

# The 1595 Lambeth Articles and the so-called “Calvinist Consensus” (1)

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The aim of this study is to focus attention on a document called the Lambeth Articles to assess the level of consensus English Calvinism had achieved by 1595. The idea of a Calvinist consensus was highlighted by historians like Patrick Collinson. Collinson maintains that the doctrines of Calvinism provided the Elizabethan church with a “theological cement” to unite various theologians on the issue of grace. As early as 1973, Nicholas Tyacke, using the same adhesive analogy described this union as an “ameliorating bond” which helped to give the Church of England a Calvinist “consensus.”<sup>1</sup> This “consensus” thesis has much to commend it, not least the support it has gained from other historians,<sup>2</sup> although the concept of a late Elizabethan church united by a common respect for Calvinism predates Tyacke’s thesis.<sup>3</sup> To be fair, Tyacke’s argument is not that the English church was uniformly Calvinist, but he does maintain it united most of the clergy and much of the educated laity. Indeed, in the last decade of Elizabeth’s reign, the universities of Oxford and Cambridge did become centres of Calvinist learning.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>P. Collinson, *The Religion of the Protestants* (Oxford, 1982), p. 81; N. Tyacke, “Puritanism, Arminianism and Counter-Revolution,” in C. Russell (ed.), *The Origins of the English Civil War* (London, 1973), pp. 121-123. The consensus argument is also upheld in N. Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists, The Rise of Arminianism c. 1590-1640* (Oxford, 1987), pp. 1, 7, 9, 29, 247; and N. Tyacke, “Anglican Attitudes: some recent writings on English Religious History, from the Reformation to the Civil War,” *Journal of British Studies*, 35 (1996), pp. 139-167. <sup>2</sup>C. Russell, *Parliaments and English Politics 1621-1629* (Oxford, 1979), pp. 26-32; C. Durston and J. Eales, “Introduction: The Puritan Ethos 1560-1700,” in C. Durston and J. Eales (eds.), *The Culture of English Puritanism 1560-1700* (Macmillan, 1996), p. 7; A. Foster, *The Church of England 1570-1640* (London, 1994), p. 33.

<sup>3</sup>W. Haller, *The Rise of Puritanism* (New York, 1957), p. 17; R. A. Marchant, *The Puritans and the Church Courts in the Diocese of York 1560-1642* (London, 1960), p. 12; C. H. and K. George, *The Protestant Mind of the English Reformation 1570-1640* (Princeton, 1961), p. 405.

<sup>4</sup>N. Tyacke, “Anglican Attitudes,” pp. 144-146; N. Tyacke, “Puritanism, Arminianism,” p. 120.

More recently the idea that there were significant divisions and tensions in the Church of England prior to the reign of James I has been argued by Peter White. White sees a “spectrum” of Calvinistic and anti-Calvinistic opinions. Richard Greaves helpfully adds “consensus and opposition are matters of degree” and Ian Breward’s research reveals that there were “undeniable tensions.” In addition, Peter Lake speaks of “considerable differences of tone and emphasis” and “unstated disagreements” within any such consensus. Their contentions deserve further investigation, but first we must clarify and define our terms to avoid the pitfalls that occur so often when attempting to describe aspects of consensus and polarity.<sup>5</sup>

### Defining Calvinism

Historians accustomed to defining Puritanism rarely expend as much energy attempting to define Calvinism. Calvinists are not those who just uncritically or unreservedly follow the teachings of John Calvin. Even in the 1590s Calvinism was adopting a broader meaning. Though the term seems to originate from 1552, Calvin was not the sole progenitor of the Reformed tradition. That is not to argue that definitions of Calvinism should bear no relation to Calvin, it is merely to suggest that Calvinism should not be confined to the straightjacket of Calvin’s explicit doctrines.

The nature of Calvinism itself partly hinders definition. Calvinism is a doctrinal system that formulated ideas through debate and precise adversarial discussion throughout the sixteenth century. Theological argument enabled Calvinists to reach a nominal consensus and draw up confessions or creeds but equally it could lead to division. Calvinist fervour for debate, the urge to clarify and the desire to persuade were, and indeed remain, endemic. Sixteenth century Calvinism had an international compulsion to unify partly due to its utter intolerance of heterodoxy. Calvinists like Theodore Beza and William Perkins and many of the early Puritans had a desire for precision which created differences in interpretation. John Calvin himself produced so many theological works within his lifetime that the opportunity to appeal to diversity and variety were there from the very

<sup>5</sup>P. White, “The Rise of Arminianism Reconsidered,” *Past and Present*, 101 (1983), pp. 34-54; P. White, *Predestination, Policy and Polemic* (Cambridge, 1992), pp. x-xiii; R. Greaves, “The Puritan Non-conformist Tradition,” *Albion*, 17 (1985), p. 456; I. Breward (ed.), *The Work of William Perkins* (Abingdon, 1970), p. 14; P. Lake, “Calvinism and the English Church,” *Past and Present*, 114 (1987), p. 45.

outset. Peter White comes close to defining Calvinism in the preface to his book, *Predestination, Policy and Polemic*, only to remark that it is too broad to be “sufficiently defined” as predestinarian. He admits, though, that predestination and its importance is at the heart of the problem even amongst Calvinists.<sup>6</sup>

It does not assist historians in their task of course when “known” Calvinists like Walter Travers and Thomas Cartwright rejected the epithet “Calvinist” when it was applied to themselves, but before 1600 this was a common reaction.<sup>7</sup> Fortunately the most prominent and prolific English Calvinist of the 1590s, William Perkins comes to our rescue when he tells his readers that what he maintained was often called “Calvinists’ Doctrine.”<sup>8</sup> So Calvinism was a contemporary label which cannot be so easily overlooked or abandoned.

What is clearly needed is a series of terms that describe different types of Calvinists. For instance the term “moderate Calvinist” can be used to describe men like Henry Smith, Richard Greenham or Samuel Ward; whilst the badge “high Calvinist” best describes writers like William Perkins, Robert Some, William Whitaker, not to mention Theodore Beza and Jerome Zanchius. John Calvin is claimed, understandably, by both camps but his central position enables us to dub someone “moderate” who withdraws from some of Calvin’s double predestinarian views, and label someone “high” if they appear to enthusiastically defend or emphasise the most striking language Calvin adopts regarding predestination. For instance, moderate Calvinists tend towards infralapsarianism, play down the doctrine of reprobation far more than Calvin did, hold to a general view of the atonement and display a desire to offer the gospel to more than just the elect (whilst still retaining the doctrine of election). High Calvinists, on the other hand, would be authors who tend more towards supralapsarianism, readily preach the biblical doctrines of election and reprobation, hold to a restrictive or limited view of the atonement and play down any thought that the unregenerate can respond to the demands of righteousness unless

<sup>6</sup>P. White, *Predestination*, p. xii.

<sup>7</sup>P. Lake, *Moderate Puritans and the Elizabethan Church* (Cambridge, 1982), p. 68; A. Milton, *Catholic and Reformed, The Roman and Protestant Churches in English Protestant Thought 1600-1640* (Cambridge, 1995), p. 408.

<sup>8</sup>See *The Workes of that Famous and Worthie Minister of Christ in the University of Cambridge, Mr. William Perkins*, 3 vols. (Cambridge, 1631), vol. 2, p. 605.

God first, by his grace alone, regenerates them. The idea of a gospel offer to all people does not fit with the high Calvinist position and was clearly introduced as means of weakening the higher position to develop a consensus around a more moderate definition of Calvinism.

One particular problem with this approach is although most Calvinists do fall into one or other camps they do not necessarily always believe all of the doctrines on either side. For instance those who believed that Christ died for all of the world were often referred to in England, at least in 1595, as “Lutheran” or, more commonly, as “semi-Pelagians.” This is quite helpful until we realise that the moderate Calvinist Samuel Ward uses the term “Lutheran” of his opponents whilst he held to the doctrine of general atonement in his own theology.<sup>9</sup>

### The Cambridge Crisis

The circumstances that led up to, or sprang from, the Lambeth Articles debate of 1595 bring these tensions into sharp focus in late Elizabethan Calvinism. The chief personality at the centre of the events of 1595 was William Whitaker, Head of St. John’s College, Cambridge, and Regius Professor of Divinity. Although it could be argued that Whitaker was indeed reacting to a series of sermons that questioned aspects of the doctrine of predestination, his sermon on 27th February, 1595, set in motion a chain reaction of theological arguments over the theology of grace.<sup>10</sup>

Most historians focus on the sermon of William Barrett (29th April, 1595) as the chief cause of the Lambeth Articles, but Barrett’s sermon was merely a response to Whitaker’s sermon. The content and purpose of Whitaker’s sermon on predestination (February, 1595) is worthy of attention. Whitaker’s sermon emphasises the ramifications of divine ordination. He defends the doctrine of a definite or limited atonement and assails the concept that God desires the salvation of all. Whitaker’s initial motivation may well have been to reassure his hearers of God’s prevailing power to maintain the salvation of the elect.<sup>11</sup> He clearly wished his audience to seek

<sup>9</sup>S. Ward, “Diary,” in M. Knappen (ed.), *Two Elizabethan Diaries* (London, 1933), pp. 125-126.

<sup>10</sup>For more on William Whitaker, see T. Brook, *The Lives of the Puritans*, 3 vols. (1818; reprint 1994), vol. 2, pp. 72-85.

<sup>11</sup>See P. Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, pp. 202-203. Lake cites *Praelectio habita Februarii 27 Anno. Dom. 1594/5*, pp. 12-15. See also P. White, *Predestination*, p. 101.

comfort in God's ability to control all circumstances.<sup>12</sup> He was certainly not alone at this time in maintaining that God controls all things. Notes taken down by a student at the lectures of Laurence Chaderton during the early 1590s record that Chaderton argued that God's control extended even to Satan's actions.<sup>13</sup> Whitaker would have also found support from William Perkins and Andrew Willet.<sup>14</sup> So there was definitely a "Cambridge" consensus in the early 1590s, at least on the positive aspects of predestination and assurance.

However, Whitaker may have had more provocative reasons for delivering this sermon. Whitaker was determined to defend his beliefs against a series of attacks. Encouraged by his awareness of a "Cambridge" consensus, Whitaker feared a growing number of preachers, at large, who challenged his view of theology. He was not ignorant of the criticisms of Samuel Harsnett a preacher at Paul's Cross in 1584-1585. Harsnett had claimed that the Calvinist view of omnipotence inevitably presented God as the "author of sin."<sup>15</sup> In addition, Whitaker may well have had in mind the comments of Everard Digby too.

In 1587, Whitaker had drawn up eighteen serious complaints against Digby, a fellow of St. John's Cambridge. Digby had argued in favour of free will rather than predestination,<sup>16</sup> and in complaint number three Whitaker objected to Digby's depiction of "Calvinians as schismatic."<sup>17</sup> This again proves Whitaker's nervousness about possible divisions over Calvinist teaching. With Whitgift and the Earl of Leicester's help, Whitaker was able to eject Digby in 1588, although Whitgift was reluctant at first.<sup>18</sup> Peter Lake believes Whitaker's fear of the advance of popery lay behind his clash

<sup>12</sup>Whitaker elsewhere makes this very point in his *An Answer to the ten reasons of Edmund Campion the iesuit*, trans. R. Stock (London, 1606), p. 195.

<sup>13</sup>According to P. Lake (*Moderate Puritans*, p. 153), these notes are to be found in the North Yorkshire Record Office, Hutton MSS (ZAZ), p. 134.

<sup>14</sup>See W. Perkins, *A Golden Chaine* (1591), in *Workes* (1605 edition), pp. 1-130; A. Willet, *Synopsis Papismi, or a General view of Papistrie* (London, 1600), p. 554.

<sup>15</sup>See D. Wallace, *Puritans and Predestination: Grace in English Protestant Theology, 1525-1695* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1982), p. 66; P. White, *Predestination*, p. 100.

<sup>16</sup>See P. Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, p. 176; E. Digby, *Dissuasive from taking away the livings and goods of the Church* (1590).

<sup>17</sup>Cambridge University Registry Guard Book 93 No. 6, mentioned in P. Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, p. 171.

<sup>18</sup>P. Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, pp. 179-183; V. H. H. Green, *Religion at Oxford and Cambridge* (London, 1964), p. 103.

with Digby. He says, "The Protestant confrontation with Rome dominated Whitaker's world-view."<sup>19</sup> Whitaker's desire for consensus in the Church of England and fear of deviation gave him an acute sensitivity to comments from prospective adversaries. The high predestinarian Whitaker still desired unity and a predestinarian homogeneity.

By 1595 Whitaker was acutely aware of other potential threats to the "Cambridge" view of predestination from recognised preachers. In 1594 none other than Lancelot Andrewes (1555-1626), chaplain to Archbishop Whitgift (later Bishop of Winchester), criticised the high predestinarian view regarding the concept of the security of salvation.<sup>20</sup> Samuel Ward, in his diary, makes reference to Whitaker's determination to "stand to God's cause against the Lutherans."<sup>21</sup> Further evidence that even the Cambridge accord was being challenged by a new wave of anti-predestinarians is found in William Perkins's preface to the reader (1592) of *A Golden Chaine*, in which the author described four different views on predestination. He implies a revival of Pelagian views in England at this time. Perkins calls them "New Pelagians." Like Whitaker, Perkins was very sensitive to divisions over aspects of his theology, especially in the very heartland of Calvinist orthodoxy.<sup>22</sup>

Far from William Whitaker's sermon quietening fears, it led directly to the statements of William Barrett. On 29th April, 1595, William Barrett, chaplain of Gronville and Caius College, Cambridge, preached a sermon in Latin at Great St. Mary's.<sup>23</sup> Apparently, Barrett challenged some basic predestinarian tenets. Unfortunately, the text of the sermon has not survived but we can approximate or reconstruct some of its comments from reactions to it. Barrett argued that assurance, if taken too far, could breed

<sup>19</sup>See P. Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, p. 162; D. Wallace, *Puritans and Predestination*, p. 169.

<sup>20</sup>L. Andrewes, *Sermons*, Anglo-Catholic Library, 5 vols. (Oxford, 1841-1843; new edition, 1875-1892), vol. 2, p. 72.

<sup>21</sup>S. Ward, "Diary," p. 125. See also E. Gilliam, "To 'Run with the Time,' Archbishop Whitgift, the Lambeth Articles and the Politics of Theological Ambiguity in Late Elizabethan England," *Sixteenth Century Journal*, XXIII/2 (1992), p. 330.

<sup>22</sup>W. Perkins, *A Golden Chaine*, in *Workes* (1605 edition). The preface is not numbered. This book was first produced in Latin in 1590 and in English in 1591 but the preface is dated 23rd July, 1592.

<sup>23</sup>See V. H. H. Green, *Religion at Oxford and Cambridge*, p. 123; E. Gilliam, "To 'Run with the Time,'" p. 325; H. C. Porter, *Reformation and Reaction in Tudor Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1958, 1972), p. 364.

presumption, that human effort was not without merit, that God would be the author of sin if he controlled all things, that sin rather than God was the first cause of reprobation, that predestination was not an absolute decree and that assurance could not simply rest on faith alone.<sup>24</sup> Many of Barrett's comments played on moderate predestinarian concerns about supralapsarianism but Barrett also unadvisedly criticised high predestinarians by name. This approach (alongside Barrett's subsequent conversion to Roman Catholicism) helped put the pendulum of events into full motion in 1595, with argument and counter-argument.

Whitaker was shocked by Barrett's direct criticism of John Calvin, Peter Martyr, Theodore Beza and Jerome Zanchius.<sup>25</sup> That summer fifty-six Cambridge dons led by Henry Alvey of St. John's, signed a petition against Barrett's sermon.<sup>26</sup> By July, eight of the College Heads had drafted a publication entitled, *The truth of religion publicly and generally received*.<sup>27</sup> Momentum gathered. Whitgift's chaplain Adrian Saravia was swift to defend Barrett's comments on reprobation and assurance but not his personalisation of the issues. However, historians remain divided over Whitgift's reactions that summer. Peter Lake maintains that the archbishop was desperately trying to be impartial whilst White sees Whitgift as defensive of Barrett's right to speak out, at least initially.<sup>28</sup> Tyacke portrays Whitgift as reflective and slow to act without consultation. Whitgift was a complex personality and there may well be some truth in all of these speculations, but soon the archbishop was to be overtaken by events. On 19th August, 1595, the Archbishop of Canterbury consulted Matthew Hutton, Archbishop of York.<sup>29</sup> His deliberations gave the dons the initiative that vital

<sup>24</sup>See P. White, *Predestination*, p. 102; Cambridge University Registry Guard Book 6, vol. 1, No. 33. See also *Trin. Coll. Camb. MS B14/9*, p. 35.

<sup>25</sup>See Gilliam, "To 'Run with the Time,'" p. 325.

<sup>26</sup>P. Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, p. 205; V. H. H. Green, *Religion at Oxford and Cambridge*, p. 123; P. White, *Predestination*, p. 103.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 103; H. C. Porter, *Reformation and Reaction*, p. 314. The document, *Trin. Coll. Cam. MS B14/9*, p. 27, names the eight heads as John Duport (Jesus), Roger Goad (King's), Humphrey Tyndall (Queen's), Edmund Barwell (Christ's), John Jegon (Corpus), Laurence Chaderton (Emmanuel), Robert Some (Peterhouse) and William Whitaker (St. John's).

<sup>28</sup>P. White, *Predestination*, p. 103; W. Nijenhuis, "Adrianus Saravia as an Eirenical Churchman in England and the Netherlands," in D. Baker (ed.), *Reform and Reformation: England and the Continent c.1500-c.1750*, Studies in Church History 15 (Oxford, 1979), p. 155. See also P. Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, pp. 217-218; P. White, *Predestination*, p. 103.

summer. Whitgift's insistence, on 30th September 1595, that silence be maintained on the disputed points was partly unheeded, at least by Whitaker.<sup>30</sup> Just when Whitgift was hoping to reassert his authority and prevent a schism, he allowed Whitaker to examine Barrett. This led to Whitaker's initial drafting of what soon became known as the Lambeth Articles.

## The Lambeth Articles

The actual text of the Lambeth Articles deserves serious perusal. The content of these nine statements divulge a great deal about predestinarian thought in the 1590s. Richard Fletcher, Bishop of London; Richard Vaughan, Bishop-elect of Bangor; and Humphrey Tyndall, Dean of Ely, had all joined Whitaker in order to produce the Articles.<sup>31</sup> This was indeed an attempt on the part of Whitaker to create a university consensus. Thomas Fuller believes that this was not a private conventicle, but, according to a letter from Cambridge, these men were sent to London "by Common Consent." This is possibly the nearest the 1590s came to pleading for a national Calvinist consensus.<sup>32</sup> The fact that the Articles were then passed on and partly altered only serves to reinforce the point that it was more than just a "Cambridge" affair.

A close examination of the nine articles reveals an interesting structure. The first three articles were clearly intended to form a philosophical definition of predestination, the second (or middle) three articles were designed to give the pastoral or soteriological implications of predestination with a view to preaching assurance. Finally, the last three articles were unashamedly negative in structure and directed specifically at the doctrine of free will and the "New Pelagians." Historians who discuss the nine articles of

<sup>29</sup>N. Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, p. 32. See also M. Hutton, *The Correspondence of Dr. Matthew Hutton* (Surtees Soc., 1843), pp. 104-105.

<sup>30</sup>H. C. Porter, *Reformation and Reaction*, p. 360.

<sup>31</sup>For various translations of the Lambeth Articles, see N. Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, pp. 30-31; H. C. Porter, *Reformation and Reaction*, p. 371; E. Cardwell, *Documentary Annals of the Reformed Church of England; being a collection of Injunctions, Declarations, Orders, Articles of Inquiry, etc. from the Year 1546 to the Year 1716*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1844), vol. 1, pp. 49-53. All of these have been consulted in order to understand the Latin text more accurately. See also T. Fuller, *The Church History of Britain* (London, 1868), vol. 3, pp. 162-164, for the original Latin text and translation.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 165.



ten overlook this threefold structure and therefore miss their intention. Many historians are swift to separate the articles and therefore fail to treat them as a single entity. Examining each article in turn, but in context, proves revealing.

**Article I** - *God from eternity has predestined some men to life, and reprobated some to death.*

Article I is a high predestinarian definition of the decree because it mentions reprobation (*reprobavit*), but no alteration is made to incorporate the moderate view that reprobation was due to sin. The word “sin” could easily have been included. Moreover, the vital words “from eternity” do appear. White argues that the article does not mention the cause of reprobation but the phrasing “God from eternity” surely implies God’s will rather than man’s sin. In view of this, it is quite odd that Article I was left unchanged. Porter and White have made much of the alterations made to the Articles so it is essential to exegete these articles with reference to these alterations.<sup>33</sup> The moderate alterations to the other articles were made by Archbishops Whitgift and Hutton in 1595 but Whitaker’s original was published in 1651. Indeed, amongst Whitgift’s letters a document exists that delineates all of these alterations.<sup>34</sup>

**Article II** - *The moving or efficient cause of predestination to life is not the foreseeing of faith, or of perseverance, or of good works, or of anything innate in the person of the predestined, but only the will of the good pleasure of God.*

Peter White and Peter Lake have argued that Article II is mild and moderate because it does not mention the word “reprobation” but that seems an odd conclusion to draw as Article II directly follows the first article that ended with the words “*reprobavit ad mortem.*”<sup>35</sup> Also the moderate case partly rests upon the idea that God reprobates from eternity

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<sup>33</sup>See H. C. Porter, *Reformation and Reaction*, pp. 365-371; P. White, *Predestination*, pp. 107-109.

<sup>34</sup>This useful document was reproduced in its original Latin format, altered by Hutton and then sent by Whitgift to the Vice-Chancellor. See J. Whitgift, *The Works of John Whitgift*, 3 vols. (Cambridge, 1851-1853), vol. 3, pp. 612-613. For Whitaker’s original, see *Articuli Lambethani*, A 3890 in S.T.C.

only those He foresees sinning and the main thrust of the second article is to eschew such a view of foreknowledge. Article II resoundingly declares, not only against foreseen faith in the elect, but the “foreseeing” of “anything innate in the person of the predestined.” The alterations Hutton made to the second article are an attempt to make them more moderate, however he does not go too far. The addition of the word “moving” to the line about the cause of predestination does imply that secondary causes can be taken into consideration by God in the execution of the decree, but clearly not in its inception. The replacement of Whitaker’s word “absolute” with “good pleasure” does make the discussion of God’s will seem softer in its tone or language, for high Calvinists too believed in God’s “good pleasure” and would not have been offended by this alteration. The argument was not over God’s pleasure but more specifically what God had pleasure in.

**Article III** - *There is a determined and certain number of predestined, which cannot be increased or diminished.*

Article III is almost a mathematical definition of predestination and more than makes up for the removal of the word “absolute” in the previous article. What surely could be more absolute than the fact that the elect are a fixed number? Actually, this article shouts in favour of high Calvinism with its “cast in stone” format. White comments that it does not rule out foreknowledge but in conjunction with Article II it most certainly does.<sup>36</sup> If the number of the elect is absolutely fixed “*et certus numerus est*” then no amount of foreknowing can change a certainty. It hardly leaves the door open for moderates who believe in God foreknowing possibilities. In fact, in the original Latin many of these articles display an exactitude few moderate predestinarians could gloss over. No wonder the Lambeth Articles were so popular with the Dutch high Calvinists at the Synod of Dort in 1618-1619. However, the one article that many moderates would have seen as the most appealing is certainly Article IV.

**Article IV** - *Those not predestined to salvation are inevitably condemned on account of their sins.*

<sup>35</sup>P. White, *Predestination*, p. 108; P. Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, p. 224.

<sup>36</sup>P. White, *Predestination*, p. 108.

Frankly, in the light of the other articles, this article is an enigma, at least on first reading. It introduces the idea of “on account of their sins” which none of the other sections even hint at. The conundrum is not that it omits the word “reprobated” for the milder phrase “condemned” or “damned” (*damnabuntur*), but surely that it includes the word “inevitably” (*necessario*). The term “not predestined” in 1595 was a pseudonym for “reprobate” whichever way theologians interpreted it. So the idea that the reprobate are damned due to sin would appeal to moderate Calvinists and anti-Calvinists alike, but equally, “*necessario*” would upset them. Article IV is therefore puzzling because it does appear to appeal to a milder form of predestination by placing the blame on man and “sin” (not God) but it could hardly have escaped the attention of the theologians of 1595 that “*necessario*” implies that the non-elect are on an inevitable railroad to hell. When we read the fourth article alongside the third it appears harsher still. Although Article IV does retain infralapsarian overtones its central placing in the Articles as a whole is significant. It overtly teaches the certain and inevitable damnation of the reprobate.

**Article V** - *A true, lively and justifying faith, and the sanctifying Spirit of God, is not lost nor does it pass away either totally or finally in the elect.*

According to White and Porter, Article V was changed to accommodate the moderates too, but Porter also admits the alterations did not please William Barrett.<sup>37</sup> Apparently the original had said that “those who once have been partakers” could not finally fall. However, that phrase would not have pleased many high predestinarians either, because it had antinomian implications. It could imply that if the reprobate could be “partakers” they would be saved. However the substitution of the phrase about “partakers” for a phrase about “the elect” could hardly be construed as a moderating adaptation. The article does not say why the elect cannot fall so it remains open ended. The aim of the article is mainly pastoral, namely to dispel despair and give comfort to the believer. This point becomes even more obvious when Article V is read in the light of Article VI.

**Article VI** - *The truly faithful man—that is, one endowed with justifying faith—is sure by full assurance of faith (“plerophoria*

<sup>37</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 109; H. C. Porter, *Reformation and Reaction*, p. 371.

*fidei”) of the remission of sins and his eternal salvation through Christ.*

Article VI appears mild, and comforting, as it talks of the “truly faithful” rather than the elect which, according to White, at least pleased moderates like Lancelot Andrewes.<sup>38</sup> However, the article does add that the faithful are those “endowed” with (not just those exhibiting) “justifying faith” which is a reference to the high Calvinist idea that faith is always a gift of God not merely an independent action of man. The substitution of the word “assurance” in place of “certainty” seems unnecessarily minor especially as Articles III and IV had already mentioned “certain” or “*necessario*.”

**Article VII** - *Saving grace is not granted, is not made common, is not ceded to all men, by which they might be saved, if they wish.*

Changes to Article VII are also equally minor. That article is so negative in construction that the alteration merely changes one type of grace—that is “not granted”—for another type of grace that is also clearly “not granted.” In the end these changes merely played with words. It could have been argued that sufficient grace is given “to all men” if “sufficient grace” actually meant saving grace. If “sufficient grace” was given to all to be saved then it would follow that the possibility of salvation must be common to all. The text does not make this point but confidently adds that saving grace is not granted to all. If “saving grace” was withheld from some, as the article clearly stated, then grace was hardly “sufficient” unto salvation. One would assume it was merely “sufficient” to condemn and therefore truly insufficient to save. So Article VII is not as moderate as some would have us believe. When read alongside Article I it remains emphatic and unreservedly, high Calvinism and high predestinarianism in tone.

**Article VIII** - *No one can come to Christ unless it be granted to him, and unless the Father draws him: and all men are not drawn by the Father to come to the Son.*

<sup>38</sup>P. White, *Predestination*, p. 109.

Further proof of the high predestinarian hue of the Lambeth Articles is discovered by a close examination of Article VIII. It launches into an enthusiastic attack on the free offer of the gospel, as a portrayal of the sincere desire on the part of God, to save all. It opens with the negative “No one can come to Christ unless it be granted to him” and then ends emphatically with “all men are not drawn by the Father to the Son.” White believes the language of this article makes it appealing to moderates but surely it is not the most appealing biblical language the compilers could have used.<sup>39</sup> Again the Articles starkly emphasise the strongest aspects of the doctrine of predestination.

**Article IX** - *It is not in the will or power of each and every man to be saved.*

Finally, Article IX affords us one of the shortest and most direct attacks on the doctrine of free will in the history of credal Christianity, in any Protestant confession or statement of faith. White claims that Andrewes found this article acceptable as the alterations took “the sting” out of its words.<sup>40</sup> Examination of its bold phrasing, even after modification, reveals that the “sting” is still there. Even with its best gloss this clearly argues that salvation is beyond human free will, endeavour or power. The final version of the Lambeth Articles was delivered on 24th November, 1595. It produced a mixed reaction at that time and still produces differing reactions today. At least five of the articles contained statements that were unacceptable to moderate predestinarians who wanted to hold out hope of salvation to all they preached to. Only two of the articles (Articles II and IV) had any serious moderating element but only then when taken strictly out of context apart from the other seven. Taken as a whole (however they may appear individually) the nine articles are definitive high predestinarianism.

*to be concluded (DV)*

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<sup>39</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 109.

<sup>40</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 110. For the original Latin, see G. W. Prothero, *Select Statutes and other Constitutional Documents illustrative of the Reigns of Elizabeth I and James I 1558-1625* (Oxford, 1913), p. 226.