

ODNB-Hooker

HOOKER, RICHARD (1554-1600), THEOLOGIAN AND PHILOSOPHER BY A. S. MCGRAD(c) Oxford University Press 2004-7 All rights reserved Hooker, Richard (1554-1600), theologian and philosopher, was born in or near Exeter in early April 1554. The original name of the family was Vowell, but in the fifteenth century its members began calling themselves Vowell, alias Hooker or Hoker, and in the sixteenth century the original name was generally dropped. Hooker's great-grandfather, John Hooker (d. 1493), and his grandfather, Robert Hooker (d. 1537), were mayors of Exeter, the former in 1490 and the latter in 1529. But his father Roger Vowell, alias Hooker, was relatively poor. Education and early career Richard was educated at Exeter grammar school, where according to Izaak Walton he was 'an early questionist, quietly inquisitive' (Walton, 7). His progress was rapid, and at the schoolmaster's commendation his uncle John Hooker, alias Vowell, resolved to provide him with means for a university education. The uncle, 'Exeter's resident humanist for half a century' (Hill, xiii), was intimate with Bishop John Jewel of Salisbury, and urged his friend to look favourably on his poor nephew. Jewel summoned the lad and his teacher to Salisbury, was impressed by Richard's promise, and obtained a place for him at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, where he matriculated in late 1569. The president of the college, William Cole, took an interest in Hooker, who sometimes journeyed on foot from Oxford to Exeter, on the way visiting Jewel, whom he later extolled as 'the worthiest Divine that Christendome hath bred for the space of some hundreds of yeres' (Hooker, Laws, 2.6.4). Jewel died in September 1571, and his place as Hooker's patron was taken by Edwin Sandys, then bishop of London, who sent his son Edwin to be Hooker's pupil at Oxford. Sandys and another Oxford pupil, George Cranmer, great-nephew of the archbishop, became two of Hooker's closest friends. In 1573, when he was nearly twenty years old, Hooker was elected a disciple of his college. The statutable limit of age for this was nineteen, but it was permissible according to the founder's statutes to make an exception for a candidate of unusual attainments. Corpus was a Renaissance foundation, with a humanistic curriculum combining classical with Christian wisdom (including that of the Greek fathers). Hooker's education there was accordingly very wide. Theology was his chief study, but he was well acquainted with music (he had been a chorister) and poetry, 'all which he had digested and made useful' (Walton, 19). His friends at university included Henry Savile and his tutor, John Rainolds, a moderate and immensely learned puritan, to whom Hooker submitted some of his later anti-puritan writings for criticism. While Hooker was at Oxford, his father, then in Sir Peter Carew's service in Ireland, was captured by rebels. He had died by 1582, when his son was granted a pension of £4 by the corporation of Exeter. By then Richard had graduated in January 1574 and proceeded MA on 29 March 1577. He became a scholar (probationary fellow) of Corpus on 16 September 1577 and a full fellow in 1579. In July 1579, on the recommendation of Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester, Hooker was appointed deputy professor of Hebrew. On 14 August of the same year he was ordained deacon by John Aylmer, bishop of London. His college had amazing reputation for library and tri-lingual scholarship. Had a copy of Reuchlin's *De rudimentis hebraicis* (Pforzheim, 1506) [HTH-95] Rainolds was president of the college—he told ppl to study Hebrew, and his lecture notes survive in Queen's College [159-160] 'For a 16th C Oxford College to have a Hebrew lecturer or a fellow who was a competent Hebraist was the exception rather than the rule.' [213]—but Rainolds was amazing. In October 1580 Hooker, with Rainolds and three other fellows, was briefly expelled from the college for opposing a manoeuvre to replace Cole as president with John Barfoot, the vice-president, a rigorous enforcer of conformity to the Book of Common Prayer. On 15 January 1583 the chapter of Canterbury Cathedral, persuaded by letters from Leicester and another staunch defender of the protestant cause, Sir Francis Walsingham, granted Hooker an annual bursary of £5 6s. 8d. Two sermons on the epistle of Jude survive from Hooker's Oxford years, and a Latin letter to Rainolds may also come from this period. All three compositions express anguish and trepidation at Roman Catholic attacks on the English church, especially those made by Englishmen themselves. In October 1584 Hooker was presented to the living of Drayton Beauchamp in Buckinghamshire, but there is no evidence of his presence in this parish. Walton's tale of his friends Sandys and Cranmer finding him there tending sheep while reading Ovid and then rocking the cradle under orders from a shrewish wife is certainly false, since Hooker was not yet married. He resigned this living in October 1585. Personality The few known remarks made by contemporaries on Hooker's personal characteristics and the many offered in Walton's *Life* (first published in 1665), must be assessed in the light of his writings and the course of his life. Allowances must also be made for bias in Walton's sources—family connections no doubt resented a suit brought against Sandys for Hooker's daughters, and hence entertained a

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low opinion of his wife and in-laws-and for Walton's readiness to model Hooker as the proleptic defender of an English church very different from the one to which he was actually devoted. When these filters are applied, parts of Walton's account must be rejected outright, such as Mrs John Churchman's entrapment of a naïve and rain-soaked Hooker as a husband for her ill-favoured daughter Joan, and the visit of Cranmer and Sandys to a henpecked Hooker at Drayton Beauchamp. Other features in Walton's portrait must be redrawn. The meekness attributed to Hooker by his first editor, John Spenser, and amplified by Walton into being his dominant trait cannot, on the evidence of his writings, have been docile submission to authority as such. If, however, meekness is construed as a notable lack of arrogance or personal animus, the attributions are evidence that Hooker's usual fraternal stance towards his puritan antagonists in his defence (or reconstruction) of the Elizabethan religious and political establishment was an expression of his character, not merely a rhetorical device. As Walton reports it, Hooker meditated on his deathbed, with his friend Adrian Saravia in attendance, on the obedience of the angels and wished it were so on earth. Hooker may have thought of the angels at his end, but their perfect obedience was not as central in his vision of them as it may have been for Walton or for the absolutist Saravia. Angelic delight in beholding God would also have been before his mind (Hooker, *Laws*, 1.4.1). It is also possible that some features of the image of Hooker presented by Walton deserve more prominence than the latter actually gave them. Walton has Hooker jesting memorably with young people while beating the parish bounds at Bishopsbourne, a pleasant complement to C. S. Lewis's discovery of 'plenty of humour, almost a mischievous humour' in his writing (Lewis, 462). There is reason to believe that Hooker attended a performance of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, a sign that the taste for poetry Walton ascribes to him at Oxford was not purely classical and bookish. Walton's report that Hooker died of a cold caught on a trip from London is one of the few indications in the *Life* of the cosmopolitanism that is perhaps C. J. Sisson's most important single addition to the received image of the man. What, then, of Hooker's marriage? He valued silence in women, counting their propensity to gossip (as well as their relatively weak understanding) a factor in the spread of puritanism and going out of his way in a funeral sermon to commend the reticence of the deceased for emulation by others of her sex (*Works of Hooker*, ed. Hill, 5.373). Signs of dissatisfaction with Joan? Yet he made 'my wel beloved wife' sole executor of his will (*Works of Hooker*, ed. Keble, Church, and Paget, 1.89n.). She is known to have had six children with him (the four daughters who survived him and two boys who died as infants), and it may be supposed that personal experience lay behind his remark that 'that kind of love which is the perfectest ground of wedlock is seldome able to yeeld anie reason of it selfe' (Hooker, *Laws*, 5.73.2). Although an image of Hooker that is both rounded and reliable is not to be had, there are grounds for believing that he was a livelier and more interesting man than the early testimonials may suggest. Rhetorical and literary style Hooker's preaching style was evidently not entertaining. In Fuller's account of Hooker's preaching in the 1580s: his voice was low, stature little, gesture none at all, standing stone-still in the Pulpit, as if the posture of his body were the emblem of his minde, unmoveable in his opinions. Where his eye was left fixed at the beginning, it was found fixed at the end of his Sermon: In a word, the doctrine he delivered, had nothing but it self to garnish it. (Fuller, *Church-history*, bk 9, 216) The style thus reported was emblematic not only of Hooker's mind but of the attitude towards preaching he expressed in a discussion of sermons some years later. Arguing first for public reading of scripture as the primary form of Christian preaching, he went on to contend that in sermons themselves the essential elements were 'substance of matter, evidence of thinges, strength and validitie of argumentes and proofes', attributes, he pointed out, perfectly retained in reading them. Hence, he contended, it would follow from the puritan denial that bare reading of scripture, homilies, or sermons can save souls, that the vigor and vitall efficacie of sermons doth grow from certaine accidentes which are not in them but in their maker; his virtue, his gesture, his countenance, his zeale, the motion of his bodie, and the inflection of his voice who first uttereth them as his own, is that which giveth them the forme, the nature, the verie essence of instrumentes availeable to eternall life. (Hooker, *Laws*, 5.22.19) Hooker's ironic downgrading of pulpit oratory does not mean that he considered sermons unimportant. He left money in his will for a new pulpit in his last parish. Nor would it be correct to say that he eschewed the use of rhetorical devices in his own preaching. The point is that rhetoric was to serve the purpose of instruction rather than emotional arousal. Thus reorientated, rhetoric contributed much to Hooker's discourse. If his doctrine had nothing but itself to garnish it, there was considerable art in the internal garnishing. As Fuller also attests, those 'who would patiently attend ... had their

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expectations over-paid at the close' (Fuller, *Worthies*, 264). Attentive readers of Hooker's prose have ranked it among the best in the English language. There are more citations of Hooker in the first volume of Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary* than of any other author save Locke, and Swift found that he wrote so naturally that his English had survived all changes of fashion. More recently, his style in the *Laws* has been praised as apt rather than natural, as: for its purpose, perhaps the most perfect in English ... The beauty of Hooker's prose is functional ... His characteristic unit is the long, syntactically latinized, sentence, unobtrusively garnished with metaphor, anaphora, and chiasmus. The Latin syntax is there for use, not ornament; it enables him, as English syntax would not, to keep many ideas, as it were, in the air, limiting, enriching, and guiding one another, but not fully affirmed or denied until at last, with the weight of all that thought behind him, he slowly descends to the matured conclusion. (Lewis, 462)

Preaching and controversy at the Temple
Hooker's public career began with the preaching of a sermon at Paul's Cross, London, probably in autumn 1584. On the recommendation of Bishop Aylmer and the elder Edwin Sandys, now archbishop of York, he was appointed master of the Temple in early 1585, receiving letters patent from the crown on 17 March. According to Fuller, Hooker's sermons 'followed the inclination of his studies, and were for the most part on controversies, and deep points of School Divinity' (Fuller, *Church-history*, 216). This is not the impression given by the sermons that survive. These show Hooker as primarily concerned to address the pastoral needs of his congregation. In *A Learned and Comfortable Sermon of the Certaintie and Perpetuitie of Faith in the Elect* he seeks to show that faith may endure even in those who are not aware of having it, to reassure his auditors that the experience of uncertainty in faith (as compared, say, with the certainty that accompanies the testimony of our senses) is not conclusive evidence that one in fact lacks the enduring faith granted the elect in Reformed theology. There is no exploration of deep theological points here but rather a picture of God as so merciful to human weakness and wavering that even anxiety about not having faith can be taken as a sign of having it. In the sermons from this period comprised in the posthumously published *A Learned Discourse of Justification, Workes, and how the Foundation of Faith is Overthrowne* Hooker's pastoral care was directed to a different sort of anxiety, one that might have been felt by anyone looking back over the previous millennium of Christian history. After laying out the differences between the doctrines of justification taught by the churches of England and Rome, Hooker ventured to suggest that 'God was mercifull to save thousandes of our fathers living in popishe superstitions, in as much as they synned ignorantlie' (*Works of Hooker*, ed. Hill, 5.165). Here he touched on some deep theological points, but his aim was to diminish the salvific importance of such points, to show that even if an individual holds beliefs logically incompatible with faith in Christ, this does not demonstrate lack of such faith. Although the 'popish' doctrine that good works are necessary to salvation is logically incompatible with the 'foundation' of faith in Christ, Hooker the logician does not demand perfect logic from his fellow Christians. Rather, he is concerned 'leste if we make too many waies of denying christe we scarce leave any waie for our selves truly and soundly to confesse him' (*ibid.*, 5.149). Hooker never adopts a relaxed attitude towards Christian believing, but for him that believing was emphatically not a matter of giving impeccable answers to theological inquisitors, even Reformed ones. For his apparent leniency towards both weak believing and false beliefs, Hooker came into conflict in his first year at the Temple with his kinsman by marriage Walter Travers, the Temple lecturer. Without personal animosity, Travers, who later declared that Hooker was 'a holy man' (Fuller, *Church-history*, 218), attacked Hooker's views relentlessly in his afternoon lectures for several months, until in March 1586 Archbishop John Whitgift forbade him to continue preaching. Fuller's characterization of the dispute as one in which 'the Pulpit spake pure Canterbury in the Morning, and Geneva in the Afternoon' (Fuller, *Worthies*, 264) can mislead. There is no reason to suppose that Whitgift was closer to Hooker than to Travers on the nature of faith or the possibility of salvation in the Roman church—the issues disputed between them. But Fuller saw the exchanges as a combat between the 'champions' of the 'Prelaticall Party' and the 'Presbyterian power' (Fuller, *Church-history*, 213-14), and it was indeed Travers's suspected role as an advocate of presbyterianism that sealed the archbishop's judgement against him. Travers appealed against his suspension to the privy council, but, although 'The Councill table was much divided about Travers his petition' (*ibid.*, 218), Whitgift prevailed. Hooker held his post at the Temple for five more years. Throughout this period he seems to have lived in the house of John Churchman, a then prosperous London merchant whose daughter Joan he married on 13 February 1588. It is most likely that it was in these years that an attack on his character was made. Fuller touches on it cryptically: 'Spotless was his conversation, and

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though some dirt was cast, none could stick on his reputation' (Fuller, Church-history, 214). Henry King, bishop of Chichester, relates in a letter to Izaak Walton that he had heard from his father, John King, bishop of London from 1611, 'all the circumstances of the plot to defame him [Hooker]; and how Sir Edwin Sandys outwitted his accusers, and gained their confession' (Walton, 82-3, 102-3). Gauden devotes more than a page to the story, as he had it from 'some well advised men of former years'. A prostitute and her accomplice arranged to accost Hooker on a walk in the fields near London and blackmailed him, until Sir Edwin Sandys, whose father had been similarly ensnared, came to know of it, had Hooker's tormentors imprisoned, and secured a confession. Gauden, like Bishop King, suggests that it was 'a plot and practice laid by some of Mr. Hookers ... more cowardly Enemies' (Works of Hooker, ed. Gauden, 32).

Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity: conception On the ground that Travers had caused or allowed his petition to the privy council to be made public and that his own silence might be taken 'as an argument that I lake what to speake trewlie, and justlie, in myne owne defence' (Works of Hooker, ed. Hill, 5.227), Hooker addressed to Whitgift in March or April of 1586 an Answer to Travers's supplication which itself became public, gaining respect for him in some quarters but by no means mollifying Travers's supporters-according to Walton these caused Hooker 'extreme grief' with their opposition after their champion's departure (Walton, 66). His response was to begin what came to be published as *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity: Eight Books*, the first major work in the fields of theology, philosophy, and political thought to be written in English. In its professed aim of resolving the consciences or enlisting the affections of those who could or would not accept the religious settlement of 1559, the Laws can be read as a continuation of Hooker's earlier pastoral efforts. It can also be read as an attempt to resolve his own conscience against the charge that 'if we maintain things that are established ... we serve the time, and speak in favour of the present state, because thereby we either hold or seek preferment' (Laws, 1.1.1). Given the scale on which Hooker conceived the work, it required more time and peace than his position at the Temple afforded. On 21 June 1591 he became subdean of Salisbury and prebendary of Netheravon, livings joined to that of Boscombe, Wiltshire, where he was instituted as rector by Whitgift on 17 July. His appointment at the Temple ended on 10 November. In the next few years he was occasionally active at Salisbury and perhaps at Boscombe. The first drafting of some or all of the Laws was done, however, at his father-in-law's houses in Watling Street in London and at Enfield, Middlesex. Hooker worked in close consultation with his former pupils Cranmer and Sandys, and publication of the preface and first four books early in 1593 was subsidized by Sandys, who signed a contract with Hooker's cousin John Windet for the printing of the work on 26 January. Hooker sent a copy to Lord Burghley on 13 March, in time to be used in support of legislation in that year's parliament that was for the first time directed against protestant separatists as well as Catholic recusants. The timing was not accidental. Chapter 8 of the preface, singularly harsh and directly apposite to the measures under consideration, seems to have been a late addition written at the urging of George Cranmer. It was later testified that the printing had been 'hastened by such eminent persons whome the cause did moste speciallie concerne' (Sisson, 145). These must surely have included Whitgift, who had apparently placed his library at Lambeth at Hooker's disposal, would naturally have been kept informed from the beginning, at least in general terms, of what he was writing, and had personally licensed the work's publication; and very likely Richard Bancroft, who was at the time particularly active in pursuing nonconformists and separatists. Burghley, by contrast, had for years opposed Whitgift's repression of nonconformists. The dispatch of Hooker's work to him was thus presumably meant to steel him for action contrary to his personal sympathies. How far Hooker moved him is unknown, but in the event Burghley was the government's chief spokesman in the Lords for the bill that retrospectively legitimated the execution of the separatists Henry Barrow and John Greenwood on 6 April 1593. Whatever forces were active at its first publication, the germ of the Laws can be detected in *A Learned Sermon of the Nature of Pride* preached at the Temple, probably after the controversy with Travers. In it Hooker urges that the divine origin of a law does not entail its immutability. The point is expanded in book 3 of the Laws to refute the necessity of a particular form of church government even if it was the polity of the primitive church. Hooker goes further than this, however. In the course of its eight books, the Laws deals with issues between conformists and nonconformists, episcopalians and presbyterians, and Rome and the Church of England in greater depth than any previous treatment. The idea of law That depth came primarily from Hooker's allocation of the first four books to 'generall meditations' or first principles, before he came directly to grips in the last four with the particular

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issues concerning worship and governance that so agitated the church when he wrote. Lest this plan call for more patience than those interested in the disputed issues could muster, Hooker prefaced his work with an address 'To them that seeke (as they tearme it) the reformation of Lawes, and orders Ecclesiasticall, in the Church of England' in which he dealt obliquely and historically with the reformist movement, while promising to provide later a direct theological treatment of its particular demands. This preface presents Calvin's establishment of a clerical-lay consistory at Geneva as an astute response to chance circumstances, not the fulfilment of a divine imperative, and attributes enthusiasm for the Genevan model in England to factors other than biblical inspiration or rational persuasion. Early critics noted indignantly the irony in some of his references to Calvin. For example: 'Divine knowledge he gathered, not by hearing or reading so much, as by teaching others' (Hooker, *Laws*, preface, 2.1). The ruling idea in Hooker's 'generall meditations' is law. The laws with which he was most crucially concerned are indicated early in book 1. On one hand there are 'the lawes whereby we live', that is, 'the rites, customes, and orders of Ecclesiasticall government' currently in force in the English church. On the other hand, there is divine law, presented by advocates of Genevan presbyterianism as a radically incompatible alternative. 'We are accused as men that will not have Christ Jesus to rule over them, but have wilfully cast his statutes behinde their backs, hating to be reformed, and made subject unto the scepter of his discipline' (*Laws*, 1.1.3). Hooker's strategy for defusing the potentially explosive clash between these alternatives was to enrich the very idea of law to include 'any kind of rule or canon, whereby actions are framed'. More precisely, since 'all things that are' have some characteristic operation or work aiming at an end, which cannot be achieved 'unlesse the worke be also fit to obtaine it by', a law is that which specifies how a thing must operate in order to achieve its end: 'That which doth assigne unto each thing the kinde, that which doth moderate the force and power, that which doth appoint the forme and measure of working, the same we tearme a Lawe' (*ibid.*, 1.2.1). In the sixteen chapters of book 1 Hooker does in fact apply this conception of law to 'all things that are': God, the angels, natural (non-voluntary) agents, and human beings; and human beings are considered both as individuals and in societies and as guided by the law of reason, by the supernaturally revealed law of salvation found in scripture, and by laws of their own making. In setting forth this legal cosmology Hooker's own aim was to show how much more complex were the issues involved in regulating church life than the proponents of the presbyterian discipline believed. He concludes by showing how each sort of law discussed has a bearing on issues in the life of the church. In this demonstration and in appeals to the whole range of normative considerations in the course of his work, Hooker substitutes devotion to the ideal of law as intelligible direction towards an understood end for devotion to what he regards as a narrow and ill-founded conception of Christ's statutes. Exaltation of 'the scepter of Christ's discipline' is echoed by Hooker in an encomium of law itself, of which, he says: there can be no lesse acknowledged, then that her seate is the bosome of God, her voyce the harmony of the world, all thinges in heaven and earth doe her homage, the very least as feeling her care, and the greatest as not exempted from her power, but Angels and men and creatures of what condition so ever, though ech in different sort and maner, yet all with uniforme consent, admiring her as the mother of their peace and joy. (*Laws*, 1.16.8) Hooker's conception of a diversity of laws allows him to mount in book 2 a powerful response to the contention 'That scripture is the onely rule of all things which in this life may be done by men' (*Laws*, bk 2, title). Scripture contains all things necessary to salvation, it is perfect in relation to the actions it directs towards the end for which God provided it, but in directing to salvation it presupposes and acknowledges the validity of natural human reason. The same division of directive labour refutes the thesis 'that in scripture there must be of necessitie contained a forme of Church-politie the lawes whereof may in no wise be altered' (*ibid.*, bk 3, title), the subject of book 3. For first, scripture's specific aim of showing the way to salvation through faith in Christ does not require for its fulfilment the laying down of a form of church polity, and further, if a particular polity should be found in scripture, even with divine inspiration or endorsement, that would not by itself show that the designated form was binding on the church in perpetuity. It is not the maker of a law but its nature that determines whether it is immutably binding. The nature of church polity, as Hooker saw it, is not such as to require that it always take a single form. In book 4 Hooker responds to the charge 'that our forme of church-politie is corrupted with popish orders rites and ceremonies banished out of certaine reformed Churches whose example therein we ought to have followed' (*ibid.*, bk 4, title). He argues that conformity with Roman Catholic ceremonial usage is no reason for the Church of England to abandon otherwise effective

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devotional forms. To make distance from Rome the criterion for adopting a ceremony is to make an incidental feature essential and thus to distort the purpose of ceremonies. 'The end which is aimed at in setting downe the outward forme of all religious actions is the edification of the Church' (ibid., 4.1.3). In Hooker's view, for a church to define itself by difference from other churches does not build it up: Where Rome keepeth that which is ancients and better; others whome we much more affect leaving it for newer, and changing it for worse, we had rather followe the perfections of them whome we like not, then in defectes resemble them whome we love. (ibid., 5.28.1) The public duties of religion There is reason to believe that Hooker had drafted all eight books of the Laws by 1593, when the first four were published. At the end of this first publication, however, he announced that 'for some causes' he had thought it fit to 'let goe these first foure bookes by themselves, then to stay both them and the rest, till the whole might together be published'. In line with his earlier description of the design of the work, he suggested that the 'generalities of the cause' handled in books 1-4 might well be considered apart, 'as by way of introduction unto the bookes that are to followe concerning particulars'. By the time book 5 was published, about December 1597, Hooker's base of operations had shifted. On 7 January 1595 he was presented by the queen to the living of Bishopsbourne, Kent. Book 5 of the Laws is a detailed exposition of the worship and ministry prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer. It is longer than the preface and first four books combined. There is evidence, however, of a shorter earlier form of the book, one less exhaustive in replying to reformist objections. Even in its full form book 5 is as much constructive as defensive. In controversy with Thomas Cartwright in the 1570s Whitgift had collected ancient precedents for the disputed usages, but his decisive argument was that these were 'things indifferent' (adiaphora) and hence fell under the authority of the Christian magistrate. In effect, when Hooker wrote, the church's ceremonies were seen as 'there because they were there' (Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans?*, 164). Hooker made explicit the many ways in which the prescribed devotional forms could serve the important aim of building up the church. This construction project had two dimensions, one broadly social, the other transcendently spiritual. Book 5 begins with a chapter on 'True Religion' as 'the roote of all true virtues and the stay of all well ordered common-wealthes'. The second main section of the book begins with the contention that 'happines not eternall only but also temporall' depends upon a proper Christian ministry (Hooker, *Laws*, 5.76). Godliness, Hooker maintains, is the 'cheifest top' and the 'welspringe' of all true virtues (ibid., 5.1.2). In spelling out this thesis with regard to the cardinal virtues of justice, courage, and prudence his emphasis is more on motivating good behaviour from those in power than on securing obedience from those below. This is one of many signs scattered through Hooker's work of his critical attitude towards the personal qualities of those currently administering the laws he defended. His moral earnestness about the social significance of religion-and the ill effects of irreligion-is his strongest link with evangelical Christianity. Hooker's conception of the dynamics of worship shows how he expected it to achieve its aim. In instruction and prayer (including the prayer that all may be saved) there is an 'entercourse and comerce betwene God and us' (*Laws*, 5.23.1) which prepares a congregation for participation in Christ in the sacraments, and Hooker accordingly thought of public worship as effecting an ongoing personal transformation shaping the whole of life. But for Hooker the aim of Christian worship was not limited to improvement of character for the benefit of society. In book 1 of the Laws he had approached the religious dimension of life by way of the dissatisfaction felt with even the best things a purely natural existence can offer. The human soul seeks 'that which exceedeth the reach of sense; yea, somewhat above capacite of reason, somewhat divine and heavenly, which with hidden exultation it rather surmiseth then conceyveth' (*Laws*, 1.11.4). This seeking can only end 'when fully we enjoy God, as an object wherein the powers of our soules are satisfied even with everlasting delight: so that although we be men, yet by being unto God united we live as it were the life of God. (ibid., 1.11.2) It is in the centre of book 5, and in the central idea of participation in Christ, that Hooker points most directly to such a living of the life of God. The 'union or mutuall participation which is betwene Christ and the Church of Christ in this present worlde' is 'that mutuall inward hold which Christ hath of us and wee of him, in such sort that ech possesseth other by waie of speciall interest propertie and inherent copulation' (ibid., 5.56.1). Seen from a later century, the sacramentalism Hooker built on this theology of mutual participation has looked distinctively catholic, but at the time it was an authentic part of Reformed tradition. A nice sign of this is the conclusion of Hooker's discussion of the eucharist (ibid., 5.67.12), a rhapsodic translation of a twelfth-century Latin text edited by a French Reformed pastor. Most of the particulars of worship discussed in book 5 are indeed, technically,

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adiaphora, but in both its details and its Christocentric structure the book offers a theology of public devotion of extraordinary depth. Last years: the mystery of the missing books Hooker's one known invitation to preach at court was during Lent 1598, a few months after the publication of book 5. Whether or not the queen appreciated the fact, Hooker appears to have come 'uncannily close to what we can glean of the idiosyncratic private religious opinions of this very private woman' (MacCulloch, 781). In his few remaining years Hooker was an exemplary pastor at Bishopsbourne, while continuing to work on the Laws. After a long and painful illness, which began on a trip from London to Gravesend, he died at Bishopsbourne on 2 November 1600. He was buried in the church, under a slab that had formerly been the altar. A monument, with the most nearly contemporary likeness of him (it was the source of several engravings from the 1650s onwards), was set up by William Cowper in 1635. Hooker's estate was substantial, including what must have been a magnificent library, valued at £300. The whole amounted to nearly £1100, enough for £100 towards the dowry of each of his daughters, £3 for the pulpit at Bishopsbourne, £5 5s. to the poor of Barham and Bishopsbourne, and a handsome residue for his wife, with which she soon made an unfortunate marriage to Edward Nethersole, a former mayor of Canterbury. There is good evidence that Hooker finished the last three books of the Laws, but it is clear that the surviving texts, though undoubtedly Hooker's work, are not in finished form. On 7 November 1600, within a week of Hooker's death, Lancelot Andrewes instructed Henry Parry, who had informed him of the event, to 'have a care to deal with his Executrix or Executor ... that there be special care and regard for preserving such papers as he left, besides the three last books expected' (Works of Hooker, ed. Hill, 3.xiii-xiv). Perhaps on Parry's initiative, Hooker's father-in-law, designated in his will as his overseer (with Sandys), sent his servant Philip Culme to Bishopsbourne to collect 'all such written books, writings, and written papers as he ... could find' (ibid.). Churchman later called together Parry, Sandys, and John Spenser (president of Hooker's Oxford college) to examine the papers that Culme had salvaged. In a division of the papers made at another meeting, at which Andrewes was present, Spenser was given the manuscripts pertaining to the three last books, with a view to publishing them. In a note to the reader prefacing a second edition of Laws, books 1-5, published in 1604, Spenser testified with regard to books 6-8 that Hooker had 'lived till he sawe them perfected' and announced that, although the 'perfect Copies' had been 'smothered', 'the importunities of many great and worthy persons will not suffer them quietly to dye and to be buried', and so 'it is intended they shall see them as they are'. When and why the project was abandoned is matter for conjecture. The content of book 7 and still more of book 8 ran strongly against the tide of divine right views of episcopacy and kingship current under the early Stuarts, and this may be why the latter was first published (along with the surviving portion of book 6) only in 1648, when a more moderate conception of royal authority might reasonably have hoped for acceptance, while book 7 appeared only in 1662 under the auspices of John Gauden, bishop of Exeter. The status of the surviving texts of the three last books has been much debated. There are two distinct questions here. First, did Hooker actually finish these books, and if so, what happened to the 'perfect Copies'? Second and more important, are the surviving texts of Laws, books 6-8, genuinely Hooker's work? On the first question, besides Spenser's assertion in 1604 that Hooker lived to see his work completed, there is testimony to the same effect a year earlier by William Covel in his *A Just and Temperate Defence of the Five Books of Ecclesiastical Policie*. Covel referred to the three last books 'which from his own mouth, I am informed that they were finisht' (Works of Hooker, ed. Hill, 3.xvii). What happened, then? When Andrewes urged Parry to 'have a care' to preserve Hooker's papers, he explained that: 'By preserving I meane, that not only they be not embezelled, and come to nothing, but that they come not into greate hands, whoe will only have use of them quatenus et quousque [as far and as long (as they wish)], and suppress the rest, or unhappily all. (ibid., 3.xiv) Spenser in 1604 confirms what Andrewes had feared, informing his readers with regard to the three last books of the Laws that 'some evill disposed mindes, whether of malice, or covetousnesse, or wicked blinde Zeale, it is uncerteine ... smothered them, and by conveying away the perfect Copies, left unto us nothing but certaine olde unperfect and mangled draughts, dismembred into peeces'. Who might these 'evill disposed mindes' have been? There are two sets of candidates. Edmund Parbo, a London lawyer, of Staple Inn, testified in 1614 (in the suit brought against Sandys on behalf of Hooker's daughters for such proceeds as might be owing them from the sale of their father's works) that he had 'Credibly heard' that Nethersole, Joan Hooker's new husband, Roger Raven, a Canterbury schoolmaster, and a Mr Aldridge gained possession of various of Hooker's 'written woorks' and burnt or caused to be burnt all or most of them (Sisson,

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138). Walton gives an account similar to Parbo's but names different culprits. Here Hooker's widow is said to have testified that she had allowed one Mr Chark and another local minister access to Hooker's study and that they burnt and tore many of his writings, assuring her that they were not fit to be seen. C. J. Sisson, whose research brought to light a wealth of information about the writing and publication of books 1-5 of *Laws*, the hard circumstances of Hooker's daughters (their mother dead in 1603 and her father bankrupt), and the suit against Sandys, was disturbed by imprecisions and inconsistencies in the preceding testimonies-and perhaps by their degree of support for the negative picture of Joan Hooker that he had done much to efface. He accordingly argued, somewhat strainedly, not only that the tales of vandalism were baseless, but even that Covell's and Spenser's direct assertions that Hooker had finished the *Laws* should be rejected. There had not been any 'perfect Copies'. The manuscripts divided up at John Churchman's house in 1600 contained Hooker's last words on the last books. Since Sisson wrote, however, another incident involving the defacing of books by Roger Raven has been discovered. The second, more material question about the surviving texts of *Laws*, books 6-8, that of their authenticity, can be dealt with more briefly. What is extant of these three last books is indeed by Hooker. There is no suggestion by Spenser that the manuscripts brought to London after Hooker's death had included addition or other alteration to what Hooker had written, only that what remained were 'olde unperfect and mangled draughts, dismembred into peeces'. The possibility of alteration in these manuscripts between their assignment to Spenser and their publication by others decades later must be addressed, but such alteration does not appear to have occurred. Each of the three books is authentic as far as it goes, and all are of some importance. Penance, prelates, and princes In the plan of the *Laws* laid out in the preface, book 6 was to deal with the presbyterian polity urged upon the English church by Travers, Cartwright, and their followers, and in particular with the power of jurisdiction enjoyed by lay elders in that scheme. From comments made on it by Cranmer and Sandys it is certain that Hooker had completed, probably by 1593, a draft of such a book. The text printed as book 6 in all editions of the *Laws* since 1648 begins in accordance with the announced plan but soon turns into a treatise on 'the virtue and discipline of repentance'. This book 6 is certainly not a revision of the early draft. It has been suggested, however, that a discussion of penance would have been a reasonable preliminary to a revised treatment of the eldership, since, as Hooker avers at the beginning of the book as it survives, repentance is the aim of ecclesiastical jurisdiction. This suggestion receives support from a body of autograph working notes for books 6 and 8 discovered during preparation of the Folger edition of Hooker's works (*Works of Hooker*, ed. Hill, 3.462-523; 6.233-48, 1055-99). These notes show him working towards an account of existing English ecclesiastical law in response to a comment by Sandys on the lost draft. Such an account, along with a revision of the earlier draft and the existing treatise on penance could have yielded an extensive but coherent book 6. The surviving treatise is largely historical; it argues against the Roman Catholic view of penance as a sacrament and differs from some Reformed conceptions in making the sinner's cure or repentance, rather than the church's purity, the aim of spiritual discipline. The absence of a full book 6, along with the evidence that Hooker completed the *Laws*, supports Spenser's charge of vandalism. A refutation of presbyterianism would have been the part of Hooker's work above all others that overly zealous disciplinarians would have been tempted to destroy. Conversely, there is no reason to suppose that Spenser or his associates would have wished to suppress it. Book 7 as it survives in Gauden's edition of 1662 is the most finished of the posthumous books. Fourteen chapters in nuanced defence of the authority of bishops are followed by eight in defence of episcopal 'honours', especially ample endowment with lands and livings. Hooker's assertion that 'if any thing in the Churches Government, surely the first institution of Bishops was from Heaven, was even of God, the Holy Ghost was the Author of it' (*Laws*, 7.5.10) makes a strong claim on behalf of *jure divino* episcopacy, but the 'if' which begins this much quoted statement should not be ignored, and even granting Hooker's probable acceptance of divine inspiration as the origin of episcopacy, it would not follow, on his principles, that the office was immutable. He makes this point in book 7 in an exegesis of St Jerome's declaration that bishops owe their power to the custom of the church, not to any commandment of the Lord. Hooker's exposition of Jerome is complex in itself; it was rendered more complex by inclusion in the text published by Gauden of what appears to be a warning comment from one of Hooker's advisers. The suggestion that episcopacy, even if of divine institution, could in some (very extreme) circumstances be abolished is compatible with Hooker's contention in his sermon on pride and in book 3 of the *Laws* that not all divine commandments are immutable. The presence of the obscuring comment in the manuscript in Gauden's

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possession and some signs of hasty composition or imperfect editing elsewhere may indicate that Gauden's manuscript was not a fair copy of the book. A part of book 7 that puritans certainly would not have objected to is the beginning of chapter 24, with its scathing animadversions on the faults of contemporary bishops. 'No other apologist for the Elizabethan status quo chose to be as critical as Hooker of the institution he was supposed to be defending' (Collinson, 171). Hooker's defence of episcopacy in book 7 of the *Laws* is thus, for all its vigour, a qualified one with regard both to the office and to its present incumbents. Hooker's defence of the royal headship of the English church—the 'power of Ecclesiastical Dominion as by the Lawes of this Land belongeth unto the Supreme Regent thereof' (*Laws*, bk 8, title)—is also significantly qualified. In the dedication of book 5, he had ranked 'those questions which are at this daie betweene us and the Church of Rome about the actions of the body of the Church of God' as second in importance only to the controversies over the person of Christ in the patristic period (*ibid.*, bk 5, dedication, 3). Accordingly, book 8 and the autograph notes pertaining to it are occupied at least as much with Rome as with domestic presbyterianism. Hooker indeed emphasizes the 'body' of the English church, 'personally' identical with the 'independent multitude' which is the commonwealth of England, in his account of the royal supremacy. We say that the care of religion being common unto all Societies politique, such Societies as doe embrace the true religion, have the name of the Church given unto every of them for distinction from the rest. So that every body politique hath some religion, but the Church that religion, which is only true. (*ibid.*, 8.1.2) The royal supremacy, as Hooker saw it, was a wholly legitimate institution with which the body politic that was the English church cared for its religion. Besides depending on law emanating from the community for its initial legitimacy, the crown's power of dominion was limited in its operations by laws made in and with a parliament in which all the monarch's subjects were present either in person or by proxy. Hooker was unique among his contemporaries in his emphasis on law—and not only divine and natural law but 'municipal' law, the law of the land—as a restraint on royal action. He distanced himself from the newly fashionable concept of sovereignty in book 8 and has accordingly been criticized for holding an illogical notion of twin majesty, but just such a consensual idea of political authority might have been useful in the fateful political debates of the next century. None of the ten known manuscript versions of book 8 appears finished. If Hooker filled out some of the hints in the autograph notes, the result would have been, or perhaps was (if vandals disposed of a finished version) even more constitutionalist than the extant text. The surviving text, for example, argues for the king's exemption from ordinary ecclesiastical censure of the sort proposed by the disciplinarians. The autograph notes suggest an intention to lay out arguments on both sides of the general question of sovereign immunity, the ultimately decisive issue of the civil war.

Editions Besides the first editions of the preface and first four books of the *Laws* in 1593 and book 5 in 1597, there were five early seventeenth-century editions of the first five books together, Spenser's in 1604, printed by Windet, and four printed by William Stansby (1616-17, 1622, 1632, and 1638-9). The answer of Mr. Richard Hooker to a supplication preferred by Mr. Walter Travers to the HH. lords of the privie counsell, edited by Spenser's associate, Henry Jackson, was printed at Oxford by Joseph Barnes in 1612. Jackson also edited and Barnes published *A learned and comfortable sermon of the certaintie and perpetuitie of faith in the elect; especially of the prophet Habbakuks faith* (1612); *A learned discourse of justification, workes, and how the foundation of faith is overthrowne* (1612, 2nd edn 1613); *A learned sermon of the nature of pride* (1612); *A remedie against sorrow and feare, delivered in a funerall sermon* (1612); and *Two sermons upon part of S. Judes epistle* (1614). The first collected edition of these writings, *Certayne divine tractates, and other godly sermons*, was printed in London by Stansby in 1618. This was issued with the 1616-17 edition of *Laws*, books 1-5, and was reprinted in 1622, 1632, 1635-6, and 1639. A fragment, possibly of a sermon, was published as 'A discovery of the causes of the continuance of these contentions touching church-government: out of the fragments of Richard Hooker' in a publication arranged by Archbishop Ussher, *Certain briefe treatises ... concerning the ... government of the church* (1641). Ussher was also responsible for the first edition of *Laws*, books 6 and 8: *Of the lawes of ecclesiasticall politie; the sixth and eighth books ... now published according to the most authentique copies* (1648; reissued 1651). Fragments of book 8 were published as 'Mr. Hookers judgment of the kings power in matters of religion, advancement of bishops &c.' in *Clavi trabales*, edited by Nicholas Bernard (1661). Book 7 was first published in Gauden's edition of *The works of Mr. Richard Hooker ... in eight books of 'Ecclesiasticall polity': now compleated, as with the sixth and eighth, so with the seventh ... out of his own manuscripts, never before published* (1662). Numerous later

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editions were published, most notably that of John Keble, the first critical edition, which appeared in three volumes in 1836. The seventh edition of Keble (1888) was the standard reference text until the appearance, with new material, of The Folger Library Edition of the Works of Richard Hooker published in seven volumes between 1977 and 1998 under the general editorship of W. Speed Hill. Hooker and Anglican identity Hooker presents himself in the Laws as offering posterity 'information ... concerning the present state of the Church of God established amongst us' lest 'their carefull endeavour which woulde have upheld the same' be permitted to 'passe away as in a dreame' (preface, 1.1). He is commonly read as not merely an informant but a defender of the established church: as 'par excellence the apologist of the Elizabethan Settlement of 1559 and perhaps the most accomplished advocate that Anglicanism has ever had' (Cross and Livingstone, 789); or, in a less amiable statement, as providing 'window dressing for the command structure of Elizabethan society' (Eccleshall, 63). A closer look at the reception of Hooker's work across the centuries raises questions about such characterizations. There is the question whether he was 'not so much defensively recapitulating Anglicanism as inventing it' (Collinson, 151), and, if the latter, there is a further question as to what sort of Anglicanism it is that he invented. The first published reaction to the Laws (that is, to the five books published in their author's lifetime) was the anonymous Christian Letter of 1599. Its author or authors certainly saw something new in Hooker, not simply information about, much less defence of, the Church of England as defined by the Thirty-Nine Articles. The Letter attacked Hooker on one article after another, to his very great annoyance. Complementing this protestant attack was the positive reception accorded the work in Catholic circles. When the crypto-papist John Good attacked puritans in the parliament of 1604 as being 'no better than Protestant sectaries' he quoted the 'absolute and unanswerable works of reverend Mr. Hooker' (MacCulloch, 787). About the same time Elizabeth, Lady Falkland, anticipated James II in attributing her conversion to Catholicism to reading Hooker. He had left her hanging in the air; for having brought her so far (which she thought he did very reasonably) she saw not how, nor at what, she could stop, till she returned to the Church from whence they were come. (ibid.) Covell in his Just and Temperate Defence of 1603 had sought to rescue Hooker as a loyal member of the English church, as did Henry Jackson in his editions of Hooker's sermons. Covell, however, confirms the impression of Hooker's defence of prescribed practices as being at the same time a shift in their interpretation, a sort of 'avant-garde conformism' moving away from the Reformed mainstream of the rest of Europe and towards the sacramentalism of the Laudian church. Yet in this same period Samuel Ward of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, 'a hero of the godly and a disciple of William Perkins', strongly commended Hooker's views on the eucharist as healthier than the general run of English protestant sacramental discussion (ibid., 789-90). Moderation has been a watchword in eulogies of Hooker, but it seems to have been the Laudians, hardly moderate by Hooker's standards in their ideas or exercise of authority, who first made much of the adjective 'judicious' which eventually came to characterize the man. Hooker's defence of reason against what might be called forensic biblicism also won him admirers in the first half of the seventeenth century. He was a hero for the group of genuinely moderate intellectuals who gathered around the second Viscount Falkland (son of Lady Elizabeth) at Great Tew; he was especially admired by William Chillingworth, author of *The Religion of Protestants a Safe Way to Salvation*. By the outbreak of the civil war, then, Hooker had achieved iconic status in at least some respects for a remarkable range of persuasions: 'godly' as well as moderate and rationalist protestants, high-flying Laudians, and converts to Roman Catholicism. Publication of book 8 of the Laws in 1648 significantly altered what there was to approve or reject in Hooker. Manuscripts of the book had been circulating for some years. According to Dugdale's *A Short View of the Late Troubles*, constitutionalist passages in some copies (insertions, he thought) had 'miserably captivated' many well-meaning people and drawn them to the parliamentary side. At length they were not ashamed, in that Treaty which they had with his Majesty [Charles I] in the Isle of Wight [1648], to vouch the authority of this venerable man, in derogation of his Supremacy, and to place the Sovereign power in the People Whereunto the good King answered; that though those three Books, were not allowed to be Mr. Hookers; yet he would admit them so to be, and consent to what his Lordship [William, Viscount Saye and Sele] endeavoured to prove out of them, in case he would assent to the judgment of Mr. Hooker, declared in the other five books, which were unquestionably his. (Dugdale, 39) Charles especially commended Hooker's Laws to his children, though presumably not book 8. When book 7 was published at the Restoration, the stage was set for a minuet of selective appropriations of Hooker in which each claimant chose for a partner

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either the Hooker of books 1-5 of *Laws*, the serene expositor of orderly liturgy and an ordered society, or the ecclesio-political rationalist of the last two books. John Locke, the most influential student of Hooker's teachings on consent as the basis of political authority and law as supreme in its exercise, was careful to quote only from the undoubtedly authentic earlier books, but public awareness of the later ones could only confirm his interpretation of the others. Suspicions of the three last books, kept alive by inclusion of Walton's *Life* in editions of Hooker's works from 1666, preserved him for tory use, however, and as an implicit nonjuring defender of the church's apostolic government. Hooker maintained his double identity as whig and tory into the eighteenth century, when, however, the weakening hold on political reality of his ideal of a church organically connected with the nation's civil polity led Warburton to propose in 1736, in explicit disagreement with Hooker, an 'alliance' rather than an identity of church and state. Reacting a century later against the secularization of society, Coleridge, a great admirer of Hooker, 'creatively misunderstood him'. In his *On the Constitution of Church and State* of 1830, he saw the national church as bearer of a nation's civilization, echoing Hooker's thesis that political communities are properly concerned with goods of the soul, not merely material welfare-but Coleridge went lightly on the divine character of the institution. In the same period there were competing Tractarian and evangelical presentations of Hooker. Keble sought to rescue Hooker from 'the rationalists ... and the liberals of the school of Locke and Hoadly', but Benjamin Hanbury, in his edition, had already criticized the high-church treatment of Hooker as 'the smoke of incense obscuring the truth'. At the turn of the millennium perceptions of Hooker were still diverse. An American political philosopher proclaimed his importance as a pioneer of enlightenment: If there is any single point that must be chosen as the beginning of the English Enlightenment, as the first glimmering of its dawn, then that would have to be the publication in 1593 of the first four books of Richard Hooker's *Of the Lawes of Ecclesiasticall Politie*. (Beiser, 46) In a volume marking completion of the Folger edition an eminent historian of Elizabethan puritanism confirmed Lake's account of Hooker as the inventor of Anglicanism but with a negative twist. Hooker did indeed confront the English church with an original account of its identity, but it was a 'disturbing and destabilizing' one (Collinson, 181). In the same volume, however, Hooker is presented as 'an Apologist of the Magisterial Reformation in England' and his position is praised by a catholic-minded Anglican bishop as one of 'contemplative pragmatism'. Such an assemblage of Hooker's admirers and critics through the centuries may suggest that he was either a thoroughly confused thinker or a deeply ambiguous author. But if Hooker's work is read, rather than read about, a different impression may form. His views are complex, but they are the outcome of engagement with a wider range of ideas than those who would appropriate or reject him usually consider. His style is complex, too, but not unreadable, once both its art and its naturalness are appreciated. Hooker thought that undue concern with positioning the Church of England as an antagonist of Roman Catholicism was a distraction from the proper tasks of Christian life. Possibly the attempt to pigeon-hole Hooker himself is, similarly, a distraction from the best use and enjoyment of his work.

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