

Jacob's last published treatises – the manuscript can help to clarify the degree to which Jacob's ecclesiology continued to evolve in response to Presbyterian pressure. Additionally the Presbyterian 'Examinations' themselves help to expand our understanding of moderate Puritanism, providing, for example, greater insight into the Puritan approach to patristic sources and a defence of Reformed synods and councils more thorough than anything published during the period. While this volume is unlikely to be of interest to non-specialists, scholars with an interest in the seventeenth-century development of both Presbyterianism and Congregationalism will find the manuscripts presented here to be a stimulating source for further research.

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY,  
BELFAST

MATTHEW C. BINGHAM

*Early Stuart polemical hermeneutics. Andrew Willet's 1611 Hexapla on Romans.* By Darren M. Pollock. (Reformed Historical Theology, 50.) Pp. 351. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2017. €100. 978 3 525 57053 1; 2198 8226  
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Andrew Willet's *Synopsis papismi* was among the most celebrated works of anti-Roman Catholic polemic of its day. First published in 1592, it had reached its fifth edition by 1634. Its subtitle gives a good flavour of its contents, and of Willet's religious stance: 'A generall viewe of papistry wherein the whole mysterie of iniquitie, and summe of antichristian doctrine is set downe, which is maintained this day by the Synagogue of Rome, against the Church of Christ, together with an antithesis of the true Christian faith, and an antidotum or counterpoyson out of the Scriptures, against the whore of Babylons filthy cuppe of abominations.' Although there is no evidence that Willet ever failed to conform, he was undoubtedly a friend of the godly and pressed, in print, for further reform, after the accession of James I. These efforts produced such a hostile reaction that Willet chose to focus the remainder of his writing career on producing biblical commentaries. A work on 1 Samuel (1607) was followed by commentaries on Genesis (1608), Exodus (1608), Daniel (1610), Romans (1611), 2 Samuel (1614) and Leviticus (posthumously published in 1631). Darren Pollock's clearly argued analysis of the Romans Hexapla demonstrates, however, that Willet's mid-career turn towards biblical commentary did not involve a turn away from religious polemic but rather the continuation of that polemic by other means. A helpful introduction locates Willet's Romans commentary in its historical and exegetical context, and makes a convincing case that early modern biblical commentary has often been neglected by historians of theology. This opening chapter is followed by a series of essays which discuss Willet's approach to issues of text and translation, to grammar and rhetoric, to causality, as well as his use of both ancient heresy and the Church Fathers in the interpretation of the text. Pollock delves into Willet's detailed textual and doctrinal discussions with confidence, and examines his appropriation of previous exegetical work, both Protestant and Roman Catholic. He argues persuasively that Willet's polemical approach to the biblical text was not incompatible with informed textual scholarship. Pollock also underlines that Willet's engagement with earlier Reformed commentaries on Romans was both flexible and critical, enabling him to respond to a polemical landscape reshaped by

Cardinal Bellarmine, in particular. Given that Willet had been prompted to focus on biblical commentary by a bruising engagement over English church polity, it is perhaps regrettable that Pollock does not explore how the Romans Hexapla bore upon those discussions; although his emphasis on anti-Roman Catholic polemic undoubtedly reflects Willet's own priorities. *Early Stuart polemical hermeneutics* makes an interesting and scholarly contribution to the field of early Stuart church history, and provides welcome encouragement to scholarly engagement with early modern biblical commentary.

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

STEPHEN HAMPTON

*The Church of Ireland and its past. History, interpretation and identity.* Edited by Mark Empey, Alan Ford and Miriam Moffitt. Pp. xii + 322 incl. 4 tables. Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2017. £50. 978 1 84682 637 5  
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This ambitious work in seventeen chapters by sixteenth authors seeks to provide a comprehensive interpretive understanding of Irish Anglicanism from the foundation of the Church of Ireland in 1536 down to the present. It is written by some of Ireland's leading historians or English historians of Ireland, with one American in the mix. A problem which is intermittently examined but not systematically addressed is the question, can the Church really claim to be the Church of Ireland, except in the very limited sense of being the ecclesiastical body established by law, a status that came to an end on 1 January 1871. This problem of identity goes back at least to the time of James Ussher, the formidably learned archbishop of Armagh, 1625–56, who began a trend in Irish Protestant historiography by trying to demonstrate that the reformed Church in Ireland was discernibly the successor of the Church planted by Patrick in 432. This consistent obsession, until comparatively recently, is perhaps an indication at an unacknowledged psychological level that Anglicanism really was what its Catholic opponents alleged it to be: an English import.

Ussher was a product of Trinity College Dublin, founded in 1592, which, as Alan Ford points out, 'provided the crucible in which Irish Protestant intellectual self-awareness was forged' (p. 20). It was Trinity which in the nineteenth century produced, at a cost in today's values of several hundred thousand euros, the seventeen-volume edition of Ussher's work. It took some forty years to complete. The archbishop's labours on Irish history were taken up by others in subsequent centuries. not least by James and Robert Ware: the latter's distortions and fabrication of documents for purposes of anti-Catholic polemics left a 'malign legacy [that] can scarcely be underestimated' (p. 52). Not all eighteenth-century Church of Ireland historians were so *parti pris*, as T. C. Barnard points out in his entertaining and well written account ('Writing the history of the Church of Ireland in the eighteenth century'), but their antiquarian researches were hampered by an 'almost universal ignorance of the Irish language' (p. 60).

The work of other enormously influential Irish Anglicans is dealt with in various chapters. C. R. Elrington, Richard Mant, J. H. Todd, George T. Stokes and W. A. Phillips all find mention, as does the most important nineteenth-century Irish Presbyterian historian, James S. Reid. One problem is that their names keep coming up and there is a good deal of repetition, perhaps unavoidably so,