events are linked to those cited in Revelation in a similar way to Bale and Foxe's method.<sup>63</sup> Brute's reframing of Revelation suggests he utilised the emblems within the Book of Revelation to make sense of the events and society of which he was so critical. Brute provides a compendious treatment of corruption, cleverly crafted alongside the narrative of Revelation. According to Revelation, angels were the vanguards of these events and could be relied upon in times of crisis to intervene; they were important facilitators along the route to salvation. In his application of angelic presence, Brute appears to apply restrictions to the agency of angels when compared to the Marian readings. Whereas the Marian martyrs sometimes deviated away from scriptural precedent when it came to their use of angelic presence.

One example is when Brute omits the Archangel Michael's name from his description of the angel binding Satan, something Foxe also did centuries later. In his discussion of the role Christ played in the judgement of souls, again, Brute minimised the agency of angels and their role. This notion is particularly striking as angels within Brute's lifetime and until the Reformation were integral to medieval spirituality and the soteriological landscape. As

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<sup>62</sup> Thomas Freeman, *Over their Dead Bodies: Concepts of Martyrdom in the Late Medieval and Early Modern England*, in *Martyrs and Martyrdom in England 1400-1700*, (The Boydell Press: Woodbridge, 2007), p. 1.

<sup>63</sup> Firth. *The Apocalyptic Tradition*, p.91.

outlined within the introductory chapter, David Keck and other historians have attested to the significance of angelology to the medieval outlook; so significant it was habitual.<sup>64</sup> Brute's defences suggest his thinking was a valid precursor to sixteenth-century approaches to thinking and practises towards angels. The reduced visibility of named angels and specific duties evidence this much. That being said, to Brute and the Marian martyrs, angels played an essential role along the route to salvation. The heightened sense or awareness of an impending apocalypse potentially elevated the importance attributed to angels because of the role they played in the narrative of Revelation. Angels were representative of what was to come and judgment. Notions of end times are a consistent theme running throughout this thesis and suggest a close association with the idea of 'transformational change'. The angels of Revelation are key in triggering the sequence of events that all precede the Second Coming. Like Brute, the martyrs used these examples to link the events of Revelation to their time, adding weight to the idea that angels were on hand in times of crisis. Brute's thinking recorded in the *Actes* offered much in the way of a precedent for Foxe to establish his telling of English history and link to the letters, defences and statements of faith left by the Henrician and Marian martyrs.

### **Angels and Anticipated Change**

The sources evidence that the Marian martyrs closely linked angels to living in end times. Key to this association was the precedent of angels in the Book of Revelation triggering the events of the Apocalypse. These angelic duties were prominent within Brute's defences as well as Foxe's commentary notes. The Marian accounts show a continuation of this theme. Former Archdeacon of Winchester, John Philpot, martyred in December of 1555, had

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<sup>64</sup> Keck, *Angels and Angelology*, p. 212.

previously debated the institutionalisation of the Catholic Church with his inquisitor, Moreman.<sup>65</sup> Foxe included a full version of this exchange in all four editions.<sup>66</sup> Both Moreman and Philpot were at odds with each other over which came first Church or Scripture. Philpot was deeply critical of his interrogator's literal interpretation of Scripture; Moreman was clearly thinking of the Bible as an entity, a distinct text made up of the Gospels and the books which we would recognise today. Foxe wrote:

For he tooke the Scripture only to be that, which is wrytten by men in letters, wheras in very deede, all Prophecie, vttered by the spirite of God, was counted to be Scripture before it was wrytten in paper & inke, for that it was wrytten in the heartes, and grauen in the mindes, yea, and inspired in the mouthes of good men, and of Christes Apostles by the spirite of Christ.<sup>67</sup>

Instead, Philpot challenges Moreman's argument with the idea that Christianity existed and was evidenced through prophecy and history. Foxe described Philpot's understanding:

As the salutation of the angel was the scripture of Christe, and the word of God before it was written. At that Moreman cried, fie, fie, wondring that the Scripture of God shoulde be counted scripture, before it was wrytten, and affirmed that he had no knowledge that said so.<sup>68</sup>

In Philpot's thinking, paper and ink were preceded by the spiritual, which in turn inspired the hearts and minds of those to detect the word of God long before Christ was born. Philpot suggested that Old Testament prophecy was fulfilled with the Annunciation and the Archangel Gabriel's announcement of the Incarnation. Philpot argued the 'salutation of the angel was the scripture of Christ, and the word of God before it was written'.<sup>69</sup> It is worth

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<sup>65</sup> 'John Philpot, Queen Queen Mary, Disputation in the Conuocation house about the reall presence in Queene Mary', *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1583 edition), (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 22 August 2017], 1563 edition, p. 984; 1570 edition, p1616; 1576 edition p1372; 1583 edition, p1441.

<sup>66</sup> 'Philpot, Queen Queen Mary, Disputation in the Conuocation', 1583 edition, p. 1441.

<sup>67</sup> 'Philpot, Queen Queen Mary, Disputation in the Conuocation', 1583 edition, p. 1441.

<sup>68</sup> 'Philpot, Queen Queen Mary, Disputation in the Conuocation', 1583 edition, p. 1441.

<sup>69</sup> 'Philpot, Queen Queen Mary, Disputation in the Conuocation', 1583 edition, p. 1441.

pointing out that the Archangel Gabriel was traditionally associated with the Annunciation and is unmentioned in Philpot's response. Philpot used angelic presence frequently in his writings. Not referencing the archangel in his response is at odds with his overall style and application of angelic presence.

On the other hand, Foxe uses secondhand accounts, so Philpot may not have referenced the archangel, or Foxe could have missed the reference in writing the report. This could suggest a concerted effort or an emerging trend to reduce the visibility or agency of a particular angel. This approach is further evidenced by Foxe describing the binding of Satan as a Godly intervention rather than St Michael in his exegesis of Revelation.<sup>70</sup> Philpot's response solicited a biting rebuke from Moreman: 'fie, fie', this is somewhat counterbalanced by Foxe's marginal note which neatly summarised Philpot's argument: 'Scripture consisteth not onely in letters but is that which is inspired in the hartes of good men by the holy Ghost'.<sup>71</sup> Philpot tried to establish a clear connection between Mary's prophetic message and the foundation of Christianity. More broadly, the sources that follow the evidence of the link between angels signalling the beginning of a new era was an important trope to the sixteenth-century reformers. Further, angelic presence in specific scenarios was representative of the fulfilment of prophecy and anticipated change.

The iconography of the title page to the *Actes and Monuments* is an excellent visual representation of the significance of angels to Foxe's history. The image was used across the four editions, with notable changes restricted to the text over the four editions, as discussed in the preceding section. The traditional view is that the beautiful woodcuts which feature

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<sup>70</sup> Foxe, 'Exegesis of Revelation', 1583 edition, p 124.

<sup>71</sup> Foxe's marginal note on 'Philpot, Queen Queen Mary, Disputation in the Conuocation house about the reall presence', 1583 edition, p. 1441.

throughout the martyrdom reports demonstrate that the *Actes* was intended to reach audiences far beyond the literate elite and was accessible to all of English society.<sup>72</sup> Elizabethan authorities were invested in making the *Actes* accessible to all, by canon decree the text was set up for public reading in cathedrals and churches. Warren Woodend stated it was as much a civic duty as it was religious to read the great book.<sup>73</sup> However, the old adage that a copy of the *Actes* was available in every Church and public place in England is more than likely an exaggeration.<sup>74</sup> Despite this, the four editions published in Foxe's lifetime, followed by five more editions, the last one published in 1684, are testament enough to the overriding popularity and significance of the text.<sup>75</sup> Tessa Watt's work has demonstrated that some of the martyr stories were turned into popular ballads, contributing significantly to the 'Foxeian view of history as the progressive Protestant struggle towards true religion'.<sup>76</sup> Mark Bayer's more recent article evidences how episodes of the *Actes* were staged in the first decade of the seventeenth century in famous London theatres:

Both the Red Bull and the Fortune are usually described as purveyors of popular low-culture entertainment to often raucous audiences who, because of their limited access to other forms of news media and political and religious propaganda, might be more susceptible to the ideologically motivated statements disseminated in dramatic performance.<sup>77</sup>

It may not be possible to be truly confident of the audience demographics and the numbers the *Actes* reached. Despite Collinson's doubts that 'an adequate reception history of Foxe will ever be written', it is still reasonable to suggest that the title page iconography would have been a familiar sight to members of 16th-century English society since many editions were

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<sup>72</sup> Evenden, and Freeman, *Religion and the Book in Early Modern England*, p. 231.

<sup>73</sup> Wooden, *John Foxe*, Preface.

<sup>74</sup> Haller, *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*, p. 13.

<sup>75</sup> Haller, *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*, p. 13.

<sup>76</sup> Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety*, p. 91.

<sup>77</sup> Mark Bayer, 'Staging Foxe at the Fortune and Red Bull,' *Fance and Reformation / Renaissance et Réforme*, 27:1 (2003), p.62.

produced and the stories within were refashioned into popular ballads and plays.<sup>78</sup> The iconography of the title page is significant because it is where angels are depicted as assuming a key role within the narrative of salvation. Using Ruth Luborsky's method of attributing distinct categories to the iconography of the woodcuts, the 'Announcement' category, in which the page 'announces a change in the major text or a summary of it' is the most applicable to the title page.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Collinson, *This England*, p 198.

<sup>79</sup> Luborsky, R. 'The Illustrations: Their Pattern and Plan,' p. 68.

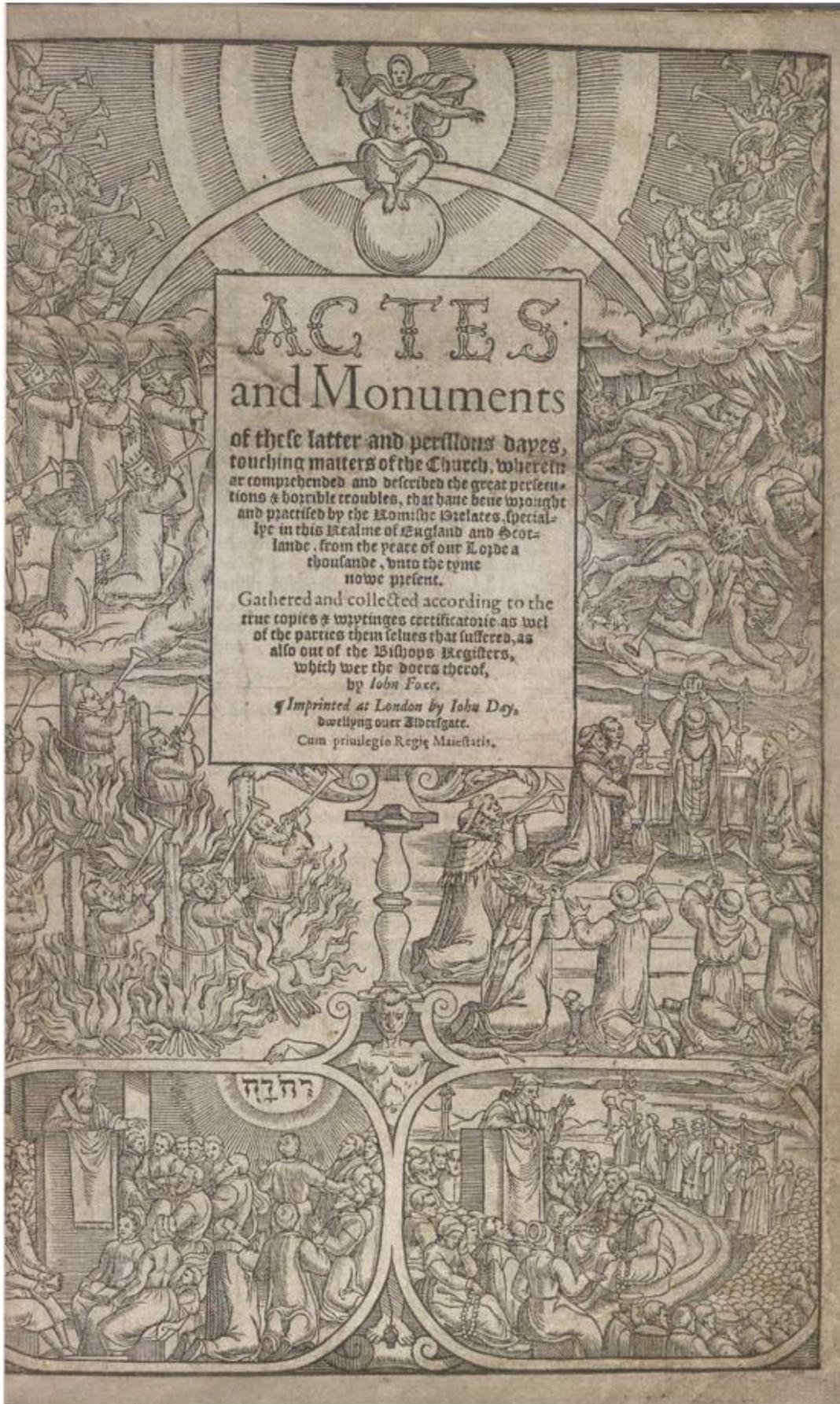


Figure 1 Title page 1583 edition the *Actes and Monuments*

The title page depicts the Last Judgement. On the left is the true Protestant Church, and on the right is the false Catholic Church. The confrontational scene is reminiscent of another popular text of the time, John Bale's *Image of both Churches*, published in 1545 by John Bale, the first early English Reformation exegesis of Revelation and a text to which Foxe was greatly indebted.<sup>80</sup> The conflict between the 'true' and the 'false' Church naturally focuses on the polarity between the Protestant and Catholic schools of thought, isolating the English people into one of two camps. The angels placed above the adversarial scene cement the idea of shared heritage and, simultaneously, a stark polemical divide. Sitting beneath Christ, the angels blow their trumpets, announcing the arrival of imminent judgement. The remainder of the title page is taken up by striking imagery; beneath the angels, the risen saints kneel on Christ's right, with trumpets at their lips and palms in their hands. Further below, the martyrs blow their trumpets whilst they burn at the stake. Beneath the martyrs, Protestants sit listening to the preaching of the Word, whilst some congregation members follow the reading with a copy of the Bible. On the other side of the divide, instead of the risen saints, the Catholic priests are cast out of Heaven by a host of demons. The congregation below them kneel at the Elevation of the Host.

Darren Oldridge, in a survey of supernatural belief in Tudor and Stuart England, commented on the shared heritage and dichotomy within the scene, concluding the 'angels that adorned Foxe's book could serve only one side or the other: they were the invisible guard of the one true church'.<sup>81</sup> Angels are a shared theological and cultural space for both Catholics and Protestants, and as Oldridge argues, it was this dichotomy which 'underlined the conviction that there was one true and timeless revelation, and the reformed ministry was its

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<sup>80</sup> Firth. *The Apocalyptic Tradition*, p.83.

<sup>81</sup> Oldridge, *The Supernatural in Tudor and Stuart England*, p. 100.

custodian'.<sup>82</sup> The title page to the *Actes* reflects Foxe's preoccupation with the prophecies of Revelation and their bearing on England and represents the tension in the shared heritage of the Catholic and Protestant Churches. Richard Bauckham observed in the 1970s that the doctrine of the two churches was a basic tenet of the Tudor Protestant apocalyptic outlook. Bauckham argued it was 'frequently an underlying assumption even when not explicitly stated'.<sup>83</sup> Human history, according to Foxe, was therefore defined by its conflict between the two churches, though this notion is not new. Both Bale and Foxe cited Augustine's the *City of God* and were deeply influenced by the metaphor of the two cities, which found its origins in Psalm 87. This dichotomy was refashioned and utilised to demonstrate the abuse of the Catholic Church. Both reformers used this polemic to frame their versions of history in England, with both interpretations neatly bound up within the narrative of Revelation, of which the angels were the principal actors. The title page to *Actes and Monuments* is all the more significant because it is the only visual representation of angels within the text across the four editions. This can be contrasted with Bale's *Image of Both Churches* which included twenty-five woodcuts across four hundred pages, of which twenty included images of angels.<sup>84</sup> Bale's writing is more explicitly a commentary on Revelation; with a classic format of the scriptural passage and shored up with explanatory notes. In the same way that Dante Alighieri offered angelic guides to escort his readers through the nine circles of heaven and hell, Bale offered armies of angels to guide his readers through the chapters of Revelation. Another relevant text in the context of powerful visual representations is the Albert Dürer edition of Revelation, written in Latin and German and published in 1498. Dürer included fifteen illustrations, but it was the picture of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, according

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<sup>82</sup> Oldridge, *The Supernatural in Tudor and Stuart England*, p. 100.

<sup>83</sup> Bauckham. *Tudor Apocalypse*. p 54.

<sup>84</sup> John Bale, *The image of both Churches after the most wonderfull and heauenly Reuelation of saint Iohn the Euangelist, contayning a very fruitfull exposition or paraphrase vpon the same. Wherin it is conferred vwith the other scriptures, and most auctorised histories*. Compyled by Iohn Bale an exyle also in thys lyfe, for the faithfull testimony of Iesu. (S.Mierdman: Antewrp, 1545).

to Andrew Cunningham and Ole Peter Grell, that was celebrated and resonated with readers, as the image encapsulated the anxieties and preoccupations of the age.<sup>85</sup> Much in the way the title page to the *Actes* depicted a discernible tension between the two churches and angels announcing the arrival of a change in the tide, Dürer's Four Horsemen portrayed the onset of war, famine, disease and death – heralding in great changes.

There is further evidence to suggest that angels were, to sixteenth-century early Protestant reformers, welcome vanguards of the second coming. John Day's collection of prayers (largely borrowed from Heinrich Bullinger's *Christian Prayers and Holie Meditations*) is a good example. One example includes the line: 'with thousandes of Saintes, with Angels of thy power, with a mighty cry, shoute of an Archangell, and blast of a trumpe, soddenly as a lightning which shineth from the Earth'.<sup>86</sup> Here, angels sounding the trumpets, signify the end of the present day and the birth of a new age; an appealing notion to those living in a state of persecution.

Marian martyr John Bradford expressed similar sentiments in a letter to his congregation. Bradford's life, examination, martyrdom and letters to his friends, family and network are featured in all four editions of the *Actes and Monuments*.<sup>87</sup> His letters are numerous and an excellent resource. According to the *Actes and Monuments* online editorial commentary, the material on Bradford was badly organised in the 1563 edition, with additional material added to the 1570 edition.<sup>88</sup> Within the letter, Bradford warned his congregation, 'Here is not our home, therefore let vs accordingly consider thinges, always having before our eyes the

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<sup>85</sup> Cunningham, and Grell, *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*. p 4.

<sup>86</sup> Day, John. *Christian Prayers and Mediations* (London, 1569.), pp 39-40.

<sup>87</sup> *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or TAMO (1563 edition). Editorial commentary and additional information. (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [27 March 2019], 1563 edition, p. 1241.

<sup>88</sup> Editorial commentary and additional information. 1563 edition, p. 1241.

heavenly Jerusalem Heb. 12. Apoc.21 22 the way thether to be by persecutions'.<sup>89</sup> Bradford links the angels of Hebrews and Revelation to his present time. By using the theme of persecution he persuasively suggests the angels sounding their trumpets are to be contemplated and anticipated. Bradford goes on to draw on the parallels of persecution faced by Jesus Christ and the martyrs: like Christ, the martyrs will rise again, and the angels announce this change with the familiar sound of the trumpet. The extract in full reads:

The deare frendes of God, howe they haue gone it after the example of our Sauioure Iesus Christ, whose footestepes let vs followe euen to the gallowes, if God so will, not doubting but that as he within three dayes rose agayne immortall: euen so wee shall doe in our tyme: that is, when the trumpe shall blow, and the Angell shall shoote, and the sonne of man shall appeare in the cloudes, with innumerable saintes and Aungels in maiestie and greate glory: then shall the dead arise, and we shall be caught vp into the cloudes to meete the Lorde, and so be alwayes with hym. Comfort your selues with these wordes, and praye for me for Gods sake. E carcere.<sup>90</sup>

Here, Bradford confirms innumerable saints and angels would be on hand and ready for those who would be saved at the second coming of Christ. Importantly, these anticipated events and changes were all signposted by an angel in response to the blow of the trumpet.<sup>91</sup> The inclusion of the 'saintes' is an additional reference to the scriptural martyred saints in which Bradford aligns with the Marian martyrs. This is confirmed when Bradford places the second coming within his lifetime. The familiar motif of the trumpets sounding and the angels announcing this marks the beginning of the end of the current epoch of time and a new heavenly order. The angels sounding the trumpets of the apocalypse is a motif that must have appealed to those who were persecuted for their faith, the evidence they found in scripture. This trend was subsequently enhanced by visual representations like Bale's *Two Churches*,

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<sup>89</sup> 'Queene Mary ghostly letters of M John Bradford Holy martyr,' in Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1583 edition) (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.johnfoxe.org> [Accessed: 02 March 2019]; 1583 edition, p.1660.

<sup>90</sup>'Queene Mary ghostly letters of M John Bradford Holy martyr,' in Foxe, 1583 edition, p. 1660.

<sup>91</sup>'Queene Mary ghostly letters of M John Bradford Holy martyr,' in Foxe, 1583 edition, p. 1660.

Dürer's *Four Horsemen* and the title page of the *Actes and Monuments*. It ensured its adoption and repetition into the Protestant religious rhetoric and eschatological outlook.

Heinrich Bullinger repeats this motif in a letter to his close friend, the former Bishop of Winchester and Gloucester, John Hooper, written in October of 1554, in which angelic agency is linked to the idea of an imminent change. Richard Bauckham has argued that out of all of the continental influences on English apocalypticism; it was Zwingli's successor Heinrich Bullinger and his defence of the apostolic canonicity of Revelation, which endorsed the 'principle of the historicist exegesis.'<sup>92</sup> This approach interprets the book of Revelation as a continuous prophecy of the course of the church and world history, from the Incarnation to End Times, (or sometimes from the Creation to the End)<sup>93</sup> Bullinger's canonical defence was not the only indicator of his influence on the English apocalyptic narrative. During the Henrician exile, Bullinger housed John Hooper and several early reformers who would be later martyred under Queen Mary; thereby exposing many influential reformers to Continental ideas.<sup>94</sup> Diarmaid MacCulloch suggested that in the early 1550s, England had a good chance of taking the lead internationally as the centre for Protestant reform.<sup>95</sup> This advance was hindered by Hooper's zealous refusal to be consecrated wearing the traditional vestments. Had he conceded, MacCulloch argues, Hooper might have led the English Reformation to be as thoroughgoing as anything in Switzerland.<sup>96</sup> Foxe certainly attributed significant honour and praise to the Swiss reformer, introducing Bullinger's letter and describing him as the 'super-intendent in the Citie of Zuricke' and as having a 'singulare loue

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<sup>92</sup> Bauckham, *Tudor Apocalypse*, p.45.

<sup>93</sup> Bauckham, *Tudor Apocalypse*, p.15 and p.45.

<sup>94</sup> 'A fruitfull and godly letter of M. Bullenger to M. Hooper martyr', *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1583 edition) (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.johnfoxe.org> [Accessed: 02 March 2017], 1570 edition, p. 1731; 1576 edition, p.1470; 1583 edition, p. 1542.

<sup>95</sup> D MacCulloch, 'The Myth of the English Reformation', *Journal of British Studies* 30: 1 (1991), p. 6.

<sup>96</sup> D MacCulloch, 'The Myth of the English Reformation'. p. 6.

and tender affection toward Maister Hooper'.<sup>97</sup> It is also worth noting that this particular letter appears from the 1570 edition onwards, with no significant difference other than the spelling of the word angel. This letter appears in Miles Coverdale's collection of letters written by the Marian martyrs, *Certain Most Godly, Fruitful and Comfortable Letters of such True Saintes and Holy Martyrs as in the Late Bloodye Persecution Gave their Lyves* published in 1554. According to the critical apparatus of the *Actes and Monuments* online, 'it was very likely that Bull, in obtaining this letter, prompted Bullinger to send his memories to Foxe, or to Bull who passed it on to Foxe'.<sup>98</sup> The letter is a poignant final parting from one friend to another, with Bullinger signing off: 'farewell and farewell eternally....you know the hand H.B'.<sup>99</sup>

Throughout this thesis, there are examples of letters and words of encouragement being shared amongst the prisoners. Bullinger's spiritual reassurances must have been some comfort to Hooper's and others if circumstances allowed. In the letter, Bullinger cited a passage from Revelation:

For so agayne sayth the Aungell of the Lord: If any man worshyp the beast and his Image and receiue his marke in his forehead, or on his hand, the same shall drinke of the wrath of God, yea of the wyne which is poured into the cup of his wrath, and he shall be tormented in fire and brimstone before the holy Aungels, and before the Lambe: and the smoke of their tormētes shall ascend euermore, and they shall haue no rest day nor night, whiche worshyp the beast and his Image, and whosoouer receiueth the print of his name. Here is the patience of Saintes: here are they that keepe the commaundementes of God, and the fayth of Iesus.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> 'A fruitfull and godly letter of M. Bullenger to M. Hooper martyr', 1583 edition, p. 1542.

<sup>98</sup> *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or TAMO (1570 edition). Editorial commentary and additional information. (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [17 March 2020], 1570 edition, p. 1731.

<sup>99</sup> 'A fruitfull and godly letter of M. Bullenger to M. Hooper martyr', 1583 edition, p. 1542.

<sup>100</sup> 'A fruitfull and godly letter of M. Bullenger to M. Hooper martyr', 1583 edition, p. 1542.

Bullinger affirms the parallel between the Marian prisoners and the martyred saints, suggesting the Marian martyrs were actors within an apocalyptic drama. This notion is enhanced further within his subsequent statement: 'The Lorde Iesus shew pittie vppon the Realme of Englande, and illuminate the same with his holy Spirite to the glorye of his name, and the saluation of soules'.<sup>101</sup> Bullinger links the apocalyptic drama to the English state yet interestingly it is Foxe's marginal notes in which the nation, the apocalypse and angels are linked together: 'In this time of antichrist is the patience and faith of God's children tried whereby they shall overcome all his tyranny read (Matthew 24) in which Jesus Christ describes to his disciples signs of end times'.<sup>102</sup> In Matthew 24, Christ describes a number of familiar signs which point to the second coming: false messiahs, wars, natural disasters, but it is the angels which herald in the new age: 'angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other'.<sup>103</sup> In citing Matthew 24, Foxe reinforces Bullinger's notion of the English state in tyranny – adding much weight to his use of Revelation with its angelic warning of a false religion. Foxe's marginal notes endorse Bullinger's letter, affirming angels as the facilitators of these anticipated changes and their closely associated role in judgement. It is worth noting that although Bullinger referenced Queen Mary's persecution in England several times, his spiritual guidance and advice could be interpreted as an indication of the overall success of the Protestant faith outside of England. Bullinger refers to 'the word of God increaseth dayly in that part of Italy that is neare vnto vs, and in Fraunce' – an attempt to update the evangelicals on the collective success of the religious reforms across Europe.<sup>104</sup> This could also be extended to Foxe linking the narrative of Revelation to the events in Marian England and his time of writing: 'In this time of antichrist' is to simply reference the Pope's supremacy. Here,

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<sup>101</sup> 'A fruitfull and godly letter of M. Bullenger to M. Hooper martyr', 1583 edition, p. 1542.

<sup>102</sup> 'A fruitfull and godly letter of M. Bullenger to M. Hooper martyr', 1583 edition, p. 1542.

<sup>103</sup> Matthew 24. 31.

<sup>104</sup> 'A fruitfull and godly letter of M. Bullenger to M. Hooper martyr', 1583 edition, p. 1542.

Foxe's telling of English history is clearly linked to Revelation, in which angels were key to signposting the advent of the Second Coming.

Another excellent example of the link between angels and anticipated change can be found in an exchange between Marian Martyr, Robert Smith and the Catholic Bishop Bonner. Foxe included Smith's accounts of his examination from the 1563 edition of the *Actes* onwards with his letters and an account of the martyrdom included in the four editions.<sup>105</sup> Smith, a clerk from Windsor, Berkshire, was vocal in defence of his Protestant beliefs and consequently condemned by Bonner and burned in August 1555.<sup>106</sup> In a heated exchange between Smith, the bishop and several unnamed officials, Smith challenged his inquisitors and asked where exactly they were when Edward was King. Bonner's response was, 'we were in England'.<sup>107</sup> Smith retorted with:

Yea, but then ye had the faces of men, but nowe yee haue put on Lyons faces again, as sayth S. Iohn: Ye shew your selues now as full of malice as ye may be. For ye haue for euery time a viser: yea, & if an other king Edward shoulde arise, ye would then say, Downe with the Pope, for hee is Antichrist, and so are all his Angels.<sup>108</sup>

Although the citation is unreferenced within the exchange, Smith's response is strikingly similar to Revelation 4, where the angel leads John to the heavenly thrones, twenty-four elders and the four beasts. Revelation 4. 7 reads, 'the first beast was like a lion, and the second like a calf and the third beast had a face of a man, and the fourth beast was like a

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<sup>105</sup> Editorial commentary and additional information. (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [27 March 2019] 1563 edition, p. 1321.

<sup>106</sup> Thomas Freeman, 'Table of Foxe's Marian Martyrs' in *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or TAMO (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 11 March 2020].

<sup>107</sup> 'Martydome and Letters of Robert Smith', *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or TAMO (1583 edition) (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.johnfoxe.org> [Accessed: 11 March 2018], 1563 edition, p. 1326; 1570 edition, p. 1912; 1576 edition, p.1630; 1583 edition, p. 1717.

<sup>108</sup> 'Martydome and Letters of Robert Smith', 1583 edition, p. 1717.

flying eagle'. The four beasts of Revelation are traditionally linked to the four evangelists; the man is associated with Matthew, the calf Luke, the lion Mark and the eagle John. By referencing the inquisitor's former tenure under the Protestant King Edward, their subsequent support of the Catholic Queen Mary, and the antichrist and his angels, Smith argues that the inquisitors are representative of disorder as opposed to the world order signified by the four beasts of Revelation.

Bishop William Fulke, in his commentary on Revelation, wrote of the same passage in 1557, 'the Lyon holdeth the chiefe place amongst the beastes, the oxe is most profitable amongst the same beastes, the man is ruler over all living creatures, the eagle is called the chief of soules, under these four shapes this vision doth comprehend all other living creatures'.<sup>109</sup> Here, Fulke links the passage to universal laws, linking the four beasts to order and temporal organisation. Heinrich Bullinger, in his *A Hundred Sermons upon the Apocalypse of Jesus Christ*, published in 1561, directly linked the four beasts of Revelation to the monarchy:

and some here forged the four Monarchies of the worlde, and every beaste had his face, and his bodye five wings, and the same ful of eyes within, as also they, bodies were full of eyes. The firste represented in shape and fashion a lion, the second a calfe, the third a man, and the fourth a flying egle.<sup>110</sup>

The notion of the state transforming under a specific leader is an important message in Robert Smith, Fulke and Bullinger's expositions. Significantly, Smith does not reference the angel of Ezekiel, as the subsequent verse in Revelation does. Instead, he refers to the 'Antichrist, and his angels'.<sup>111</sup> Fulke likens those who have forsaken all created things to be worse than monsters suggesting they should be so far from 'immatatynge the Aungeles and other

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<sup>109</sup> Fulke, William. *Prælections vpon the sacred and holy Reuelation of S. Iohn, written in latine by William Fulke Doctor of Diuinitie, and translated into English by George Gyffard*. (Thomas Purefoot: London, 1570) p. 29.

<sup>110</sup> Bullinger, Heinrich. *A hundred sermons vpon the Apocalips of Iesu Christe*, (John Day: London, 1561) p.149.

<sup>111</sup> 'Martydome and Letters of Robert Smith', 1583 edition, p. 1717.

creatures in setting for the praises of God, that they may seeme almoste to have conspired with the devils'.<sup>112</sup> In linking the dynastic rulers of the past, present and future, we are again confronted with the idea that angels (even the antichrist's) are representative of a new epoch of time and that Revelation was key in the telling of English history.

The sources discussed so far evidence individuals, some relatively high-ranking Protestants, all linking angelic presence to transformational change. Isolation, fear, and anxiety are natural reactions to the prospect of persecution, imprisonment, and martyrdom. The Book of Revelation correlated with the events in Marian England and occupied a central place within the reformers' outlook. This correlation between the scriptural past and present is evidenced by the wave of commentaries on Revelation with Bale at the vanguard in 1547. Angelic presence within the apocalyptic narrative was key in triggering the series of events in Revelation moving forward and is reflected within this collection of sources. The text of the 1583 title page, the iconography and the scriptural citation of Revelation 7. 9 all combine to evidence angels assuming an important role in Foxe's framing of English history, a by-product of the increasing importance and significance of Revelation to early Protestants. Angels are depicted as ambassadors of anticipated, transformational and imminent change. Angelic presence in this context was significant for two reasons; it was an important theme in the early reformers' approach and preparation for what they believed to be their Last Days. It also assisted Foxe in his promoting a powerful message of resistance to the Catholic Church.

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<sup>112</sup> Fulke, *Prælections*, p.30.

## Judgement

The following section considers the theme of judgement and closely examines a range of sources, largely based upon Revelation 14. 8-10, in which an angel issues a warning to St John:

And the third Angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or on his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, yea, of the pure wine, which is poured into the cup of his wrath, and he shall be tormented in fire and brimstone before the holy Angels, and before the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment shall ascend evermore; and they shall have no rest day nor night, which worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the print of his name.<sup>113</sup>

Here, the angel reminds those who repeatedly reject God that they will suffer eternal death.

Interestingly, several sources that reference this reading all demonstrate an element of creative license on the author's part. John Bale's exegesis of this same passage within *Bothe Churches* is almost three pages long, in comparison to the original verse of several lines.<sup>114</sup>

Moreover, it contains a passage of beautiful prose describing the angels bearing witness to the torture of the blasphemers: 'and this shall in the sight of the angels, which are not only the spirits of heaven but also the church of the faithful'.<sup>115</sup> This simple line reinforces the idea that angels are witnesses and always on hand to regulate human behaviour. Although the angels live seemingly 'unseen' within the celestial realm, they are always aware of the lives of humans on earth. Several martyrs reference this particular passage, including small nuances worthy of note. Walter Brute's final defence in the *Actes* included the following statement:

My counsell is, let the buyer beware of those markes: because that after the fall of Babylon, if any man hath worshipped the beast and her image, & hath reciued the marke vpon his forehead, & vpon his hand, he shall drinke of the wine of gods wrath, which is mixed with the wyne in the cup of his anger, and he shalbe tormented in fire & brymstone in the sight of the holy angels, and in the sight

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<sup>113</sup> Revelation 14. 9-11.

<sup>114</sup> Bale. *The image of both Churches*, pp 251-255.

<sup>115</sup> Bale. *The image of both Churches*, p.255.

of the Lambe: and the smoke of their tormentes shall euer more ascend, although he looke for a recompence, small, mean, or great, of the beast, or els the nūber of his name.<sup>116</sup>

In his interpretation of Revelation 14. 8-10, Brute adapts the angel issuing the warning to 'my counsel,' another example of an omitted angelic role. Brute's earlier accounts, along with this extract, evidence the same approach and could provide evidence of a correlation between the Lollards and the subsequent sixteenth-century reform application of angelic presence. Indeed, Margaret Aston has argued, 'He [Foxe] provided it [The Church of England] with a tradition, with the historical evidence of spiritual ancestry reaching back through the annals of English martyrs towards the pure standards of the primitive apostolic church'.<sup>117</sup> This spiritual ancestry may also be extended to include a tradition of scriptural exegesis.

A caveat to the theory of historical continuity is Brute's reference to 'his counsel.' which could be deemed an allusion to the guidance of an angel. Although the traditional duty of angelic guidance is arguably absent from the source, Brute's statement could be interpreted as presenting himself as having received a divine message by either the direct counsel of an angel or, at the very least, inspired by the scriptural passage in which the citation is rooted. At the time of writing his defence, angelic belief had not been stripped or sanitised by the religious reforms of the sixteenth century. Brute may have quoted Revelation and articulated it purposefully to suggest he was reciting guidance directly. Indeed, the notion of angels witnessing the torment of souls is a key theme repeated in all subsequent interpretations of Revelation 14. 8-10 cited by the Marian martyrs. Specifically, 'he shall be tormented in fire & brimstone in the sight of the holy angels, and in the sight of the Lambe: and the smoke of their tormentes shall euer more ascend,' is repeated across the selection of sources penned by

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<sup>116</sup> 'The story and proces agaynst Walter Brute', 1583 edition, p524.

<sup>117</sup> Aston, *Survival or Revival*, p.169.

Brute and the Marian martyrs in their citing of Revelation 14. 8-10.<sup>118</sup> This is significant as this passage highlights the importance of angelic agency to the role of judgement, as the angels bear witness to humanity's sin alongside Christ. In the examples which follow, the only notable variations are in the absence or presence of the angel issuing the warning.

This is evident in a letter written by Marian martyr John Bradford to his congregation. In his letter, Bradford reminds his followers that their temporal life was a precursor; his appeal is drenched in revelatory language, and the address suggests to his congregation that they should all be ready to confess their sins and face imminent judgement.<sup>119</sup> Bradford wrote:

For wee haue taught you no fables nor tales of men, or our owne fantasies, but the very word of GOD, which we are ready with our lyues (God so inhabling vs, as we trust he will) to confirme, and by the sheading of our blouds in all patience and humble obedience to the superior powers, to testifie and seale vp, as well that you might be more certaine of the doctrine, as that you myght ready to confesse the same before this wicked world, knowyng that if we confesse Christ and his truth before men, hee will confesse vs before his father in heauen: if so be we bee ashamed hereof for losse of lyfe, friends or goods, he wil be ashamed of vs before his father, and his holy Angels in heauen.<sup>120</sup>

There is no fire and brimstone in this reading, nor is there smoke ascending the lofty heights of Heaven. What is apparent is that angels are presented in a way that suggests they assume a role in the act of judgement. Bradford argues that since his congregation was certain of the doctrine, it was up to them to spread the Word of God amongst a society beset by false religion. This passage is emotive, powerful, and stark. It highlights that the early reformers felt Marian England was so corrupt it could penetrate the realm of Heaven. Conversely, if Bradford and his congregation were pained by the loss of temporal life, friends or property, they would be judged unfavourably by Christ, God and the angels. The Catholic orthodoxy had no place in the reforming world, and this is the truth Bradford sought to communicate to

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<sup>118</sup> 'The story and proces agaynst Walter Brute', 1583 edition, p524.

<sup>119</sup> 'Ghostly letters of M. John Bradford martyr in Foxe', The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO (1583 edition) (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.johnfoxe.org> [Accessed: 11 March 2018], 1570 edition, p. 1872; 1576, p.1594; 1583 edition, p.1675.

<sup>120</sup> 'Ghostly letters of M. John Bradford martyr', 1583 edition, p.1675.

his congregation. Foxe also had a hand in shaping Bradford's warning. Within the marginal notes, he stated: 'Harken to your preachers as the Thessalonians did to Paule: that is, conferre their sayings with the scriptures, & if they sound not thereafter, the morning light shall not shyne vpon them'.<sup>121</sup> Here, Foxe links the salvation of the reformers to the morning light, based upon Proverbs 4. 18, in which it is suggested the path to righteousness and perfection can only be completed once the soul has reached Heaven. This is quite the contrast to the scenario depicted by Bradford. Both Foxe and Bradford reinforced the notion of the individual having an active part to play in securing their salvation through the close reading of Scripture and maintaining a firm resistance to the Catholic Church. Neither Bradford nor Foxe reference the scriptural passage which inspired the extract. Yet, despite this omission, the overall structure and language are strikingly similar to the final lines of Revelation 14. 10. The more faithful readings of the same passage tend to include St John's angel giving the warning, as noted in the extract of Heinrich Bullinger's letter to John Hooper.

Another source in which the angelic guide is omitted from the reading was written by Marian martyr Richard Gibson and formed one of seven questions he prepared for Bishop Edmund Bonner. Thomas Freeman's table of *Foxe's Marian Martyrs* describes Gibson as a literate gentleman, who was burned as a heretic in November 1557.<sup>122</sup> The editorial commentary suggests that Gibson was a freewiller, but what is missing from Foxe's account of the martyr is that he converted to what Foxe would regard as orthodox/predestinarian leanings.<sup>123</sup>

Gibson's seventh article read:

What the beast is, the which maketh warre with the Sayntes of God, and doth not onely kill them, but also will suffer none to buy nor sell, but such as worship his Image, or receiue his marke in

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<sup>121</sup> Foxe's marginal notes, 'Ghostly letters of M. John Bradford martyr', 1583 edition, p.1675.

<sup>122</sup> Thomas Freeman, 'Table of Foxe's Marian Martyrs'.

<sup>123</sup> Editorial commentary and additional information, 1563 edition, p. 1721.

theyr right handes, or in theyr foreheades, his name or the number of his name, or do worship his Image, which by the iuste and terrible sentence of God already decreed, shalbe punished in fire and brimstone before the holy Angels and before the lambe: and they shall haue no rest day nor night, but the smoake of their torment shall ascend vp for euermore.<sup>124</sup>

Like Brute, Gibson omits the angel in warning St John, and the angelic function is again reduced. In his reading, Gibson questions the nature of the beast that had declared war against the 'Sayntes of God'. Gibson seems to have made a comparison or analogy between the 'Sayntes of God' and the Marian martyrs. Unlike Bradford, Gibson does not link confession to the angelic duty of witnessing divine punishment and eternal damnation. Nevertheless, the theme of judgment is neatly articulated with angels witnessing man's transgressions alongside Christ. The tone of this extract is more biting when compared to Brute's interpretation. Gibson was writing after he had faced trial and the extract formed one of nine questions put to Bishop Bonner.<sup>125</sup> It is perhaps with a sense of irony Gibson introduced the theme of prophecy with his reference to the 'iuste and terrible sentence of God already decreed'.<sup>126</sup> This statement could arguably be about his sentence, or to the deterministic nature of Predestination which he was at odds with, given Freeman's classification of Gibson as a 'freewiller'.<sup>127</sup> Gibson's interpretation of Revelation 14. 8-10 centres on the clash between the antichrist and the 'Sayntes of God', enhancing the ever-present dichotomy between the martyred saints of Revelation and the Marian prisoners. The role of the angel within Gibson's reading ensures the narrative of judgement and eventual salvation are highlighted whilst affirming the martyr's position in opposing the Catholic governing powers. This is further evidenced by the martyrs sometimes comparing

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<sup>124</sup> 'Articles of Richard Gibson', in Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1583 edition) (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.johnfoxe.org> [Accessed: 24 December 2018], 1576 edition, p.1947; 1583 edition, p. 2052.

<sup>125</sup> 'Articles of Richard Gibson', p 2052. Foxe wrote in the marginal notes, 'Gibson's questions or demands put to B.Boner'.

<sup>126</sup> 'Articles of Richard Gibson', p 2052.

<sup>127</sup> Thomas Freeman, 'Table of Foxe's Marian Martyrs'.

themselves to the Israelite exiles of Exodus. Persecution is not a new trope, and the correlations the martyrs drew between their suffering and the narrative of Revelation suggest that they and Foxe believed they were living in end times. Judgement for the martyrs was something they could look forward to in defeating their enemies for eternity, whilst they would confidently reside with the martyred saints. For Foxe, it was further evidence of the need to defeat the Catholic Church.

In contrast to Brute, Bradford and Gibson omitted the angel guiding John in Revelation 14. 8-10, there are further examples given by contemporary martyrs in which the angelic guide is present. John Hullier, a minister and scholar whom Foxe described as ‘zealous and earnest in that doctrine of truthe,’ was martyred in April of 1556 and included the entire passage referencing the angelic warning.<sup>128</sup> In a letter to his congregation, Hullier wrote:

Nowe (most deare Christians) hauing the sweete comfort of Gods sauing health, and being confirmed wt hys free spirit (be he only praised therefore) am constrayned in my conscience, thinkyng it my verye duetie to admonishe you, as ye tender the saluation of your soules, by al maner of meanes to separate youre selues from the companie of the Popes hirelings, considering what is sayd in the Reuelation of S. Iohn, by the Aungell of God, touching all men. The woordes be these: If any man worship the Beast and his Image, and receiue his marke in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drinke the wine of the wrathe of God, whiche is powred into the cuppe of his wrathe, and hee shall be punished with fire and brimstone before the holye Angels and before the Lambe, and the smoke of their torment ascendeth vp euermore.<sup>129</sup>

Hullier’s letter is littered with scriptural citations, referenced by Foxe in the marginalia. In this example, the passage begins with a pious and sensitive introduction to a stark warning. Hullier references the pull of his conscience in guiding his congregation away from mixing with Catholic society. Unlike Gibson and Brute, Hullier introduced the angel of Revelation 14. 8-10 and wrote: ‘considering what is sayd in the Reuelation of S. Iohn, by the Aungell of

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<sup>128</sup> Letters of John Hullier, in Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1583 edition) (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.johnfoxe.org> [Accessed: 14 December 2018], 1563 edition, pp.1582-1583, 1570 edition, p. 2127, 1576 edition, p. 1827; 1583 edition, p.1932.

<sup>129</sup> ‘Letters of John Hullier’, in Foxe’, 1583 edition, p.1932.

God, touching all men'.<sup>130</sup> The 'touching all men' is an additional note, and an acknowledgement of imminent judgement, which would impact all. The inclusion of 'all men' highlights the individual's active responsibility in resisting the temptations of Catholicism. Heinrich Bullinger's earlier letter to John Hooper also included the angelic warning, 'For so agayne sayth the Aungell of the Lord'.<sup>131</sup> Whilst Brute gave a vague reference to his 'counsel'.

Hullier further includes the pious preamble referencing the angelic duty before introducing the angelic guide. Bullinger preceded his introduction with reassurances that the reformers would be blessed with eternal life and that the 'first death' was a mere precursor to eternal salvation.<sup>132</sup> Bullinger referenced the warning given by the angel of Revelation to reaffirm that Scripture evidenced angels providing a dual service in offering guidance and as witnesses to the final judgement alongside Christ. With the assistance of the scriptural angelic guide, both Hullier and Bullinger were seeking to provide comfort and reassurance; Hullier to his congregation and Bullinger to his friend and their mutual network within the English prisons. The angel delivering the warning adds much to the overall message, most prominently in the case of Brute, in which it could be interpreted as presenting himself as having received the message directly from the angel. Although Bradford and Gibson do not include the angelic warning, the passage retains its powerful message. However, the application of angelic presence could point to the martyrs being motivated to cite the same passage for different reasons. Gibson used the passage (amongst others) to attack his captors, demonstrating that the Catholic Church was a false religion and the angels were witnesses to this. Bradford, on the other hand, cited the reference to reaffirm his congregations' faith;

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<sup>130</sup> 'Letters of John Hullier', in Foxe', 1583 edition, p.1932.

<sup>131</sup> 'A fruitfull and godly letter of M. Bullenger to M. Hooper martyr', 1583 edition, p. 1542.

<sup>132</sup> 'A fruitfull and godly letter of M. Bullenger to M. Hooper martyr', 1583 edition, p. 1542.

angels would be on hand to witness the downfall of their persecutors. Bradford's letter also offered a more pastoral interpretation, reminding his followers that his imminent death was a sign that they were on the right side of God and fulfilling prophecy.

The sources highlighted so far reinforce the notion that angels retained a prominent place in the minds of the Marian martyrs. Precisely when citing Revelation 14. 8-10, all of the martyrs reference the 'ungodly' being 'tormented in fire and brimstone before the holy Angels and before the Lambe'. This placement of Christ and the angels, side by side, suggests an equally active part in the role of Judgement and is at odds with the Protestant idea of Christ as the sole intermediary between God and mankind. Furthermore, the omission or inclusion of the angelic guide at the beginning of the passage highlights the importance of this particular function, whether the martyr assumes the angelic role or the angelic role is retained.

On the other hand, angels were conspicuous in their absence. The angel issuing the warning would have been a familiar duty and consequently missed by anyone who was scripturally well-versed. In the same way, the angel binding and throwing Satan into the pit for a thousand years or the angelic role in the Annunciation were both widely understood to be angelic duties and, therefore, obviously not present in the earlier accounts. In her review of the seventeenth-century commentaries on Revelation, Laura Sangha saw a stark contrast in the treatment of St Michael compared to pre-reformation beliefs. Doom paintings displaying Saint Michael presiding over the weighing of souls at the Judgement had no scriptural grounding, so they disappeared from reformed religious expression.<sup>133</sup> Closely associated with this was the 'tendency to interpret 'Michael' as the slayer of the dragon in Revelation as

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<sup>133</sup> Sangha, *Angels and the Apocalypse*, p. 253.

a portrayal of Christ'.<sup>134</sup> Again, this expression is not present within the commentaries. This certainly fits in with the accounts considered. Another element which builds on Sangha's research is the repetition of specific biblical passages advancing a Protestant message. Sangha identified several catechisms where Psalm 34. 7 was employed, which alongside the number of examples within the *Actes*, served to embed its adoption within the Protestant outlook.<sup>135</sup> Arguably, the same could be said of the many examples of Revelation 14. 8-10 cited within the *Actes* and across the four editions. Repetition as a literary device works to make an idea or a concept more decisive and memorable.

### **Angelic Witness**

The closely associated role of angels as instruments of God's judgment ensured that angelic presence could be utilised to both evidence and strengthen the early reformers' position and condemn the Catholic authorities' stance. This is often evidenced in declarations with similar patterns in phrasing and almost always linked to the judgement of soul. An excellent example is a petition which appeared in all four editions on behalf of the Protestant inhabitants of Norfolk to the Queen's Council, which Foxe dates to around 1556.<sup>136</sup> The letter's purpose is to request that church services continue to be spoken in English vernacular and not Latin. Although the petition strikes a respectful tone, in the first paragraph, the position of the Norfolk Protestants was laid bare: 'VVherefore, whosoever resisteth the powers, the same resisteth God, & they that resist, get themselues iudgemēt'.<sup>137</sup> Despite the townspeople's brave stance, they respected the monarch's power and her institutions. But, as

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<sup>134</sup> Sangha, *Angels and the Apocalypse*, p. 253.

<sup>135</sup> Sangha, *Angels and Belief in England*, p. 70.

<sup>136</sup> 'The Norfolk Supplication', in Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1583 edition) (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.johnfoxe.org> [Accessed: 14 December 2018], 1563 edition, p. 1576; 1570 edition, p.2121; 1576 edition, p.1822; 1583 edition, p. 1926.

<sup>137</sup> 'The Norfolk Supplication', 1583 edition, p. 1926.

faithful Christians, they were bound 'to preferre Gods honour in al thinges, and that al obedience (not onely of vs mortall men, but even of the very angels and heavenly spirites) is due vnto Gods word: in so much that no obedience can be true and perfect, eyther before God or man, that wholly & fully agreeth not with Gods worde'.<sup>138</sup> Here, angelic presence is used to articulate that God's authority should be regarded higher than all things, royalty and angels. Consequently, the argument is that in ordering church services to be conducted in Latin, the queen was going against the word of God. This statement and the petition's purpose were in response to the Royal Injunction of 1554, which saw the return to Latin and the prohibition of clerical marriage in the English Church. The petition suggests that this change was not the fault of the queen and that she was tricked into reinstating Catholicism and consenting to papal authority over the English nation.<sup>139</sup> The Norfolk reformers were acutely aware of the repercussions their protests opened them up to. In response, they likened their position to that of the persecution Christ faced:

For our sauior Chryst requyreth the same of vs, saying: whosoeuer shalbe ashamed of me and my word before this aduouterous and sinnefull generation, the sonne of man wyll also be ashamed of hym, wh? he shall come in the glory of his father with the holy aungels. And agayne sayeth he: whosoeuer wyll confesse me before men, I wil confesse him also before my father that is in heau?<sup>140</sup>

Here, the reformers affirm that their protest is just as Christ directed; they were following the word of God. In repeating the warning, Christ gave in Matthew 10. 33 and Luke 9. 26, the reformers are evidencing a scripturally grounded fact – Christ will not vouch for any who denied the word of God at the Final Judgement. The return to Catholicism, in the eyes of the reformers, was to deny the very principles that Christianity was built on, and this much would

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<sup>138</sup> *'The Norfolk Supplication'*, 1583 edition, p. 1926.

<sup>139</sup> *'The Norfolk Supplication'*, 1583 edition, p. 1926.

<sup>140</sup> *'The Norfolk Supplication'*, 1583 edition, p. 1927.

have to be confessed to God and his angels. This argument is repeated in a similarly constructed statement several times:

We humblye beseche the Quenes maiestye, and you her honourable Commissions, bee not offended with vs for confessyng this truth of god, so strayghtly geuen vs in charge of Christ, neyther bryng vpon vs that great synne that shall neuer be forgeu?, that shall cause our sauour Iesu Christ, in the great day of iudgement before his heauenly father and all his aungels, to denye vs, & to take take from vs the blessed price and ransome of his bloudshed, wherwith we are redemed.<sup>141</sup>

Again, Mary's reversal of the English Church back to the Catholic orthodoxy assigned the Norfolk Protestants to a lifetime of sin and an eternity in hell. The Day of Judgement would see God and his angels deny redemption to anyone who did not remain steadfast in their faith. Further on in the petition, the reformers directly attack the Latin mass and argue that the return of the service would be the direct cause of sin against their redemption.<sup>142</sup>

For such as willingly and wittingly agaynst theyr consciences shal so doe (as it is to be feared many one doth) they are in a miserable state, vntyl the mercye of God turne them: whiche if he dooe not, we certainly beleue, that they shall eternally be dampned: and as in this world they deny Christs holy worde and communion before menne, so wil christe denye them before his heauenly father & his angels.<sup>143</sup>

This argument is repeated. A decision made by the Queen and her council would consign the souls of the Norfolk Protestants to hell. In challenging the Queen and her commissioners, the author(s) of the petition were aware of the risk this posed. Despite this, the danger of submitting to the state's ruling on the renewed Catholic orthodoxy represented a greater threat to their salvation. It was a risk worth taking. Once again, an appeal to the Queen includes a link to the role of angels to the judgement of souls:

For wee haue bounde oure selues in baptysme to be chrystes dysciples, and to kepe hys holy worde and ordinaunces. And if we denye him before men, he wyll deny vs before his heauenly

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<sup>141</sup> *'The Norfolk Supplication'*, 1583 edition, p. 1926.

<sup>142</sup> *'The Norfolk Supplication'*, 1583 edition, p. 1929.

<sup>143</sup> *'The Norfolk Supplication'*, 1583 edition, p. 1928.

father and his holy Angels in the day of iudgement: whiche we trust her benygne grace wyll not require of vs.<sup>144</sup>

The spiritual bond between man and God trumps that of subject and monarch. Angelic presence works in these scenarios to validate the arguments within the petition as the petitioners repeated the words of Christ: 'For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him, the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His glory, and in His Father's, and of the holy angel'.<sup>145</sup> Again, Christ's words were used in evidence of the reformers' argument; that the removal of the English vernacular services was in direct opposition to the word of God. This last reference, linking angels to the Final Judgement, made up the penultimate paragraph of the petition in the 1563 edition. The subsequent editions included additional paragraphs with further appeals to the Queen and her councillors but no further references to angels. Angels do not play the leading role in judgement. However, their supporting role to Christ within the context of an imminent judgement and eternity in hell certainly advanced the overall message of the petition. The argument was shored up with the repeated use of Christ issuing a warning in the company of angels at four different points. This technique continuously returned the petition's focus to its powerful opening line: 'VVherefore, whosoever resisteth the powers, the same resisteth God, & they that resist, get themselues iudgemēt'.<sup>146</sup>

There are further examples of reformers employing angelic presence using similar phraseology. Robert Samuel was a preacher from Ipswich, Suffolk. The complete account of

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<sup>144</sup> *'The Norfolk Supplication'*, 1583 edition, p. 1929.

<sup>145</sup> Luke 9. 26.

<sup>146</sup> *'The Norfolk Supplication'*, 1583 edition, p. 1926.

his background, arrest, and martyrdom appeared in the *Rerum*.<sup>147</sup> Samuel also gave accounts of several visions detailing an interaction with angelic beings clothed in white robes before his martyrdom. These sources are explored in the final chapter of this thesis. For now, one of Samuel's letters written to his congregation will be considered. The letters which appear from the 1570 edition of the *Actes* onwards are placed after the accounts of Samuel's martyrdom. This particular letter is the final document in the account of Samuel's life and is signed off with the following declaration:

Thus do I beleue, and this is my fayth and my vnderstandyng in Christ my Sauour, and his true and holy Religion. And this who soeuer is ashamed to do among this adulterous and sinnefull generation, of him shall the sonne of man be ashamed when hee commeth in the glory of his father with the holy Aungels.<sup>148</sup>

The Norfolk reformers protested against the use of the Latin Mass; by referencing the words of Christ, Samuel adopted a similar approach. Foxe references the scriptural passage in the marginalia, adding biblical credentials to Samuel's account. Samuel's declaration constitutes a powerful denouncement of the Marian Church and those Protestants that had recanted. Further, it demonstrates that Samuel believed he had done all he could to affirm his faith before an imminent martyrdom. When judgement came, Christ would likely vouch for Samuel in front of God and the angels. Christ's warning: 'For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his glory, and his Father's, and of the holy angels,' certainly added much weight to the protests of the early reformers.<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1563 edition). Editorial commentary and additional information. (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [28 March 2019], 1563 edition, p. 1338.

<sup>148</sup> An other letter wrytten to the Christian congregation, by Robert Samuel, wherein he declareth the confession of his fayth, in Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1583 edition) (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011), 1570 edition, p.1922; 1576 edition, p.1639; 1583 edition, p.1731.

<sup>149</sup> Luke 9. 26.

In a letter to the Mayor of Coventry, Robert Glover gave an overview of his treatment at the hands of the Catholic authorities, the appalling conditions he put up with whilst he awaited sentencing whilst contending with a long-term and debilitating illness.<sup>150</sup> In his letter, he responds to the accusation that he is a sinner with the following declaration:

I am a sinner, and therefore not woorthy to bee a witsse of this truth. What then? Must I deny his worde because I am not woorthy to professe it? What bring I to passe in so doying, but adde sinne to sinne? What is greater sinne then to deny the truth of Christes Gospell? as Christ himself beareth witsse: Hee that is ashamed of me or of my wordes, of hym I will be also ashamed before my father and all his aungels. I might also by like reason forbear to do any of gods cōmandements.<sup>151</sup>

It looks as though Glover had been accused of being overly confident of his piety. Glover argues that his arrogance had been misconstrued as confidence in ‘the trust of his promise made in Christ’.<sup>152</sup> In referencing Christ’s promise of either support or reproach on the Day of Judgment, Glover affirms his strict and unwavering faith while criticising the Catholic authorities. Again, in the same way, the Norfolk reformers petitioned the Queen and her commissioners, Glover uses Christ’s words to argue that the Catholic authorities were the greatest sinners of all. Again, angelic presence serves a dual purpose; to advance the protests and faith of the reformers whilst denouncing the position of the Catholic authorities.

A similar approach was adopted in a letter by John Rough. Rough, a Scottish minister and former Dominican Friar, was burned in London on 22 December 1557 by order of Bishop Bonner.<sup>153</sup> Rough is one of the martyrs whose letters and declarations feature throughout the

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<sup>150</sup> ‘The appearance of M Rob Glover’, in Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1583 edition) (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.johnfoxe.org> [Accessed: 14 December 2018], 1563 edition, p.1351; 1570 edition, p.1929; 1576 edition, p.1644; 1583 edition p. 1737.

<sup>151</sup> ‘The appearance of M Rob Glover’, 1583 edition, pp. 1735-7.

<sup>152</sup> ‘The appearance of M Rob Glover’, 1583 edition, p. 1737.

<sup>153</sup> ‘John Rough and Margaret Mearing’, in Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1583 edition) (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.johnfoxe.org> [Accessed: 14 December 2018], 1563 edition, p 1727 and Glossary of people for date of death.

chapters of this thesis. In this example, Rough, like Robert Samuel and the Norfolk reformers, again makes use of the warning given by Christ: ‘I speak to gods glory, my care was, my senses of my soule open to perceau the voyce of god, saying who that denieth me before men, them will I deny before my father and his Angells’.<sup>154</sup> Rough’s letter is written to his ‘godly frendes’... and is an attempt to steward the spiritual welfare of his former circle from afar.<sup>155</sup> Unlike Robert Samuel’s declaration, Rough’s statement of faith is written within the first six lines of his letter. His opening gambit is prefixed with a stark warning of Satan roaming the earth. This is an urgent warning from Rough, intended to remind his congregation that they must remain steadfast in their faith to retain the support of Christ and the angels at the time of judgement.

In another example, formidable reformer John Philpot adopts a similar phrasing in employing angels as witnesses. Bishop Bonner was agitated by Philpot and his reliance on scripture in response to his questions. Bonner exclaimed: ‘These heretickes come alwayes with their yfs, as this man doth nowe, saying: if he can be satisfied by the scriptures, so that he wil alwayes haue this exception’.<sup>156</sup> Philpot responded:

I say (my Lord) I will be satisfied by the Scriptures in that wherein I stand. And I protest here before God & his eternall sonne Iesus Christ my Sauour, and the holy ghost and his Angels, and you here present that be iudges of that I speak, that I do not stand in any opiniō of wylfulnes, or singularity, but onely vpon my conscience, certainly informed by gods word, from the which I dare not go for feare of dammatiō: and this is the cause of mine earnestnes in this behalfe.<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>154</sup> ‘John Rough and Margaret Mearing’, 1563 edition, p.1730; 1570 edition, p.2267; 1576 edition, p.1950; 1583, p.2054.

<sup>155</sup> ‘John Rough and Margaret Mearing’, 1583 edition, p.2054.

<sup>156</sup> ‘Examinations and Martyrdom of John Philpot’, in Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1583 edition) (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.johnfoxe.org>. [Accessed: 14 December 2018], 1563 edition, p.1464; 1570 edition, p. 2005; 1576 edition, p.1719; 1583 edition, p.1824.

<sup>157</sup> ‘Examinations and Martyrdom of John Philpot’, 1583 edition, p. 1824.

The use of angels as witnesses alongside Christ, God and the Holy Ghost to Philpot's declaration of faith is a powerful spiritual army to conjure. In the Norfolk petition and the letters of Robert Samuel, Robert Glover and John Rough, angels bore witness to the sins of Catholic society. In this example, they, instead, are witnesses to Philpot's steadfast faith. A subtle nuance but one which suggests a more direct connection to angelic presence and without a scriptural citation to endorse his statement. This suggests that scripturally, there was enough evidence to legitimise the role of angels in the judgement of souls, paving the way for Philpot and others to draw on this established understanding.

Angels proved to be a useful and versatile tool for the early Protestant reformers, especially when the words of Christ endorsed a particular scenario or duty. There are further examples of angels bearing witness to man's sinful nature. However, these depictions are notable because, rather than highlighting the misdeeds of their Catholic counterparts, they celebrate the Godliness of the Protestant reformers. Much in the same way, Philpot encouraged his followers to look ahead to eternal heaven in the company of God and his angels; in another letter, Philpot appeals to his supporters to maintain their religious zeal and not be side-tracked by the temporary pleasures the world has to offer:

If I were sure of this great recompence here, I could be glad to forsake all. But where is this 100. folde in this life to be founde? Yes truely: for in stead of worldly riches which thou doest forsake, which be but temporall, thou hast found the euerlasting riches of heauen, which be glory, honour and praise, both before God, aungels and men: and for an earthly habitation, hast an eternall mansion with Christ in heauen, for euen now thou art of the citie and housholde of the Saints with God, as it is verified in the 4 to the Philippians.<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>158</sup> 'Philpot's Letters', in Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1583 edition) (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.johnfoxe.org> [Accessed: 14 December 2018], 1570 edition, p. 246; 1576 edition, p. 1755; 1583 edition, p. 1860.

Here, Philpot suggests that sacrifices must be made along the path toward salvation. Using angels to evidence the eternal richness of heaven, Philpot again relies on the understanding that one of the angelic duties was to bear witness to earthly events, paying close attention to man's misdeeds. Angels are also offered as part of the reward and represent the heavenly mansion and eternal life with Christ. Philpot's message is positive and inclusive to his followers. He intended to affirm and maintain the faith of those early Protestants who remained in England under Catholic rule, staving off any temporary temptations on offer.

Another example was written by martyr Thomas Whittel, who was at one point imprisoned with Philpot.<sup>159</sup> Both men suffered terribly at the hands of Bishop Bonner. Whittel must have admired Philpot greatly, as in a previous letter to martyr John Careless, he requested the testimonial from Philpot's examination so he could copy it out and pass it on to a friend.<sup>160</sup>

Similarly, in a letter to Marian Martyr John Went, Whittel wrote:

Consider to your comfort, the notable and chiefe shepheardes and souldiours of Christe, whiche are gone before vs in these dayes, I meane those learned and godly Bishops, Doctours, & other ministers of Gods word: whose fayth and examples we that be inferiours ought to folowe, as S. Paule sayth: Remember them that haue declared vnto you the worde of God, the ende of whose conuersation see that ye looke vpon, and folow theyr faith. The grace & blessing of God, with the ministry of his holy Angels, be with you for euer, Amen. All my prison felowes greeete you.<sup>161</sup>

In the same way, Philpot ministered to his followers from afar, Whittell adopts a similar approach toward a fellow prisoner. Comparable to the earlier declarations of faith found in the Norfolk petition, this sign-off evokes a comparable meaning but uses different phraseology.

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<sup>159</sup> Glossary of People – Thomas Whittell in *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or TAMO (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 14 December 2018].

<sup>160</sup> 'Thomas Whittel's letters', in Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or TAMO (1583 edition) (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.johnfoxe.org> [Accessed: 14 December 2018], 1570 edition p.2058; 1576 edition, p.1766; 1583 edition, p. 1872. Whittell was willing pay for the testimonial. An interesting snippet, evidencing the martyrs sharing ideas whilst awaiting their martyrdom.

<sup>161</sup> 'Thomas Whittel letters', 1583 edition, p. 1872.

Whittel reminds Went that angels are on hand to minister and protect him as a faithful evangelical, concluding his letter with the promise of God's blessing and angelic ministry. This technique neatly summarises Whittell's sentiment of holding strong. Designed to remind Went of the reward, of which angels were a part, this technique adds much to the letter as a bold concluding statement and a strong sign-off. It is also worth pointing out that Foxe adds more angelology into this example by referencing Hebrews 13 and linking the ministry of angels to those in prison:

Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters. Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it. Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.<sup>162</sup>

The letter appears in the *Actes* from the 1570 edition onwards and all three include this scriptural citations from Foxe. The link between angels and prisoners is something which is developed further in the final chapter and is traditionally associated with Peter's escape from prison. Unfortunately there is no record of Went's reception of this letter, or any other personal letters. Despite this, from Whittell's account it is evident that angelic presence was used as a way to strengthen the resolve of the prisoners, as much as it was to protest against the wrongdoing of the Catholic Church.

For the prisoners awaiting martyrdom, angels were a significant reminder of the benefits to remaining steadfast in their faith:

Now in þ<sup>e</sup> butchers hands as shepe apoynted to die, then sitting at Gods table with Christ in his kingdom, as Gods honorable and deare children: where we shall haue for earthly pouertie, heauenly riches, for hūger and thirst, saturitie of the pleasant presence of the glory of God, for sorrowes, troubles, and colde yrons, celestiall ioyes, and the company of aungels, and for a bodely

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<sup>162</sup> Hebrews 13.

death, life eternal. Oh happy soules, Oh precious death and euer more blessed: right dear in the eyes of God, to you the spring of the Lord shal euer be flourishing.<sup>163</sup>

Samuel uses the analogy of the Catholic authorities as butchers, ordering the death of the prisoners or sheep. This polarising view of Marian England works to steward and steer not only the author of the source but his friends, family and followers towards the company of the angels for an eternal and happy life in Heaven. Foxe adds on a commentary note: ‘precious is the death of God’s sainctes.’<sup>164</sup> The hardship, persecution and, of course, impending martyrdom all evidenced that God had chosen Samuel and his followers as long as they adhered to the Protestant faith. This much-repeated contrast of good and evil, light and dark and even armies of angels were all techniques employed by the early Protestant reformers to prepare themselves and their followers for martyrdom and, more broadly, final judgement.

These examples all share remarkable similarities in phrasing and structure. Every citation sees the martyr cite angels, God, Christ, and sometimes the Holy Ghost. The subject matter is always linked to the judgement of souls, so in these examples the function of the angelic reference is to endorse the message and the actions of the martyrs. In the same way, there have been examples of repetition of particular scriptural passages such as Revelation 14. 8-10, these examples, although not scripturally grounded, were widely recognised and legitimate responses to the persecuting times. It is fascinating to see the repetition of angelic

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<sup>163</sup> ‘An other letter wrytten to the Christian congregation, by Robert Samuel, wherein he declareth the confession of his faith’, in Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1583 edition) (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.johnfoxe.org> [Accessed: 14 December 2018] 1570 edition, p.1920; 1576 edition, p.1637; 1583 p.1730.

<sup>164</sup> ‘An other letter wrytten to the Christian congregation, by Robert Samuel, wherein he declareth the confession of his faith’, 1583 edition, p.1730.

presence in these statements and evidence of the individual beliefs of the martyrs as a public act and protestation of faith.

### **Conclusion**

The four editions of the *Actes and Monuments* capture Foxe's evolving interest in the Apocalypse. Angels are key to Revelation's narrative, and, through close examination of the many expressions documented within the *Actes*, there is a corresponding increase in angelic visibility and the significance of angelic presence with often competing views on angels as protectors and defenders. Richard Bauckham described English sixteenth-century society with 'a sense of approaching the climax of the true church's conflict with the forces of evil, a sense either of impending doomsday or of living in the dawn of a new age'.<sup>165</sup> Bauckham's summary is fitting and helps to understand the deeply polarising approaches apparent within the material and how valuable angelic presence is in viewing these opposing arguments.

Foxe's inclusion of the Lollard accounts provided a bridge from the past to Marian England. In the defences of Walter Brute, Foxe found a kindred spirit. Brute's protests were doctrinally similar to those of the contemporary martyrs. Notably, he used the Book of Revelation to make sense of the conflicting forces of evil he saw around him, and this approach employed angelic presence. Interestingly, Brute and Foxe adopt similar strategies in minimising the role of the angel, most noticeably in the examples that describe the binding of Satan for a thousand years. Brute again reduced the role of the angel in his citing of Revelation 14. 8-10 and in the act of judgement. Despite this, Brute references angelic presence on eight separate occasions, evidencing the significance of angelic presence to his defences and in validating his arguments.

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<sup>165</sup> Bauckham., *Tudor Apocalypse* p 54.

Brute's defences also offer further insight into the Real Presence debate in chapter two, evidencing his value as a precursor to the contemporary debates.

Both Walter Brute's and even Foxe's commentary evidence attempts to reduce the role or visibility of specific angels. The Marian examples included John Philpot not naming the archangel Gabriel about the Annunciation and omitting the angelic guide in the many citations of Revelation 14. 8-10. This reduction could be part of a more significant trend, first explored by Laura Sangha's research on the *Book of Common Prayer* and the disappearance of doom paintings featuring the image of St Michael weighing the souls in judgement.<sup>166</sup> St Michael weighing the souls has no scriptural grounding. On the other hand, angels binding Satan for a thousand years or announcing the Annunciation are scripturally grounded duties, suggesting either a tentativeness in describing these accounts or an attempt not to emphasise specifically named angels. Further examples of this are discussed in the remaining chapters, contributing more evidence to Sangha's assertion.

Within Revelation, angels are God's facilitators, continually triggering events towards the inevitable end. Both Foxe and the Marian martyrs relied heavily upon scriptural precedent, with many biblical references validating their defences. This facilitated an association between angels and an anticipated new age, a positive reading of the Apocalypse, which beautifully adorns the title page of each edition of the *Actes*. The many prominent roles and duties of the angels of Revelation suggest they had the potential to offer the Marian martyrs and the audience Foxe was writing for an approach to understanding and preparing for the imminent triumph of good over evil. They also served a dual function: angels were a reassuringly comfortable presence that served to relieve the anxieties generated in response to religious conflict. Angels

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<sup>166</sup> Sangha, 'Revelation and Reckoning: Angels and the Apocalypse in Reformation England', p. 253.

were also vanguards of an anticipated and new epoch of time. Importantly this was a model Foxe had no problem promoting within the *Actes*; angels were representative of God's constancy. God would and could send angels to protect the weak and vulnerable if needs be.

This chapter has evidenced that for the early Protestant reformers, such as the Norfolk petitioners and above all for John Foxe, many of the traditions, understanding, and expectations of an angel remained a significant part of personal devotion in multiple ways. Angelic presence encouraged and empowered the Marian prisoners to speak against their captors. Angels were valuable weapons against Catholic enemies. Many of the accounts include examples of a scriptural precedent used to validate and evidence the arguments of the Protestant prisoners, adding weight to Knott's suggestion that the Bible during this period provided a 'treasury of archetypes'.<sup>167</sup> Foxe provides further evidence to back up Knott's claims as often these citations were referenced within the marginal notes, giving the account an additional layer of authority. There is also significant evidence of the repetition of certain scriptural passages, such as Revelation 14. 8-10, and Christ's warnings referenced in Matthew and Luke's gospels. The accounts drawing upon Old Testament examples of persecution and comparing the Catholic enemies and ancient Egyptians evidence this, assigning angelic presence with a vengeful role. Equally, there are many examples where angels are referenced within their role alongside God in the judgement of mankind. Again, this role highlights the capacity of angels to serve a dual function as, for some, this duty would be vengeful as angels could judge the soul of a sinner. For Protestants, this angelic duty was pastoral, as they would hopefully be amongst the chosen to live out their lives eternally in Heaven with God and his angels. By citing angelic presence, the martyrs could evidence, validate, and advance their position from Foxe's point of view, while simultaneously criticising that of their Catholic enemies. The

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<sup>167</sup> J. R., Knott, *Discourses of Martyrdom in English Literature*, (Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 7.

repetition of angelic presence in public declarations of faith is fascinating evidence of the approaches of both individuals and communities in protesting their faith and could be deemed early examples of a Protestant cultural ritual.

## Chapter 2 – Sacramental Angels

Marian martyrs utilised angelic presence in conjunction with one of the more significant debates of the Reformation, the Real Presence of Jesus Christ within the Eucharist. Although angels do not feature within the scriptural narrative, which provided the basis for the sacrament, they proved helpful in the arguments that drew on broader debates over the corporeal nature of angels, of Jesus Christ and the agency of the human soul. Laura Sangha cites the Book of Common Prayer as providing evidence of angels retaining a role within the Reformed Church and devotional life. Sangha argued ‘Protestants encouraged parishioners to contemplate their ministry, and they continued to regard them [angels] as a useful devotional aid’.<sup>1</sup> We can look to the 1549, 1552 and 1662 editions of the *Book of Common Prayer* for official models of angelic presence. The preface to the Communion in the 1549 edition reads:

Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the holy companye of heaven, we laude and magnify thy glorious name, evermore praisyng thee, and saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lorde God of Hostes: heaven (& earth) are full of thy glory: Osanna, is the highest. Blessed is he that commeth in the name of the Lorde: Glory to thee, O lorde in the highest.<sup>2</sup>

Here, man and angels are joined in prayer and contemplation of God. Angels are the focal point of this excerpt; they are present and active within the Sacrament. The same passage appears in the 1559 edition, with the omission of ‘Osanna is the highest’, with no further changes in the 1662 edition.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Sangha. *Angels and Belief in England*, p. 61.

<sup>2</sup> ‘Preface to Communion’, Brian Cummings, (ed.) *The Book of Common Prayer, the Texts of 1549, 1559 and 1662*, (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2011) 1549 edition, p. 29.

<sup>3</sup> ‘Preface to Communion’, 1559 edition, p. 136; 1662 edition, p. 401.

Angels are also referenced within the Te Deum Laudamus in each edition, without any changes:

All the earth doeth wurship thee, the father everlastyng. To thee al Angels cry aloud, the heavens and all the powers therein. To thee Cherubin, and Seraphin continually doe crye. Holy, holy, holy, Lorde God of Sabaoth.<sup>4</sup>

The Book of Common Prayer gives a clear and decisive explanation of the place of angels, their roles in relation to the Sacrament and, more generally, within devotional life. It is also worth noting that there is a continuation and expansion of the idea of specific orders of angels joining with man in their mutual contemplation of God within the Te Deum. This then seems rather conclusive, yet the sources within this chapter demonstrate that there remained contested areas between the Catholic Inquisitors and Marian Martyrs in Eucharistic debates.

When considering the sources within the *Actes and Monuments* alongside the *Book of Common Prayer*, it is important to remember the climate from which these debates stemmed. The views expressed by the Marian martyrs were, for a time, orthodox. Swiftly, they were deemed illegal and heretical when Mary ascended the throne in 1553. It is also important to note that the legacy of the Marian restoration should also be considered. Whilst Mary's death in 1558 marked another counter-trajectory of reforms in England, the debates captured within this chapter were documented during a period of Catholic renewal. This chapter considers material from the records of disputations and convocations. The sources evidence an effort from both sides of the confessional divide to either defend or establish their respective stances on a theological position. In particular, the convocation records can be considered truly representative of an official perspective on Eucharistic Theology, as the convocations would decide on Canonical law.

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<sup>4</sup> 'Te Deum Laudamus', Brian Cummings, (ed.) *The Book of Common Prayer, the Texts of 1549, 1559 and 1662*, (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2011), 1549 edition, p. 9; 1559 edition, p. 106; 1662 edition, p. 243.

As a starting point, this chapter considers the sources which link angelic presence to the promotion of religious adherence and the criticism of some fundamental Catholic teachings. Following on from this, the focus shifts to the role of the angel in relation to the debates around the Real Presence of Jesus Christ within the Eucharist. The objectives of this chapter are to explore precisely how angelic presence was used to evidence the nuances within the arguments over the Real Presence, to contrast the opposing models of angelic presence within the Catholic and Protestant sources and to relate any intersections of thought on the agency of angels.

### **Angels: Tools to Promote Religious Adherence**

One common feature of the sources is that an angel was a mutually understood and recognised symbol of devotional life for Catholics and Protestants. For both groups, angels were useful in promoting religious adherence. Foxe included an account of John Alcocke in all four editions of the *Actes and Monuments*, though the 1570 and 1576 editions did not include Alcocke's letters; they were added subsequently as an appendix to the 1583 edition. Included in the first and final editions are two interesting epistles written by Alcocke to the people of Hadleigh.

In *The First Epistle of John Alcocke*, Alcocke wrote:

Yea if it were an Aungell came from heauen, and woulde tell you that the sacrifice of Christes body vpon the crosse, once for all euer, for all the sinnes of all those which shalbe saued, were not sufficient: accursed be he. If he were an aungell, or what soeuer he were, that would say that our seruice in English were not right Gods seruice, but will better allow that moste wicked mumming that you nowe haue. Those what soeuer they be, except they doe repent & allow the Gospell of Iesus Christ, they shall neuer come into that kingdome, that Christ hath prepared for those þt be his. Wherefore my dearly beloued brethren of Hadley, remember you well what you haue bene

taught heretofore of the Lorde Gods true and simple Prophetes, that onely did wish your health and consolation.<sup>5</sup>

The title of Alcocke's is a homage to the apostolic letters of the New Testament. Alcocke is appealing to the people of Hadleigh in the same way that Paul, James, Peter, John and Jude petitioned believers and non-believers thousands of years before. This approach is undoubtedly contrived to trigger a collective response to the themes contained within the original epistles, thus linking the position in Marian England to that of the biblical forefathers. Notions of persecution, alienation, immorality, and conflict were as relevant to the early Christians as they were to the Marian martyrs, the people of Hadleigh, and his readership from Foxe's perspective. Here, the angel assumes a pivotal role in this section of Alcocke's epistle and is used to evidence that false doctrine should be rejected, even if an angel announced it. The parallel of the reformed church service is introduced and compared to the 'wicked mumming', the model at the time; thus providing a link between angelic presence to the criticism of Catholic Church service and the defence of Protestantism. Alcocke's final line is a reminder that his epistle intended to bolster support but also to confront and correct any conflicted souls of Hadleigh.

It is curious that Alcocke has not cited his source of inspiration, nor has Foxe included a reference within the marginal notes to this particular biblical trope. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians contains the reference: 'But though that we or an Angel from heaven preach unto you otherwise than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed'.<sup>6</sup> Alcocke extends the scope of the narrative and the agency of the angel to evidence his argument. It is

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<sup>5</sup> 'The First Epistle of John Alcocke', *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or *TAMO* (1583 edition). (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 20 March 2019], 1563 edition, p.1744; 1583 edition, p. 2170.

<sup>6</sup> Galatians 1. 8.

worth noting that this challenges the model of the Marian martyrs strictly adhering to the scriptural precedent touched upon in the first chapter of this thesis.

In another example, Marian martyr John Bradford, in a letter to a George Eaton also appears to take inspiration from Paul's Epistle to the Galatians. Bradford heavily criticises the Catholic Church in the letter, with special attention paid to Catholic bishops. Bradford emphasises his adherence to the Protestant faith and assures Eaton that, in death, he will find the grace of God and salvation. Bradford wrote:

And as for the doctrine which I haue professed and preached, I do confesse vnto you in writing, as to the whole world I shortly shall by gods grace in suffering, that it is the very true doctrine of Iesus Christ, of his Church, of his Prophets, Apostles and all good men: so that if an Angell should come from heauen and preach otherwise, the same were accursed.<sup>7</sup>

Foxe included this letter within the second, third and fourth editions of the *Actes*; in all three entries, he commented "in testimony of Bradford's doctrine", suggesting that this particular passage was an important component to the martyr's defence.<sup>8</sup> Similarly, Bradford and Alcocke utilised angelic presence to issue a stark warning on the corruption of the Gospel. Bradford is more faithful to the scriptural passage's original text, evidenced by his use of the verb, "preach". Nor does he, unlike Alcocke, extend the warning beyond the limits of the citation. Both martyrs maintain that any being, angels included, would be cursed if they corrupted the truth of the Gospel. Alcocke and Bradford continue to discuss their strength in resisting spiritual corruption, and both martyrs utilise the idea of angels bearing witness to their struggle and exhortations. In a similar vein, John Philpot, in a letter to Lady Vane, positioned angels as obstacles separating him from his path to God. Philpot wrote:

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<sup>7</sup> 'Bradford's letters', 1570 edition, p.1872; 1576 edition, pp. 1594-1595; 1583 edition, p.1675.

<sup>8</sup> 'Bradford's letters', 1583 edition, p. 1675.

I am perswaded that neither death, neither aungels, neither princes or powers, neither things present, neither things to come, neither highness, neither lowness, neither any other creature is able to separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Iesu our Lord.<sup>9</sup>

Philpott considered angels within a plethora of obstacles that could obscure the route to God. This is in direct contrast to Alcocke and Bradford, who focussed solely on demonstrating their adherence to the Protestant faith, notwithstanding the distraction of an angel. Despite this caveat, all three martyrs affirm their commitment to the Protestant faith. Interestingly, in Philpott's case, the obstacles all appear to be intimately linked to the course of human life and Christian history; death, the present and the future. It is worth noting that Philpott not only considers angels in amongst these distractions but alludes to two orders of the celestial hierarchy. The princes or powers could refer to the Principalities and Powers traditionally associated with authority. In Alcocke's second epistle, he too explores angelic presence in relation to the hierarchy of power:

If we bee not ashamed of the Gospell of our Lord and Sauour Iesus Christ, but earnestly confesse it, to the vttermost of our power, thē are we sure to be confessed of our Lord and Sauior Iesus Christ, and that before þ<sup>e</sup> Angels in heauen to be his seruants. But if we will so lust to keepe our goodes, and rather deny hym then to loose our goodes, then doth it folow whose seruantes we are. Therefore my deare brethren of Hadley, beware that you doe not consent to anything agaynst your conscience. For if you do, beware of Gods great wrath.<sup>10</sup>

Alcocke continues to use angels to promote religious adherence; this time, the celestial spirits are used to signify man's union with God. Here, angels witness the martyrs' affirmations and are presented as part of a spiritual warning – if an individual recants their faith to save their mortal skin, they would not be God's faithful servants. Notably, Foxe chose to reference Luke 12 within the marginal notes, in which the trope of the spiritual confession witnessed by

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<sup>9</sup> 'An other letter of maister Philpott, to the godly Ladie Vane', in *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1583 edition) (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.johnfoxe.org> [Accessed: 14 December 2018], 1583 edition, p. 1862.

<sup>10</sup> 'The Second Epistle of John Alcocke', *The Actes and Monuments or TAMO online*. (1583 edition.) *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: Accessed: 20 March 2019].1563 edition, p. 1744; 1583 edition, p. 2170.

angels validates Alcocke's statement. A scriptural citation is noticeably absent in a similar passage written by Bradford. Within the extract, Bradford contrasted what he deemed to be the fables and fantasies of the Catholic Church with the truth found within the reading of Scripture.<sup>11</sup> Both Alcocke and Bradford saw the value in the idea of confession; it was an essential component of the scenarios they depicted and closely related to the idea of the individual refuting the corrupted antichristian religion, with angels bearing witness to these declarations of faith, validating their affirmations. Bradford, in one of his letters, provides an excellent example of this. He wrote, 'before his father in heauen: if so be we bee ashamed hereof for losse of lyfe, friends or goods, he wil be ashamed of vs before his father, and his holy Angels in heauen'.<sup>12</sup> Again, the notion of shame is central to Bradford's premise. For Alcocke too, he promoted the notion that Christ would be ashamed of the individual who chose to recant their faith for fear of the loss of life, or loss of friends or material possessions. The angels bearing witness to this enhance Bradford's stark warning. Marian martyr John Rough adopted a similar approach. In a letter written on the evening of his condemnation, rather than detailing his suffering, Rough wanted to 'speake to Gods glorie: my care was to haue the senses of my soule open, to perceiue the voice of GOD, sai yng: Who soeuer denieth me before menne, hym will I deny before my Father and his Aungelles'.<sup>13</sup> As with Alcocke and Bradford, Rough employed the use of angels as spiritual witnesses to bolster his faith – and significantly promote religious adherence within his circle of influence. It is worth pointing out the similarity in structure and tone of these accounts to many of the declarations examined in the first chapter.<sup>14</sup> The notion of 'angelic witness' effectively validated the affirmations of the martyrs, giving the accounts an additional layer of spiritual authority. The caveat is that these examples were expressed in response to questions over the Communion.

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<sup>11</sup> 'Bradford's letters', Foxe's marginal notes, 1583 edition, p. 1674.

<sup>12</sup> 'Bradford's letters', Foxe's marginal notes, 1583 edition, p. 1675.

<sup>13</sup> 'John Rough', 1583 edition p. 2055.

<sup>14</sup> Chapter 1, p. 90.

Foxe's use of commentary is consistent throughout these examples, validating the sources he included by referencing or citing scriptural passages when they were absent or adding further comments. In the case of Bradford, the re-titling of letters evidences an attempt on Foxe's part to refine his presentation of these accounts into a cohesive message and outlook.

Collectively, this material is excellent evidence of the significance of angelic presence in promoting religious adherence. Galatians 1. 8 presented the angel preaching false doctrine, which the martyrs should reject. Another notable and complementary strand is where angelic presence is employed alongside Christ to remind of the spiritual reward when retaining loyalty to Protestantism. This idea is expressed in two connected ways. First, in terms of a warning issued, meaning an individual or a collective could stand to lose the favour of Christ and His angels if they were to recant their Protestant faith. Second, in terms of the spiritual reward, that favour could be retained as long as Protestantism was adhered to.

Margaret Mearing was burned at Smithfield in 1557; in her final declaration, she used angelic presence to affirm her faith.<sup>15</sup> Mearing's declaration follows John Rough's letters and appears within all four editions of the *Actes and Monuments*. The editorial commentary confirms the records that make up the account of Mearing were located in official records of the articles levelled against her and also provided to Foxe directly by witnesses. Foxe narrates Mearing's account and the responses she gave. According to the material, Mearing was asked multiple times if she would recant her faith. Mearing responded: 'I will stand them unto the death: For the Aungells of heaven do laugh you to scorne, to see your abomination that you use in the church'.<sup>16</sup> Mearing's response adds much weight to the affirmations of Alcocke,

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<sup>15</sup> 'Margaret Mearing', *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1583 edition) (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 12 May 2019]. 1563 edition, p. 1730; 1570 edition, p. 2268; 1576 edition, p. 1950, 1583 edition, p. 2055.

<sup>16</sup> 'Margaret Mearing', 1583 edition p. 2055.

Bradford and Rough. Rather than professing her faith to members of the same pocket of resistance, she bravely stood by her arguments against the Catholic Church to the very people who would send her to her death in the company of the angels. It is worth noting that Mearing chose to reference the company of ‘aungells,’ rather than a singular angel, which suggests several motivations on her part. First and foremost, Mearing drew strength in the knowledge that she would be in the company of angels once she had died a martyr’s death – the archetypal Protestant good death. Secondly, in the face of persecution, stating to the Catholic authorities that the ‘aungelles of heaven do laugh you to scorne’ suggests that Mearing made a final and passionate attempt to demonstrate once again that she and her fellow prisoners were on the right side of God and that they had an army of angels on their side. Consequently, the Catholic Church and its religious adherents were not privy to the same protection; the opposite was true. It was documented from Foxe’s continuation of the account that John Rough and Margaret Mearing were martyred on the same day, December 22nd, 1557, at Smithfield in London.<sup>17</sup> Foxe did not cite any scriptural passages, leaving this powerful declaration as the final words attributed to Mearing’s record. Laura Sangha suggests that by the seventeenth century, sites of execution ‘still functioned as foci of power and that the angels were called upon to endorse particular political and spiritual positions as fragmented groups struggled for agency’.<sup>18</sup> Sangha argues this was particularly important as it ‘demonstrates how angels were evoked to provide legitimacy and vindicate the authenticity of a confessional group – as people struggled to affirm that God was on their side, the angels could function as evidence of divine support’.<sup>19</sup> Mearing’s declaration collaborates with Sangha’s arguments. Further, the idea of angels endorsing, validating and strengthening the positions of the Marian martyrs could be extended more broadly to the general application

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<sup>18</sup> Sangha, *Angels and Belief*, p. 123.

<sup>19</sup> Sangha, *Angels and Belief*, p. 123.

and utilisation of angelic presence by the martyrs and Foxe, as demonstrated throughout this thesis.

There is further detail to glean from Foxe's account of Margaret Mearing. Directly after her declaration Foxe offered some contextual information on the relationship between Rough and Mearing. Rough was Mearing's pastor and had excommunicated her a week before his arrest.<sup>20</sup> The account suggests that aside from a personal dislike of her, Rough and other congregation members were suspicious of the company Mearing kept; she would often bring strangers to church services.<sup>21</sup> Mearing is described as 'in her talke seemed (as they thought) somewhat to busy'.<sup>22</sup> Given Mearing's actions following the arrest of Rough, she was clearly a loyal member of the congregation. Given Mearing's actions following the arrest of Rough, she was evidently a loyal member of the congregation. Upon hearing of Rough's arrest, Foxe shares that Mearing dressed as his sister and visited him with clean clothes and comforting words, as no one within his circle had made the journey to Smithfield..<sup>23</sup> Mearing went on to seal her fate. Following her visit, she knocked on the door of Rough's accuser seeking answers, loudly asking if Judas was at home.<sup>24</sup> These details help assemble a valuable profile of a pious, spirited and tenacious woman who was deeply attached to and influenced by her pastor John Rough. As outlined in the previous source, Rough's declaration of faith to his congregation included the witness of angels. It seems unlikely to be coincidental that both Rough and Mearing included angelic motifs in their declarations of faith. Mearing's declaration may evidence Rough's influence as a pastor or, more broadly, a general association of angelic presence strengthening the Protestant position within this particular

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<sup>20</sup> 'Margaret Mearing', 1583 edition, p. 2055.

<sup>21</sup> 'Margaret Mearing', 1583 edition, p. 2055.

<sup>22</sup> 'Margaret Mearing', 1583 edition, p. 2055.

<sup>23</sup> 'Margaret Mearing', 1583 edition, p. 2055.

<sup>24</sup> 'Margaret Mearing', 1583 edition, p. 2055.

circle. This association is further enhanced by the positioning of the sources within the *Actes*; Rough preceding Mearing across the four editions. It is worth pointing out that Mearing's tenacity in spreading the Protestant message is not an isolated example of a female reformer or martyr. Susannah Brietz Monta has demonstrated how Foxe included evidence of women circulating Protestant texts in England; indeed, Monta suggests they were instrumental in spreading reformed ideas.<sup>25</sup> Monta deals mainly with the gender transgressions committed by female martyrs within the *Actes* and how Foxe frames them within his Protestant messaging. Monta does not cite the example of Margaret Mearing. Mearing was an excellent example of a female challenging typical gendered roles; she adopted Rough's pastoral position when he was in need and alone. Her impressive final declaration in the company of angels was a brave and direct attack on the Catholic authorities. Mearing's powerful declaration would have fed into Foxe's overall narrative of the valiant Marian martyr, imbuing the same certainty into communities who were not yet confident enough to affirm their religious beliefs publicly.

The angelic motif proved helpful in advancing the arguments of the martyrs as it often served a dual function. As well as angels promoting the spiritual rewards of religious adherence, the reference of an angel within a defence or declaration proved useful in criticising Catholic practises or teachings; several sources evidence this. The themes drawn from this material continue the apocalyptic approach established in chapter one. In John Careless' correspondence, we are privy to a good example. Careless was a weaver from Coventry who died in prison in 1556; Foxe wrote that he should be 'counted in honor & place of Christe's martyrs'.<sup>26</sup> The sources referencing Careless are primarily examination records and

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<sup>25</sup> Susannah Brietz Monta, 'Foxe's Female Martyrs and the Sanctity of Transgression Author', *Renaissance and Reformation / Renaissance et Réforme*, 25:1 (2001), pp. 3-22.

<sup>26</sup> John Foxe, 1583 edition, p.1943.

correspondence with his wife Margaret and other prisoners. The *Actes and Monuments* editorial commentary notes confirm that although the examination of Careless is included within the 1563 edition, the 1570 edition had swathes of deleted sections as they ‘revealed far too much about the doctrinal squabbling among Protestant prisoners, particularly over the issues of free will and liturgy’.<sup>27</sup> The 1576 and 1583 editions remain consistent, with no further changes. In a letter to Agnes Glascocke, Careless offers some consolatory guidance after she had been forced to attend a Mass by her husband.<sup>28</sup> Within the letter, Careless pleads with Agnes to remain strong and steadfast in her faith, exhorting her to ‘see howe mightely the Lorde hath magnified hym selfe in you, and other his deare electe darlings’.<sup>29</sup> Beyond the implication that Careless deemed Agnes and her circle as members of an elect group; he also used angelic presence to reaffirm Agnes’ faith:

But dere sister K. do you flie from it, both in body & soule, as you would flie from the very Deuill himselfe. Drinke not of the whore of Babylons cuppe by no meanes, for it will infecte the body, and poyson the soule. Be not partakers of her sinnes (sayth the aungell) least you be partakers of the plagues that shortly shall be powred vpon her. O what an array is this? that so many that know Gods truth, wil nowe tourne againe and defile them selues in the filthy puddle of antichristes stinking religion?<sup>30</sup>

Careless draws heavily on many of the emblems found within the Book of Revelation, the whore of Babylon, the Antichrist and plagues to demonstrate the extent of the corruption of the Catholic Mass. The angel warns against this particular sin; the basis for this is, of course, the angel of Revelation warning against the worship of false idols.<sup>31</sup> Careless carefully aligns his language to the ritual element of the ceremony, drinking from the cup of Babylon and

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<sup>27</sup> Editorial commentary and additional information, 1576 edition, p. 1943.

<sup>28</sup> John Foxe, 1576 edition, pp. 1850-1851; 1583 edition p. 1955.

<sup>29</sup> ‘The letters of John Careless’, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or *TAMO* (1583 edition) (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 11 March 2020]. 1576 edition, p. 1851; 1583 edition p. 1955.

<sup>30</sup> ‘The letters of John Careless’, 1583 edition p. 1955.

<sup>31</sup> Revelation 22. 9.

warning against both physical and spiritual corruption. The 'filthy puddle' is an interesting turn of phrase and highlights the disgust Careless feels in response to the Catholic ceremony. Foxe adds his gloss to the communication within the marginal notes, exclaiming, 'What an high honour it is to suffer for Christ'.<sup>32</sup> It is worth pointing out the similarities between Careless' letter and the material considered in the first section of this chapter by Philpot, Bradford, Rough and Mearing. All of the communications share two similar intentions. Angelic presence is used to reaffirm the faith of the individual in Protestantism whilst simultaneously criticising Catholic teachings and practices. What separates the approaches is emphasis. Careless adopts the method of attacking, insulting and discrediting the Catholic Church and the sacrament of Mass, drawing heavily on revelatory emblems to evoke an emotional response. When considered alongside the sources centred on the promotion of religious adherence considered previously, it could be argued that both the confessions of faith and warnings against Catholicism go hand in hand. The sources suggest that for the martyrs and Foxe, angelic presence served a valuable and dual function. Angelic presence was employed to promote religious adherence and used as a tool to attack the characteristics and practices of the Catholic Church.

### **Reformed Eucharist Theology**

A key contested Catholic practice was the Mass. In the editorial commentary on Walter Brute, Thomas Freeman muses on Foxe's reaction to reading the testimonial of the Lollard. 'When he read this material, Foxe must have realised that God was on his side. Here was a figure, from the dark period before Luther, who identified the Papacy with the Antichrist and

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<sup>32</sup>Foxe's marginal notes, 1576 edition, p. 1851; 1583 edition p. 1955.

who believed that the Eucharist was primarily a memorial'.<sup>33</sup> Freeman's comments are quite right; the arguments found within Brute's declarations form the basis of many of the subsequent defences penned by the Marian martyrs. In a declaration against Transubstantiation, Brute highlights the spiritual element of the ritual:

And as touching the intelligible powers of þ<sup>e</sup> same (as well exteriour as interior) they are refreshed with the flesh (that is to say) with the humanitye of Iesus Christ: which is, as a queene standing on the right hand of God, decked w<sup>t</sup> a golden robe of diuers colours: for this queene of heauen alone by the word of God, is exalted aboue the ompany of all the angels: that by her, all our corporal power intellectuē, may fully be refreshed as is our spirituall intelligēce, with the beholding of þ<sup>e</sup> deity of Iesus Christ, and euen as the Aungels, shall we be fully satisfied.<sup>34</sup>

The physical act of taking the sacrament, or the 'flesh' which Brute paraphrases, triggers the spiritual cleansing of the human soul and the physical strength or intellect. Christ is likened to a queen standing on the right side of God; sitting below are the angels. This arrangement is often repeated in the Marian accounts, an attempt to evidence that God was the sole mediator. Interestingly, angels receive an additional mention by Brute. The suggestion is that through the spiritual process of the sacrament, man could attain the spiritual satisfaction enjoyed by angels. Brute went on to criticise the role of the priest; he argued: 'Let them therefore take heed, least they extolling themselues for this Sacrament, aboue the company of Angels which neuer sinned, for the errour which they be in, for euermore be placed with the sinnefull angels vnder the earth'.<sup>35</sup> Brute uses the parallel between the fallen and good angels to articulate his point. For Brute, many priests celebrated their role in the ritual of transubstantiation and again, hierarchy forms an essential component of his argument. If a priest took pride in their role, it follows that they were positioning themselves higher than God's angels. The reality was that for Brute, this was a grave error which automatically

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<sup>33</sup> Editorial commentary and additional information, 1583 edition, p.499.

<sup>34</sup> 'The story of Walter Brute. Popes autors of warres. Iustification by faith', 1583 edition, pp. 518-519.

<sup>35</sup> Editorial commentary and additional information, 1583 edition, p.499.

placed the sinful priests in the company of the fallen angels in Hell. This point was emphasised by Foxe's commentary notes; he wrote, 'marke here ye goode priests'.<sup>36</sup>

Brute's arguments are a good indicator of the early Protestant debates against the Eucharist. The comparison of angelic incorporeal nature to Christ's spirit again was a much-repeated topic found in the contemporary accounts, employed to evidence that Christ was not physically contained within the sacrament. Many of the accounts retain an intensely combative tone. In a letter written by Marian martyr John Bradford, he called for a reformed alternative to the Catholic orthodoxy:

He exhorteth to come from the Masse Therefore take heede, for the Lordes sake take heed, take heed, and defile not your bodies or soules with this Romish and Antichristian religion set vp amongst vs agayne: but come away, come away, as the Angell crieth from amongst them in their idolatrous seruice, lest you be partakers of their iniquitie.<sup>37</sup>

Interestingly, Bradford's appeal was preceded by an earlier reference to an affirmation of faith in the company of angels. The angel warning against the idolatrous service is in reference to Revelation 18, where Babylon is fallen, and earthly sin has reached Heaven. Although Foxe references the biblical passage, Bradford uses the parallel to demonstrate the corruption of the mass, which is not directly referenced within the biblical passage, though the phrase 'lest you be partakers of their iniquitie' is. Bradford used a well-known biblical citation to evidence his stance, utilising angelic presence to bolster his argument in an open letter to his network of friends and followers. The similarities between this account and those surveyed earlier are plain to see: Bradford is issuing a stark warning to his followers through the medium of an angel to not attend the Catholic Mass or else face the consequences.

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<sup>36</sup> John Foxe marginal notes, 1583 edition, p. 519.

<sup>37</sup> 'Bradford's letters', 1583 edition, p.1675.

Many debates surrounding Eucharistic theology within the *Actes* require serious unpicking and thinking. Before consulting the remaining sources, some fundamental aspects of Eucharistic theology will be considered. The Eucharist can be described as a celebration or re-enactment of the Last Supper; the final meal shared between Jesus Christ and his disciples on the eve of the crucifixion. The biblical basis for this event is found in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke and again within the First Epistle to the Corinthians. The prayers and readings in a Eucharistic service are designed to remind parishioners of that final meal and Christ's subsequent sacrifice. Even before the early sixteenth century, the Eucharistic theologies differed. This disparity in opinion was more pronounced after the European Reformation(s), and Eucharistic theology became even more convoluted and contradictory.

The formal disputation records evidence arguments centred upon discussions of how one's relationship with God is nourished through this mystical meal. As Jesus Christ was human at the Last Supper and Crucifixion, Christ's corporeal nature remained a contested subject. Though angels do not directly feature within the scriptural narrative, their supernatural nature ensured they were incorporated into the 'real presence' debate. Further, the traditional notion of angels joining in prayer alongside man was deep-seated. Fernando Cervantes argued that during the evangelisation of Spanish America, angels were key protagonists in this process: 'to partake in the liturgy and especially to pray at Mass with the myriad of angels was for the mendicants and neophytes a logical way to locate themselves beyond as well as within the material world, not to hear the choirs of angels in the liturgical prayers, in fact would have seemed as skewed as to not hear the cry of the oppressed'.<sup>38</sup> The Eucharist was the central rite of a spiritual community, and angels and man were thought to participate in the

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<sup>38</sup> Fernando Cervantes, 'Angels conquering and conquered: changing perceptions in Spanish America', in P., Marshall, and A., Walsham (eds) *Angels in the Early Modern World*, (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2006), p.128.

sacrament. Even after the English Reformation, this model continued with angels retaining a place within the Communion and the Te Deum, as discussed in the introductory chapter.

Indeed, whilst angels remained somewhat on the periphery of the debates that raged between the Protestant subjects after the Reformation, these sources represent an excellent opportunity to analyse competing expressions of contested religious practice from the early Protestant perspective. Timothy Rosendale's robust framework for 'mid-century' sacramental theology is a useful point of reference to help unpick these sometimes obtuse arguments. Rosendale's study, *Liturgy and Literature in the Making of Protestant England*, surveys the 1549 and 1559 editions of the Book of Common Prayer and offers four competing and accepted views of the Eucharist. Catholic dogma held that the unseen substance of the Eucharistic bread and wine were transformed into the body and blood of Jesus Christ by the act of consecration.<sup>39</sup> Transubstantiation maintained the literal sense of Christ's words within the Gospels, 'this is indeed my body'. As the priest was the one to consecrate the bread and wine, this belief prompted an elevated view of the priest and his office within the Catholic tradition. The second approach Rosendale outlines is that of Luther, who also maintained the literal sense of the sacrament; Lutheran consubstantiation or "Real Presence" held that the substance of the elements is not wholly transformed but rather coexists with the corporeal presence of Christ.<sup>40</sup> Although not wholly transformed, the consecrated wine and bread are still deemed to be one with Jesus Christ within Luther's reading. The third line of thought originated from reformed theologies in Switzerland. Huldrych Zwingli maintained that the Eucharist contained no divine presence and was a strictly memorial act of thanksgiving, remembering Christ's sacrifice, reinvigorating both the individual and communal responses to faith. The

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<sup>39</sup> Timothy, Rosendale, *Liturgy and Literature in the Making of Protestant England*, (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2007) p. 90, McGrath's descriptions of the nuances between the different models of the Eucharist are in line with Rosendale's. McGrath, *Reformation Thought, An Introduction*, p.196.

<sup>40</sup> Rosendale, *Liturgy and Literature in the Making of Protestant England*, p. 90; McGrath, *Reformation Thought*, p. 178.

fourth and final reading eventually held by Calvin, Bucer, Melancthon, and Bullinger maintained that divine grace is spiritually (not corporeally) given by the elements when consumed in faith.<sup>41</sup> The fourth and final reading eventually held by Calvin, Bucer, Melancthon, and Bullinger maintained that divine grace is spiritually (not corporeally) given by the elements when consumed in faith.<sup>42</sup> Rosendale's readings will prove useful as they provide a benchmark of criteria to relate to and compare the accounts featured within the *Actes*. They are straightforward definitions which will provide a standard against the primary sources, which are loaded with mystical, metaphysical and combative arguments over the mystery of the sacrament.

### **The Protestant side**

Debates on Eucharistic theology prompted significant discussion, protest, judicial process and martyrdom even before the Marian burnings, 1555-58. John Lambert was condemned to burning before Henry VIII and Cromwell for his denial of the real presence in 1538.<sup>43</sup> Foxe included Lambert's defence in all four editions of the *Actes and Monuments*. However, the material proved to be problematic, prompting criticism from Nicholas Harpsfield and some embarrassment to the Protestant cause due to the involvement of Henry VIII, Thomas Cramner and Cromwell in condemning the martyr.<sup>44</sup> For Foxe, this was mitigated by the fact that Lambert's arguments evidenced views against the real presence, predating the views of the Marian martyrs. In the editorial commentary of the *Actes and Monuments* online,

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<sup>41</sup> Rosendale, *Liturgy and Literature in the Making of Protestant England*, p. 90; McGrath, *Reformation Thought*, p. 182.

<sup>42</sup> Rosendale, *Liturgy and Literature in the Making of Protestant England*, p. 90; McGrath, *Reformation Thought*, p. 196.

<sup>43</sup> 'The story of Iohn Lambert. Articles objected agaynst hym', *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or *TAMO* (1583 edition) (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 11 November 2020], 1563 edition, p. 583, 1570 edition; p. 1294; 1576 edition, p. 1098; 1583 edition, p.1125.

<sup>44</sup> Editorial commentary and additional information, 1583 edition, p.1125.

Thomas Freeman writes, ‘Lambert and his writing were invaluable to Foxe in providing a Reformed ancestry for the theology of the Elizabethan church’.<sup>45</sup> Before his death, Lambert prepared a treatise for the King, defending his position on the Sacrament, based upon teachings from the Church Fathers and scripture.<sup>46</sup> Lambert’s position rested upon the notion that Christ’s corporeal body will remain in heaven until the final judgement; an argument which formed the basis of a number of the Marian martyrs’ defences.<sup>47</sup> Angelic presence proved important to both Lambert’s arguments and the Marian martyrs. Within his defences, Lambert hones in on the technical arguments concerning the presence of Christ’s corporeal nature:

And he shall come, as the voice of the Angell beareth witness, as he was seene to goe into heauen, that is to say, in the selfe same forme and substance of flesh, wherunto vndoubtedly hee gaue immortalitie, but hee did not take away the nature therof: According to this fourme of hys flesh he is not to be thought to be euery where And we must take heed that we doe not so affirme the diuinitie of his manhode, that we therby take away the truthe of his body.<sup>48</sup>

Angels witnessed the corporeal body of Christ ascend to heaven, in the ‘selfe same forme and substance of flesh’. Therefore, Christ could not be physically present within the sacrament. Nor would it be possible for His physical presence at the multitudes of services which would have taken place across England and the Continent. Interestingly, it is not only the angels who work to classify Christ’s corporeal nature; Lambert warns against man affirming divinity to Christ’s physical body within the Eucharist, as this would take away the ‘truthe of his body’. At the root of this argument is the proposition that Christ was human at the time of death, and angels were witnesses to this. Although Lambert does not cite a biblical passage, he probably referred to Matthew 16. 27 in which Christ admits he is the son of God and

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<sup>45</sup> Editorial commentary and additional information, 1583 edition, p.1125.

<sup>46</sup> The distinction here is that most biblical passages are referenced by Foxe, though some instances – biblical events are just paraphrased demonstrating that certain narratives were just accepted.

<sup>47</sup> ‘A treatise of the sacrament by John Lambert to the King’, 1583 edition, p.1150.

<sup>48</sup> ‘A treatise of the sacrament by John Lambert to the King’, 1583 edition, p.1150.

predicts his imminent death to the disciples. The passage concludes, ‘the Son of Man will come hereafter in his Father’s glory with his angels about him, and he will recompense everyone, then, according to his works’.<sup>49</sup> The content and meaning of the scriptural passage and Lambert’s argument are strikingly similar. Angels shared a close platform with Christ before and after the resurrection and were, therefore, the ideal candidates to vouch for his human body ascending to heaven. The fact that Lambert did not cite the scriptural basis for his argument suggests two points; Lambert’s views were a personal expression of his own scriptural and spiritual practice. Secondly, the notion that angels witnessed Christ’s corporeal residing in heaven was a commonly accepted biblical trope. The question of Christ’s humanity remained significant to the advancement of the Protestant position. This point is again confirmed within a second citation given by Lambert, and again, angels were utilised to prove this point. Here, Lambert summarises St Augustine’s arguments:

But how he did ascend into heauen, but because he is a locall and very man? Whereby we may see, that by this sentence, Christ could not ascend, except he had bene locall, that is, conteined in one place, and so very man. And that is according to S. Augustine, writing as is aboue shewed: And he shall so come (as the Angell witnesseth) euen as you haue seene him going vp into heauen, that is to say, in the same forme and substance of his flesh. According to this forme he is not spread abroade in euery place.<sup>50</sup>

Lambert’s ‘personal expression’ is heavily indebted to Augustine. This does not detract from the sentiment that forms the basis for both citations; that Christ was human at the time of his death. Lambert argues that man should not place faith within the physical elements of the Sacrament; Christ cannot be ‘spread abroade in every place’ because his physical body will remain in heaven until the final judgement. Angels testify that Christ will return in his human form, even though his corporeal body ascended to heaven at the Resurrection. Therefore, the Eucharist is purely spiritual, not just a simple act of memorial, but a reading

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<sup>49</sup> Matthew 16. 16

<sup>50</sup> ‘A treatise of the sacrament by John Lambert to the King’, 1583 edition, p.1150.

similar to that of Calvin, Bucer, Melancthon, and Bullinger, which maintained that divine grace is spiritually (not corporeally) given by the elements when they are consumed in the Eucharist.

Angelic testimony to Christ's humanity remained significant to the reformed position on the Eucharist. John Philpot adopted a similar approach when refuting the Catholic arguments over the real presence during the 1553 Convocation. Philpot relied almost entirely on the testimony of angels in his arguments against the real presence. Philpot declared, 'And I take the occasion of my first argument out of the 28. of Mathew, of the sayeng of the anghell to the thre Maries sekyng Christ at the sepulchre, sayeng: 'He is risen, he is not here'.<sup>51</sup> Philpot also references the angel from Luke's testimony, and in 'S. Luke in the 23. chap. the anghell asketh thē, why they sought hym that lyueth among þ<sup>e</sup> dead'.<sup>52</sup> Philpot concludes: 'Likewyse the scripture testifieth that Christ is risen, ascēded into heauen, and sitteth on the right hand of þ<sup>e</sup> father: all the which is spoken of hys naturall body: Ergo, it is not on earth included in the sacrament'.<sup>53</sup> Doctor Chedsey, one of the Catholics presiding over the convocation, countered Philpot's arguments and the technicalities of the angelic testimony. He argued that Christ's visible ascension to heaven 'but that doeth not exclude the inuisible presence of his naturall body in the Sacrament'.<sup>54</sup> Philpot simply responded: 'you haue not directly answered to the saying of the angel: Christ is risen, and is not heere, because you haue omitted that which was þ<sup>e</sup> chiefest poynt of all'.<sup>55</sup> Philpot is accusing Chedsey of ignoring

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<sup>51</sup> 'John Philpot, True Report', *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1583 edition) (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 12 June 2017], 1536 edition, p. 978; 1570, 1612; 1576 edition, p.1368; 1583 edition, p.1437.

<sup>52</sup> 'John Philpot, True Report', 1583 edition, p. 1437. It is worth pointing out that this particular scriptural reference is from Luke 24. 5. Philpot may have miss-referenced the citation.

<sup>53</sup> 'Disputation in the Conuocation house about the reall presence', *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1583 edition) (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 14 February 2019].1583 edition, p.1437.

<sup>54</sup> 'Disputation in the Conuocation house about the reall presence', 1583 edition, p.1438.

<sup>55</sup> 'Disputation in the Conuocation house about the reall presence', 1583 edition, p.1438.

scripturally grounded angelic testimony and misconstruing the events of the resurrection and, by extension, the corporeal nature of Christ. Philpot, much like Lambert, relied upon the technicality of Christ's humanity before the resurrection. Philpot's prolocutor, Thomas Weston, challenged this and denied that Christ in his human form could, in fact, be deemed strictly human:

Philpot tooke it, except sinne, For þt Christ was not conceiued by the seede of man, as we be. Whereunto Philpot againe replied, that Christes conception was prophesied before by the Angel to be supernatural, but after he had receiued our nature by the operation of the holy Ghost in the virgins wombe, hee became in all poynts like vnto vs, except sinne.<sup>56</sup>

Philpot acknowledged that although human upon his death, Christ could not sin, unlike mankind, which was a key difference. When challenged on this point, Philpot resorted to the prophecy and testimony of angels to evidence his argument. Note that he did not cite Mary or the archangel Gabriel within his reading. Gabriel was intimately linked to Mary because of his announcement or prophesy at the Annunciation. This could be evidence of the 'reduction or remodification' of angelic presence in response to the religious reforms of the sixteenth century. Laura Sangha argues that reputationally angels sustained collateral damage during the Reformation through their prior association with the cult of Mary, as the temptation to conceive of Mary as mediator and seek her assistance was even greater than that of the saints.<sup>57</sup> Reformers were keen to abolish the cult of Mary, thus reducing the presence of angels and thwarting Gabriel's role as messenger and prophet. Philpot was a reformer within the *Actes*, perhaps one of the most referenced martyrs. He was officially examined over thirteen times, mainly by Bishop Bonner; he wrote countless letters to his fellow martyrs, including Robert Ferrar, Rowland Taylor, John Careless, and John Bradford and produced numerous sermons for his congregation whilst in prison. Philpott's omission of

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<sup>56</sup> 'Disputation in the Conuocation house about the reall presence', 1583 edition, p.1440.

<sup>57</sup> Sangha, *Angels and Belief in England 1480-1700*, p. 52.

the archangel Gabriel is in line with a broader trend where Protestants were uncomfortable recognising specific duties or angels because of the risk of prompting veneration.

Significantly in this instance, Philpot only reduced the presence of the archangel Gabriel. He still relied upon a universally understood angelic trope and understanding to evidence his argument and did so again when pressed further on the corporeal nature of Jesus Christ:

Philpot sayd he could also so do, and right well deduce the same out of S. Paule, who sayeth, that Christ is like vnto vs in all poyntes, except sinne: and therefore like as one of our bodies cannot receiue in it selfe any thing contrarye to the nature of a body, as to be in Paules churche, and at Westminster at one instant, or to be at Londō visibly, & at Lincoln inuisibly at one time: For that is so contrary to the nature of a body, and of all creatures (as Didimus and Basilius affirme) that an inuisible creature, as an Angell, cannot be at one time in diuers places, wherfore he concluded, that the body of Christ might not be in moe places then in one, which is in heauen, and so consequently, not to be contained in the sacrament of the altare.<sup>58</sup>

Here, Philpott employs several dichotomies within his argument; time and place, the visible and invisible. Philpot uses notions of the visible and invisible to connect opposing concepts to angelic presence, which ultimately he uses as a spiritual benchmark in comparison to Christ's material nature. In his physical form after the resurrection, Christ remained restricted to Heaven; his corporeal elements could not be contained within the sacrament. Despite the handful of angelic interventions explored in chapter three, it was predominantly thought that angels would not reveal themselves to mankind. Although angels were deemed invisible, they still symbolically served as mediators between God and man. This notion is curiously paradoxical as the invisible Christ is visibly evidenced by means of the invisible. In this instance, angels confirm Christ's supernatural nature and invisibility, which Philpot evidenced by arguing that Christ could not be in more than one place (like the angels), again adding weight to the Protestant argument on the real presence.

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<sup>58</sup> 'Disputation in the Conuocation house about the reall presence', 1583 edition, p.1440.

Besides the correlation between angelic presence and visibility, Philpot used another dichotomy, time and place, to advance his argument, citing the authority of St Paul in comparison to a contemporary Westminster. Here, he is perhaps hinting at the origins of the formal Church and the long history of Popish abuse, or even the idea of the universal Church and the collective body of believers. Within both readings, entrance into the Church rests upon the idea that Jesus Christ was like man, aside from his inability to sin; therefore, mankind cannot receive through the Sacrament anything contrary to the nature of the human body. According to Philpott's schema, a devil could not receive the holy sacrament if it contained the physical elements of Christ's body because it would go against the physical and natural laws of the universal Church. In terms of place, Philpot uses Lincoln and London to evidence that Christ's body cannot possibly be present at both locations simultaneously, neither visibly nor invisibly like an angel. Philpot's arguments are similar to Augustine and Lambert's earlier position; once the angels had witnessed Christ's ascent to Heaven, paradoxically, Christ as a spirit was contained.

In another example, Nicholas Ridley responded to Thomas Weston's affirmation that the 'reall body of Christ is in the Eucharist'.<sup>59</sup>

We behold with the eyes of fayth, him present after grace and spirituallly sette vpon the Table: and we worship which sitteth aboue, & is worshipped of the Aungels, For Christ is alwaies assistant to his mysteries, as the sayd August. sayth. And the diuine maiesty, as sayth Cyprian, doth neuer absent it selfe from the diuine mysteries, but this assistaunce and presence of Christ, as in Baptisme is wholly spirituall, and by grace, and not by any corporal substaunce of the flesh: euen so is it here in the Lords supper, being rightly & according to the word of God duely ministred.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> 'Disputation of Doct. Ridley Bishop of London in Oxford', *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or *TAMO* (1583 edition) (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 22 May 2018]. 1583 edition, p. 1478.

<sup>60</sup> 'Disputation of Doct. Ridley Bishop of London in Oxford', p. 1478.

Ridley employs familiar arguments, for example, that both mankind and the angels worship Christ, though Ridley explicitly states that mankind worships Christ who ‘sitteth above’ in Heaven alongside the angels. There is a discernible suggestion of both hierarchy and the temporal and celestial. Yet, it is precisely the worship of Christ which unites man and the angels, abolishing the particular barriers Ridley identifies in his response. Ridley argued the Eucharist was a spiritual provision provided by God, and as Augustine and Cyprian argued, one which is a ‘divine mystery’ recognised by grace (by the grace of both man and angels in Ridley’s reading).<sup>61</sup> Unlike Lambert and Philpott, Ridley does not refer to when Christ was man and became spirit to evidence his argument against the real presence. Instead, Ridley cited the Sacrament of Baptism as evidence of the non-corporeal elements of the Eucharist; one does not celebrate the Holy Spirit within Baptism, but what the Holy Spirit represents. The main thrust of Ridley’s defence is in line with the memorial element of the ‘real presence,’ advanced by Zwingli and then Bullinger. This is evidenced by the comparison Ridley makes between the Eucharist and Baptism. Ridley drew upon angelic presence to articulate just what the Eucharist represented spiritually, emphasising the notion that the reformed service united man with Christ in the company of angels. Ridley’s narrative echoes Lambert and Philpot in employing angelic presence. Still, it is illustrative of another approach where angels are utilised to signify a spiritual benefit rather than demonstrating that Christ’s corporeal body could not be contained within the Sacrament. Alister McGrath points to the words spoken by those receiving communion in the Book of Common Prayer as evidencing an evolving official view on the debate around the Real Presence. McGrath argues ‘the 1549 words reflect an essentially Lutheran position; the 1552 words a more Zwinglian stance. The 1559 statement brings the two together, without attempting any form

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<sup>61</sup> ‘Disputation of Doct. Ridley Bishop of London in Oxford’, p. 1478

of theological resolution'.<sup>62</sup> Indeed, Cranmer employs a similar technique to evidence that Christ's physical body is not contained within the Eucharist in his *Defence of the True and Catholic Doctrine of the Sacrament*, first published in 1550.<sup>63</sup> Cranmer stated 'The Lord now sits on the right hand of his Father, and there shall remain until the last day, when he shall come to judge the quick and the dead'.<sup>64</sup> McGrath says of this particular passage, 'If he is indeed at God's right hand, he cannot be anywhere else'.<sup>65</sup> This approach is remarkably similar to Lambert and Philpot's application of angelic presence in which a premise was stated to demonstrate the opposite being false. For example, if an angel was in one place, consequently, it could not be somewhere else at the same time.

Marian Martyr John Newman held similar, practical views. A pewterer by trade, Newman was condemned by Bishop Bonner and burned at Saffron Walden, Essex, in August 1555.<sup>66</sup> The examination of Newman appears from the 1570 edition onwards. In an attempt to integrate the material into chronological order, Foxe created a confusing timeline for Newman in the 1583 edition.<sup>67</sup> Newman's defence suggests he was educated, well-read, and familiar with scripture. Like Lambert, Philpot and Ridley before him, Newman denied the humanity of Jesus Christ after the Resurrection. Responding to Dr Thornton Suffragane: 'No, I do not so beleue, neyther can I so beleue: for the soule of man doth not feed vpon natural things as the body

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<sup>62</sup> McGrath, *Reformation Thought*, p. 259.

<sup>63</sup> McGrath, *Reformation Thought*, p. 258.

<sup>64</sup> Thomas Cranmer, '*Defence of the True and Catholic Doctrine of the Sacrament*,' in McGrath, *Reformation Thought*, p. 259.

<sup>65</sup> McGrath, *Reformation Thought*, p. 259.

<sup>66</sup> 'The examination and answers of Iohn Newman, Martyr'. *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or TAMO (1583 edition) (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 30 June 2017], 1570 edition, p. 2175; 1576 edition, p. 1871; 1583 edition, p. 1710.

<sup>67</sup> Editorial commentary and additional information. The material was duplicated when Foxe attempted to reorganise Newman's sources into chronological order so both page numbers have been cited. For example, Newman's exchange with Thornton appears on pages 1710 and 1974 in the 1583 edition.

doth'.<sup>68</sup> Newman's response prompted the Doctor to ask how human souls feed. Newman responded: 'I thinke the soule of man doth feed as the angels in heauen, whose feedyng is only the pleasure, ioy, felicity, & delectation that they haue of God: and so the soule of mā doth feed and eat, through fayth, the body of Christ'.<sup>69</sup> Newman's reading echoes Ridley's sentiment; he centres on the reception of the sacrament in that he describes just how the Eucharist was consumed; with the human soul-feeding spiritually. This notion is directly at odds with the orthodox Catholic view of the individual drinking the Sacramental wine, the blood of Christ and eating the wafer, His body. Newman's defence also places mankind side by side with angels, much like Ridley with the juxtaposition of man and the angels receiving spiritual nourishment through their mutual faith and contemplation of God. Newman utilises the spiritual nature of angels and their associated functions to articulate both human and angelic responses to the spiritual succour of the soul; feelings of pleasure, joy, felicity and delectation, all human emotions, yet spiritual responses to the act of contemplation – shared by both mankind and the angels in fellowship. Therefore, the soul of man was like the angels; in that, it must sustain itself through faith alone. The notion of the human soul 'feeding' as the angels is reminiscent of Isaiah 6. 1-3. This particular Psalm formed the basis of the church's *Sanctus*, deemed the 'angelic' hymn because of the Seraphim's exclamation of 'Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory'.<sup>70</sup> It also formed the basis of the traditional idea that man, along with angels, is united in the worship of God together. Neither Foxe nor Newman references Isaiah. Nevertheless, in his defence against Dr Thornton Suffragane, Newman links the two processes directly to the sacrament. The pairing of man and angel certainly had scriptural grounding, though Newman and Foxe felt it unnecessary to

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<sup>68</sup> 'The examination and answers of Iohn Newman Martyr, before D. Thornton and others', 1583 edition, p. 1710 and 1974.

<sup>69</sup> 'The examination and answers of Iohn Newman Martyr, before D. Thornton and others', 1583 edition, p. 1710 and 1974.

<sup>70</sup> Isaiah 6. 1-3.

reference an authority. This could indicate a general acceptance and understanding of the significance and synergy between man and angel in the practice and reception of the Eucharist. Newman is undoubtedly arguing in favour of the consumption of the rite spiritually and not literally and echoes Ridley's earlier example of Baptism. It is representative of a spiritual act, not a literal one. Further on in the examination, Dr Thornton asks Newman whether or not he believed Christ rose from the dead and 'came through the stone'.<sup>71</sup> It is worth pointing out that at this point in the examination, Thornton was clearly becoming agitated. This question followed the exclamation 'Tushe, what shall we stande reasoning with him? I dare say he doth not beleue, that Christ cam out of his mother, not opening the matrice'.<sup>72</sup> Foxe in the marginal notes wrote, 'Note the grosse ignoraunce of this Suffragan'.<sup>73</sup> Newman responded, 'The Scripture doth not say he went through þe stone, but it saith the Angels of God, came downe and roled away þe stone, and for feare of him: the keepers became euen as dead men'.<sup>74</sup> This provoked an outburst from Thornton, 'A foole, foolle...'.<sup>75</sup>

Thomas Greene, gave a similar response when he was asked if he thought the body and blood of Christ existed within the Sacrament. Greene responded: 'as for the Masse I cannot vnderstand it, but in the new Testament I read, that as the Apostles stode looking after the Lord when he ascended vp into heauen, an Angel sayd to them: Euen as you see him ascend vp, so shal he come agayne'.<sup>76</sup> Greene's biographical account was included in all four editions

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<sup>71</sup> 'The examination and answers of Iohn Newman Martyr, before D. Thornton and others', 1583 edition, p. 1710 and 1974.

<sup>72</sup> 'The examination and answers of Iohn Newman Martyr, before D. Thornton and others', 1583 edition, p. 1710 and 1974.

<sup>73</sup> 'The examination and answers of Iohn Newman Martyr, before D. Thornton and others', 1583 edition, p. 1710 and 1974.

<sup>74</sup> 'The examination and answers of Iohn Newman Martyr, before D. Thornton and others', 1583 edition, p. 1710 and 1974.

<sup>75</sup> 'The examination and answers of Iohn Newman Martyr, before D. Thornton and others', 1583 edition, p. 1710 and 1974.

<sup>76</sup> 'Queene Mary. The scourging of Thomas Greene prentice', *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or TAMO (1583 edition) (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from:

of the *Actes and Monuments*. It appeared along with other witness testimonies of Protestants who had been imprisoned, questioned and tortured but ultimately lived to tell the tale. Greene had been arrested for having a copy of a prohibited book. The editorial commentary suggests it was almost certainly a copy of John Olde's translation of Rudolph Gualter's *Antichrist*.<sup>77</sup> Greene stated he could not understand the Mass, as it was given in Latin. His understanding of the sacrament was based on scripture, in this instance, angelic testimony. Again, Christ's ascent to heaven meant that His body and blood could not be contained within the sacrament. Even though the angel confirms Christ's return, this should be understood spiritually. Again, angels proved helpful when defending the accuracy of biblical events and discrediting Catholic interpretations.

The arguments advanced by the reformers evidence a rigorous denial of the 'real presence' with no room for compromise. Instead, emphasis is placed on what the sacrament symbolised, and angelic presence was important to this articulation. The formal convocation and disputation records are representative of an effort to defend and ratify an approach for both the Catholic authorities in affirming their approach and the Marian martyrs in defending their position. This section's final source to be reviewed steps away from the official disputation records. Rowland Taylor was the former pastor of Hadleigh in Suffolk. Foxe included material on Taylor in the *Rerum*; by the first edition of the *Actes*, anecdotal information on Taylor's life based on oral sources was included; his background, quarrels with the Catholic residents of the town, his arrest and journey to London.<sup>78</sup> The 1570 edition saw the addition of a letter from Taylor to his wife Margaret, which includes important details on the martyr's stance on debates around the Eucharist. Taylor, like Philpot, is one of

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<http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 02 March 2020]. 1570 edition, p.2085, 1576 edition, p. 1981; 1583 edition, p. 2085.

<sup>77</sup> Editorial commentary and additional information, 1583 edition, p.2084

<sup>78</sup> Editorial commentary and additional information, 1583 edition, p.1542.

the most referenced martyrs within the *Actes*, he was one of the Protestant representatives at the Cambridge disputation debating the real presence, and he was well connected, sharing letters with Nicholas Ridley, Thomas Cranmer, Hugh Latimer, John Bradford and John Philpot to name but a few.<sup>79</sup> Marjorie Keniston McIntosh's research on poor relief in Hadleigh describes a robust presence of early religious reform ideas, arguing English was said to have been used in 'the mass and consecration of the sacrament at the altar as early as 1538, the same year in which royal injunctions ordered that an English Bible be placed in every parish church'.<sup>80</sup> Indeed within the introduction to Taylor, Foxe commended the townspeople of Hadleigh on their Protestant learning and declared that 'the whole towne seemed rather an Vniuersitie of p<sup>e</sup> learned, then a town of Clothmaking or labouring people'.<sup>81</sup> Foxe's portrayal of Hadleigh as a centre of Protestant learning has since been countered by John Craig, who, on a 'closer examination of the surviving evidence from Hadleigh, indicates that the Reformation was as bitterly contested here as it was in many another mid-Tudor community'.<sup>82</sup> Indeed, Taylor's letter to his wife Margaret is evidence of the confessional conflict in Hadleigh and not the all-encompassing endorsement of Protestantism advertised by Foxe. The letter was written in response to Sir Robert Bracher, who preached Catholic doctrine to the townspeople of Hadleigh whilst Taylor was in prison. The vitriol within specific passages of Taylor's writing is discernible and is reminiscent of the sources surveyed initially in this chapter which directly attacked the Catholic orthodoxy.

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<sup>79</sup> Critical Apparatus, Glossary of People. *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or TAMO, Editorial commentary and additional information. (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 01.07.19].

<sup>80</sup> Marjorie, McIntosh, *Poor Relief and Community in Hadleigh, Suffolk 1547-1600* (University of Hertfordshire Press: Hertfordshire 2013) p. 31.

<sup>81</sup> 'A godly letter of Doct. Taylour Martyr to his wife', *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or TAMO (1583 edition) (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 1 November 2019], 1570 edition, p. 1743; 1576 edition, p. 1481; p. 1583 edition, p. 1552.

<sup>82</sup> J, Craig, 'Reformers, Conflict, and Revisionism: The Reformation in Sixteenth-Century Hadleigh'. *The Historical Journal*, 42:1 (1999), pp. 1-23.

Taylor began his letter arguing in favour of justification by faith, against the corporeal presence of Jesus Christ within the Eucharist and prayers for the dead.

In a letter to his community, Taylor criticised the notion of the 'real presence' and again evidences angelic presence being used as a spiritual benchmark:

We are sure that our sauour Christs body is made of none other substaunce then of his mother the blessed virgin Maries substaunce. We are sure, that he taketh not the nature of Angels, muche lesse of bread. Only he taketh on hym the seed of Abraham. In all thynges lyke vnto vs, sin only except. And this is a comfortable doctrine to vs christians, beleuing stedfastly as the true catholike fayth is, that Christ hath but two natures, perfect God, and perfect man.<sup>83</sup>

Taylor begins by pointing to the human lineage of the Virgin Mary, firmly stating that Christ and Mary were made of the same 'substance'. He then links Christ to the 'seed of Abraham,' suggesting that Christ was intrinsically linked to the Patriarch Abraham, who is traditionally seen as the precursor to Christianity. By using the motif of the seed, Taylor links the Abrahamic prophecy of the saviour and the subsequent growth and spread of Christianity through the ministry of Christ and the apostles. Nestled within the discussions of Christ's human lineage, Taylor's quote on angelic spirituality is enhanced with a citation from Foxe. Here, Taylor argues, 'we are sure that he taketh not the nature of Angels', which prompts Foxe's reference to the second book of Hebrews. The 'muche less of bread' is Taylor's additional turn of phrase.<sup>84</sup> This sentence is significant for several reasons. Firstly, Taylor's affirmation of 'we are sure'. Taylor is sure because scripture evidences his argument, though significantly, he did not cite the passage and must be relying on his audience's knowledge of the bible to evidence his statement. Additionally, the second chapter of Hebrews is an interesting passage for Taylor to allude to and for Foxe to reference. It is loaded with

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<sup>83</sup> 'A godly letter of Doct. Taylour Martyr to his wife', 1583 edition, p. 1552.

<sup>84</sup> Foxe's marginal notes, 'A godly letter of Doct. Taylour Martyr to his wife', 1583 edition, p. 1552.

meandering arguments over angelic hierarchy in relation to Christ and the significance of angels to Christian law. For instance, it begins with: 'Wherefore we ought diligently to give heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we run out. For if the word spoken by Angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward'.<sup>85</sup> 'If the word spoken by the Angels' refers to Paul's affirmations that 'the law' was given and spoken by the Angels, then entrusted to Christ. The angels were integral to the overall Christian narrative and were deemed inferior to Christ the Saviour. This is confirmed in the first book of Hebrews, in which it is referenced numerous times 'the son is superior to the Angels'.<sup>86</sup> Interestingly, the second chapter of Hebrews turns the idea of Christ's superiority over the angels on its head:

Thou madest him a little inferior to the Angels: thou crownedst him with glory and honor, and hast set him above the works of thine hands.<sup>87</sup> And again: But we see Jesus crowned with glory and honor, which was made little inferior to the Angels, through the suffering of death, that by God's grace he might taste death for all men.<sup>88</sup>

This passage must be understood as referring to Christ's temporary state as a human and his consequential inferior status to angels during the time before his death. Taylor took inspiration from the second chapter of Hebrews. One of the final passages reads: 'For he in no sort took on him the Angels' nature, but he took on him the seed of Abraham'.<sup>89</sup> Christ's human lineage facilitated the saviour of mankind through His sacrifice, therefore Angels did not share the same divine or spiritual nature with Jesus Christ, and that he was at least for a time, human. By adding the 'much less of bread', Taylor shrewdly links this argument directly to his own attack on the 'real presence' within the Eucharist. Taylor demonstrated the relevance of angelic presence to debates surrounding the Eucharist, much like John

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<sup>85</sup> Hebrews 2. 1-2.

<sup>86</sup> Hebrews 1.

<sup>87</sup> Hebrews 2. 7.

<sup>88</sup> Hebrews 2. 9.

<sup>89</sup> Hebrews 2. 16.

Lambert, John Philpot, Nicholas Ridley and John Newman, utilising angels as a spiritual benchmark to evidence that Christ could not be present physically within the sacrament. This approach was adopted to prove what the sacrament was and was not. As mentioned earlier, Cranmer employed a similar technique when he stated that Christ was on the right-hand side of God. Therefore, he was not physically present in the sacrament. The emphasis on the memorial element of the sacrament, which was traditionally a Zwinglian view, again helps to clarify what the sacrament was not, and as McGrath demonstrated, this was a process which evolved and is reflected within the words spoken by the priest whilst giving communion:

**1549 edition:** The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life.

**1552 edition:** Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart with thanksgiving.

**1559 edition:** The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart with thanksgiving.<sup>90</sup>

The Elizabethan Settlement muted the move from a Lutheran approach to Zwinglian as the 1559 statement combined the two systems. Something which McGrath deemed a symbol of pragmatism rather than theological resolution, as both Lutherans and Zwinglians would find something which they could approve.<sup>91</sup> The examples considered in this section demonstrate that angelic presence was useful. Angels offered the early Protestant reformers and the Marian martyrs a way of exploring sacramental theology in light of the evolving religious reform movements and competing approaches to orthodoxy. The Marian martyrs utilised angelic presence as a form of spiritual and cultural self-determination. The opinions and logic expressed within these accounts were not solely based on scripture. Nowhere in the Bible states that angels are immaterial or invisible, yet this formed the basis of many of the

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<sup>90</sup> McGrath, *Reformation Thought*, p. 259.

<sup>91</sup> McGrath, *Reformation Thought*, p. 259.

Protestant arguments against the real presence. This is important because it shows that pre-existing ideas and beliefs on angels remained after the Reformation and were acceptable within this particular circle of Protestants.

### **The Catholic side**

Foxe and the Marian martyrs saw that angelic presence offered clarity in evidencing the Protestant position against the real presence. Foxe also found value in employing angelic presence to criticise the orthodoxy of the Catholic Church. In the first and final editions of the *Actes and Monuments*, Foxe included a cutting commentary on the Catholic Mass. In the Rubric, he included a transcription of the service along with interjections of opinion captured in the marginal notes and the body of the text. A good example of this is the hymn Gloria in Excelsis. Foxe wrote:

Next followeth Gloria in excelsis, &c. Which words were song of the Angels at the birth of our sauiour. Albeit these words also were corrupted, (as many other things were) in the Church. For where the words of the Angels himne were hominibus bona voluntas. i. to men good wil; þ<sup>e</sup> Masse sayd hominibus bonæ voluntatis, i. to men of good will, &c.<sup>92</sup>

Here, Foxe used the Gloria in Excelsis to evidence the heritage of Catholic misinterpretation and abuse of Scripture. It was errors like this which gave Foxe the ammunition needed to question the practices of the Catholic Church. By the 1570 edition, Foxe expanded his commentary to include a transcription of the Psalter of Our Lady, a thirteenth-century work

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<sup>92</sup> 'The Rubric', *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or *TAMO* (1583 edition) (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 01.03.11]. 1563 edition, p. 963 and 1583 edition, p. 1425.

attributed to Saint Bonaventure.<sup>93</sup> This particular psalter was part of the Wayland primers, which Eamon Duffy suggested ‘had a distinctive character and content, and carried the regime’s stamp of approval’.<sup>94</sup> Indeed, Duffy points to the survival of Marian primers as evidence of a broad acceptance of the return to Catholicism.<sup>95</sup> The following extracts are a good indication of, to use Duffy’s words, ‘the religion approved for lay use in Mary’s church’.<sup>96</sup> The Our Lady’s Psalter is full of angelology with the opening passage including a blessing from the angels: ‘All women thou passest in the beautie of thy body, all Angels and Archaungels in the excellencie of thy holinesse’.<sup>97</sup> Here, the angels and archangels demonstrate that the Virgin Mary’s grace is reflected and magnified in all things. Foxe includes a commentary note stating ‘Our Ladyes beautye,’ evidencing that he took issue with attributing praise to Mary, his issue was directly with the Marian Church and government.<sup>98</sup> Another extract evidences some convergence in opinion over the role of angels and their close association with the protection of the human soul: ‘Here vs O Lady in the day of trouble, &c. Cast vs not away in the time of our death, but succour our soule when it forsaketh the body. Sende an Angell to meete it, that it may be defended from the enemies. &c. In torments and paines let it feele thy comforte, and graunt to it a place among the elects of God’.<sup>99</sup> Angels served both to pastorally preserve the soul of the faithful, but also to protect and defend it against enemies. Again, angels were commonly believed to protect the innocent. The idea of choirs of angels offering protection has been a common theme within the Protestant sources. The ‘Our Ladies’ Psalter’ reflects similar expectations which would

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<sup>93</sup> ‘Queene Mary, The booke of our ladies Psalter - full of Popish blasphemy’, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1583 edition) (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 01.03.11], 1570 edition, p. 1813; 1576 edition p. 1541; 1583 edition, p. 1623.

<sup>94</sup> Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, p. 527.

<sup>95</sup> Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, p. 526.

<sup>96</sup> Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, p. 527.

<sup>97</sup> ‘Queene Mary, The booke of our ladies Psalter - full of Popish blasphemy’, 1583 edition, p. 1623.

<sup>98</sup> ‘Queene Mary, The booke of our ladies Psalter - full of Popish blasphemy’, 1583 edition, p. 1623.

<sup>99</sup> ‘Queene Mary, The booke of our ladies Psalter - full of Popish blasphemy’, 1583 edition, p. 1623.

have been comforting to a lay audience: ‘Be thou my guide to the heauenly rest, and to the company of Angels associate me’.<sup>100</sup> It is worth remembering that Psalters were designed to be sung, further developing the idea of a unity between angels and mankind, joined in prayer to God. Laura Sangha has noted examples within Catholic literature where comparisons between angelic nature and men were designed to promote the significance of Mass. Sangha suggested this technique was ‘used to bring the reader an awareness of their privileged position and to demonstrate the broad, encompassing nature of God’s love and mercy’<sup>101</sup> These examples of angelic spirituality demonstrate that angels were portrayed as assuming a key responsibility in liturgical practice. Angels were mediators, protectors and joined in prayer with mankind. These accounts offer an excellent point of comparison for some of the views expressed by the Catholic inquisitors captured by Foxe in the *Actes and Monuments* in which there is evidence of angels being presented as occupying a more passive space in the sacrament.

A fascinating example is an unfortunately incomplete speech penned by notorious Catholic Inquisitor, Bishop Edmund Bonner, entitled *The dignity of Priestes*. Here, Bonner compares the status of the Priest to that of an angel. Laura Sangha has suggested a common comparison between priests and angels was based on interpretations of the seven angels in Revelation as pastors and bishops, an association employed when using old ideas to support religious innovation.<sup>102</sup> In this example, Bonner employs the comparison to highlight the traditional value of celebrating the position of the priest and clergy. Bonner delivered this speech during the 1553 Convocation of Canterbury and York. When Bonner spoke at the

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<sup>100</sup> ‘Queene Mary, The booke of our ladies Psalter - full of Popish blasphemy’, 1583 edition, p. 1624.

<sup>101</sup> Sangha, *Angels and Belief*, p 133.

<sup>102</sup> Sangha, *Angels and Belief*, p.100.

Convocation, Queen Mary had declared him the vicegerent president of the Convocation whilst Thomas Cramner, Edward's former vicegerent, was imprisoned in the tower.<sup>103</sup>

Bonner's stance then is a good indication of state and theological orthodoxy. In the source, the bishop employs a number of tropes which evidence the superiority of the Priest over angels. Foxe consequently uses some of Bonner's points within his introduction to the material:

In his foresayd conuocation, Bonor B. of Londō being Vicegerent and President as is said, made a certayne exhortation or oration to the Clergy (whether it was in this conuocatiō or much about the sayd time) wherin he semeth to shew a great piece of his profound and deep learning in setting forth the most incomparable & superangelical order of Priesthood, as may appeare by this parcell or fragment of his foresayd Oration.<sup>104</sup>

Significantly Foxe described the organisation of Bonner's priesthood as 'superangelical', which could be read in two ways. First, Bonner's sermon rests on the hypothesis that Priests are higher than angels because they possess the power to consecrate the host. The second scenario is neatly bound up in a more traditional reading of angelology whereby Pseudo Dionysius's *Celestial Hierarchy* was utilised as a model of ecclesiastical organisation. Foxe was more than likely familiar with the *Celestial Hierarchy* and used this to criticise Bonner. One of the key differences Joad Raymond identified between Protestant and Catholic theology of angels was the opposing positions on the Pseudo Dionysius' *Celestial Hierarchy*.<sup>105</sup> Raymond employed the work of Calvinist controversialist Andrew Willet to exemplify the position. Willet wrote in the 1590s that the Papists' boldly affirmed' the nine orders of Angelles' while Protestants accept there are' diverse orders' but judge that to enquire 'more subtilly' is not only 'foolish curiositie', but also 'ungodly and dangerous rashness'.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> 'Bonners Oration in praise of Priesthood', *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1583 edition) (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 17.11.19]. 1563 edition, p.995-6; 1570 edition, p. 1626-7; 1576 edition, p1380-1; 1583 edition, p. 1450.

<sup>104</sup> 'Boners Oration in praise of Priesthood', 1583 edition, p. 1450.

<sup>105</sup> Raymond, *Milton's Angels*, pp. 48-56.

<sup>106</sup> Raymond, *Milton's Angels*, p. 49.

oxe is playing on the parallel Bonner has presented between the priesthood and the order of the angels. With a sense of irony, Foxe employs the word 'superangelical' because Bonner elevates the priest's position above an angel. Foxe continues the theme of hierarchy:

I thought to impart it to the Reader, both for that the Author of so worthy a worke should not passe vnknown, and partly also, for that þe estimatiō of this blessed order should lose nothing of his preeminence, but might be knowne in most ample perfection, so as it standeth aboute Angels and kinges, if it be true that Bonner sayth.<sup>107</sup>

Here, Foxe rehashes Bonner's words to describe the sermon as 'standing above angels and kings', another rebuke. Foxe was keen for Bonner's views to be published so that they would be 'knowne in most ample perfection'. This is where the introduction ends, and Bonner's commentary begins. Nonetheless, we are still privy to a number of Foxe's caustic commentary notes throughout sections of Bonner's sermon. In the source, Bonner relates key biblical figures to the priest. He begins by referencing Matthew chapter 16, in which Christ predicted his death. This is preceded by Christ scolding his disciples for their argument over a forgotten loaf of bread. 'Don't you remember the five loaves for the five thousand and how many basketfuls you gathered? Or the seven loaves for the four thousand, and how many basketfuls you gathered? How is it you don't understand that I was not talking to you about bread?'<sup>108</sup> As the Last Supper had not yet taken place, the bread was not yet sacramental but a sign that Jesus Christ was the messiah. This was an interesting citation to begin his sermon with and one which Bonner used to evidence that Priests were worthy of worship: 'Wherefore it is to be knowne that Priestes & Elders be worthy of all mē to be worshipped for the dignity sake which they haue of God, as in Mat. 16'.<sup>109</sup> The Bishop goes on to compare the function of the priest to the Virgin Mary. In summary, Bonner's argument is

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<sup>107</sup> 'Bonners Oration in praise of Priesthood', 1583 edition, p. 1450.

<sup>108</sup> Matthew 16. 9-12.

<sup>109</sup> 'Bonners Oration in praise of Priesthood', 1583 edition, p. 1450.

based upon three principles. The first is that Mary conceived Jesus Christ. Bonner references Luke 1, in which Elizabeth and Mary are both told by an angel that they will conceive a child. Bonner compares this to the Eucharistic prayer.

So the priest by 5. wordes doth make the verye body of Christe. Euen as immediately after the consent of Mary, Christ was all whole in her wombe: so immediatly after the speaking of the wordes of consecration, þ<sup>e</sup> bread is transubstantiated into the very body of Christ.<sup>110</sup>

The Virgin conception is at once compared with and matched to Bonner's interpretation of the Eucharist. Here, the sacramental bread is transformed into the body of Christ, and in Bonner's reading, this evidences the fact that the Priesthood should enjoy a higher status because they alone possess the power of consecration. The second thread to Bonner's argument is that after the birth, the Virgin Mary carried Christ in her arms and placed him in the manger. Bonner argued the Priests perform the same function within the Mass 'euen so the Priest after the consecration, doth lift vp the body of Christ, & placeth it, & caryeth it, and handleth it with his hands'.<sup>111</sup> The final strand to Bonner's comparison rests upon the notion that Mary was cleansed of sin before the annunciation. The bishop likens this to the priest being anointed before he is ordained: 'without orders he could cōsecrate nothing, therefore the lay man cannot do the thing, although he bee neuer so holy, and do speake the selfe same wordes of consecration'.<sup>112</sup> Bonner's arguments focus on three areas:

- 1) The spoken word, which marks the consecration of the bread and wine.
- 2) Actions; the lifting of the bread and wine.
- 3) Ceremonial; the anointment and cleansing of sin.

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<sup>110</sup> 'Bonners Oration in praise of Priesthood', 1583 edition, p. 1450.

<sup>111</sup> 'Bonners Oration in praise of Priesthood', 1583 edition, p. 1450.

<sup>112</sup> 'Bonners Oration in praise of Priesthood', 1583 edition, p. 1450.

In Bonner's schema, Mary's significance to the Christian narrative is somewhat reduced. Bonner then moves on to compare the office and status of the priest to that of the angels: 'Therefore here is to be knowne, that the dignity of Priestes by some meanes passeth the dignity of angels, because there is no power geuen to any of the Aungels to make the body of Christ'.<sup>113</sup> Again, Bonner's argument rests upon the power of the Priests' spoken word and the subsequent act of consecration. In the marginal notes, Foxe commented, 'priesthood is compared and preferred before the state of Angels'.<sup>114</sup> Here Foxe comments on the central argument of Bonner's sermon, and subsequently his own criticism of it, Bonner's inflated opinion of the Priest. In chapter one it was noted how Foxe omitted the role of the angel when he referenced Satan being cast down to hell for a thousand years.<sup>115</sup> It is interesting to observe Foxe in this context, defend the status of angels and employ hierarchy in his argument against Bonner.

Bonner continued and drew upon readings from Bernard of Clairvaux and Saint Ambrose to add authority to his argument: 'Wherby the least priest may do in earth, that the greatest and highest Aungell in heauen can not do as S. Barnard sayth: O worshipful dignity of Priestes in whose hands the Sonne of God is, as in the wombe of the Virgin he was incarnate'.<sup>116</sup>

Bonner's reasoning tends to rely upon the notion of hierarchy and his audience's understanding of it. The 'least priest' and the 'highest angel' must have been a flattering comparison to an audience of clerics; on the other hand, it must have also generated a feeling of redundancy to a lay audience; if an angel is lower than a priest then the average person would have been at the bottom of this ladder. Bonner strengthened his position further and

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<sup>113</sup> 'Bonners Oration in praise of Priesthood', 1583 edition, p. 1450.

<sup>114</sup> 'Bonners Oration in praise of Priesthood', 1583 edition, p. 1450.

<sup>115</sup> Chapter 1, p.8.

<sup>116</sup> 'Bonners Oration in praise of Priesthood', 1583 edition, p. 1450.

cited Augustine's argument of angelic agency within Mass: 'S. Augustine sayth that Angels in the consecration of the sacred host do serue him, and the Lorde of heauen descendeth to him'.<sup>117</sup> Augustine's rationale places great significance on the role of angels in the act of consecration; they are active, participating in the ritual. The Sanctus further evidences this, the hymn sung or spoken within the final stages of the Mass. Here, the congregation are thought to join in with the angels as they sing 'Holy, Holy, Holy Lord' as the angels did in the Old Testament, Isaiah 6 and attend God at His throne. Bonner countered Augustine's view with Ambrose's teachings: 'Saynt Ambrose vpon Saynt Luke sayth: Doubt thou not the Aungels to be where Christ is present vpon the Aultare'.<sup>118</sup> Once again, angelic agency is reduced, angels are restricted away from the altar, whilst the priest and Christ were unified in mutual participation of the sacrament. This framework was indicative of Bonner's overall rationale, which can be seen further in his concluding remarks: 'Wherefore Priestes are to be honoured before all kinges of the earth, Princes and Nobles For a Priest is higher then a King, happyer then an Aungell, Maker of his Creator. Wherefore. &c'.<sup>119</sup> This bold statement solicited a biting attack, with Foxe writing in his marginal notes 'Blasphemy'.<sup>120</sup> And this is where the accounts ends. Bonner concludes his sermon by underlining why the office of the Priest was such a lofty one, because the priest was 'Maker of his Creator'. For Bonner, there was no question of whether or not the body of Jesus Christ existed within the bread and wine of the Eucharist. It existed, was tangible, and the act of consecration was a legitimate function of the priesthood, which positioned priests above angels. The priests were privy to a unique and sacred power, one which laypeople, nobles and even monarchs needed to complete their devotional routines. The office of the priest, even the lowest ranking, would be required to exercise their sacred and exclusive power for all of society, kings and queens included, to

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<sup>117</sup> 'Bonners Oration in praise of Priesthood', 1583 edition, p. 1450.

<sup>118</sup> 'Bonners Oration in praise of Priesthood', 1583 edition, p. 1450.

<sup>119</sup> 'Bonners Oration in praise of Priesthood', 1583 edition, p. 1450.

<sup>120</sup> 'Bonners Oration in praise of Priesthood', 1583 edition, p. 1450.

attain salvation. It is worth pointing out that Bonner's presentation of the power dynamic between the priest and angels is not represented in the Our Ladies Psalter. It is quite the opposite. Joad Raymond has pointed to a shift in the hierarchy of angels in comparison to man from the seventeenth century onwards. Raymond argues this was due to three areas of human privilege; 'humans are given atonement, the angelic fall was irreversible because grace was forfeited; Christ adopted human nature and not angelic'.<sup>121</sup> Although not directly referencing the dynamics or relations between priests and angels, it is possible that these debates feed into a wider view.

A year after the Convocation, Bonner's catechism, *A Profytable and necessary doctrine* was published, a text which Laura Sangha and Eamon Duffy both consider to be a vitally important work of the Marian period. Duffy described the catechism as 'one of the most remarkable books of the reign, a neglected masterpiece of Tudor catechesis'.<sup>122</sup> Laura Sangha views it as a good example of the way in which 'Marian religious literature would generally appear to offer a perception of angels that was distinct from that of late mediaeval Catholicism'.<sup>123</sup> Sangha suggested Bonner was 'not concerned with an exploration of the wonderful benefits supplied to mankind by way of angels, and makes no attempt to offer a comprehensive synthesis of heavenly beings'.<sup>124</sup> In the catechism, Bonner makes no reference to angels in his exposition on the Sacrament of Orders and only references angels once in his thirty plus page exhortation on the Sacrament of the Altar. Here, Bonner quotes St Cyprian:

Thys breade or fode of Angels, hauynge al delte with maruaylous power or virtue, both sauour untu all them which wotheye and deuoutly receyue it, according to their hartse desyre, and more

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<sup>121</sup> Raymond. *Milton's Angels*, p. 83.

<sup>122</sup> Eamon Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, p. 534.

<sup>123</sup> Sangha. *Angels and Belief in England*. p. 130.

<sup>124</sup> Sangha. *Angels and Belief in England*. p. 130.

fruitfully both fulfil and sait the appetites if the eaters, than dyd that Hosanna in the wilderness, and both far pass fragantnes of all earthly sauours, ye and the pleasures of all swetenes.<sup>125</sup>

Bonner employs St Cyprian to draw on the parallels between the bread or food of the angels and appetites tempted by earthly savours and sweetness. This translates as a metaphor for the soul feeding spiritually as Jesus did in the wilderness and as the angels do in heaven. The idea of the soul feeding is what Newman promoted in his arguments against the real presence. Ridley also utilised St Cyprian in his views in support of the memorial elements of the Eucharist. This is an excellent example of the heritage shared by Catholics and Protestants. Both opposing factions could draw on the same source material to evidence their arguments. In quoting St Cyprian, Bonner draws on the spiritual reward of communion.

There are further examples of Catholic arguments concerning the real presence, although perhaps not encompassing the same degree of dogmatic certainty as Bonner. William Glyn, bishop of Bangor was a Catholic representative during the second Disputation at Cambridge. Duffy describes Glyn as a distinguished theologian, formerly ‘Lady Margaret’s Professor of Divinity at Cambridge and President of Queens’.<sup>126</sup> In 1554, Glyn at a Disputation on the Sacrament opposed Protestants, Andrew Perne, Edmund Grindal, Edmund Guest and James Pilkington, with Nicholas Ridley, Glyn’s one time friend, moderating proceedings.<sup>127</sup> Foxe included a record of the second disputation within all editions of the *Actes*, bar the first. It was only the final edition which included a transcript of proceedings. Within the

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<sup>125</sup> ‘Edmund Bonner, *A Profytable and necessary doctrine*’, (Johannis Cawood: London, 1557).

<sup>126</sup> Eamon Duffy, *Fires of Faith, Catholic England under Mary Tudor*, (Yale University Press: London, 2011) p. 24.

<sup>127</sup> ‘Disputation in Cambridge about the Sacrament’, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or *TAMO* (1583 edition) (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 12 July 2020]. 1570 edition, p. 1593; 1576 edition, p. 1350; 1583 edition, p. 1399.

material, Glyn was asked to explain how Christ's body existed within the Sacrament and Heaven simultaneously. The bishop responded:

The body of Christ is in heauen circumscripitiuely, but not so in the sacrament. The angels also are contened diffinitiuely. But I haue learned that the body of Christ is in the sacrament, but not locally nor circumscripitiuely, but after an vnspeakable maner vnknowen to man.<sup>128</sup>

Glyn is suggesting that it was possible for Christ's corporeal body and incorporeal spirit to physically exist in more than one place at one time and independently of each other. In Glyn's reading Christ is in Heaven, watching mankind from above, though his presence is also described as 'circumscribed' and therefore limited. Glyn also describes Christ's body as being contained within the Sacrament, but 'not locally nor circumscriptively' suggesting it was contained, but also limitless. In between this division of the physical and spiritual realms, Glyn clearly stipulates that the angels are contained definitively alongside Christ, thus limiting angelic presence to heaven. The Council of Trent's statement gave the official position of the Catholic Church on the real presence in 1551, declaring that: 'After the consecration of the bread and wine, our Lord Jesus is truly, really and substantially contained in the venerable sacrament of the Holy Eucharist under the appearance of those physical things'.<sup>129</sup> The Council of Trent Decree also states, 'our Saviour sits at the right hand of the Father in heaven according to his natural mode of existing, while he is sacramentally present to us in his own substance in many other places'.<sup>130</sup> Glyn's thoughts on the real presence are, therefore, in line with the official position as decreed by the Council of Trent. Equally, as evidenced in previous examples, Glyn built on this position and added angelic presence into the debate as a point of comparison or a spiritual benchmark. In doing so, Glyn suggested

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<sup>128</sup> 'Disputation in Cambridge about the Sacrament', 1583 edition, p. 1408.

<sup>129</sup> 'Council of Trent Decree on the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist'. in McGrath, *Reformation Thought*, p. 194.

<sup>130</sup> 'Council of Trent Decree on the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist'. in McGrath, *Reformation Thought*, p. 194.

that the body of Christ and the angels were contained and limited in heaven. In his explanation, Glyn simply resorts to the divine mystery.

Both Glyn and Bonner appear to limit the agency of angels, and again, this approach appears in an exchange between Thomas Cranmer and the Catholic inquisitor Hugh Weston. During Cranmer's trial at St Mary's Oxford in 1555, Weston argued that Christ was human at his sacrifice. Because of this, Weston argued, Christ became our 'kinsman by his true, naturall and organically flesh: Therefore he gaue his true, natural, and organical flesh to be eaten'.<sup>131</sup> Cranmer's response discounts Weston's interpretation, and instead, he concentrates on what the ritual represented symbolically. Cranmer argued, 'I graunt he tooke and gaue the same true, naturall, and organically flesh wherein he suffered, and yet he feedeth spiritually, and that flesh is receyued spiritually'.<sup>132</sup> Cranmer's description of the 'soul feeding' is now a familiar trope that transcended confessional lines. Identified in both Ridley and Newman's defences in which the human and angelic souls feed and Bonner's citation of St Cyprian in his catechism, it symbolises the spiritual element of receiving the Sacrament. Cranmer's stance prompts a scathing attack from Weston, in which he draws on Church Father John Chrysostom: 'Let it come into thy remembrance with what honour thou art honored, and what table thou sittest at: for wyth the same thyng we are nourished, which the angels do behold and tremble at'.<sup>133</sup> Weston chose this particular reference because it directly references Mathew 26, providing the biblical basis for the Eucharist. Another reason for Weston's choice of the source material is that in an earlier disputation, Peter Martyr cited a reading of Chrysostom's to argue against the real presence: 'Christ in bread and wyne sayde: do this in

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<sup>131</sup> 'Disputation of Doct. Cranmer archbishop of Canterbury at Oxford', *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or *TAMO* (1583 edition) (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 25 September 2020], 1570 edition, p. 1635; 1576 edition, p. 1388; 1583 edition, p. 1457.

<sup>132</sup> 'Disputation of Doct. Cranmer archbishop of Canterbury at Oxford', 1583 edition, p. 1457.

<sup>133</sup> 'Disputation of Doct. Cranmer archbishop of Canterbury at Oxford', 1583 edition, p. 1457.

remembraunce of me'.<sup>134</sup> Here, Peter Martyr used Chrysostom to articulate the memorial element of the Sacrament. In citing Chrysostom to advance his argument, Weston cast doubt on Peter Martyr's testimonial which provided argued the case for the memorial element of the Sacrament. The addition of the angels beholding and trembling at the ritual is not referenced in Matthew. It could be Chrysostom's reading, and again represents that strand of thought that saw angelic presence limited. Additionally, this stance follows Bishop Bonner's earlier sermon, in which he argued the priest was 'higher than a king and happier than an angel'. The notion of hierarchy is a prevalent theme and is employed to demonstrate how mankind was honoured by Christ's sacrifice and subsequent gift. Weston added his commentary to Chrysostom and continues:

Neither are they (the angels) able to behold it w<sup>o</sup>ut great feare, for the brightnesse which commeth therof: and we be brought and compact into one heape or masse with hym. Being together one bodye of Christ, and one flesh w<sup>it</sup> him. Who shal speake the powers of the Lord, and shall declare forth all his prayes? What Pastor hath euer nourished hys sheepe wyth hys owne members? Manye mothers haue put forth their Infantes after their byrth, to other Nurses: which he would not do, but feedeth vs w<sup>it</sup> hys owne body, & conioyneth and vniteth vs to himselfe.<sup>135</sup>

Weston maintained the lower status of angels. The idea that angels were fearful of the physical elements contained within the sacrament is an important notion. The angels could not watch the ceremony without great fear nor stand the great brightness that radiated from man once he had eaten his mystical meal. This act united humanity with Jesus Christ, in 'one heape and one flesh', completing the ceremony, the very ceremony the angels were powerless to participate. Where angels are absent, mankind is present and actively participating in the sacrament. This adds some weight to Laura Sangha's point that suggested examples of comparisons to men and angels were designed to demonstrate man's privileged position.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> 'Peter Martyrs Disputation in Oxford', 1583 edition) (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 25 September 2020]. 1583 edition, p. 1398.

<sup>135</sup> 'Disputation of Doct. Cranmer archbishop of Canterbury at Oxford', 1583 edition, p. 1457.

<sup>136</sup> Sangha, *Angels and Belief*, p. 133.

However, Weston's primary concern in this example was that the Catholic approach to the real presence was the correct interpretation. Highlighting the benefits of partaking in the service would also suggest that participants would not be privy to the same benefits in a Protestant service. Weston returned to his original point, arguing that Christ's body existed within the Eucharist. He likened Christ to a shepherd or a mother feeding her child with a wet nurse. Christ chose to provide for his children by his sacrifice, and through the sacrament, mankind would be absolved from sin. Weston used clever dichotomies to advance his arguments, the angels who were too weak to participate in the Sacrament and the Saviour who could have used a surrogate to feed his children. In another exchange, Weston again cited one of Chrysostom's homilies as evidencing the real presence:

For lyke as in the pallace of kyngs, neither the walles, nor the sumptuous bed, but the body of Kings sitting vnder the cloth of estate, and royall seat of Maiestie, is of all things els the most excellent: so is in lyke maner, the kings body in heauen, which is now set before vs on earth. I shew thee neither Angels nor archangels, nor the heauen of heauens, but the very Lord & maister of all these things. Thou perceiuest after what sort thou doest not onely behold, but touchest, and not onely touchest, but eatest that which on the earth is the greatest and chiefest thyng of all other, and when thou hast receued the same, thou goest home: Wherefore cleanse thy soule from all vncleannesse.<sup>137</sup>

Weston's interpretation of the sacrament supports a literal understanding by adopting a symbolic and spiritual approach to sacramental theology. In this reading, Weston utilises the distinction between the material and spiritual and the visible and invisible to evidence that Christ was physically present within the sacrament. Temporally, Weston argues that a palace, walls, and bed are all visible symbols of a king and do not have to be seen to comprehend his majesty. Similarly, the angels and archangels are not seen but deemed representative of Christ. Weston presents these temporal and heavenly inventories as obstacles in the way of human perception, hiding what can be held, touched and eaten. Weston is arguing vicariously through Chrysostom that the real presence of Christ is tangible

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<sup>137</sup> 'Disputation of Doct. Cranmer archbishop of Canterbury at Oxford', 1583 edition, p. 1458.

and significantly edible, that human souls are fed spiritually yet by non-corporeal elements. This is also evidenced by Peter Martyr's citing Chrysostom to evidence the spiritual elements within the sacrament, not the corporeal.<sup>138</sup>

In these readings, all four Catholic voices suggest a reduction in the agency of angels, specifically in the Eucharist service. Bonner's sermon, *The dignity of Priestest*, celebrated the status and agency of the priest whilst presenting angels as passive participants. As priests held the exclusive power to consecrate the host, the priesthood was 'higher then a King, happyer then an Aungell, Maker of his Creator. Wherefore. &c.'. <sup>139</sup> Weston maintained the lower status of angels, suggesting that angels were fearful of the physical elements contained within the Sacrament. Again, this passivity is evidenced by angels not standing the great brightness that radiated from man once he had taken the Sacrament and the addition of angels trembling at the ritual; something which is not referenced in Matthew and again represents angelic presence passive and not active. Finally, in his description of the physical and spiritual realms, Glyn stipulated that the angels are contained definitively alongside Christ, thus limiting angelic presence to heaven. This is somewhat at odds with the reformed sources and the Our Ladies Psalter, the Te Deum and the preface prayer to the Communion. These prayers all evidence the communal relationship between mankind and angels. In contrast to the Catholic sources, the Marian martyrs frame angelic presence as active and angels are portrayed as participating alongside man in the Sacrament.

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<sup>138</sup> 'Peter Martyrs Disputation in Oxford', 1583 edition, p. 1398.

<sup>139</sup> 'Bonners Oration in praise of Priesthood', 1583 edition, p. 1450.

## Conclusion

This chapter demonstrates the shared cultural and theological space angels occupied for the Marian martyrs and Catholic authorities. Key in evidencing this is how the Marian martyrs both employed angelic presence to encourage a faithful adherence to the Protestant faith whilst simultaneously attacking Catholic practices. Angels bearing witness to Protestant declarations of faith validated the affirmations of the Marian martyrs. The role angels played in the judgment of souls also provided an opportunity to discredit the Catholic Church's practices and its followers. The the sources and the subject matter selected for this chapter has allowed for more juxtaposition of opinion. The majority of sources from convocation records in which the Protestant reformers defended their position on the Sacrament; consequently allowing more opportunity to consider the Catholic position captured in the exchanges between the two parties.

Again, there is a strong precedent of the debates the Protestant reformers would later develop, found in Brute's defences. The comparison of angelic incorporeal nature to Christ was seen repeatedly, as were Brute's criticisms of the priest. In some cases, the debates over the Real Presence generated the adoption of similar approaches and flexibility in utilising angelic presence from both sides. From both the Marian martyrs and Catholic authorities, angelic presence was employed as a spiritual benchmark to evidence whether Christ's corporeal body was contained within the Sacrament. Both the Marian martyrs and Catholic authorities applied their knowledge of scriptural events and readings of Augustine, Chrysostom and Cyprian to evidence the incorporeal nature of angels in contrast to the human Christ. Another example of a convergence of ideas is the notion of the soul feeding upon Christ within the

Sacrament. Newman, Ridley, and Bonner's use of Chrysostom references this activity again, evidencing that angels belonged to Catholic and Protestant liturgical practices. More broadly, communion fulfils the Christian narrative of sacrifice and salvation; it was a mutually beneficial spiritual exchange between Christ and humankind. The Real Presence debates were therefore complicated, protracted and deeply contentious.

The Protestant sources allow much more scope for angels' role, function, and agency than the Catholic readings. There is evidence of the traditional functions ascribed by Lambert and Philpott from the sources. Angels were witnesses to the human Jesus Christ. Angels prophesied Christ's birth (although the archangel Gabriel is omitted) and announced his resurrection to Mary Magdalene. This is also true of the collection of sources in which the reformers utilised angelic presence to promote religious adherence and attack the Catholic Church. Here, the witness and testimony of angels were key in advancing the Protestant message. The discussions of Christ as both man and spirit are significant because they evidence the reformers attempting to work out intricate technicalities and explain why Christ's body was not physically present within the Sacrament. Foxe and the Marian martyrs were not concentrating on what the Sacrament meant to the individual Christian; instead, they attempted to disprove transubstantiation theory using angelic presence.<sup>140</sup> Angels were employed as a spiritual benchmark offering much-needed clarity on an extremely complicated debate with the common consensus that Christ as a spirit was limited compared to the Catholic argument of Christ's physical elements being present at all times and in all places. Philpot advanced this argument and immediately placed angels almost on a level

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<sup>140</sup> There more accounts in the A&M which do not employ angels in their arguments against the real presence, but these accounts go beyond the scope of this thesis.

footing with Christ. Likewise, Newman and Ridley placed angels side by side in their mutual contemplation of Christ. In the case of Taylor, aside from his use of angels to criticise the priest's office, the role of the angels as signs of God's grace and Christ's sacrifice were important elements to his stewardship of the spiritual welfare of Hadleigh from afar. Also notable, compared to chapter one, much of the material cited is strikingly more mystical in tone, giving the sources and the protagonists more creative license. For example, Newman's 'contemplative' angels are not a motif commonly addressed within the *Actes*, whilst notions of light and dark, the visible and invisible, are also examples of an approach in which angelic presence is explored in relation to their existence to the material world.

The place of the angel within the Catholic sources suggests a subordinate role to that of the office of the Priest. Angels were considered peripheral, with angelic presence often presented as inactive and even powerless than men receiving the Sacrament. Instead, Bonner, Glyn and Weston appear to concentrate on the Priest's status superseding that of the angels. This notion is particularly striking within Bonner's sermon, in which he argues the Priest is higher than an angel because the angels do not have the power to consecrate the host. This reduction in the agency of angels is also present within Weston's readings when he argues that angels were lower than a man because they did not possess the power to receive the Sacrament. This argument reduces the significance of angels and suggests that the angels did not participate in the Sacrament alongside man as traditionally thought. We also have the Welsh Bishop Glyn's assertion that angels were restricted specifically to heaven alongside Jesus Christ, and their functions were limited. The Catholic sources considered within this chapter appear to reduce the visibility, agency and role of angels within the communion. In Bonner's case, this reduction of angelic agency served only to highlight the Priest's position and power. Although the evidence points to a significant decrease in the functions of angels,

they still participated with mankind in worship and the Sacrament. It is also pertinent to note that angels retained their presence within the Book of Common Prayer's various iterations. This broadly evidences the importance of angelic presence to the Sacrament and devotional life. However, within the Catholic sources considered, angelic presence and agency appear to be stripped back and restrained.

### **Chapter 3 – Angelic Protection**

Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." ... For I tell you that in heaven their angels are always in the presence of my heavenly Father. Mathew 18:10

This passage from Matthew contributed towards the belief that every individual had a guardian angel. For Protestants, many of the associated traditions linked to belief in guardian angels were distinctly Catholic, without scriptural grounding and problematic. The writings of Saint Umilta of Faenza explored within the introductory chapter are an excellent example of the elements reformers considered to be the worst accretions of pre-reformation religious culture. Umilta named her guardian angels, wrote letters to them, prayed to them directly, talked to them, and the angels talked back to her. Umilta venerated her angels because she believed Sapiel and Emmanuel exerted a direct influence over her daily life. Despite the challenges or resistance to belief in guardian angels, Laura Sangha, Joad Raymond, Peter Marshall, and Alexandra Walsham have all shown that the guardian angel was an important element of Protestant angelology.<sup>1</sup> Joad Raymond argues, ‘the interest in angelic communication cut against the grain of the Protestant insistence that the age of miracles and angelic apparitions was over’.<sup>2</sup> Foxe certainly captures instances of the miraculous within the *Actes and Monuments* and includes several accounts in which angelic intervention is suggested. This chapter will draw upon the various models of angelic protection evidenced across the four editions of the *Actes*.

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<sup>1</sup> Sangha, *Angels and Belief in England*; Raymond, *Milton’s Angels and Conversations with Angels*; Marshall and Walsham, *Angels in the Early Modern World*; Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England*.

<sup>2</sup> Raymond, *Milton’s Angels*, p. 59.

This final chapter falls into four distinct sections. It is framed on the accounts in which Foxe and the Marian martyrs demonstrate belief in angels ministering to themselves as individuals, as families and as a distinct collective. The first section explores the examples which link the angel to the protection of England and the Protestant collective. This notion is predominantly based on the accounts which reference or at least bear a striking resemblance to Psalm 34. 7: ‘The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them’.<sup>3</sup> Matthew 18. 10 provides the basis for the association of angels and the protection of children and family. Yet, despite the scriptural grounding, none of the accounts considered cite the biblical references underpinning this association. The third theme explores the examples of angelic intervention. These examples also give the opportunity to explore Foxe’s position on the existence of angels as the material is buttressed by extensive introductory and commentary notes. Given the prison setting from which the Marian martyrs wrote their letters, there is a notable parallel with Acts 12 in which the guardian angel aids Peter's escape from prison. In particular, this passage is the strongest biblical evidence of individuals having been assigned a specific angelic protector. The final theme explores the accounts in which the martyrs are given angelic attributes, either by their fellow cellmates or by witness testimonials after attending the public martyrdoms. These sources, in particular, evidence how the commonly understood benefits of angelic protection translated into aspects of day-to-day life and experience.

### **Angels and the Protestant Collective**

Felicity Heal has provided a useful classification for the genre of writing Foxe's *Actes & Monuments* belongs. Heal suggested that any 'ecclesiastical history was providential,

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<sup>3</sup> Psalm 34. 7.

universal (and for Protestants apocalyptic); it was also deeply intertwined with the political history of nations and peoples'.<sup>4</sup> This is an excellent description of the *Actes* and complements the material evidenced and explored in the first and second chapters. Heal's framing of the *Actes* provides a helpful reference point to explore the first selection of sources due to the continuation of the apocalyptic themes and the development of a political component which can be linked to the history of nations and people. As evidenced in the previous chapters, Foxe was keen to demonstrate the lineage of the Protestant reformers by linking the Lollard protests to the contemporary Marian accounts. Foxe included the account of Lollard Richard Wyche from the 1570 edition onwards, using Robert Fabian's chronicle and an old English chronicle to compile the record.<sup>5</sup> The account of Wyche's martyrdom in the early fifteenth century included the following statement: 'Whereby it may appeare, the holy aungels of God to fight for them which embraced the syncere doctrine of Christes gospel'.<sup>6</sup> Wyche's argument bears a striking resemblance to Psalm 34. 7. Significantly, Foxe's marginal notes paraphrase Wyche's statement and the scriptural passage, suggesting that he at least thought the Lollard was referencing the Psalm: 'Gods holy angels pitch their tentes about them which fear him. Psalm'.<sup>7</sup> Wyche was a Lollard of some standing; he was commemorated within the *Actes* with a woodcut. After his martyrdom, the location of his death became a place of pilgrimage; Foxe even comments, 'Wyche after his death taken for a saint'.<sup>8</sup> In citing the Psalm, Wyche argued for the defence of religion through the word and not by the sword. It is possible Wyche reinterpreted the Psalm from memory, as he omits the

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<sup>4</sup> Felicity Heal, 'Appropriating History: Catholic and Protestant Polemics and the National Past', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 68:1-2 (2005), p.115.

<sup>5</sup> Editorial commentary and additional information. 1583 edition, p. 725.

<sup>6</sup> 'K. Hen. 6. The cruell fact of Mainardus. Ric. Wiche martired. The kings writte', in John Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1583 edition) (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.johnfoxe.org> [Accessed: 28 July 2015] 1570 edition, p. 850; 1576 edition, p. 700; 1583, p.725.

<sup>7</sup> Foxe's marginal notes in 'K. Hen. 6. The cruell fact of Mainardus. Ric. Wiche martired. The kings writte', in John Foxe, 1583, p.725.

<sup>8</sup> 'K. Hen. 6. The cruell fact of Mainardus. Ric. Wiche martired. The kings writte', 1583 edition, p.725.

word 'tent', but in the preceding sentence, he talks about the Bohemians leaving their tents in a panic before they were struck down by God.<sup>9</sup> Although the source of Wyche's scriptural reading is not immediately obvious, the thrust of his argument is straightforward. Wyche and the Lollards were worthy of God's protection via the angel's intervention. Their faith was strong and, for Foxe, demonstrated the heritage of the Protestant Church. This much was validated further by Foxe's commentary notes in his repetition of Psalm 34.7.

Psalm 34.7 also reinforced the idea that they were privy to a special protection as members of a persecuted collective. Rafe Allerton's letter to Marian, martyr to Richard Roth, is included within all four editions of the *Actes*, with no editorial changes. The letter, which includes the Psalm, is preceded by the articles levelled at Allerton. An extract gives additional context:

Item thou Rafe allerton canst not deny, but that the letters writtē with bloud, beginning with these wordes in the ouer part thereof (The angel of God &c.) and ending thus (be with you Amen) and hauing also this postscript (do ye suppose that our brethren. &c.) remayning now registred in the actes of this court, are thyne owne hand writyng.<sup>10</sup>

The official court records reported Allerton's declaration and letter to Roth written in the martyr's blood.<sup>11</sup> Presumably, Allerton felt his responses would be met with more impact and considered a protest to his imprisonment written in his blood. Also notable is that the Psalm goes unreferenced. Instead, an incomplete first line indicates where Allerton began writing in blood and finished. Importantly, Allerton chose the Psalm as the title to his letter, exclaiming from the top of the page, '*The angell of God pitch his tent about vs, and defend*

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<sup>9</sup> 'K. Hen. 6. The cruell fact of Mainardus. Ric. Wiche martired. The kings writte,' 1583 edition, p.725.

<sup>10</sup> 'Rafe Allerton and others', in John Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1583 edition) (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.johnfoxe.org> [Accessed: 11 March 2019], 1563 edition, p. 1709; 1570 edition, p 2252-3; 1576 edition, p.1936; 1583 edition, p. 2041.

<sup>11</sup> 'The examination of Rafe Allerton at his seconde apprehension, appearing before the Bishop of London at Fulham, the 8. day of Aprill. An. 1557. wrytten by him selfe, wyth his owne bloud', 1583 edition, p. 2038, p. 2041.

*vs in all our wayes. Amen, Amen*'.<sup>12</sup> The nuances in the text are interesting. Allerton is writing to Richard Roth, a fellow Protestant prisoner, so on one level, the 'us' is an apparent reference to them both. However, the 'us' could also point to the Universal Church Felicity Heal suggests Foxe depicted within the *Actes*. Further, the phrase 'defend vs in all our ways' is Allerton's addition. This makes both the passage and the message immediately personal to Allerton and Roth as individuals and the Protestant cause more broadly. Fittingly, Allerton closes with 'amen amen', signifying the spiritual and personal sentiment of his statement and draws it to a natural close.

There is a further connection to this particular Psalm. Richard Roth, the recipient of Allerton's letter, wrote to the Colchester martyrs, Agnes Bongeor and Margaret Thirston a year later. It seems that Roth was indeed inspired by Allerton as this letter also included the Psalm purportedly written in his own blood with Roth signing off the letter 'By me Rich. Roth, wrytten with mine blood'.<sup>13</sup> The nuances in the text are interesting. Allerton is writing to Richard Roth, a fellow Protestant prisoner, so on one level, the 'us' is an apparent reference to them both. However, the 'us' could also point to the Universal Church Felicity Heal suggests Foxe depicted within the *Actes*. Further, the phrase 'defend vs in all our ways' is Allerton's addition. This makes both the passage and the message immediately personal to Allerton and Roth as individuals and the Protestant cause more broadly. Fittingly, Allerton closes with 'amen amen', signifying the spiritual and personal sentiment of his statement and draws it to a natural close. This particular letter is rather insightful to the martyrs' psychological state as, at the time, Roth, Allerton, Bongeor and Thirston all awaited their death. Roth, in his introduction, even jokes that he and Allerton are placing bets on which

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<sup>12</sup> 'Rafe Allerton and others', 1583 edition, p. 2041.

<sup>13</sup> 'A letter wrytten by Rich. Roth', *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or *TAMO* (1583 edition) (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 22 April 2018]. 1563 edition, p. 1712; 1570 edition, p. 2255; p. 1576 edition, 1938, 1583 edition, p. 2043.

one of them will be martyred first.<sup>14</sup> In the body of the letter, Roth wrote, 'wayte you still for the Lord. He is at hand, yea the Angel of the Lord pitcheth his tent rounde aboute them that feare him, and delyureth them which way he seeth best'.<sup>15</sup> Although the opening of Roth's letter included a certain lightness in terms of the joke, the 'wayte you still for the Lord,' which precedes the Psalm, indicates the overall tone of the letter. Roth utilised the Psalm, along with other reassurances, to bolster and reinforce the Colchester martyrs' faith in the face of their impending martyrdom. God's providential care is also central to Roth's understanding of martyrdom: 'the lorde deliyuereth them which way he seeth best, For our lyves are in the Lordes hands'.<sup>16</sup> Roth cements this notion by suggesting that the Colchester martyrs would be 'clothed in longe white garments vupon the Mount Sion' along with the multitude of Saintes and Jesus Christ.<sup>17</sup> Roth's letter is littered with theological parallels; Christ's suffering on the cross, which he associated with the martyr's suffering and the Virgin Mary, which Roth linked to Bongeor and Thirston as religious visionaries. Roth's use of familiar theological conventions is arguably bound up with his use of the Psalm; the angel would protect the Protestants. However, once martyred, both Bongeor and Thirston would be like the angels' clothed in longe white garments' and awaiting the companionship of Jesus Christ.<sup>18</sup>

Laura Sangha has demonstrated the pervasiveness of Psalm 34. 7, identifying the passage within a number of sources during this period. Sangha noted the passage within the prayer 'For the help of God's holy angels' which featured within several primers and in the 1572 *Briefe and Necessary Catechism*.<sup>19</sup> Sangha also cites Allerton and Roth's use of the Psalm

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<sup>14</sup> 'A letter wrytten by Rich. Roth', 1583 edition, p. 2043.

<sup>15</sup> 'A letter wrytten by Rich. Roth', 1583 edition, p. 2043.

<sup>16</sup> 'A letter wrytten by Rich. Roth', 1583 edition, p. 2043.

<sup>17</sup> 'A letter wrytten by Rich. Roth', 1583 edition, p. 2043.

<sup>18</sup> 'A letter wrytten by Rich. Roth', 1583 edition, p. 2043.

<sup>19</sup> Sangha, *Angels and Belief in England*, p.70.

within their letters featured within the *Actes and Monuments*, but does not mention the connection between the two martyrs, nor the potential circle of influence in which the use of the Psalm was propagated. There is further evidence of the potential exchange and spread of ideas between the martyrs. In another letter to Roth, Allerton wrote:

Also deare brother vnderstand that I haue seen your Letter, and although I cannot reade it perfectly, yet I partly perceiue your meanyng therein, and very gladly I would copy it out, with certayne comfortable additions thereunto annexed.<sup>20</sup>

Chapter two suggested that Margaret Mearing's declaration of faith mirrored that of John Rough's, her former pastor.<sup>21</sup> This notion was based on the similar application of angelic testimony poignantly and powerfully documented in their final declarations before they were martyred. Another reason for this proposition is the anecdotal evidence based on their relationship as documented by Foxe. This scenario is entirely applicable to the case of Rafe Allerton and Richard Roth. Both martyrs were close enough to be writing to each other. Both Allerton and Roth were from Essex and questioned by Bishop Bonner; the bishop also questioned Allerton over his connection with Roth during a second examination.<sup>22</sup> Further, the account of Allerton's questioning was based on a first-hand transcription prepared by the martyr and again written in his blood.<sup>23</sup> This suggests that this was a protest on Allerton's part and that Roth was more than likely influenced to follow suit. Eamon Duffy discusses the 'prison letter' within his book *Fires of Faith*. Duffy argues 'the prison letter, deliberately larded with New Testament phraseology evoking the early church under pagan persecution, became a distinctive new protestant genre, and such letters might be widely circulated'.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Rafe Allerton and others', 1583 edition, p. 2041.

<sup>21</sup> Chapter 2, p. 11

<sup>22</sup> 'The examination of Rafe Allerton Martyr, with his answer to the same', 1583 edition, p. 2038.

<sup>23</sup> 'The examination of Rafe Allerton Martyr, with his answer to the same', 1583 edition, p. 2038. (in reference to Allerton's blood is included within the title).

<sup>24</sup> Duffy, *Fires of Faith*, p. 91.

Duffy points to the prisons in Marian England as providing fertile ground for the sharing of Protestant ideologies: ‘This difficulty in monitoring and controlling the activities of the prisoners in the secular gaols led Bishop Bonner to make increasing use of the Lollards Tower at St Paul’s, and even of his own windowless coalhouse, as places of closer confinement and scrutiny for ideologically dangerous inmates’.<sup>25</sup> Bonner’s concerns are somewhat vindicated by Allerton’s promise to Roth to copy the letter.

It is clear that Psalm 34. 7 came to take on a specific significance for this small circle of Marian martyrs. For Foxe, this was evidenced in his commentary notes when, for example, Wyche did not directly reference the source of his inspiration. Although a small sample, these letters could reflect the development of Protestant core values in which angelic protection was utilised to illustrate or convey a common feeling amongst the martyrs and was evidenced subsequently, and more broadly, in the Catechisms referenced by Laura Sangha. The *Briefe and Necessary Catechism* cited by Sangha was not published until after the 1563 edition of the *Actes and Monuments*, which included Wyche’s use of the Psalm along with Foxe’s commentary notes and the letters between Allerton and Roth.<sup>26</sup> Psalm 34. 7 met the needs of those who cited it because it suggested that God was on hand through the ministrations of angels. The popularity of this verse in Protestant texts also complements Felicity Heal’s suggestion that the *Actes* were a political history of nations and people. These themes are present within the material relating to Psalm 34. 7 and enhanced further by Roth’s connection of the protection of the angel to God’s providential care: ‘the lorde deliyuereth them which way he seeth best, For our lyves are in the Lordes hands’.<sup>27</sup> One of the points of

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<sup>25</sup> Duffy. *Fires of Faith*, p. 91.

<sup>26</sup> Sangha, *Angels and Belief*. p. 70.

<sup>27</sup> ‘A letter wrytten by Rich. Roth’, 1583 edition, p. 2043.

division between the Catholic and Protestant understanding of the protection of angels is linked to nations and kingdoms.

Joad Raymond quoted Andrew Willet, the Calvinist controversialist, to demonstrate evidence of this. Willet argued, ‘The papists erroneously say that Michael is the protector and keeper of the whole church of Christ and that kingdoms and churches have their special angels for their protectors’.<sup>28</sup> According to Willet, Protestants employed a much more universal understanding: ‘Protestants know that Christ and all angels protect the whole Church without any limitation of place and that it cannot be proved out of Scripture that angels are assigned to kingdoms’.<sup>29</sup> This universal protection noted by Willet is reflected in the Protestant sources and the much-repeated presentation of a persecuted minority group, protected collectively by the angel of Psalm 34. 7. This association is a common theme that appealed to the martyrs and was something Foxe employed to endorse his vision of England as a Protestant nation but as part of the universal church.

The notion of a universal Protestant church was expressed to specific audiences with tailored messaging. William Tyms, former Deacon and Curate of Hockley, Essex wrote to the female members of his congregation from prison, thanking them for the support they had shown his family whilst he had been incarcerated.<sup>30</sup> The letter is short and includes several references to scriptural and contemporary women who had demonstrated notable and steadfast faith. Old Testament women such as Susannah, Judith, Hester and Abigail, the wife of David, and the contemporary martyr Anne Askew are referenced to highlight ideal Christian qualities.

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<sup>28</sup> Andrew Willet, as cited in Joad Raymond, *Milton's Angels*. p. 56.

<sup>29</sup> Andrew Willet, as cited in Joad Raymond, *Milton's Angels*. p. 56.

<sup>30</sup> ‘Godly letters of William Tyms Martyr in Foxe’, in Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1583 edition) (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.johnfoxe.org> [Accessed: 14 December 2018], 1563 edition, p. 1919; 1570 edition p. 2117; 1576 edition, p.1818; 1583 edition p. 1922.

Tyms reinforces the notion that fighting against external threat and keeping households safe were mutually exclusive and female roles and would be rewarded:

So I doe beleue, that when the Lord shall send his Aungell to destroy these Idolatrous Egyptians here in England, and shall finde the bloud of the Lambe sprinkled on the dore postes of your harts, he wil go by & not hurt you, but spare your whole housholdes for your sakes.<sup>31</sup>

Tyms's sermon is expertly woven together and designed to evoke a response from a specific audience. According to Tyms, Mary Magdalen exemplifies unwavering faith in the New Testament. A contemporary example follows her, Marian martyr Anne Askew, who is another example of 'constancy in Christ'.<sup>32</sup> This repeated technique appears in subsequent chapters and is evidence of the Marian Martyrs attempting to understand themselves and their position in light of the violence and persecution ordered by the Catholic authorities. The use of the Old Testament as a scriptural precedent is a technique documented within other martyrologies during the religious reforms of the sixteenth century. This technique also feeds into Foxe's portrayal of the historical persecution inflicted on Protestants. Also notable is the change in the protection offered by the angel: Tyms links protection to the defence of England in terms of the destruction of external enemies instead of the earlier examples referencing Psalm 34. 7 and the angel guarding those in need.

Charles H. Parker suggested that the French martyrs featured within Jean Crespin's *Histoire des Martyrs* employed Old Testament symbolism in order to describe themselves and their

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<sup>31</sup> 'Godly letters of William Tyms Martyr', *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1583 edition) (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 11.07.20], 1583 edition, p. 1922.

<sup>32</sup> 'Godly letters of William Tyms Martyr in Foxe', 1583 edition, p.1922.

world.<sup>33</sup> Parker also argues this 'self-perception' was not found in the martyrologies of other lands where Reformed Protestantism became an influential force, namely in Adriaan van Haemstede's *De gheschiedenisse ende de doot der vromer Martelaren* and John Foxe's *Actes and Monuments*.<sup>34</sup> To say this form of 'self-perception' is not found within the Marian martyrologies is not true. There are many more examples where the Marian martyrs juxtapose their position against that of the ancient Israelites and persecution at the hands of the Egyptians.<sup>35</sup> There is also evidence of this approach applied in comparisons of Rome with Babylon.<sup>36</sup> Parker ultimately links the Genevan influence as being proportionate to the use of Old Testament self-description within the martyrologies.<sup>37</sup> It is tempting to link a particular approach to a specific branch of Protestantism, as Parker has. This approach would limit the significance of other examples of similar expressions and the cultural and historical events they were responding to.

For example, Tyms used the juxtaposition of the Old Testament precedent to emphasise the role of the early Protestant reformers and the prospect of imminent judgement. The angel conveys the idea of judgement looming but equally hopeful salvation for the evangelicals through either martyrdom or simply adhering to the Protestant faith. Tyms argued that biblical precedent evidenced that God would send an angel to destroy an enemy, suggesting a clear dichotomy between those who would be saved and those who would not. The book of Revelation provided evidence of avenging angels, and the Old Testament provided the precedent of the long history of persecution. With this in mind, Tyms' angel performed a

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<sup>33</sup> Charles H Parker, 'Jean Crespin's *Historie des Martyrs*, before the Wars of Religion'. *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 24:2 (1993), pp. 227-248.

<sup>34</sup> Parker, 'Jean Crespin's *Historie des Martyrs*, before the Wars of Religion', p229.

<sup>35</sup> Chapter 1, p. 6 discussion of the title page and inclusion of Rev 7, Chapter 1, p. 38 and Chapter 3, p. 10 Tyms references 'Egyptians' as enemies offering a parallel with the Protestant reformers who biblically were represented by the Israelites.

<sup>36</sup> Chapter 1, p. 13, Chapter 3, p.3.

<sup>37</sup> Parker, 'Jean Crespin's *Historie des Martyrs*, before the Wars of Religion', p.248.

dual function. In the first instance, the angel would serve as an instrument of God's divine punishment for the sinners. Secondly, the angel would reserve mercy for the faithful – a point Tyms believed would have appealed to his congregation. It is also worth noting that Tyms states that God instructed the angel to wreak havoc, affirming that God was the sole intermediary. Although Providence is not mentioned, this is an example of what many Protestants would argue was God's Providential care. Within the account, it is, of course, the angel acting on these orders, guided by the blood of the lamb. Avenging angels might have been on hand, but only on the instruction of God and with the prerequisite of a shared enemy. Tyms' letter is an example of new ideas on salvation emerging in response to specific circumstances. Angelic protection is clearly linked to judgement and the angel choosing who will be saved: 'he wil go by & not hurt you, but spare your whole housholdes for your sakes'.<sup>38</sup> The notion of 'household' is crucial in generating an emotional response from this group of women to an impending external threat. It also evidences the flexibility of angelic presence in that it accommodated several iterations of protection. Tyms' letter evidences a developed ideology where women were not only linked directly to angelic protection but practically recruited into the defence of the Protestant cause.

The prospect of threat prompted similar examples and expectations of angelic protection. In a letter from martyr John Careless, Careless writes to several prisoners awaiting their martyrdom in Newgate. The *Actes and Monuments* editorial commentary confirms Careless' correspondence was greatly expanded from the 1570 edition onwards, thanks to Miles Coverdale's *Letters of the Martyrs*.<sup>39</sup> Careless was an excellent correspondent who saw value in the protection of angels, already explored in chapter two.<sup>40</sup> In this example, which

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<sup>38</sup> 'Godly letters of William Tyms Martyr', 1583 edition, p. 1922.

<sup>39</sup> Editorial commentary and additional information. 1583 edition, p. 1945.

<sup>40</sup> Chapter 2, p. 13-14.

appeared from the 1570 edition onwards, Careless wrote to M Greene, M Whittel and 'certaine other prisoners in Newgate'.<sup>41</sup> The penultimate paragraph is fittingly empowering and emotive. Careless presents the idea of sheep going to slaughter in reference to the mass burnings of the early protestants, 'Therefore they must shortly fetch more sheepe to the shambles: for he is the common slaughter slaue of all England'.<sup>42</sup> The slave is a direct allusion to Bishop Bonner and his sanctioning of hundreds of martyrdoms, reflected in the reference 'they' fetch(ing) more sheepe' because there were many more to follow.<sup>43</sup> In Duffy's *Fires of Faith*, two images of prints that first appeared in William Turner's *The Huntyng if the Romyshe Wolf* in 1555 depicts Marian bishops dressed as wolves.<sup>44</sup> Duffy suggests, the 'Protestant jibes against 'bite-sheep' bishops as wolves in sheep's clothing became the central image of the horrifying feast on the blood of slaughtered protestant victims'.<sup>45</sup> The use of sheep also evokes thoughts of the sacrificial lamb. In martyrdom, the Marian prisoners would all be following in Christ's footsteps. The reference to England is a stark reminder of the scale of the martyrdoms and, indeed, is an important example of the Protestant response. Careless continues, 'But happy are you that are passed through þe pikes & deliuered out of his hands, and from al the angels of the darknes of this world, which long tempted you in þe wildernes of the same'.<sup>46</sup> Careless tells Greene, Whittell and their circle at Newgate that they should be happy and embrace their mortality as they have much to look

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<sup>41</sup> 'To M Greene, M Whittel and certaine other prisoners in Newgate, condemned and ready to be burnt for the testimonies of our Lord Jesus', *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or TAMO (1583 edition) (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 25 January 2019], 1570 edition, p. 2146; 1576 edition, p. 1844; 1583 edition, p. 1949.

<sup>42</sup> 'To M Greene, M Whittel and certaine other prisoners in Newgate, condemned and ready to be burnt for the testimonies of our Lord Jesus', 1583 edition, p. 1949.

<sup>43</sup> 'To M Greene, M Whittel and certaine other prisoners in Newgate, condemned and ready to be burnt for the testimonies of our Lord Jesus', 1583 edition, p. 1949.

<sup>44</sup> 'The Lambe Speaketh' (anonymous print: Emden (?) 1555) Duffy, *Fires of Faith, Catholic England under Mary Tudor*, plates 28-29.

<sup>45</sup> 'The Lambe Speaketh' (anonymous print: Emden (?) 1555) Duffy, *Fires of Faith, Catholic England under Mary Tudor*, plates 28-29.

<sup>46</sup> 'To M Greene, M Whittel and certaine other prisoners in Newgate, condemned and ready to be burnt for the testimonies of our Lord Jesus', 1583 edition, p. 1949.

forward to after death. An interplay between the opposing forces of good and evil, dark and light, follows. The idea of Satan and his angels tempting the Marian martyrs to recant their faith is linked directly to Christ's temptation in the wilderness. This notion is contrasted against the light: 'But now shall the angels of God come and minister vnto you, for they are your seruantes to hold you vp in your handes, & that you shal not hurt your foot no nor one heare of your head shall pearish'.<sup>47</sup> On their side, the martyrs had God's angels ministering to their needs, holding them in their hands to protect them. Not a hair on their head would perish, nor would they feel a painful stub of a toe, the direct opposite of the reality of their situation. Despite the prospect of imminent and painful death, the martyrs could look forward to restoration once human history had run its course. As for the route to salvation, they would be guided and protected by the angels; Careless writes, 'they [angels] shal cary you vp to heauen in a fiery chariot, thoughe you leaue your Mantell behinde you for a time, till God restore the same agayne in a more ample and glorious sort'.<sup>48</sup> The fiery chariot could also reference how Careless and the letter's recipients were due to die. This extract is a powerful example of the use of angels as signposts to salvation and the expectation that God would offer the prisoners protection through his angels at times of crisis.

So far, the sources evidence the continued significance of angels to the Protestant martyrs. The material has also evidenced just how flexible angelic presence was and how creative Foxe and the martyrs were in highlighting different duties and functions of angels to suit their circumstances. There appears to be a distinct theme in which England is presented as Jerusalem and the Marian martyrs as Christ's Disciples. However, it is worth highlighting that this parallel is amplified when referencing the Catholic threat. The expectation that

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<sup>47</sup> 'To M Greene, M Whittel and certaine other prisoners in Newgate, condemned and ready to be burnt for the testimonies of our Lord Jesus', 1583 edition, p. 1949.

<sup>48</sup> 'To M Greene, M Whittel and certaine other prisoners in Newgate, condemned and ready to be burnt for the testimonies of our Lord Jesus', 1583 edition, p. 1949.

angels would protect fledgling Protestant communities is a direct response and expression to the mass burnings and persecution of the time. Gone is the mediaeval tradition of personal relationships with named guardian angels. In the martyrdom accounts, there is no room for conversations with angels. The relationship between angelic protection of a Protestant minority group and yet collective inspired another strand of rhetoric. In a letter to ‘certaine other prisoners in Newgate,’ Thomas Whittell wrote:

Wherefore (my dearely beloued) through the hope of this heauenly ioy and rewarde, which he that can not lye hath promised (whiche ioye is so greate that no eare hath heard, no eye hath sene, nor the hart can thinke, where we shall dwell for euer in the heauenly City, the celestially Ierusalem, in the presence of God the Father, & Iesus Christ our Mediatour, as Paul sayth, and in the company of innumerable Angels, and with the spirites and soules of all faythfull and iust men) reioyce and be glad: and seing ye be called to so great glory, see that ye make your election and vocation sure by good workes, and specially by sufferinge aduersitye for the Gospelles sake: for it is geuen vs of GOD (sayth Paule) not onely to beleue in Christ, but also to suffer for his sake.<sup>49</sup>

In this letter, Foxe interjects and includes several biblical citations as marginal notes.

Specifically, Foxe cites Hebrews 2 to correspond to Whittell's reference to 'innumerable angels'. The second chapter of Hebrews is a warning, 'Be not forgetful to lodge straggers for thereby some have received Angels into their houses vnwares'.<sup>50</sup> This is important because this reference is Foxe's contribution to Whittell's argument – and is rather specific in contrast to Whittell's more universal use of the theme of 'heavenly reward'. The notion of 'Innumerable Angels' complimented the Protestant ideology of an 'elect nation.' Likewise, the idea of a Protestant collective in response to the regime of suffering and persecution, both prompted and validated the need for the protection of angels. The reference to innumerable angels is given with the standard sanction of Pauline testimony, validating that not just angels, but innumerable angels were offered as part of the reward. The reference to innumerable angels is given with the standard sanction of Pauline testimony, validating that

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<sup>49</sup> 'Queen Mary - Godly letters of Thomas Whittell', The 1563 edition includes details of Whittell's arrest and examination, from p. 1523 onwards; 1570 edition, p. 2060; 1576 edition, p. 1767; 1583 edition, p. 1873.

<sup>50</sup> Hebrews 2. 2.

not just angels but innumerable angels were offered as part of the reward. Indeed, Whittell returns to the Protestant rhetoric and implores 'see that ye make sure your election and vocation'.<sup>51</sup> Whittell was one of the named recipients Careless addressed in the source previously considered.<sup>52</sup> Further, in the first chapter, one of Whittell's letters to John Careless was cited in material evidencing formulaic endings using angelic references.<sup>53</sup> In the letter, Whittell asks Careless to copy out the testimonial to martyr John Philpot's examination, adding further evidence to the significance of the 'prison letter' cited by Duffy.<sup>54</sup> Whittell writes: 'Prouide me M. Philpots examinations for a friend of mine, and I shall pay you therefore'. REF John Philpot's testimony included extensive references to angelic presence, with material already considered in chapters one and two, with further examples to be considered later in this chapter. Innumerable angels are contrasted to the souls and spirits of the 'all the faythfull and just men', and this is a vestige of traditional angelology, something which former Bishop of Gloucester and Worcester, John Hooper, exemplifies within a letter to the congregation of St Mary-le-Bow church:

Remember what lookers vpon you haue, to see & behold you in your sight, God & all his Angels...you haue standing at your backes all the multitude of the faithfull, who shal take courage, strength, and desire to follow such noble & valiant Christians as you be.<sup>55</sup>

There is no reference to Hebrews 2 within this example, despite the first line resembling the scriptural passage. The absence of a biblical reference could suggest that 'thinking with angels' was deeply set within Hooper's approach. It is worth referring back to Heinrich

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<sup>51</sup> 'Queen Mary - Godly letters of Thomas Whittel'l, 1583 edition, p. 1873.

<sup>52</sup> Chapter 3, pp.178-179

<sup>53</sup> Chapter 1, pp.53-54.

<sup>54</sup> Duffy. *Fires of Faith*, p. 91.

<sup>55</sup> 'A letter of consolation sent from M Hooper to the Godly bretheren taken in Bow Churchyard, in prayer and layd in the counter in Breadstreet', in Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1583 edition) (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.johnfoxe.org> [Accessed: 30 June 2019], 1570 edition, p 1693; 1576 edition, p. 1437; 1583 edition, p.1506.

Bullinger's letter to Hooper, reviewed in chapter one, in which angelic presence played a key role.<sup>56</sup> The letter itself is exceptionally long and filled with warnings against Queen Mary's oppressive regime. Hooper was comforted by and wanted others to take comfort in that it at least was a collective experience. Laura Sangha cited this extract of Hooper's letter as evidence of the source that contributed to the idea of a constructed national sentiment.<sup>57</sup> Sangha argues that the *Actes* 'allowed Englishmen to see themselves as the faithful members of an embattled nation surrounded by enemies of God. In these circumstances, it was perhaps natural to expect the angels to come to the defence of God's chosen people'.<sup>58</sup> Indeed, this passage is a good example of Hooper attempting to evidence the universal protection God and his angels afforded to Protestants: the heavenly reward of 'God & all his Angels' is contrasted with the 'multitude of the faithfull'.<sup>59</sup> This was not a fleeting connection; instead, it was one he sought to promote. This relationship was also evident in John Bradford's letters, considered in chapter one.<sup>60</sup> When John Bradford reflected on his feelings of persecution, he argued any feelings of discomfort or pain were inconsequential because 'when the trumpe shall blow, and the Angell shall shoote, and the sonne of man shall appeare in the cloudes, with innumerable saintes and Aungels in maiestie and greate glory hen shall the dead arise, and we shall be caught vp into the cloudes to meete the Lorde, and so be alwayes with hym'.<sup>61</sup> Bradford subscribed to the belief that the atrocities faced by him and his brethren were a sign of end days, and once they had been martyred, they would rise again and be rewarded by the everlasting company of God. Bradford aligned the 'innumerable saintes and Aungels'

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<sup>56</sup> Chapter 1, p. 28 - 32.

<sup>57</sup> Sangha, *Angels and Belief in England*, p. 72.

<sup>58</sup> Sangha, *Angels and Belief in England*, p. 72.

<sup>59</sup> 'A letter of consolation sent from M Hooper to the Godly bretheren taken in Bow Churchyard, in prayer and layd in the counter in Breadstreet', 1583 edition, p.1506.

<sup>60</sup> Chapter 1 pp. 27-28 and pp. 35-36.

<sup>61</sup> 'Queene Mary ghostly letters of M John Bradford Holy martyr in Foxe', *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1583 edition) (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.johnfoxe.org> [Accessed: 27 March 2017], 1570 edition, p.1857; 1576 edition, p. 1580; 1583 edition, p.1660.

alongside the multitudes of faithful Protestants and, like Hooper, used this belief to give comfort and assurance to those he left behind: 'Comfort your selues with these wordes, and praye for me for Gods sake'.<sup>62</sup>

The repetition of specific names and approaches suggests an emerging pattern of association between a small network of the Marian martyrs whereby angelic presence played a significant part in their defences and in sustaining spiritual assistance in the face of pressure from the authorities. Moreover, angelic presence was flexible, evidenced by the many duties and functions documented in the Bible, specifically the New Testament. Angels were on hand to protect the English Protestants in the face of internal and external threats and avenge enemies. Angelic protection was reinterpreted through the popularisation of scriptural passages such as Psalm 34:7. This is evidenced within the *Actes and Monuments*, the sharing of powerful scriptural passages between the martyrs and their subsequent adoption into the Protestant outlook evidenced by Laura Sangha's research and further endorsed by Eamon Duffy.<sup>63</sup> Felicity Heal's interpretation of the *Actes* connects the dots between the handful of scriptural passages modified in response to the internal conflict between the Marian authorities and early Protestants, resulting in a somewhat patriotic and vigorous defence from the martyrs, then subsequently framed and promoted by Foxe.<sup>64</sup> Paul's affirmation of 'innumerable angels' offered the martyrs, their families and congregations a useful and powerful parallel, evidencing that they were not alone in their plight, were united in their cause and protected by armies of angels. Interestingly, these readings have given some insight into the connections amongst the Marian martyrs whilst they awaited their fate. Paul's 'innumerable angels' offered the martyrs, their families and congregations a valuable

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<sup>62</sup> 'Queene Mary ghostly letters of M John Bradford Holy marty,' 1583 edition, p1660.

<sup>63</sup> Sangha, *Angels and Belief in England*, p. 72; Duffy, *Fires of Faith*, p. 91.

<sup>64</sup> Heal, 'Catholic and Protestant Polemics and the National Past', p.115.

and powerful parallel, evidencing that they were not alone in their plight, were united in their cause and protected by armies of angels. Models of angelic presence were agreed upon and shared amongst prisoners to aid their defence as individuals and as a part of a persecuted collective. These accounts must be taken as contributing to a broader picture for some early protestants; God's angels were defined as protectors of England and the Protestant community.

### **Angels and Family**

This next section explores a traditional aspect of angelic protection, the relationship between angels and family. This belief stems from the Gospel of Matthew, in which Jesus states, 'See that ye despise not one of these little ones: for I say unto you, that their angels in heaven always beholde the face of my Father in heaven'.<sup>65</sup> The disciples mistaking Peter for 'his angel' also provided scriptural evidence of God assigning guardian angels to individuals.<sup>66</sup> Calvin said of this passage:

There is one passage which seems to intimate somewhat more clearly that each individual has a separate angel. When Peter, after his deliverance from prison, knocked at the door of the house where the brethren were assembled, being unable to think it could be himself, they said it was his angel.<sup>67</sup>

Calvin concedes that the idea is suggested, though he discredits the possibility more forthrightly:

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<sup>65</sup> Matthew 18. 10.

<sup>66</sup> Acts. 12. 15.

<sup>67</sup> John, Calvin, J. *Institutes* 1. 14. 6-7, in translated and (ed.) Robert White, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, (The Banner of Truth Trust: Edinburgh, 2020).

If anyone does not think it enough to know that all the orders of the heavenly host are perpetually watching for his safety, I do not see what he could gain by knowing that he has one angel as a special guardian.<sup>68</sup>

Here, Calvin avoids criticising the scriptural basis of belief in the guardian angel; instead, he points to a general misjudgment of what the passage signifies. Calvin's argument rests on the notion that God has given all spiritual provision. Therefore there was no need for the individual to receive counsel from a specific guardian angel. Peter Marshall argued in the earlier decades of reform, 'there was a broad consensus amongst Elizabethan theologians that belief in guardian angels was at best a very uncertain opinion; at worst a toxic relic of popery'.<sup>69</sup> Joad Raymond concurs, arguing that Protestants were divided on the issue, pointing to Andrew Willet, Thomas Cartwright, Willam Fulke and Christopher Love, who all insisted only the elect received any ministrations from angels.<sup>70</sup> Both Raymond and Marshall point to John Salkeld, using Marshall's words as 'rudely disrupting' the consensus with the 'first full-length English protestant angelology' published in 1613.<sup>71</sup> Whilst Raymond outlined that 'John Salkeld reported that Protestants were unsure about guardian angels, but he presented a great deal of evidence for the belief, from the Greek and Roman churches, which he suggested, was enough to persuade some'.<sup>72</sup> This watershed moment was around sixty years after Foxe captured the Marian martyrs' application of angelic protection of families, children and the individual. The martyrdom accounts are, therefore, excellent examples of early iterations of the Protestant guardian angel. John Philpot, in a letter concerning the baptism of infants, cited Matthew 18. 10:

Take heede therefore that ye despise not one of these babes, for I tell you, their Angels do continually see in heauen my fathers face. And what may be sayd more playner then this: It is not

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<sup>68</sup> John, Calvin, *J. Institutes* 1. 14. 6-7.

<sup>69</sup> P., Marshall, 'The Guardian Angel in Protestant England', in: Joad Raymond, (ed) *Conversations with Angels. Essays towards a History of Spiritual Communication, 1100-1700*, (Palgrave Macmillan: London, 2011) p.298.

<sup>70</sup> Raymond. *Milton's Angels*, p. 58.

<sup>71</sup> P. Marshall, 'The Guardian Angel in Protestant England', p. 298.

<sup>72</sup> Raymond. *Milton's Angels*, p. 58.

the wyll of the heauenly father, that the Infants should perish? whereby we may gather that he receyueth them freely vnto this grace, although as yet they confesse not their fayth. Since then that the worde of the promise which is conteyned in Baptisme, pertayneth as well to children as to men.<sup>73</sup>

Philpot's argument is a sound one since it is stated plainly within scripture by Christ that God had provided for his children. Philpot suggests denying this would be to deny the word of God. This example evidences the utility and flexibility of angels in giving additional authority to an argument as Philpot links the protection of angels to children to advance his argument on Baptism.<sup>74</sup> Infants were too young to categorically affirm their faith in God. Therefore, it followed that God had given children the protection of angels until they were old enough to do so.

Further accounts are included in the *Actes and Monuments*, which explore the association of angels and children. Foxe included the account of the Duchess of Suffolk's providential escape from England in all editions of the *Actes and Monuments*, bar the 1563 edition. Catherine Willoughby, and her family were among several Marian exiles who left England for the continent in 1555. Catherine and Richard Bertie's exile (Willoughby's husband) became the basis of a ballad by Thomas Deloney (1543-1600), *The most Rare and Excellent History, Of the Dutchess of Suffolks Calamity*, and of Thomas Drue's play, *The Life of the Duchess of Suffolk*, published in 1624. The account of their journey is printed within all editions of the *Actes*, though, curiously, Deloney and Drue's versions of the event omit the angelic reference. Foxe narrates the account in which he describes the young family as just a mile from their intended destination when they find themselves stranded in the middle of an icy storm. The family are refused entry to every tavern they try; their situation is painted as

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<sup>73</sup> 'Godly Letters of M. Iohn Philpot, Martyr. *Baptisme of Infants*', in Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1583 edition) (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.johnfoxe.org> [Accessed: 22 August 2020]. This letter appears from the 1570 edition onwards. 1570 edition, p. 2051; 1576 edition, p. 1759; 1583 edition, p.1864.

utterly desperate. However, their luck changes, 'till at last goyng towards the Church porch, he (Bertie) heard two striplings talkyng Latin, to whom he approched and offered thē two stiuers to bring him to some Wallons house'.<sup>75</sup> In the marginal notes, Foxe comments 'God's Providence in tyme of distresse'.<sup>76</sup> Foxe's affirmation of God's providential care was inspired by the preacher in the town after learning of the Duchess and her family's plight. According to the account, the preacher:

openly in sharpe termes rebuked that great inciullitie towards straungers, by allegation of sundry places out of holye scriptures, discoursing how not onely Princes sometyme are receiued in the Image of priuate persons, but Angels in the shape of men, and that God of his Iustice woulde make the straungers one daye in an other lande, to haue more sense of the afflicted hart of a straunger.<sup>77</sup>

Interestingly, the preacher leads with the moral of the tale and extrapolates its meaning for the pastoral guidance of his audience. Although not cited, the preacher's argument brings the warning referenced in Hebrews 2, 'Be not forgetful to lodge stragers, for theyby some have received Angels into their houses vnwares' to mind. Much like the accounts surveyed in part one of this chapter, the protagonists are in a precarious position, and it could be argued that the 'two striplings' who came to the aid of Bertie were angels. Foxe certainly thought that the rescue was providential. It is, however, more obvious that angelic presence within this account is used to impart a code of moral guidance to the preacher's congregation, and to acknowledge the possibility of angelic protection.

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<sup>75</sup> 'The Duchess of Suffolke, her trouble in Foxe, The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO (1583 edition) (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.johnfoxe.org> [Accessed: 30 August 2020], 1570 edition, p. 2325; 1576 edition, p. 2000, 1583 edition, p.2104.

<sup>76</sup> 'The Duchess of Suffolke, her trouble', in Foxe, 1583 edition, p.2104.

<sup>77</sup> 'The Duchess of Suffolke, her trouble', in Foxe, 1583 edition, p.2104.

This Providential narrative is strikingly similar to the much later Irish tale of Faithful Teate, discussed by Peter Marshall and Alexandra Walsham in their edited collection, *Angels in the Early Modern World*. The story relates that Teate and his family, whilst travelling to Dublin after he was deposed from his position, was forced to seek cover from the elements under a snowy rock 'where the said Dr Teate's suckling babe had perished (the mother having no milk in her breasts) had not the Lord of his mercy under the rock where they lay provided a bottle of clabber or buttermilk which preserved the child's life until the next day'.<sup>78</sup> Marshall and Walsham show how subsequent commentators such as Isaac Ambrose retold the story but emphasised different elements, some versions including an angel, whilst others omitted the angelic reference entirely.<sup>79</sup> Key to this argument is the revision of the function of the angel, which Marshall and Walsham suggest as evidence of angelic presence being used to solve problems and justify certain positions.<sup>80</sup> The similarities between the narratives of the Duchess of Suffolk and Bishop Teate are striking; angelic presence is subtly alluded to whilst celebrated for saving lives.

Two further sources include similar themes and circumstances. The first account is based on events in November 1558, when a Mrs Prest was martyred.<sup>81</sup> Foxe included an overview of the martyrdom in the 1563 edition appendix notes, indicating that the account reached him later. The 1563 version does not reference a testimonial from the martyr. A version including Mrs Prest's declarations appears from the 1570 edition onwards.<sup>82</sup> The source reveals Mrs

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<sup>78</sup> 'The story of Dr Teate', in Marshall, Peter and Walsham, *Angels in the Early Modern Word*, (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2006), p 225.

<sup>79</sup> Marshall and Walsham, *Angels in the Early Modern World*, p 227.

<sup>80</sup> Marshall and Walsham, *Angels in the Early Modern World*, p 227.

<sup>81</sup> 'The Martyrdome of Prestes wife, Thomas Hale, and Richard Sharpe, with others', *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1583 edition) (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 17 October 2019], 1583 edition, p. 2073.

<sup>82</sup> 'The Martyrdome of Prestes wife, Thomas Hale, and Richard Sharpe, with others', 1583 edition, p. 2076.

Prest spent a substantial amount of time in prison and was subject to a prolonged catalogue of questioning, torture and verbal abuse. Several people of standing visited in a bid to solicit a recantation, but to no avail; for example, Walter Raleigh's mother is listed as a visitor.<sup>83</sup>

According to the source, Mrs Prest ignored the pleas of her children and husband to recant her faith. In response, Foxe mused, 'in þe Byll of my Information, it is so reported to me, that albeit she was of suche simplicite and without learnyng, yet you could declare no place of Scripture, but shee would tell you the Chapter: yea, shee woulde recite to you the names of all the bookes of the Bible'.<sup>84</sup> Foxe's appraisal of Mrs Prest's knowledge and understanding of scripture was appropriate as her responses to the inquisitor's questions and demands to recant ultimately served to prolong her fate.<sup>85</sup> Foxe reveals she was kept in a cell for weeks, then called up for further questions, then 'when they had played the part of the cat with the mouse, at length condemned her'.<sup>86</sup> Mrs Prest's final response is significant. The authorities pressed for a recantation. Foxe wrote, 'And yet this fauour they pretended after her iudgement, that her lyfe should be spared if shee would turne & recant'.<sup>87</sup> She affirmed:

Nay, that wil I not (said shee:) God forbyd that I shoulde loose the lyfe eternall for this carnal and short lyfe. I wyl neuer turne from my heauenly husband, to my earthly husband: from the felowship of angels, to mortal chyldren: And if my husband and chyldrē be faithfull, then am I theirs. God is my father, God is my mother, God is my sister, my brother, my kinsman, God is my frend most faithfull.<sup>88</sup>

Mrs Prests's declaration is incredibly moving and somewhat reminiscent of Allerton and Whittell's letters to their congregations, in which they used Psalm 34. 7 to remind their followers to remain steadfast in their faith. This woman bravely renounced her earthly ties in

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<sup>83</sup> The Martyrdome of Prestes wife, Thomas Hale, and Richard Sharpe, with others', 1583 edition, p. 2075.

<sup>84</sup> 'The Martyrdome of Prestes wife, Thomas Hale, and Richard Sharpe, with others', 1583 edition, p. 2076.

<sup>85</sup> The source reveals Mrs Prest spent a substantial amount of time in prison and was subject to a prolonged catalogue of questioning, torture, abuse etc. Several people of standing visited, in a bid to solicit a recantation but to no avail. Walter Raleigh's mother is listed as a visitor.

<sup>86</sup> 'The Martyrdome of Prestes wife, Thomas Hale, and Richard Sharpe, with others', 1583 edition, p. 2076.

<sup>87</sup> 'The Martyrdome of Prestes wife, Thomas Hale, and Richard Sharpe, with others', 1583 edition, p. 2076.

<sup>88</sup> 'The Martyrdome of Prestes wife, Thomas Hale, and Richard Sharpe, with others', 1583 edition, p. 2076.

favour of eternal life in heaven with a particular celestial arrangement, stating that she would not turn from her heavenly husband to her earthly husband, from the fellowship of the angels to her mortal children.<sup>89</sup> One last time, she defends her position as a Protestant and her faith in a future with God and the fellowship of angels. Another aspect to note is Mrs Prests' juxtaposition of children and angels – she does not associate the fellowship of angels with the protection of children; she does not even say 'her' children, even though she was a mother. Mrs Prest presented herself as the innocent in need of protection. Anticipating her martyrdom, Mrs Prest saw her temporal life as a technicality, a precursor to the eternal salvation she would find in the comfort of and company of God and his angels.

Another source linking angelic protection to family and children was written by John Careless in a letter to his wife Margaret, detailing his plans for the care of their children. There is a difference in situation between Careless and Mrs Prest. Mrs Prest chose to leave her husband and children to pursue her protestant faith. Margaret Careless remained the carer for her children, maintaining the traditional role of mother and caregiver, whilst from afar, Careless is writing to advise on and protect his children's spiritual care. He wanted to ensure his children would continue to be raised as 'Godly' as possible to assure his family's place in heaven in the hope they would be reunited again. He instructed Margaret:

Let not þe remembraunce of your children keep you from God. The Lord himselfe will be a father and a mother, better then euer you or I could haue bene, vnto them. He himselfe wil do all thinges necessary for them: yea, as much as rock the Cradle, if need be. He hath geuen his holy Angels charge ouer them, therefore committ them vnto him.<sup>90</sup>

The idea of God being Father is steeped in tradition. God as Mother, on the other hand, is not

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<sup>89</sup> The Martyrdome of Prestes wife, Thomas Hale, and Richard Sharpe, with others', 1583 edition, p. 2076.

<sup>90</sup> 'John Careless (letter) to his wife (Margaret)', in Foxe, The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO (1583 edition) (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.johnfoxe.org> [Accessed: 17 April 2018], 1570 edition, p. 2143; 1576 edition, p. 1841; 1583 edition, p. 1946.

so commonplace. Careless used his and Margaret's position as parents in contrast to the overall care God gives. The holy angels are given charge over children; therefore, the actual care, the 'rocking of the cradle', will be carried out by the angels on the instruction of God. Careless' main concern appears to be the potential for idolatry and superstition; he advises his wife more than once to keep their children 'farre from idolatry, superstition, and all other kinde of wickednesse'.<sup>91</sup> This concern is somewhat alleviated through the almost literal description of God's care through the protection of angels.

Mrs Prest and John Careless interpreted belief in the protection of angels somewhat differently. Prest turned towards the fellowship of angels and disregarded the traditional relationship between angelic presence and the protection of children. Careless directly linked angelic protection to children with his beautiful metaphor of God literally rocking the cradle through the protection of the angels. Philpot, Mrs Prest, Careless and the preacher within the Duchess of Suffolke's tale all interpreted the protection and guardianship of God's angels to suit their agendas and the events they were writing in response to. Alexandra Walsham cites several later accounts, including Bishop Teate and argues, 'the prominence of children in these cases reminds us that it was widely believed that God appointed angels to guard those of tender years'.<sup>92</sup> Indeed, there is an obvious correlation between the narratives found within the Duchess of Suffolke and Bishop Teate's accounts, with Philpot and Careless also linking the protection of angels to children. In contrast, the final declaration given by Mrs Prest extends the protection of angels beyond children and the sphere of the family. Angelic protection is offered as part of the reward for remaining a faithful Protestant through her declaration and martyrdom. It is worth pointing out that only one source references Matthew

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<sup>91</sup> 'John Careless (letter) to his wife (Margaret)', 1583 edition, p. 1946.

<sup>92</sup> Walsham, 'Invisible Helpers: Angelic Intervention in Post-Reformation England', p. 96.

18. 10 and this is in relation to Philpot's broader argument on the baptism of infants. This suggests that the association of angels' protection of the young and innocent remained and did not require the additional validation of a specific scriptural citation as it was commonly understood. Foxe included these examples as they demonstrated that God had made spiritual provisions for those faithful Protestants. This provision was flexible and formed to meet the demands of any situation, to assist reformers in remaining steadfast to their faith, provide solutions to problems, offer protection in times of need, and offer spiritual and moral guidance in the face of adversity and external threat.

### **Angelic Intervention**

Much of the material considered so far has included references to or placed emphasis on the association between angelic presence and the protection of a collective. Many accounts appear to link angelic protection to England explicitly, suggesting the Protestants thought of themselves as 'a people set apart from all others' as Haller argued.<sup>93</sup> The collective has also been evidenced in the letters which circulated amongst the prisoners, to their friends, family, congregations and in the material just considered which saw focus shift to the family. Belief in angels remained an important component to both Foxe and a good proportion of the Marian martyrs.

The chapter will now explore the instances of angelic intervention. The supernatural components within these accounts are more pronounced than in the sources surveyed thus far. The narratives offer much insight into Foxe's approach as a historian and a Protestant reformer. Equally, the sources reveal much about the attitudes and beliefs held by the martyrs towards the role of the guardian angel. Angelic intervention was a tricky subject for

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<sup>93</sup> Haller, *John Foxe's Book of Martyrs and the Elect Nation*, p. 225.

Foxe to handle, as it could prompt accusations of superstition or idolatry from Catholic critics. Joad Raymond cited Andrew Willet to articulate the different approaches between Catholics and Protestants on angels as intercessors: ‘Catholics permit this practice, while protestants believe that angels are not to be worshipped, nor invoked as mediators, intercessors, or advocates, the scripture speaketh evidently’.<sup>94</sup> Although Protestants rejected direct appeals to celestial beings, they could hardly deny that God would instruct angels to intervene in the affairs of human beings. Angels were scripturally grounded, so Foxe was treading on solid ground in recording and publishing the reports he received.

Equally, a degree of hesitance is detected from Foxe and the martyrs in the accounts to categorically affirm the presence of an angel. This point was highlighted in the introductory chapter in which Knott noted that Foxe purposefully omitted angelic presence from an early martyrdom account and concluded that he was keen to minimise the more supernaturally charged examples.<sup>95</sup> Knott noted the supernatural ‘elements in these accounts went against the grain of the Reformation view of martyrdom that emerges from the *Actes and Monuments*, the most obvious of these is the sense of supernatural manifestations associated with the death of a martyr and, subsequently, with his relic or shrine.’<sup>96</sup> A few of the conventions Knott identifies are notable in the following material. Knott is right in pointing to Foxe’s careful navigation of these accounts. For example, Foxe introduces some of the reports giving a sort of disclaimer, then leaves judgement in the hands of the reader. Despite this tentativeness, Foxe’s treatment of the material was extremely positive.

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<sup>94</sup> Andrew Willet, as cited in Joad Raymond, *Milton’s Angels*. p. 62.

<sup>95</sup> Introductory chapter pp. 26-27.

<sup>96</sup> Knott, *Discourses of Martyrdom*, p.42.

The scriptural passage relating to the release of Peter from prison forms the basis of a number of these accounts. A good starting point then is to consider a letter from Protestant martyr George Marsh to his congregation. Marsh's letter will act as point of reference for the intervention accounts as a key element within the letter is Peter's escape from prison. The letter is included from the 1570 edition onwards and, as seen before, Marsh is attempting to offer succor and maintain his congregation's constancy as faithful Protestants. The final three paragraphs are devoted to Peter's escape from prison. Marsh wrote:

god sent his angel, and the chaines fell off from Peters hands, and the yron gate opened vnto him by his owne accorde, and so was Peter wonderfully deliuered by God. For it is the true liuing God that looseth al bandes, and deliuereth out of prison, and not that fained God S. Leonard. On that true God did S. Peter call: vnto him did he ascribe the glory of his deliuerance, saying: Nowe I know of a truth that God hath sent his angel. &c.<sup>97</sup>

Marsh's recounting of Peter's escape from prison emphasises the agency of God rather than the angel. The signs that mark the arrival of the angel are also missing. For example, the bright light in the original scriptural passage, also present in the Marian accounts, is absent. Marsh wrote that God loosens the chains which bound Peter's wrists. In the scriptural passage, the angel prods Peter to wake him, and his chains fall off. Marsh categorically states that God delivered Peter out of prison, not the angel nor Saint Leonard, the traditional patron saint of prisoners. This last statement was an apparent criticism of Catholicism since the church had denounced the intercessory power of saints as unbiblical. Marsh concludes that Peter's escape evidenced that God had sent an angel, or rather the angel was evidence of God's providential care. Marsh goes on to highlight the didactic merit within the scriptural passage:

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<sup>97</sup> 'Godly Letters of George Marsh, Martyr', *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1576 edition) (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 27 September 2019], 1570 edition, p. 1783; 1576 edition, p. 1516; 1583 edition, p. 1596.

These things are written for our learning, that we through patience and comferte of the scriptures might haue hope. The God of patience and comfort, graūt that we be like minded one towards an other, after the ensample of Christe Iesu, that we all agreeing together, may with one mouth glorifie God the father of our Lord Iesus Christ.<sup>98</sup>

Foxe's commentary does not mention God or the angel; he simply describes Peter as 'deliuered out of prison'.<sup>99</sup> Marsh, on the other hand, points to scripture as being the lens through which all those who are patient should seek comfort, an attempt to guide his congregation from afar.

Marsh's letter offers a point of reference to the intervention material. In total, there are four accounts which allude to angelic intervention. The most famous is the case of early German reformer Simon Grinaeus. Taken from Phillip Melanchthon's commentary on Daniel, the account is the only European example of angelic intervention and is included in all four editions.<sup>100</sup> The 1563 edition briefly references Simon's escape from the Catholic authorities. Here, Foxe attributes the escape to 'God's healpinge hand'.<sup>101</sup> The 1563 version of the account is much shorter than the subsequent examples featured in the later editions. Further, the 1563 account includes no heading with no reference to angelic presence. From the 1570 edition onwards, a full account is introduced with two pages of text, a chapter heading and the appearance of two extremely interesting references to angelic presence. Foxe makes a significant link between God's providential care and the saving of Grinaeus:

Many other like examples of Gods helpyng hande haue bene declared vpon his elect Sayntes and Children in deliuering them out of daunger by wonderfull and miraculous wayes, some by one meanes some by an other. What a notable worke of Gods mightye hand was seene in Simon Grinaeus, mentioned in the Commentary of Melancthon vpon Daniell. Who hauing a sodeine warnynge by a certaine olde man, who was not seene after nor knowen then of any what he was,

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<sup>98</sup> 'Godly Letters of George Marsh, Martyr', 1583 edition, p. 1596.

<sup>99</sup> 'Godly Letters of George Marsh, Martyr', 1583 edition, p. 1596.

<sup>100</sup> 'Simon Grinaeus, Diuers deliuered by Gods prouidence from the fire in Queene Maries time,' *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or *TAMO* (1583 edition) (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 24 May 2019], 1563 edition, p. 1776; 1570 edition, p. 2323; 1576 edition, p. 1998; 1583 edition, p. 2102.

<sup>101</sup> Simon Grinaeus, Diuers deliuered by Gods prouidence from the fire in Queene Maries time, 1583 edition, p. 2102.

avoided the peril of taking and burning, as by the relation of Melancthon writing and witnessing of the same, may appear in the wordes of hys owne story here following.<sup>102</sup>

For Foxe, Grineaus's account was another example of 'God's helping and mightie hand', intervening in the lives of the English Protestants. The 'wonderful and miraculous ways' refers to the supernatural; the mysterious old man or guardian angel is the physical manifestation of 'God's helping hand'. It was not unusual for Foxe to include an account that originated from England. As Collinson argued, 'we know that Foxe was not a vulgar nationalist but a man of universal vision and ecumenical conviction'.<sup>103</sup> This suggests Foxe was motivated to include Melancthon's account of Grineus for two reasons. Firstly, it confirmed and advanced the English examples of 'angelic intervention' or at least the potential. Secondly, it evidenced the endurance of the reformed churches in the face of Catholic threat on a European and universal level. The subsequent inclusion of the full account from the 1570 edition onwards could stem from the availability of the material. Equally, it could be in line with Foxe's growing confidence in using angelic presence as a mechanism to endorse his presentation of Protestants enjoying the protection of God.

The story of Simon Grineus's escape from the Catholic authorities is narrated by Melancthon, who, according to the source, witnessed the events first-hand. The account begins with Melancthon describing an:

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<sup>102</sup> Simon Grinaeus, *Diuers deliuered by Gods prouidence from the fire in Queene Maries time*, 1583 edition, p. 2102.

<sup>103</sup> Collinson. *This England*, p.193.

ancient fatherly man, who shewing a singular grauitye in hys countenance, wordes, and behaiour, spake vnto me & said, that the Sergeantes would by and by come vnto our lodging, being sent by the kinges commaundement, to carye Grinæus to Prison, whom Faber had accused to the Kynge.<sup>104</sup>

In the marginal notes, Foxe commented, 'a Godly warning set by an old man to Grineus'.<sup>105</sup>

Note the absence of a reference to an angelic intermediary at this stage. Melancthon's description of the old man could suggest an element of the supernatural — 'ancient and fatherly' and the old man's 'singular grauitye in hys countenance, wordes, and behaiour' is suggestive of a particular sort of protection ascribed to Grineus through the old man. Instead, it is Foxe, in his commentary notes, who points to divine intervention, a 'Godly warning' and 'God's mercyfull providence in defeating the cruell purpose of persecutors'.<sup>106</sup> Later, when the group of scholars have fled and Grineus is safe, the old man is described in angelic terms. Melancthon recalled, 'And as I cannot say, what olde man it was that gave that warning, even so likewise the Sergeants made such quick speede, that except Grineus had been covered and defended by Angels through the marvellous providence of God, he could never have escaped'.<sup>107</sup> This is where Melancthon's narration ends.

In this endorsement of angelic protection, there is a note of ambiguity. Melancthon does not confirm the old man as a guardian angel. Instead, he uses the familiar notion of angels defending and delivering the faithful from external threats, somewhat reminiscent of Psalm 34. 7. Another point worth considering is that the angelic tropes are only referenced once Grineus is safe. This could evidence a vestige of a more traditional belief system, whereby it

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<sup>104</sup> Simon Grinaeus, *Diuers deliuered by Gods prouidence from the fire in Queene Maries time*, 1583 edition, p. 2102.

<sup>105</sup> Simon Grinaeus, *Diuers deliuered by Gods prouidence from the fire in Queene Maries time*, 1583 edition, p.2102

<sup>106</sup> Simon Grinaeus, *Diuers deliuered by Gods prouidence from the fire in Queene Maries time*, 1583 edition, p. 2102.

<sup>107</sup> Simon Grinaeus, *Diuers deliuered by Gods prouidence from the fire in Queene Maries time*, 1583 edition, p. 2102.

is only after the event the protagonists realise they have received a Godly message or witnessed divine intervention, as in the cases of Tobias and Peter. The defence of Grineus, although attributed to an angel, can only be described within the rhetoric of God's providential care. Foxe joins Melanchthon in linking angelic protection to the Protestant cause and exclaims:

Therefore let vs geue thanks vnto God, which hath geuen vs his Angels to be our keepers and defenders, wherby with more quiet mindes, we may fulfill and do the office of our vocation.<sup>108</sup>

This is significant. Foxe boldly exclaims, 'God which hath geuen us his Angels.' Perhaps buoyed by Melanchthon's positive affirmation of angelic agency, Foxe links the protection of angels specifically to the Protestant cause. Foxe included a similar offering of thanks in the 1563 edition, but it is a stripped-back version with no angelology: 'With such lyke examples of Gods myghty and merciful custody the Church of England doth abounde, as by many experiences maye appeare, in these that follow, and many other mo, to vs yet vnkowen'.<sup>109</sup> The difference here is noticeable and is important evidence of Foxe's change in the treatment of the account from the 1570 edition onwards. The 1563 version provides the basis from which Foxe celebrated the protection of angels and the potential for angelic intervention from the 1570 edition onwards. In the later versions, Foxe declared:

manifold experiences' such as this are examples of God's providence and are found across history, in any reforming church in Christendom but in no place more, nor in time more plentiful, then in this persecuting time of Queene Mary in this our Realme of England: as partly hath bene already historyed, and parte yet remayneth (the Lorde willing) moreouer hereunto to bee added.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Foxe's commentary notes on Grinaeus, 1570 edition, p2323, 1576 edition 19998, 1583 edition, p. 2102.

<sup>109</sup> Foxe's commentary notes on Grinaeus, 1563 edition, p. 1776.

<sup>110</sup> 'Simon Grinaeus, Diuers deliuered by Gods prouidence from the fire in Queene Maries time', 1583 edition, p. 2102.

The persecution of Protestants under Mary facilitated Foxe's association of angelic protection to England. The idea that angels were on hand, at the instruction of God to intervene as Protestants were systematically persecuted, was an appealing message, especially since, as Foxe stipulates, he expected 'more examples to be added'. Notwithstanding the tentative introduction given to this account and of Cuthbert Simpson's (to be considered shortly), this is a surprisingly positive affirmation on Foxe's part of the agency and presence of angels. Foxe not only writes that his readers should thank God for this spiritual provision, but he also stipulates that God had 'geuen vs his Angels to be our keepers and defenders'. Peter Marshall has demonstrated that many great Protestant sixteenth-century thinkers avoided explicitly stating whether or not God had assigned each individual their guardian angel.<sup>111</sup> Laura Sangha points to a reluctance in some Protestants to engage with beliefs around guardian angels. Despite this, she argues that there 'is much to suggest that the idea that each person had a special, designated angel watching over them retained its appeal'.<sup>112</sup> Philip Melancthon's account of Simon Grineaus is important evidence of the meaning Foxe attached to the prospect of an angel intervening in the lives of men. Although Foxe did not base his thesis on the agency of the angel, it certainly advanced his overall message of God having ascribed Protestants favour. Angels protecting a collective appear to be safer ground to tread. Foxe's positive stance on the potential for angelic protection and intervention should not be overlooked.

The contemporary martyrdoms were the most immediate and enduring in terms of impact and reception amongst readers during Foxe's lifetime and the following century. Foxe's assertion of 'manifold experiences' of God's providential care, legitimises the supernatural elements within Grineus's story, and by extension any other extraordinary account of angels

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<sup>111</sup> Marshall, 'The Guardian Angel in Protestant England in *Conversations with Angels*,' pp. 295-312.

<sup>112</sup> Sangha, *Angels and Belief in England, 1480-1700*, p. 162.

protecting, comforting and guiding a faithful Protestant. Foxe recorded four accounts detailing examples of angelic intervention. The positive stance Foxe adopted in relation to Simon Grineus was carefully continued in the material relating to Marian martyr, Cuthbert Simpson.

Simpson's account features in all editions of the *Actes and Monuments*. It is worth pointing out that the report relating to Cuthbert Simpson's vision in the 1563 edition appears towards the end of the volume as an appendix. From the 1570 edition onwards, it is assimilated into the body of material relating to the martyr.<sup>113</sup> Foxe begins by stating that he was confident in sharing the report on Simpson's vision.<sup>114</sup> Foxe's confidence is balanced by a sensitivity to his audience's reception of the report, evidencing the tentative treatment of such accounts as argued by Knott.<sup>115</sup> Foxe wrote: 'Some, I see, will not beleue it, some will deride the same, some also will be offended with setting forth things of that sorte incertayne, esteeming all thinges to bee incertayne and incredible, whatsoeuer is straunge from the common order of Nature'.<sup>116</sup> Foxe approaches the account carefully stating that 'he sees' that people will not believe Simpson's account — some people he warns will be offended. Foxe goes on to muse over the validity of such visionary accounts, arguing, 'the matter were as is reported, yet for somuch as the common error of beleuing rash miracles, phantasied visions, dreames, and apparitions thereby may be confirmed'.<sup>117</sup> Foxe's explanation of Simpson's account is entirely in line with Alexandra Walsham's survey of examples of angelic intervention, in which she suggested visionary accounts offered reformers a means of escaping criticism

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<sup>113</sup> 'Queene Mary. Examination and aunsweres of Cutbert Simson Martyr. His letters. *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or *TAMO* (1563 edition) (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 19 November 2020]. 1563 edition, p.1820, for the material relating to his martyrdom it is p. 1731 onwards. 1570 edition, p. 2270; 1576 edition, p. 18952; 1583 edition, p. 2057.

<sup>114</sup> 'Queene Mary. Examination and aunsweres of Cutbert Simson Martyr. His letters', 1583 edition, p. 2057.

<sup>115</sup> Knott, *Discourses of Martyrdom*, p.42.

<sup>116</sup> 'Queene Mary. Examination and aunsweres of Cutbert Simson Martyr. His letters', 1583 edition, p. 2057.

<sup>117</sup> 'Queene Mary. Examination and aunsweres of Cutbert Simson Martyr. His letters'. 1583 edition, p. 2057.

based on the technicality that they were based on visions; i.e. no one categorically affirmed they had direct contact with an angelic being. Walsham argued, ‘by conceding that God might still reveal these heavenly messengers to men and women at critical moments, the theologians created a small but significant loophole within which optical experiences of angelic intervention could find space to exist within a Protestant mindset’.<sup>118</sup> Despite this safety net, Foxe goes to great lengths to distance himself from any potential criticism. He confirms that he is only relaying what has been reported to him by multiple witnesses, including Simpson, shortly after the event has occurred. Foxe wrote that the account appears within the *Actes* ‘as reported’.<sup>119</sup> Foxe also warns of the common error of attaching any significance to dreams, visions or apparitions and is quite specific in his criticism of Catholic visionary accounts:

Neither am I ignoraunt that the Papistes in their bookes and legendes of saintes haue theyr prodigious visions, and apparitions of Aungelles of our Lady: of Christ, and other sayncts: which as I wil not admit to be beleued for true, so will they aske me agayne, why should I then more require these to be credyted of them, then theirs of vs.<sup>120</sup>

Foxe's tentative defense of Simpson's account is immediately sharpened against his subsequent criticism of Catholic visions and apparitions of angels. Here, Foxe denied the validity of Catholic accounts of the supernatural, challenging any point of intersection between the Protestant and Catholic versions of the same theology. Foxe continues to attribute an element of discernment to his audience, explaining to his readers that they were not obliged to believe Simpson's account:

First I write not this, binding any manne precisely to beleue the same, so as they do theyrs, but onely reporte it as it hath bene heard of persons knowne, naming also þe parties, who were the hearers thereof, leauing the iudgment therof notwithstanding free vnto the arbitrement of the reader.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> Walsham, ‘Invisible Helpers,’ p.129.

<sup>119</sup> Queene Mary. Examination and aunsweres of Cutbert Simson Martyr. His letters. 1583 edition, p. 2057.

<sup>120</sup> Queene Mary. Examination and aunsweres of Cutbert Simson Martyr. His letters’. 1583 edition, p. 2057.

<sup>121</sup> ‘Queene Mary. Examination and aunsweres of Cutbert Simson Martyr. His letters’. 1583 edition, p. 2057.

The disclaimer and Foxe's subsequent musings leave judgement firmly in the hands of his readers. Despite Foxe's confidence in sharing Simpson's report, it remained important for Foxe to not categorically affirm that the reported events took place. There remained a danger of prompting criticism from Catholic critics but also those Protestant contemporaries whose hearts and minds had yet to be completely won over. On the other hand, Protestant visionary accounts within Foxe's eyes, clearly demonstrated that God had afforded these martyrs some form of protection, thereby confirming a divine preference. It is worth noting that similarly to the account of Simon Grineus, Simpson's vision is narrated by Foxe. This is a common feature within the subsequent sources detailing angelic intervention. The account of Simpson's vision is much smaller than the commentary it generated:

The day before thys Simson was condemned, he being in the stockes, Cloney his keeper commeth in with þ<sup>e</sup> keies, about 9. of the clocke at night (after his vsuall maner) to view hys prison, and see whether all were present, who when he espyed the sayd Cutbert to be there, departed agayne, locking the dores after him. Within two houres after, about eleuen of the clocke, towarde midnichte, the sayd Cutbert (whether being in a slumber, or beyng awake I cannot say) heard one comming in, first openyng the outwarde dore, then the seconde, after the thyrd dore, and so looking into the sayd Cutbert, hauing no Candell or Torche that he could see, but geuing a brightnesse, and light most comfortable and ioyfull to hys hart, saying: Ha vnto him, and departed agayne. Who it was hee coulde not tell, neither I dare define. This that he saw, he hymselfe declared foure or fiue tymes to the sayd Mayster Austen, and to other. At the sight whereof hee receiued suche ioyfull comfort, that he also expressed no little solace, in telling and declaring the same.<sup>122</sup>

The first few lines of Simpson's account demonstrate just how inaccessible the martyr was to the outside world; he was monitored by master Cloney, the prison guard and locked away through a series of doors. How the mysterious visitor navigated the obstacles and gained access to Simpson's cell remained a mystery. A significant trope within the account which is revisited in the material relating to Thomas Rede and Robert Samuel, is the issue of consciousness. Before reporting Simpson's description of his vision in full, Foxe states in brackets as an aside that he is unable to categorically affirm whether Simpson was awake at

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<sup>122</sup> 'Queene Mary. Examination and aunsweres of Cutbert Simson Martyr. His letters', 1583 edition, p. 2057.

the time of his purported vision.<sup>123</sup> If Simpson was asleep, it is possible that he dreamed of the mysterious visitor's passage through the three locked doors and into his cell. Foxe's non-committal attitude on the subject of Simpson's consciousness is another example of the tentative approach adopted when dealing with Protestant reports the supernatural. If Simpson's account was called into question by subsequent witness statements, Foxe could defend his position based on the fact he had not categorically affirmed whether Simpson was awake or not. The same is true of Simpson for making such a claim; if he were directly criticised, he could, to some extent, rely on the fact that he was half asleep.

Another important feature of this source is light. Based on Simpson's account, the cell has no source of light. Nevertheless, Simpson was bathed in brightness and light once the visitor entered as the mysterious visitor uttered 'Ha' before departing again.<sup>124</sup> The light is a crucial component of the source. The brightness which radiated from Simpson's mysterious visitor is the only real indication of a supernatural event, aside from Foxe's earlier lengthy disclaimer. Again, this is evidenced in Foxe's description of how Simpson felt upon receiving his visitor: 'having no Candell or Torche that he could see, but geuing a brightnesse, and light most comfortable and ioyfull to hys hart'.<sup>125</sup> Scripturally, angels appear before men and are often accompanied by a brilliant light or wearing white robes.<sup>126</sup> The bright light could be a reflection of the angel's nature. The bright light could likely be interpreted as a reflection of God's glory. None of the secondary readings consulted discusses Simpson's visitation other than Walsham, who considered it evidence of a potential angelic visitation.<sup>127</sup> Nevertheless, at the very least, it feels safe to argue that Simpson and, to some extent, Foxe believed the

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<sup>123</sup> 'Queene Mary. Examination and aunsweres of Cutbert Simson Martyr. His letters', 1583 edition, p. 2057.

<sup>124</sup> 'Queene Mary. Examination and aunsweres of Cutbert Simson Martyr. His letters', 1583 edition, p. 2057.

<sup>125</sup> 'Queene Mary. Examination and aunsweres of Cutbert Simson Martyr. His letters', 1583 edition, p. 2057.

<sup>126</sup> Matthew 28. 3; Ezekiel 1. 13.

<sup>127</sup> Walsham, 'Invisible Helpers,' p.94.

visitor to be an angel. The angel's words and presence certainly illuminated Simpson's mind and offered the martyr comfort and peace.

Similarly, another important component of this source (and others to follow) is spreading and disseminating ideas amongst the martyrs in prison. According to the source, Simpson, moved by his experience, felt compelled to re-tell his story to his cellmates, reiterating the comfort and peace he had felt since his 'angelic meeting'. Simpson even relayed his experience to the Catholic prison warden, Master Austen, four or five times.<sup>128</sup> Simpson's enthusiasm and joy were possibly shored up by the parallels of his experience to the biblical account of Peter's release from prison. Both Peter and Simpson faced execution the following day. The prison setting and heightened security as they were both deemed a danger to the state and, of course, the light radiating from the angel. However, Simpson's angel did not aid his escape from prison, as in the case of Peter; the scriptural narrative and the similarities afforded Simpson a special status awarded by Foxe because the account remained faithful to a scriptural precedent. On reflection, Simpson's account has more in common with the letter George Marsh wrote to his congregation detailing Peter's escape from prison. The bright light is included within Simpson's vision. Not to mention the emphasis on the agency of the angel or mysterious visitor, which is reflected in Simpson's emotional response after the event has taken place. Undoubtedly the accounts of Simon Grineus and Cuthbert Simpson served as evidence of the Protestant cause; from Foxe's introductions to both sources, he considered the events described as a precursor to further examples.

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<sup>128</sup> 'Queene Mary. Examination and aunsweres of Cutbert Simson Martyr. His letters', 1583 edition, p. 2057.

One example is found in the material relating to Thomas Rede's martyrdom. Foxe included material on Rede within all four editions of the *Actes*. The final three editions included an additional anecdote to accompany Rede's history:

THo. Rede who was burned at Lewes.....before he was in prison, determined w<sup>t</sup> himselfe to go to church. The night following, he sawe in a vision, a company of talle young men in white, very pleasant to behold: to whō he would haue ioyned himself, but it would not be. Then he looked on himselfe and he was full of spottes, & therewith waked, & tooke hold and stood to the truth: god be thanked therefore, and so constantly was burned wyth his felowes. <sup>129</sup>

Specific familiar themes are immediately apparent here. For example, it is not explicitly confirmed that Rede was privy to an angelic meeting. Instead, this is implied in the description of the men and the thanks Rede gave to God after making sense of his vision. It is also notable that Rede, although his spirits were lifted by the sight of the pleasant gathering of men in white robes and wanted to join them, 'but it would not be'. At this point, Rede was not in prison, nor had he been arrested, though he struggled with his religious identity. The tall young men in white serve to remind Rede of God's power and reach; almighty power is literally reflected in the white robes and the pleasure and joy Rede felt as a witness to the gathering. The spots on Rede's skin stir him from the episode and force him to reflect, suggesting that he was perhaps uncomfortable in his skin or distressed by the thought of reverting to his old faith. Once awake, Rede's faith is renewed. Throughout this thesis, there has been a consistent theme whereby angelic presence is linked to reinforcing an individual's faith. Rede's internal struggle was no different. Alexandra Walsham describes Rede as 'stiffened in his determination to stand fast to the truth' as a direct result of this vision.<sup>130</sup> The source confirms that Rede was considering attending mass before his vision. Therefore the joyful young men dressed in white robes worked to remind and reaffirm Rede's

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<sup>129</sup> 'A note on Thomas Rede', *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or *TAMO* (1583 edition) (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 29 May 2019]. 1570 edition, p. 2237 1576 edition, p. 1923; 1583 edition, p2028-29.

<sup>130</sup> Walsham, 'Invisible Helpers,' p.95.

commitment to his faith. The addition of this episode to Rede's history from the 1570 edition suggests that as an editor, influencer and reformer, Foxe was more confident in his later editions of citing accounts of the supernatural. This was also evidenced by the thanks Foxe gave to angels after Cuthbert Simpson's report from the 1570 edition onwards.

The penultimate source is included within all four editions of the *Actes and Monuments*.

Former minister Robert Samuel was one of the nine Ipswich martyrs executed between 1515 and 1558 for their heretical religious beliefs and was martyred in August 1555.<sup>131</sup>

Supernatural motifs appear to run throughout the sources that plot Samuel's imprisonment and subsequent martyrdom, particularly in this account. Alexandra Walsham referenced the history of Robert Samuel, providing an overview of the vision reported by Foxe as evidence of the Marian persecutions providing context for angelic intervention.<sup>132</sup> In a similar vein, Darren Oldridge referenced the story of Samuel's vision as evidence that Protestants held on to the possibility that 'angels could manifest themselves directly to the human senses, albeit in exceptional circumstances.'<sup>133</sup> The sources explored so far indeed evidence both Walsham and Oldridge's assertions. To the early Protestants awaiting martyrdom, angelic presence or the prospect of intervention was comforting and possible. Robert Samuel's story provides further evidence of this. Foxe narrates Samuel's account, which begins with a disclosure of the 'strange things' that happened after being chained to a post and starved for several days.

After this, Samuel:

fell into a slecpe, as it were one halfe in a slumber, at which time one clad all in white, seemed to stande before hym, which ministred comfort vnto him by these wordes: Samuel, Samuel, be of good cheare, and take a good heart vnto thee. For after this day shalt thou neuer be either hungry or thirsty: Which thing came euen to passe accordingly: for speedily after he was burned, and from that time till he should suffer, he fealt neither hunger nor thirst. And this declared he, to the ende

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<sup>131</sup> 'The Martyrdome of Robert Samuel', in John Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or *TAMO* (1583 edition) (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 11 May 2018], 1563 edition, p. 1338-9; 1570 edition, p. 1917-8; 1576 edition, p. 1635; 1583 edition, p. 1728.

<sup>132</sup> Walsham, 'Invisible Helpers,' p.95.

<sup>133</sup> Oldridge, *The Supernatural in Tudor and Stuart England*, p. 95.

(as he sayde) that all men might beholde the wonderfull workes of God. Many moe like matters concerning the great comforte he had of Christe in his afflictions, he could vtter (he sayde) besides this, but that shamefastnes and modestie would not suffer him to vtter it. And yet if it had pleased God, I would he had bene lesse modest in that behalfe, that the loue and care that Christe hathe of his, might haue the more appeared therby vnto vs by such present argumentes, for the more plentifull comfort of the godly, though there be sufficient testimonies of the same in the holy scriptures already.<sup>134</sup>

Robert Samuel's circumstances were extraordinary and demonstrated the need for protection from the Marian authorities; Foxe suggested the burning was 'but a trifle in comparison to those paynes that he had passed'.<sup>135</sup> Like Simpson, Samuel received a personal message from his visitor: 'Samuel, Samuel, be of good cheare, and take a good heart vnto thee. For after this day shalt thou neuer be either hungry or thirsty'.<sup>136</sup> Samuel's message is short and direct; it is a source of comfort. The 'angel' implores Samuel to disregard his hunger and thirst. Beyond the literal interpretation, the angel's words encourage Samuel to remain steadfast to his Protestant faith and not recant through fear of not securing salvation. The immediate comfort Samuel felt after the mysterious visitation suggests his hunger and thirst were quenched spiritually. As in the case of Simpson, Samuel felt such 'comforte and joy' he relayed the event to his fellow prisoners right up until his death declaring '(as he sayde) that all men might beholde the wonderfull workes of God'.<sup>137</sup> Foxe, in his final marginal notes, echoed Samuel's sentiment: 'Greate comfortes ministered by the Lord to Samuell in his painefull prisonment'.<sup>138</sup> This is an important component in this collection of sources; Cuthbert Simpson and Robert Samuel both felt the need to share their experiences within their circles, which would also serve to advance Foxe's argument of God assigning the martyrs a special form of protection.

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<sup>134</sup> 'The Martyrdome of Robert Samuel', in John Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or *TAMO* (1583 edition) (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 01.03.11]. 1583 edition, p. 1728.

<sup>135</sup> 'The Martyrdome of Robert Samuel,' in John Foxe, 1583 edition, p. 1728.

<sup>136</sup> 'The Martyrdome of Robert Samuel,' in John Foxe, 1583 edition, p. 1728.

<sup>137</sup> 'The Martyrdome of Robert Samuel,' in John Foxe, 1583 edition, p. 1728.

<sup>138</sup> Foxe's marginal notes, 'The Martyrdome of Robert Samue', 1583 edition, p. 1728.

Biblical examples of angelic visitation usually follow this format: the recipient of a divine message or angelic visitation realises they have received a communication from above only after the event. Once the recipient has that moment of realisation, they share their experience amongst their circle. This is demonstrated perfectly by the scriptural narrative of Peter's miraculous escape from prison in which he exclaimed: 'Now I know without a doubt that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from Herod's clutches and from everything the Jewish people were hoping would happen'.<sup>139</sup> Subsequently, Peter goes to share his news, but his friends are suspicious and believe Peter to be an angel - though they eventually believe him. With this, Peter requests his friends to 'Tell James and the other brothers and sisters about this', upon which he leaves, presumably to continue spreading the Word.<sup>140</sup> This model appears familiar when considered alongside the accounts of Cuthbert Simpson and Robert Samuel and is further enhanced by Foxe's positive commentary of the accounts and his subsequent linking of the events described within the sources to God's providential care. When Foxe thanked God for the angels in his concluding comments to Grineus' account, stating that he anticipated further examples, Robert Samuel's account is exactly the sort of event he foresaw.

There are further parallels between the events described within Robert Samuel's account and Cuthbert Simpson. In particular, Foxe's non-committal stance over the consciousness of both Samuel and Simpson. Foxe describes the account as 'strange visions that happened to Samuel'.<sup>141</sup> Although the source stipulates that Samuel 'fell into a sleepe, as it were one half in a slumber', this does not confirm whether Samuel was dreaming, hallucinating or indeed if an angel revealed itself to Samuel directly.<sup>142</sup> On the other hand, the visitation or vision only

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<sup>139</sup> Acts 12. 11.

<sup>140</sup> Acts 12. 16.

<sup>141</sup> 'The Martyrdome of Robert Samuel,' in John Foxe, 1583 edition, p. 1728.

<sup>142</sup> 'The Martyrdome of Robert Samuel', 1583 edition, p. 1728.

commences once Samuel has reached the half dreamlike state: ‘at which time one clad all in white, seemed to stande before hym, which ministered comfort vunto him’.<sup>143</sup> ‘Seemed’ implies uncertainty, though the description of the angel’s appearance is certain: ‘clad all in white’ denotes a traditional angelic appearance and suggests the author believed the messenger to be a ministering spirit. Darren Oldridge suggests that Foxe ‘left open the question of whether the angel appeared in delirium or revealed itself to Samuel’s outward senses’; later writers such as Isaac Ambrose accepted that Samuel was visited and comforted by an angel.<sup>144</sup> For Ambrose, this was another example of angelic ministry evidencing the legitimate role angels played in Puritan life. Foxe, on the other hand, approached the accounts tentatively, a convention he also employed in the introductions to both Simon Grineus and Cuthbert Simpson.

Robert Samuel’s angelic visitation was described by Foxe as ‘no less memorable’ than the source concerning his actual martyrdom.<sup>145</sup> In the same account, Samuel is reported to have prophesied his martyrdom which is significant in itself, but what really stands out are the corroborated descriptions of Samuel’s body as it burned:

The report goeth amōg some that were there present, and saw him burne, that his body in burning did shine as bright and white as new tried siluer in the eyes of them that stode by: as I am infourmed by some which were there, and did beholde the sight.<sup>146</sup>

Samuel’s body is given a celestial-like description. This is particularly significant given his potential encounter with an angel. The description of his martyrdom is a suitable

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<sup>143</sup> ‘The Martyrdome of Robert Samuel’, 1583 edition, p. 1728.

<sup>144</sup> Oldridge, *The Supernatural in Tudor and Stuart England*, p. 95.

<sup>145</sup> ‘The Martyrdome of Robert Samuel’, 1583 edition, p. 1728.

<sup>146</sup> ‘The Martyrdome of Robert Samuel’, 1583 edition, p. 1728.

continuation of Samuel's narrative, suggesting that his body which shone so brightly, was a remnant from his encounter with an angel. Events such as this helped evidence that God was at work; consequently, Foxe deemed them significant to print and promote.

Though accounts of angelic intervention are few during the early reforming years in England, we can look to the Continental Reformation for evidence of a more pronounced expression.

In her study of Providence in Lutheran Scandinavia and Germany, Alexandra Walsham suggested that reports of angelic visitations to uneducated laypeople reached epidemic proportions in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century and were all explained as Providential.<sup>147</sup> According to Walsham, 'Documentation relating to hundreds of popular Protestant prophets survives, most instances involving an encounter between angels and uneducated laypeople, who are instructed to exhort their contemporaries to repent or face a terrifying fate'.<sup>148</sup> There are certainly examples of those who were less educated using angelic presence to instruct others or advance their position in the *Actes and Monuments*. Mrs Prest is one obvious example. For Walsham, it was 'Providentialism (which) played a pivotal role in forging a collective Protestant consciousness, a sense of confessional identity which fused anti-Catholicism and patriotic feeling and which united the elite with their social inferiors'.<sup>149</sup> In highlighting the social status of those who reported the angelic visions, Walsham is demonstrating that Providence was not an elitist doctrine. The four examples of suggested 'angelic intervention' recorded in the *Actes and Monuments* differ from the cases Walsham cites. They are, of course, significantly earlier and take place in England, aside from the case of Simon Grineus. Further, unlike the uneducated laypeople of Lutheran Germany, Simon Grineus, Cuthbert Simpson, Thomas Rede and Robert Samuel

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<sup>147</sup> Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England*, p.213.

<sup>148</sup> Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England*, p.213.

<sup>149</sup> Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England*, p.5.

were all educated and literate. In the cases of Simpson and Samuel, by communicating what they had witnessed and the subsequent dissemination of the events through Foxe's narrative, these accounts suggest that angelic intervention remained a possibility. Further, in explaining the angelic meeting as an act of Providence, both Grineus and Samuel's experiences reminded their contemporaries and followers that the invisible hand of God was guiding them. By attributing the angelic meeting to the 'wonderfull works of God', educated Protestants and ordinary people were provided with a framework within supernatural events could be understood and accepted.

Joad Raymond offers another theory on how angels were legitimised. Raymond argues, 'Protestant theories of representation were shaped by the doctrine of accommodation. This provided a means of legitimising depictions of the invisible, sacred world and did so by identifying a mode of figuratively representing truths without fiction, metaphor, or allegory'.

<sup>150</sup> Raymond refers specifically to the representation of angels within poetry and literature. This does not discount the significance of angelic presence within religious material. Instead, Raymond argues, 'there was a developing and enlarged understanding of the role of angels within nature and theology that interacted with developments in other areas of theology, politics and culture.'<sup>151</sup> The angelic intervention accounts Foxe cited are excellent examples of early reformed articulations of angelic representation and are potential precursors to the multiple angelic visitations Walsham explored subsequently in Lutheran Scandinavia and Germany. The role of the angel within these accounts demonstrated that commitment to the reformed faith would not go unrewarded. As faithful adherents, the Marian martyrs and other

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<sup>150</sup> Raymond, *Milton's Angels*, p. 13.

<sup>151</sup> Raymond, *Milton's Angels*, p. 6.

followers were reminded they were part of a preordained plan. In the case of the martyrs, their deaths contributed to the fulfilment of this plan. To the second generation of Protestants, under the protection of the Protestant Queen Elizabeth, these accounts demonstrated that the Church of England was a continuation of the True Church.

The four accounts share common features, the first being that angelic intervention was suggested, though not categorically confirmed. Foxe's lengthy disclaimers, which frame the accounts of both Simon Grineus and Cuthbert Simpson, evidence this. Not only did Foxe defend these accounts, but he also anticipated further examples though not on the same scale as those instances documented by Alexandra Walsham. Foxe was aware of the continental models by including Melancthon's account of Simon Grineus. The reports included in the *Actes and Monuments* add considerable weight to the criticisms levelled at John Knott. To recap, Knott argued that Foxe's introductory passages before the material suggesting angelic intervention was symptomatic of Foxe reducing the supernatural elements in the sources.<sup>152</sup> On the contrary, Foxe was surprisingly positive about the agency of angels. Most notably, when he thanked God for the protection of angels in the case of Simon Grineus. But also more subtly in his willingness to accept the potential for angelic intervention, even if he did not categorically affirm the outward manifestation of angels in each example.

The second common feature is that even though an orthodox Protestant model of what a guardian angel was and did was yet to be determined, the role of such angels were clearly defined and shared similarities with the pre-Reformation model. Laura Sangha has highlighted the traditional benefits of angelic presence and suggests that the idea that 'angels

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<sup>152</sup> Knott, 'John Foxe and the Joy of Suffering', p. 723.

minister to those under lock and key' was a familiar theme within the martyrdom accounts.<sup>153</sup> Within all four of the accounts surveyed, each instance is dominated by the angel or mysterious visitor protecting or comforting the martyr. Often the angel helped the martyrs find solace and peace with their internal struggle. In the case of Simon Grineus, he was actually saved. The parallels between Peter's interaction with an angel, the prison setting and subsequent escape to that of the Marian martyrs is undeniable. This scriptural precedent not only legitimised the events Foxe reported, even if they were not directly referenced, but also served to reinforce the notion that remaining steadfast to the Protestant faith would be rewarded and that the injustices of the Marian regime would be exposed.

Although not an illustration of angelic intervention, another source shares many of the tropes found in the intervention sources. The letter also reveals valuable insight into the dynamics between two notable adversaries of the period. Chapter two included a letter from martyr John Philpot to a Lady Vane. In another letter, Lady Vane writes to Bishop Bonner.<sup>154</sup> This particular letter formed part of Philpot's inventory when he was captured and appeared in the final edition of the *Actes*.<sup>155</sup> According to Foxe, Lady Vane had been expected to meet Bonner, having written to him previously complaining of his treatment of John Philpot. Instead, she wrote to him and explained her absence from their planned meeting, having sought advice from an angel.<sup>156</sup> Lady Vane wrote:

As touchyng the breache of my promise wt you in not commyng agayne at the hower appoynted, your Lordship shall vnderstand that I take the counsaile of the Angell, which warned the wyse

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<sup>153</sup> Sangha, *Angels and Belief*. p. 70. Sangha points to Peter's release from prison forming part of John Lambert's defence and Rowland Taylor giving thanks for his cellmate (John Bradford) who he described in angelic terms. John Lambert's defence is considered in chapter 2, pp. 25-27 and Rowland Taylor Chapter 3, p. 56.

<sup>154</sup> Chapter 2, p. 7.

<sup>155</sup> Editorial commentary and additional information. 1583 edition, p. 1866.

<sup>156</sup> 'Queene Mary - A pithe letter sent to bishop Bonner of London reprovuing his bloody cruelty', in Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1583 edition) (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.johnfoxe.org> [Accessed: 11 June 2021 1583 edition, p. 1866.

men not to come agayne to Herode accordyng to their promise, but to turne home agayne another way.<sup>157</sup>

Lady Vane's letter falls into two sections; the first explains her absence from the meeting with Bishop Bonner, and the second is a much longer and scathing attack on Bonner's conduct against John Philpot. When writing, December 1555, Philpot had recently been martyred. Lady Vane employs angelic presence as a metaphor, suggesting an angel advised her against meeting with Bonner. Lady Vane likened Bonner to the New Testament King Herod. The parallels between the biblical narrative and contemporary circumstances are particularly striking. In this scenario, Lady Vane uses the scriptural passage as a pastiche in which the biblical and Marian contemporaries are one. Lady Vane thus assumes the role of one of the wise men. The warning she has received from the angel was heeded, so she writes her letter from a safe enough distance away from the clutches of 'Herod'. Bonner, according to Lady Vane, was a far worse villain than the biblical King:

Now my Lord I perceiuyng your Lordship to be a more cruell tyraunt then euer was Herode, and more desirous to destroy Christ in hys poore members then euer was he, which to destroy Christ killed hys owne sonne, I thought good to take the Angels counsaile, and to come no more at you, for I see that you are set all in a rage lyke a rauenyng wolfe agaynst þe poore lambs of Christ appoynted to the slaughter for the testimonye of the truth.<sup>158</sup>

Indeed, Herod is traditionally one of the worst biblical villains, and this particular trope continues throughout Lady Vane's letter to the Bishop.

This parallel of the biblical narrative mirrored contemporary events in Marian England. It suggested that just like Herod's mass slaughter, the innocent will be protected through the

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<sup>157</sup> 'Queene Mary- A pithe letter sent to bishop Bonner of London reprovung his bloody cruelty', in Foxe, 1583 edition, p. 1866.

<sup>158</sup> 'Queene Mary- A pithe letter sent to bishop Bonner of London reprovung his bloody cruelty', in Foxe, 1583 edition, p. 1866.

guidance of an angel. The traditional benefits of angelic protection are demonstrated within this letter: the angel warning Lady Vane away from meeting with Bonner, coupled with the scriptural grounding provided by the New Testament narrative, is by now a familiar schema. It is at least safe to argue that the author was not writing literally about an encounter with an angel. It could even be argued that the angel in this letter is a metaphor for the spiritual guidance Philpot had given when he was alive. The letter contains familiar tropes, easily identified in the preceding accounts of Simon Grineus, Cuthbert Simpson, Thomas Rede and Robert Samuel, such as a scriptural narrative or precursor and the angel saving the protagonist from danger. It is also indicative of more personal spirituality. The five initial letters from Philpot to Lady Vane suggest they shared a very close, mutually respectful and profoundly spiritual relationship. The letter itself is another excellent example of a female defence of the Protestant cause, written from a position of safety thanks to the guidance of an angel.

### **Human Angels**

Laura Sangha suggested that a 'very prominent characteristic of non-ecclesiastical angelology is the countless occasions where people are compared to angels'.<sup>159</sup> Sangha draws an abundance of analogies between women, men and angels from Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Spanish Bawd*, and *Henry IV*.<sup>160</sup> This, Sangha argues, provides evidence of how ubiquitous the concept of angels was in English cultural life.<sup>161</sup> Despite not being literary sources, some of the reports in the *Actes* demonstrate a similar application of angelic presence. In several sources, the martyrs are attributed angelic characteristics. For example, descriptions include a cellmate bathed in glorious light, wearing white flowing robes and

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<sup>159</sup> Sangha, *Angels and Belief in England*, p. 164.

<sup>160</sup> Sangha, *Angels and Belief in England*, p.165.

<sup>161</sup> Sangha, *Angels and Belief in England*, p.165.

possessing the speed and agility of an angel. Character traits are also described in this way. For example, martyrs are depicted as angelic in their countenance or disposition. These angelic attributes are similar to those documented in the visitation sources, with reports including examples of bright, white light or feeling reassured and safe as a result of their experience.<sup>162</sup> Accordingly, angelic characteristics are attributed to humans to create feelings of security, protection, and safety. Further, there is a mixture of Protestant and Catholic examples, again demonstrating how ubiquitous and flexible the concept of angelic protection was to both Foxe and the early Protestant reformers.

The first example is a source in which John Foxe discusses the high-profile Henrician martyrs. Henry VIII's treatment of the Charterhouse monks prompted shock across Europe; Peter Marshall summarised this point: 'the executions of 1535 were a defining moment for English religion, an end and a beginning. ....almost immediately, Henry's victims were hailed as Saints and martyrs'.<sup>163</sup> Marshall recounts an episode where Carthusian Prior John Houghton's martyrdom was linked to a supernatural visitation. John Darly, a traumatised member of the London Charterhouse, was visited in his cell by an apparition which urged him to 'follow the example of John Houghton, a martyr next unto angels'.<sup>164</sup> This extract further builds upon the association of John Houghton and angels, as, in this example, angelic characteristics are attributed to the Catholic martyr. In the source, Foxe is responding to Nicholas Harpsfield's *Dialogi sex contra summi Pontificatu*, published in 1566 under the pseudonym of Alan Cope.<sup>165</sup> Written and published in Latin and comprising six chapters, with one dedicated to criticism of both Foxe and the purported inaccuracies recorded within

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<sup>162</sup> Chapter 3, pp. 189-212.

<sup>163</sup> Marshall, *Heretics and Believers*, (Yale University Press: New Haven and London, 2018), p. 224.

<sup>164</sup> Marshall, *Heretics and Believers*, p. 224.

<sup>165</sup> Editorial commentary and additional information, 1583 edition, p.1093.

the *Actes*, this publication forced Foxe to remove several accounts from the 1583 edition.<sup>166</sup>

Foxe was aggrieved; referencing Harpsfield's description of Houghton, he does not reference the authorship of the *Dialogues*:

By these his owne wordes it must needes be confessed, that the authour of these Dialogues, who so euer he was, had well seene and considered the fourme and personable stature, proportion and shape of his excellent bodye, with such admiration of his personage, that (as he sayth) as oft as he calleth the said Iohn Hughton to mind, it seemeth to him, euen as though he saw an angel in the shape and forme of a man.<sup>167</sup>

Foxe states that Harpsfield greatly admired the Carthusian Prior and thought of him frequently and with such esteem that he thought of the martyr as an angel. Foxe continues his summary, identifying that Harpsfield's assimilation of man and angel was not limited to physical traits: 'Whose eminent vertues moreouer, whose diuine gifts, and heroical celsitude of mind, no man (saith he) may sufficiently expresse. &c'.<sup>168</sup> 'Heroical celsitude' really does suggest a fortitude that exceeds the norm, which is why, as Foxe points out, no one else possesses this quality. Interestingly, Foxe refers to Harpsfield describing these angelic attributes. The bracketed '(saith he)' suggests an attempt from Foxe to distance himself from the attribution of the description. The caveat is that an enemy attributed angelic characteristics to a Catholic martyr. In the same way, Foxe exclaimed, 'why should I then more require these to be credyted of them, then theirs of vs' in reference to Catholic visions and miracles, Foxe was troubled by Harpsfield's overt application of angelic characteristics to Houghton..<sup>169</sup> This is also reflected in the second half of the account, where Foxe questions Harpsfield's recollection of events, blaming his youth and the length of time which had subsequently passed:

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<sup>166</sup> Editorial commentary and additional information, 1583 edition, p.1093.

<sup>167</sup> 'K. Henry. 8. Rochester and more beheaded', Charterhouse Monkes. *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or TAMO (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 12 June 2018], 1570 edition, p. 1256; 1576 edition, p. 1066; 1583 edition, p.1093

<sup>168</sup> 'K. Henry. 8. Rochester and more beheaded', Charterhouse Monkes, 1583 edition, p.1093.

<sup>169</sup> 'An other note of the same Cutbert', 1583 edition, p.1820.

For as I vnderstand, M. Cope being yet at this present scarce come to the age of xl. yeares, he could not be then aboue nine yeare olde (the other suffering ann. 1535.) in the which age, in my minde, M. Cope had small discretion to iudge either of any such angelical proportion of mans personage, or of his diuine qualities, and heroical celsitude of his mind, as yet he remembreth in his Dialogues.<sup>170</sup>

Here, Foxe does all he can to discredit Harpsfield's recollection of events. Harpsfield was too young to remember the events correctly or not mature enough to judge whether Houghton displayed the angelic qualities referenced in the account. The inference is that the account was embellished for a memorable entry in the *Dialogi*. The report suggests that the angelic analogy was a helpful model. However, one which Foxe treated tentatively, given that it was applied within a Catholic context and by one of his most prominent critics. Foxe also calls into question Harpsfield's authorship of the account, suggesting that another Pseudocopus authored the material Foxe closes pithily, arguing, 'but as the case is of no great weight, so I let it passe, returning to other matters of more importance,' again evidencing that he was personally aggrieved by Harpsfield and not necessarily the subject matter of the source.<sup>171</sup> Harpsfield, Cope or the pseudocopus' application of angelic attributes, both physically and in terms of character, suggest attributing angelic characteristics to an individual was a mechanism to raise the profile of the subject. The opposite is true if this model was used between enemies. The accounts evidence an interest in the relationship between man and angel that goes beyond theology.

In another example, Foxe recorded a skirmish between martyr Richard Woodman and his arresting officer. The account appeared in the *Actes and Monuments* from the second edition

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<sup>170</sup> 'K. Henry. 8. Rochester and more beheaded', Charterhouse Monkes, 1583 edition, p.1093.

<sup>171</sup> 'K. Henry. 8. Rochester and more beheaded', Charterhouse Monkes, 1583 edition, p.1093.

onwards.<sup>172</sup> After attempting to evade capture, Woodman is accused of claiming to be an angel by his arresting officer: ‘Then sayde Iohn Fauconer: Nowe your maister hath deceiued you. You sayd, you were an Angel, and if you had bene an Angell, whye did you not flee away from vs?’<sup>173</sup> Fauconer’s accusation is denied by Woodman. Woodman’s response is in the first person, giving the account a sense of urgency as if events unravelled in real-time. This is particularly noticeable when Woodman suggests that the accusation was one of a thousand he had been charged with:

Then sayde I, what be they that euer heard me say that I was an Aungel? It is not the first lie by a thousande þe they haue made of mee. Angels were neuer begotten of men, nor borne of women: but if they had saide, that they had heard me saye, that I doe trust I am a Saint, they hadde not said amisse.<sup>174</sup>

Woodman bases his defence on the fact that no one witnessed him make this claim. He also introduces a scriptural narrative to defend his position, arguing the origin of angels is detailed in the bible, in which it is clearly evidenced that angels were not born out of the union between man and woman; therefore, he could not be an angel. Woodman is inferring, as many of the other Marian martyrs did, that their persecution and eventual martyrdom evidenced that they were the saints referenced in the Book of Revelation.

What, do you thinke to be a Saint? Yea that I do, and am already in Gods sight, I trust in God: for he that is not a Saint in Gods sight already, is a deuil. Therefore he that thinketh scorne to be a Saint, let him be a deuil. And with þt woord they had brought me to mine owne doore: where met wt me my father, and willed me to remember my self.<sup>175</sup>

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<sup>172</sup> ‘Richard Woodman, The apprehension, examination and answers of Richard Woodman Martyr’, The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.johnfoxe.org> [Accessed: 21 November 2018], 1570 edition, p.2214; 1576 edition, p.1904; 1583 edition, p. 2010.

<sup>173</sup> ‘Richard Woodman, The apprehension, examination and answers of Richard Woodman Martyr’, 1583 edition, p. 2010.

<sup>174</sup> ‘Richard Woodman, The apprehension, examination and answers of Richard Woodman Martyr’, 1583 edition, p. 2010.

<sup>175</sup> ‘Richard Woodman, The apprehension, examination and answers of Richard Woodman Martyr’, 1583 edition, p. 2010.

Although Woodman does not reference Revelation, he implies an eschatological connection when he states, 'I am already in God's sight'.<sup>176</sup> In much the same way he defines what an angel is not, i.e., not human, Woodman questions Fauconer on what a saint was. This interplay allows Woodman to introduce the devil and suggest that those who trust in God are already Saints in contrast to those who have fallen for the devil's trickery. Woodman's claims may have aggravated an already suspicious and nervous community. Likewise, the arresting officer's questioning and comparison of Woodman to an angel was hardly intended to ease the situation.

The remaining sources consist of letters of support. The correspondence is friendly in tone and all penned by the Marian martyrs or their friends. Consequently, angelic characteristics are attributed positively. In a letter to Philpot, John Careless wrote:

Therefore let them do what so euer god shall suffer thē to do: For I know all thinges shal turne to your best. Though you lye in the darke, slorryed with the byshops blacke cole dust: yet shall you be shortly restored vnto the heauenly light..... Oh happye bee you that you be nowe in the scouring house. for shortlye you shalbe set vpon the celestiall shelve as bright as angels.<sup>177</sup>

Careless clearly admired John Philpot. The idea that the martyrs were fulfilling God's plan through their suffering and eventual martyrdom and that their temporal lives were just a precursor to eternal life are common themes repeatedly emphasised throughout the material considered in each chapter. In many sources, bright light has been an essential component, and it has been argued that this trope was employed to signify God's almighty power and

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<sup>176</sup> 'Richard Woodman, The apprehension, examination and answers of Richard Woodman Martyr', 1583 edition, p. 2010.

<sup>177</sup> 'John Careles. to his dearelye beloued in the Lorde, mayster Iohn Philpot', in Foxe, The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO (1583 edition) (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.johnfoxe.org> [Accessed: 11 March 2017], 1563 edition, p. 1606; 1570 edition, p. 2142; 1576 edition, p. 1840; 1583 edition, p. 1945.

reach. Just like Robert Samuel's martyrdom when his body emitted a bright white light, the evidence suggests that both Foxe and the authors of these accounts were keen to attribute a celestial and supernatural component to either the martyrs or their visions. Specifically, Careless utilised this model to contrast Philpot's situation whilst awaiting his martyrdom by suggesting it was 'darke slorryed with the byshops blacke cole dust'. However, he would be restored once martyred: on the celestial shelf. In the same way Careless wrote to his wife Margaret about the care of their children, he wrote to Philpot, again employing an angelic trope to give his friend comfort and strength when he needed it the most.

In another example, Marian martyr Rowland Taylor spoke of his cellmate John Bradford in angelic terms. This account is taken from the history of Rowland Taylor's life. The editorial commentary notes confirm that much of this testimony was based on the oral accounts of witnesses.<sup>178</sup> Foxe wrote that 'D. Taylour told his frendes that came to visite him, that God had most graciously prouided for him, to send him to that prison where he found such an Angell of God, to be in his company to comfort him'.<sup>179</sup> The account reveals how Bradford and Taylor, through their mutual love of God, prayer and exhortations, comforted each other during their time in prison.<sup>180</sup> So, it is perhaps appropriate that Taylor highlights God's angelic provision, in the guise of his dear friend Bradford.

In another account, Rawlin (or Rowland, his name appears as both) Whyte's martyrdom was also described in angelic terms. The *Actes and Monuments* online editorial commentary suggests this particular account is a striking example of the importance of individual

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<sup>178</sup> Editorial commentary and additional information. 1570 edition, p. 1732.

<sup>179</sup> 'Quene Mary. The story and examination of D. Rouland Taylour', Martyr in Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1583 edition) (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.johnfoxe.org> [Accessed: 22 November 2018] 1563 edition, p. 1139; 1570 edition, p. 1735; 1576 edition, p. 1474; 1583 edition, p. 1545.

<sup>180</sup> 'Quene Mary. The story and examination of D. Rouland Taylour', Martyr, 1583 edition, p. 1545.

informants in contributing significant detail to the lives and deaths of many of the martyrs.<sup>181</sup>

The 1563 edition included a note stating that Whyte was burned at Dardyffe in Wales.<sup>182</sup>

From the 1570 edition onwards, and thanks to the report of John Dane, we are privy to a complete history of the fascinating martyrdom of the Welsh martyr.<sup>183</sup> Foxe described the account:

It is recorded furthermore of the sayd good father Raulins by this Reporter, that as he was going to his death, and standing at the stake, he seemed in a maner to be altered in nature. For wheras before he was wont to go stooping, or rather crooked, through the infirmity of age, hauing a sad countenance and a very feeble complexion, and withall very soft in speech and gesture. Now he went and stretched vpe himselfe, not onelye bolt vpright, but also bare withall a most pleasant and cōfortable countenance, not without great courage and audacity both in speache and behaiour.<sup>184</sup>

The formerly decrepit old man stood bolt upright and confronted his imminent martyrdom with a renewed countenance and stoicism. In his marginal notes, Foxe also commented on this change: ‘a sodayne alteration of nature marulous in Rawlins before death’.<sup>185</sup> Foxe’s sentiment echoes the witness reports of Whyte’s martyrdom. Although the angelic description is attributed to Whyte at the end of the witness report, his renewed strength suggests a transformation beyond the outward appearance. The account continues:

He had (of whiche thing I shoulde haue spokein before) about his head a kerchiefe. The heares of his head (somewhat appearing beneath his kerchiefe) and also of his beard were more inclined to white then to gray: whiche gaue such a shewe and countenance to his whole person, that he semed to be altogether angelicall.<sup>186</sup>

Whyte was described as ‘altogether angelicall’. There is a hint of an almost performative gloss given to Whyte’s martyrdom, applied by both the witness and Foxe’s commentary notes. Peter Lake and Michael Questier argue this point in their seminal *The Anti-Christ’s*

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<sup>181</sup> Editorial commentary and additional information. 1583 edition, p.1580.

<sup>182</sup> ‘The Martyrdom of Rawlins/Roland White’, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1563 edition) (The Digital Humanities Institute, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.dhi.ac.uk/foxe> [Accessed: 01.03.11].1563 edition, p. 1170.

<sup>183</sup> ‘The Martyrdom of Rawlins/Roland White’, 1570 edition, p. 1766-8; 1576 edition, p. 1500-2; 1583 edition, pp. 1580-1583.

<sup>184</sup> ‘The Martyrdom of Rawlins/Roland White’, 1583 edition, pp. 1580-1583.

<sup>185</sup> ‘The Martyrdom of Rawlins/Roland White’, 1583 edition, pp. 1580-1583.

<sup>186</sup> ‘The Martyrdom of Rawlins/Roland White’, 1583 edition, pp. 1580-1583.

*Lewd Hat*, suggesting that this performative aspect was vital in linking polemical texts to their audiences.<sup>187</sup> Undoubtedly, there was the potential for the Marian martyrs to have been tutored by their cellmates during their time in prison so that when their time came, they upheld their positions as Christian martyrs – dying a good death. It would seem that the universally understood concept of angelic presence was a valuable tool for both the martyrs in approaching their death and for Foxe in reporting a good Protestant martyrdom narrative. As the material for Rawlin White does not appear in full until the second edition of the *Actes and Monuments*, this adds further weight to Foxe feeling more confident in the use of accounts detailing the more supernatural themes in the later editions.

### **Conclusion**

This final chapter has explored the material focussed on angelic protection. Unlike the first and second chapters of this thesis, the source material primarily consists of letters and witness testimony passed on to Foxe. This step back from the official court, convocation and examination records has resulted in a more personal assimilation of the Marian martyrs and John Foxe's expectations and understanding of what an angel was and did and how this related to the world around them. The attitudes, hopes and feelings expressed within the material attest that angelic presence occupied an important spiritual and cultural space within the early Protestant reformer's outlook.

Four distinct areas have been explored. Building on Laura Sangha's research and the proliferation of Psalm 34. 7, the chapter has provided further evidence of how angels were sought to protect the Protestant collective. There are undercurrents of the nationalism which

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<sup>187</sup> Peter Lake and Michael Questier *the Anti-Christ's Lewd Hat: Protestants, Papists, and Players in Post Reformation England*. (Yale University Press: New Haven, 2002.) p. 14.

Haller promoted in his elect nation thesis.<sup>188</sup> For instance, when Foxe expressed his thanks for the angelic protection provided by God with expectations of further examples.<sup>189</sup> Yet despite this, there are many examples of a more universal and inclusive outlook. Angelic protection of faithful Protestants was frequently related in terms of a collective, to the protection of children, and the preservation of the spiritual welfare of the young and innocent, while the parallels made between the Protestants and the armies of angels is another excellent example. Alexandra Walsham's research demonstrates the important contribution Providence played in generating a collective Protestant consciousness and a sense of confessional identity. It is worth pointing out that Walsham uses the term patriotism rather than nationalism.<sup>190</sup> Another important element of this idea of a Protestant collective is the continuation of the apocalyptic outlook identified within all three chapters. Certainly, it endorses Felicity Heal's classification of the *Actes* as a providential history.<sup>191</sup> This group of people believed they were living in end times. Through martyrdom, they were fulfilling God's plan. This would be impossible to do in isolation. Foxe presented Protestantism as the true Church of England, with angelic presence as one of the spiritual emblems endorsing his message.

Four striking examples of angelic intervention, along with the astonishingly positive commentaries from Melanchthon and Foxe, were explored. The notion of Providence again played a key role within these accounts. As argued by Alexandra Walsham, Providence provided a valuable loophole which resulted in the more supernatural examples of angelic belief making their way into the Protestant outlook.<sup>192</sup> The array of sources suggests some of

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<sup>188</sup> Haller, *John Foxe's Book of Martyrs and the Elect Nation*, p. 14.

<sup>189</sup> 'Foxe's commentary on the history of Simon Grinaeus collected out of Phillip Melanchthon's commentaries upon the 10th chapter of Daniel', 1563 edition, p. 1776.

<sup>190</sup> Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England*, p.5.

<sup>191</sup> Felicity Heal, 'Appropriating History: Catholic and Protestant Polemics and the National Past', p.115.

<sup>192</sup> Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England*. p. 2.

the martyrs utilised the familiar notion of angelic protection to suit their agendas and solve problems. In particular, the idea that angels could intervene in people's lives remained a possibility, serving as a powerful reminder that God was on hand to intervene in times of crisis.

Many accounts suggest that the martyrs cited a scriptural passage with subtle modifications and focussed on the scriptural analogy rather than remaining entirely faithful to the text. Psalm 34. 7 was re-cited between Allerton and Roth, suggesting that for these martyrs, the Psalm represented a special significance to their situation, which they sought to promote – to encourage and share comfort and to rally support for their cause. Laura Sangha suggests that 'a central feature to both pre-and post-Reformation angelology had been a preoccupation with the fellowship offered by angels to women and men, reflecting a hope of achieving greater insight into the human condition'.<sup>193</sup> The application of angelic characteristics to both friends and enemies is an excellent example of this. It demonstrates how the concept of the angel helped articulate meaning and express feeling.

For Foxe, as a historian and martyrologist, the concept of the angel was an important component of advancing the reformed message. This then explains Foxe's lengthy discourse on why all visions are not to be mistrusted or forsaken, why it was justified to believe in the Protestant version, and discredit the supernatural components of Catholicism, a Protestant apologia set within the rhetoric of an attack of Catholic teachings. Admittedly there was an air of ambiguity in some of the Protestant accounts, in particular pertaining to visions of angels. However, this was inescapable due to the human penchant to venerate angels raising the issue of superstition and idolatry. This is tempered by Foxe's surprisingly positive interpretation of the Protestant supernatural. Although sensitive to his audience, Foxe boldly

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<sup>193</sup> Sangha, Laura, *Angels and Belief in England*. p. 167.

utilised the universal understanding of what an angel was and did so to shore up his promotion and defence of the Protestant Church and its followers.

## Conclusion

Therefore let vs geue thanks vnto God, which hath geuen vs his Angels to be our keepers and defenders, wherby with more quiet mindes, we may fulfill and do the office of our vocation. With such like examples of Gods mighty and merciful custody the church of Christ in all ages doth aboūd, as by manifold experiences may appeare as well among the Germanes, as also in all other places and ages, but in no place more, nor in time more plentifull, then in this persecuting time of Queene Mary in this our Realme of England: as partly hath bene already historyed, and parte yet remayneth (the Lorde willing) moreouer hereunto to bee added.<sup>1</sup>

From the 1570 edition of the *Actes and Monuments* onwards, Foxe thanked God for the angels who protected and defended England. Foxe related many examples of God's providential care, such as Philip Melancthon's account of Simon Grineaus' miraculous escape, to the persecution of Protestants under the reign of Mary to the protection of angels. Further, he anticipated adding more examples to the reports he had already documented. Foxe's developing confidence and positive commentary run parallel with his growing interest and use of the apocalypse as a historical framework. This is most obviously evidenced in his increasing use of revelatory constructs across the four editions; the additional works on the mystical numbers of Revelation, the addition of Revelation 7. 1-3 to the title page of the 1583 edition, along with his publishing history outside of the *Actes and Monuments*: The *Eicasmī*, Foxe's contribution to the seventeenth-century commentaries on Revelation and of course his black comedy, *Christ Triumphant* detailing Christ's final triumph over Satan. Foxe understood that the events prophesied within Revelation had already taken place. This is why he states he was hopeful that further examples of angels intervening in the lives of man were on the horizon, thus demonstrating that the Protestant collective remained in God's favour. The expectation of End Times and an imminent apocalypse go hand in hand with angelic presence. This point is also evidenced by Heinrich Bullinger's letter to John Hooper. Bullinger speaks of Marian England as an 'apocalyptic

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<sup>1</sup> Foxe's commentary on Grinaeus collected out of Phillip Melancthon's commentaries upon the 10th chapter of Daniel, in Foxe The history of Simon Grinaeus collected out of Phillip Melancthon's commentaries upon the 10th chapter of Daniel, 1583, edition, p.2102.

drama' and, like Foxe, cited angels in connection to the protection of Protestants.<sup>2</sup> Angels were therefore keenly anticipated and ubiquitous. During a time of religious turmoil, angels were a familiar and reassuring presence associated with the protection of a persecuted collective.

Foxe's increasing use of the apocalypse and the sixteenth-century preoccupation with End Days provided more opportunity for angels to retain relevance to broader debates. This is represented most prominently on the title page of the *Actes and Monuments*, where angels frame the scene of the final judgment. In each chapter, the Marian martyrs, anxiety over judgement is evident, but it is tempered by excitement about the upcoming new age. The role of angels in the judgement of souls is also a reminder that angels were a shared theological space. In this sense, angelic presence plays a dual role in representing judgment for sinners and eternal reward for those who are saved. In many accounts, judgement is documented as something to look forward to.

The role of angels as instruments of God's judgment ensured that angelic presence could be utilised to both evidence and strengthen the early reformers' position whilst condemning the stance of the Catholic authorities. Further examples were cited without the scriptural citation suggesting there was enough evidence within the bible allowing the martyrs to draw on the mutually understood role angels played in the judgment of souls.<sup>3</sup> Key to this trend and as evidenced within the sources in each chapter is an awareness of angels witnessing the actions of humanity. In the case of the martyrs, the angels could attest to the virtues that were distinctive to the Protestant faith.

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<sup>2</sup> Chapter 1, pp. 28-30.

<sup>3</sup> Chapter 1, pp. 83-91.

Angelic presence was a helpful tool in the profoundly adversarial arguments over the Real Presence. Angels were employed to offer clarity and validate the ideas put forward by the Protestants. The sources directly referencing predestination and judgment suggest that pastorally, angels eased the psychological burden caused by election. These themes intersect across each chapter and again evidence the overall apocalyptic framework established by Foxe. The disputation records offer a fascinating insight into the significance of angelic presence from the Protestant reformers and Catholic authorities and interestingly demonstrate some convergence of ideas. The term ‘spiritual benchmark’ illustrates the Protestant and Catholic approaches to employing angelic presence to indicate whether the Eucharist contained Christ's corporeal elements. The Protestant reformers gave much more freedom to the remit of angels concerning the debates on the Real Presence. As non-corporeal spirits, reformers compared angels to Christ's spiritual and physical presence and ultimately argued against the Real Presence. In drawing these comparisons, reformers placed angels side by side with Christ. Angels were by no means placed before Christ in terms of hierarchy but metaphorically placed shoulder to shoulder to demonstrate the limitation of Christ's human nature vis-a-vis his spirit. Again, this thesis shows Walter Brute's debates in the fourteenth century acted as the bridge to the Marian accounts in which the sacrament was considered an act of memorial. Ridley and Cranmer's arguments cemented this shift toward the Zwinglian interpretation of the communion liturgy, where the Real Presence was deemed an act of memorial.

Comparatively, the Catholic debates capped the remit and agency of angelic presence. Angels were portrayed as being unable to participate in receiving the sacrament alongside mankind. The status of the priest superseded that of the angel because the priest had the

power to transform the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. This evidence broadly confirms Laura Sangha's research which suggests that angels appear in Catholic literature, such as primers' in support of the Mass, the priesthood, the workings of salvation and the narrative of Christian history'.<sup>4</sup> There is a caveat. Although angelic presence was documented as supporting the sacrament, this was at the expense of agency highlighted in the Protestant sources. However, the material surveyed in this thesis is on a much smaller scale and based on the convocation records that were not devotional in focus nor intended to be interpreted in a liturgical sense. Despite this, it is undoubtedly exciting to garner such insight into the debates on the Real Presence and with angels playing such a prominent role. The material relating to the Real Presence demonstrates how valuable angels were to the Marian martyrs and the Catholic authorities in unpicking these often impenetrable debates and providing evidence to advance an argument.

Further, there is evidence of a reduction in agency of angelic presence and even omission of some traditionally and scripturally associated duties with the angel within the Protestant sources. Neither Brute nor Foxe includes a reference to Michael binding Satan for the thousand years. Admittedly, Michael is not named as the angel responsible for this duty within Revelation; therefore, applying a specific name to an angel without biblical evidence would have been unlikely. Despite this, rather than just leaving out the name of the angel responsible, both Brute and Foxe omitted the angelic role from the event entirely. A similar tendency was also evidenced by Philpot when he referenced the Annunciation but omitted the archangel Gabriel. These accounts add weight to Laura Sangha's research in which she identified a broader trend where Protestants stripped back many angelic duties which could

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<sup>4</sup> Sangha, *Angels and Belief*. p. 135.

be attributed to a specific angel.<sup>5</sup> Given the number of contemporary sources that refer to angelic presence within *Actes and Monuments*, this trend might be expected on a larger scale.

Throughout this thesis, the notion of angels protecting the English Protestant nation has remained a prominent theme. The sixteenth-century preoccupation with End Days and Foxe's increasing use of the apocalypse to frame his history provided more opportunities for angels to retain relevance and utility. Although widely disputed over the decades, William Haller's elect nation theory remains an essential contribution to any study on Foxe and the *Actes*. One cannot ignore the anti-Catholic feeling when working with the *Actes and Monuments* and exploring Foxe's influences as a historian and social commentator. In using angelic presence as a lens to examine the sources across the four editions, primarily English examples have been captured notwithstanding the continental reports from Bullinger and of Simon Grineaus recorded by Melancthon. Foxe does reference England and the English Church as a distinct entity, a collective. Furthermore, Foxe directly links angels to the defence of the persecuted and the protection of England. Haller recognised that Foxe's methodology was reliant upon an apocalyptic framework and, with this, an apocalyptic view of England.<sup>6</sup> In doing so, Foxe created a parallel of the nations and kingdoms, the elect and sinful within Revelation, and then linked these groups to the collective experience of those he documented throughout his history. Foxe located this collective experience 'in no place more, nor in time more plentiful, then in this persecuting time of Queene Mary in this our Realme of England'.

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<sup>5</sup> Sangha, Laura. *Angels and Belief in England 1480-1700*. (Routledge: London, 2012) p. 52

<sup>6</sup> Haller, *John Foxe's Book of Martyrs and the Elect Nation*, p. 225.

However, when Foxe gave thanks to the protection of angels, he also referenced examples of God's providential care in German-speaking states on the continent. Foxe was speaking of a universal collective, as long as it was Protestant. As Patrick Collinson quite rightly pointed out upon re-reading Haller's work, 'there is less about the elect nation than one remembered, and one suspects that the elect nation' of the title may have been a mistake, since, unless I have read carelessly, the phrase which appears in the text is 'an', not 'the' elect nation'.<sup>7</sup> Further, the *Actes* 'did not have one exclusionary message for the instructed, the committed (it might be thought with a certain presumption) the elect, and another inclusionary message for all the rest.'<sup>8</sup> Foxe was a Universalist with an inclusive outlook; the *Actes* has a wider significance. Haller's elect nation thesis limits a text as complex as the *Actes*. Further, each edition was created purposefully and by more hands than Foxe.

What can be determined is that by using angelic presence as a lens, there is a special connection to the English nation. Laura Sangha argues, 'There is certainly no doubt that the work allowed Englishmen to see themselves as the faithful members of an embattled nation surrounded by enemies of God....In these circumstances, it was perhaps natural to expect the angels to come to the defence of God's chosen people.'<sup>9</sup> This much is undoubtedly reflected in the sources. For example, the many references to Psalm 34.7 and the angel of the Lord protecting and delivering those that feared him or Paul's 'innumerable angels' offering reassurances to the martyrs, their families and congregations that they were united in their cause and protected by armies of angels. Despite this clear and important link, it remains clear that the *Actes* told the story of a universal conflict against the Catholic Church.

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<sup>7</sup> Patrick Collinson. *This England*. p.193.

<sup>8</sup> Collinson, *John Foxe and national consciousness*.p. 207.

<sup>9</sup> Sangha, *Angels and Belief in England*, p. 72.

Further, Alexandra Walsham's premise, that 'providentialism played a pivotal role in forging a collective Protestant consciousness, a sense of confessional identity which fused anti-Catholicism and patriotic feeling and which united the elite with their social inferiors' is again supported by the accounts surveyed throughout this thesis.<sup>10</sup> Notions of providentialism is detected across many of the accounts documented by Foxe between the Lollard, Henrician and Marian martyrs in their framing of angelic presence. The traditional notion of the individual relationship with a guardian angel was remodified and extended in response to this particular group's collective experience of persecution. Angelic protection was aligned with scriptural precedent and contrasted against the circumstances in Marian England. For example, Psalm 34. 7 was repeated by Lollard, Richard Wyche and a handful of the Marian martyrs. Philip Melanchthon also alluded to this passage when he recounted Simon Grineus' escape from Bishop Faber's clutches. Laura Sangha has demonstrated that this passage was later popularised within Protestant Catechisms.<sup>11</sup> In chapter one, several high-ranking Protestants repeated Revelation 14. 8-10.<sup>12</sup> The repetition of specific biblical passages such as Psalm 34. 7 and Revelation 14. 8-10 were attempts to shore up the Protestant collective in response to the Catholic threat.

Another example of this trend is exemplified by the use of Paul's innumerable angels, contrasted against the armies of faithful Protestants and the Israelites of the Old Testament, further developing the relationship between angelic protection and a persecuted collective. Family is another collective that is identified within the source material. For example, John Careless, as evidenced in chapter three, was deeply concerned about the physical and spiritual welfare of his children and family.<sup>13</sup> Much of the correspondence was written by the

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<sup>10</sup> Walsham, *Providence*, p. 5.

<sup>11</sup> Sangha, *Angels and Belief in England*, p.70.

<sup>12</sup> Chapter 1, pp. 32-40.

<sup>13</sup> 'The Martyrdome of Prestes wife, Thomas Hale, and Richard Sharpe, with others', 1583 edition, p. 2076.

prisoners whilst awaiting martyrdom. These letters to family, friends and former congregations, which all included references to angelic presence and angelic protection, were designed to bolster the resolve of a collective and remind the recipients that God had afforded them all the protection of his angels. Similar phrasing employed in endings to prayers, declarations and letters also suggest angelic presence bolstered the resolve of the martyrs with multiple examples signing off ‘in the presence of the angels’.<sup>14</sup> Angelic presence was, therefore, a useful and validating mechanism employed to endorse the position and beliefs of the Marian martyrs.

The various angelic roles and duties evidenced in the *Actes and Monuments* are all examples of the expected remit of angels in early modern life in England. Particularly interesting are the examples found in the correspondence between prisoners where references were directly copied and shared from amongst their networks. For example, Margaret Mearing’s powerful final statement in which she criticised the Catholic Church in the company of angels is similar to the application of angelic presence employed by John Rough, Margaret’s former pastor.<sup>15</sup> Other examples are found within the reports of Cuthbert Simpson and Robert Samuel, who shared details of their angelic visitation with fellow cellmates and prisonguards.<sup>16</sup> Further, the correspondence between Allerton and Roth written in their blood.<sup>17</sup> These accounts all evidence the sharing of knowledge and suggest citing angelic presence as a form of protection or validation was a mutually understood convention.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Luke 9. 26.

<sup>15</sup> Chapter 3, pp. 9-11.

<sup>16</sup> Chapter 3, p. 35 and p 41.

<sup>17</sup> ‘The examination of Rafe Allerton at his seconde apprehension, appearing before the Bishop of London at Fulham, the 8. day of Aprill. An. 1557. wrytten by him selfe, wyth his owne bloud’, 1583 edition, p. 2038, p. 2041.

<sup>18</sup> Chapter 1, John Rough and John Philpot pp. 47-48.

There are also many examples in which angels were employed by individuals – a traditional benefit of angelic presence. Again, this was to comfort and bolster an individual's resolve and find solutions to problems – something which Alexandra Walsham and Peter Marshall identified in the account of Bishop Teat.<sup>19</sup> The four accounts detailing 'angelic intervention' are excellent examples. According to the sources, both Robert Samuel and Thomas Rede struggled with their faith. An angel revived their physical and spiritual strength through their visions or dreams.<sup>20</sup> Each example demonstrates the connection between angelic guidance and protection during a personal struggle. John Careless wrote to Agnes Glascocke after she was coerced into attending a Catholic mass. Again, Philpot's application of angelic presence was designed to reinforce her resolve and assuage her fears.<sup>21</sup> Other examples include the Lady Vane and martyr Richard Woodman who both evaded escape from the Catholic authorities thanks to the guidance of angels.<sup>22</sup> This is also reflected when prisoners attributed angelic characteristics to their cellmates; in terms of their appearance, character traits and even death.<sup>23</sup> Angelic presence in these examples was employed rhetorically to add authenticity to the common and shared cause and experience of early Protestants. In addition, it speaks to a broader interest in angels and humans, as it explores more practical aspects of angelic ministry that were closer to everyday life.

Through the four editions of the *Actes and Monuments*, there is evidence of a more pronounced emphasis of angelic presence. Some accounts, such as Simon Grineaus and Mrs Prest, appear in the 1563 edition. Here, they are scaled-down versions of the material and include no reference to angels. By the 1570 editions, full accounts appear, detailing

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<sup>19</sup> Marshall and Walsham, *Angels in the Early Modern World*, p 227.

<sup>20</sup> Chapter 3, pp 40-41.

<sup>21</sup> Chapter 2, p. 13.

<sup>22</sup> Chapter 2, p. 6 *Lady Vane* and Chapter 3, p. 55 *Richard Woodman*.

<sup>23</sup> Chapter 3, pp 212-220.

purported instances of angelic intervention and including the overtures of thanks from Foxe. It is also worth pointing out that many individual cases, including angelic presence, appear close together in placement within the editions. For instance, John Rough and Margaret Mearing's declarations appear sequentially, as do the letters of Rafe Allerton and Richard Roth, who both wrote to each other, repeating Psalm 34. 7. Whilst Simon Grineus' miraculous escape and the case of the Duchess of Suffolk both appear directly after each other. Despite this, one cannot categorically affirm that the placement of these examples suggests Foxe grew in confidence in using material which promoted angelic presence. John Rough and Margaret Mearing were martyred together on the same day and in the same place, as were Rafe Allerton and Richard Roth.<sup>24</sup> This, though, at least confirms the networks of association and influence that were important in the sharing and promoting of angelic presence during this period.

This thesis demonstrates that angelic presence was an important tool (amongst many) which Foxe employed to promote and validate his history. The accounts he collated and included within the *Actes* suggest that both sides of the confessional divide retained significant beliefs and expectations towards angels, even at times of great upheaval and crisis, perhaps even more so. Despite the polarity in debate in England, belief in angels was developed further. Elizabeth I's astrologer, John Dee, was 'conversing with angels', constructing revised schemas of the celestial hierarchy from recovered messages and codes.<sup>25</sup> The first half of the seventeenth-century saw a flurry of publications dedicated to angels. John Salkeld's *A Treatise of Angels* was published in 1613, followed by Henry Lawrence's *An History of Angels* in 1646, Robert Dingley's *The Deputation of Angels* in 1653 and Benjamin

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<sup>24</sup> 'Margaret Mearing', 1583 edition p. 2037.

<sup>25</sup> William H. Sherman, *John Dee: The Politics of Reading and Writing in the English Renaissance* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1995); Deborah Harkness, *John Dee's Conversations with Angels: Cabala, Alchemy, and the End of Nature* (Cambridge, 1995).

Camfield's *A Theological Discourse of Angels and their Ministries* in 1678.<sup>26</sup> Given the flowering of Protestant angelology in the seventeenth century, it may be pertinent to investigate the links between the *Actes and Monuments* and the subsequent treatises within postdoctoral research. There is also scope to extend this study's remit and consider the primary source material predating the fourteenth century. Another avenue is for an in-depth biographical study of the Marian martyrs with detailed mapping of the connections and the information shared across these networks. This would be particularly beneficial as the *Actes and Monuments* did not include the entire inventory of material relating to each martyr, so there could be outstanding references to angelic belief included in the correspondence. The methodology and objectives employed in this research project could also be applied to Miles Coverdale's *Letters of the Martyrs*. Coverdale published the *Letters of the Martyrs* in 1564, one year after the first edition of the *Actes and Monuments* was released. Foxe included additional material for many Marian martyrs from the 1570 edition onwards, based on Coverdale's evidence. Equally, there is much more correspondence included within the *Letters of the Martyrs* that did not make its way into the *Actes and Monuments*. In reviewing the *Letters of the Martyrs*, whilst retaining the approach and methodology employed in this thesis, the source pool could be extended. This approach could offer further insight into the Marian martyrs' familial connections and the synergy between the *Letters of the Martyrs*, the second edition of the *Actes and Monuments*, and the authorship and authority of both Miles Coverdale and John Foxe. It is worth noting that Coverdale's martyrology is not digitised; this research would therefore require significant time spent on transcribing the material and recording the instances of angelic presence into a bespoke database before any analysis could be conducted.

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<sup>26</sup> Sangha. *Angels and belief*. p. 1 and 106.

There is also enormous potential to establishing further the link between the *Actes and Monuments* and the Apocalypse as a historical writing genre. The second line of enquiry lies in the huge volume of English commentaries on the Book of Revelation, published throughout the seventeenth century. The angelology within the seventeenth-century commentaries on Revelation has not been systematically captured, compared and contrasted, nor have the anecdotal notes from the authors. This approach could offer valuable insight into the development of ideas on angels as the influx of commentaries followed peaks and troughs in the number of publications spanning almost a century.

This thesis demonstrates that angelic presence is a most useful lens to view historical, religious, and social events through. Angels played a role in Foxe's history, in many examples validating the Protestant position. This is because angels were a recognised, familiar, important and universally understood element of the spiritual and cultural landscape. The flexibility of angelic presence proved to be a useful motif for Foxe to give sense to a soteriological landscape shifting to meet an increasingly apocalyptic eschatological outlook. For the Marian martyrs, angelic presence empowered them as individuals and as a collective to assert who they were, what they believed in and defend their beliefs whilst under extreme duress from the Catholic authorities. Therefore, angelic presence was a genuinely significant element in the process of spiritual and cultural self-determination.

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