‘A Quintissence of Woes’: In Search of Robert Pink and William Twisse

In the late seventeenth century Anthony Wood set forth his view of the ‘Wykehamist academic trajectory’: ‘Golden Scholars, silver Bachelors, leaden Masters and wooden Doctors.’[1] In the cases of Robert Pink (1573–1647) and William Twisse (1576/7–1646) this is quite plainly untrue. Yet Wood’s adage has a certain use, as it highlights the extent to which New College provided an academic community in which ‘Golden Scholars’ could find a base for their non-academic pursuits. That community of learning in the early seventeenth century provides the foundation for this article, which seeks to use Pink and Twisse as emblematic figures in the ambiguities of religious-political divergence during the decades before the English Civil War. Tracking their divergent paths within the political and theological conflict of the early seventeenth century shines light on the subtlety of confessional allegiance during the period, especially within the context of religious learning with which both were involved. The paths down which they took their New College education do help to complicate the terms which have been applied to the period, and the context of the political positions they took. Emphasised in recent studies of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods has been the overlap between academic, religious, and political concerns in the shaping of the English Church.[2] This article will argue that the seeming incompatibility of Pink and Twisse is not so dramatic when we turn the clock back to the early part of the century, and highlight the strength of intellectual and institutional ties. The points of division between Twisse and Pink were theological and political; but they were also collegiate. Moreover, they were not insuperable boundaries, and the divide is bridged by the other figures considered in this article.

Pink and Twisse were born into the Elizabethan Settlement in the rural parishes of southern England. As Wood has us believe, their education followed a predictable path, if not such a desultory one. Pink was born in Hampshire, at Kempshott, in the parish of Winslade.[3] The location of his birth is of interest: in 1562, Winslade had been bought by William Paulet, 1st Marquess of Winchester, whose political peregrinations had ensured his high status in public life despite his Catholic faith. By the time of Pink’s birth the Paulet family had become ‘the most prominent landowners in the county’,[4] although their wealth would be depleted during the life of the fourth marquess.[5] The local landowner’s relationship with Winchester would certainly have had an influence on the family’s decision to send their son to the Wykehamist College, where he was accepted in 1588 under the headmastership of John Harmar.[6] The Paulet family went on to be staunch Royalists, until Basing House was attacked by Cromwell’s troops in 1645.

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1 As quoted in William Poole, ‘Teaching and Learning in Jacobean New College: The Foundation of the Lake Lectureships’, *New College Notes* 9 (2018), no. 5, p. 1.

2 Diarmid MacCulloch *Reformation: Europe’s House Divided 1490–1700* (London: Penguin, 2004), p. 509, and Jean-Louis Quantin, *The Church of England and Christian Antiquity: The Construction of a Confessional Identity in the 17th Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), esp. p. 113.

3 Charles Harding Firth, ‘Pinck or Pink, Robert (1573–1647)’, in *Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. Sidney Lee (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1885–1900), XLV, 308–10.

4 Institute of Historical Research, ‘Manor of Winslade’ (2019): <https://www.history.ac.uk/sites/default/files/file-uploads/2019-08/002_winslade_with_kempshott_-_ds_final.pdf>, pp. 1–2 (Accessed: 28 December 2024).

5 The family decamped to Hackwood Park, which has gone on to enjoy its own entertaining history; residents include Lord Curzon, newspaper proprietor Viscount Camrose, and the mother of Aga Khan IV. When put on the market for £65 million in 2016, it was reputed the most expensive estate in British property history.

6 Although by this time we are told he had moved south to Minstead, according to Thomas Frederick Kirby, *Winchester Scholars* (London: Henry Frowde, 1888), p. 153.

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Twisse, on the other hand, was born in the 'parish of Speen, near Newbury', with a German grandfather and a clothier for a father.[7] Crucially, he had a successful uncle: Thomas Bilson, who would go on to be Bishop of Winchester, and forms a connection between the two characters of this article. Bilson's father, Harman, served as an alderman in Winchester, and Twisse followed his uncle to Winchester College at the age of twelve in 1590. It could be said that Twisse's background was a more cosmopolitan one—and Pink's one more based in the surrounding Hampshire. This does not necessarily tell us much; yet it helps us make an abiding comparison between the two. Whereas Pink was marked by his allegiance to institutions and the people in them, Twisse was known for his loyalty to his books and his learning. This article's argument is that the Wykehamist institutions where they stayed so long did accommodate both of these temperaments, but only for so long.

The list of scholars in Pink and Twisse's years at Winchester is revealing. They were fewer with Pink in 1588, beginning at ages of eleven to thirteen. Two years above him was Thomas James,[8] and among his own year Robert Adyn, who would become an important link in later years. For Twisse, the class of 1590 was more remarkable, including the Royalist lawyer Thomas Ryves, whose brother George would go on to be Warden during Twisse's tenure as a Fellow at New College; the Archdeacon of Oxford William Bridges; and the prodigious traveller Thomas Coryat.[9]

John Harmar (*c.* 1555–1613) is the first clear figure to link Pink and Twisse together. A 'perpetual fellow' of New College, he had returned to Winchester in 1588, where he remained for seven years.[10] He was first listed as '*Informator*' at the top of the list of scholars in 1588, just above Pink's name.[11] Harmar was born very near Twisse, in Newbury, of apparently humble parentage.[12] In 1585, he had been appointed Regius Professor of Greek at Oxford, and his later role in the translation of the King James Bible has only recently been highlighted, and forms an obvious link with Bilson, who became overseer of the translation project. Two things are important to note about Harmar: the first, that he had leanings towards Calvinism that evidently had an impact on the religious temper of the college. Winchester was known for its leanings towards what could broadly be called 'Puritanism' by the first decades of the seventeenth century, and this owed something to Harmar's admiration for the work of Theodore Beza, an edition of whose sermons he published in 1587, and of John Calvin.[13] The extent of New College's Calvinist faction is best assessed by Archbishop Laud's well-known insult to the college in the 1630s: that the fellows were handicapped from the start of their college careers by an over-reliance on Calvin's *Institutes*.[14] In one of Wood's footnotes, he recounts the best known anecdotes of Twisse: having been a 'very wicked' schoolboy given to worldly pleasures, he 'saw the phantom of a rakehelly boy, his school-fellow, who said to him—'I am damned.'[15] Yet Twisse's

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[7] As Anthony à Wood puts it, his grandfather was 'by nativity a Teutonic', in *Athenæ Oxonienses*, ed. Philip Bliss (London: Lackington, 1813–1820), III, 169–73, at p. 170.

[8] Who would go on to become the first Librarian of the Bodleian, and an important follower of Thomas Bilson: see William Poole's introduction to: Richard Zouche, *Fallacy/The Sophister (c. 1614): A Wykehamist Play*, ed. William Poole (Oxford: New College Library & Archives, 2021), p. 30.

[9] Known, among other things, for introducing to his native land both the table-fork and the word 'umbrella'.

[10] William Hunt, 'Harmar or Harmer, John (1555?–1613)', in *Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. Sidney Lee (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1885–1900), XXIV, 412–3.

[11] Kirby, *Winchester Scholars*, p. 153.

[12] ibid. Harmar was at Winchester under the patronage of Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester, which leads William Poole to ask whether Harmar was behind the *supplicatio* of 1686 to establish the 'Oxford learned press'.

[13] The college's Puritan leanings are attested to in the changes decreed by Archbishop Laud in 1635, in The National Archives, HL/PO/JO/10/1/40.

[14] David Parrott, 'The Reformation to Reform *c.* 1530–1850', in *New College*, ed. Christopher Tyerman (Oxford: Third Millennium, 2010), pp. 38–45, at p. 42. William Poole makes the case in the same collection—in his essay on 'Learning', pp. 64–71—that Twisse was 'probably' the main target of Laud's 'otherwise bizarre complaint' (at p. 65).

[15] Wood, *Athenæ Oxonienses*, p. 171, also recounted in a slightly different form in Jonathan Healey, *The Blazing World: A New History of Revolutionary England* (London: Bloomsbury, 2023), p. 16.

vehement belief in absolute reprobation, which formed the basis of his theological writing, can certainly be traced to more traditional sources. Harmar is one of them. The second thing important about the Winchester headmaster was that he was a translator of the Church Father John Chrysostom, an exercise which links him with a number of the foremost figures in Jacobean Oxford.

That link raises the second figure who bridges the divide between Twisse and Pink: Henry Savile (1549–1622). Savile illustrates a central part of this article's argument: that the institutions and increasing ambitions of learning in late Elizabethan and Jacobean Oxford were both the glue that tied Twisse and Pink together and in some ways the oil that caused their divergence in religio-political life. What is particularly noticeable about Savile, and what linked him again to the pursuits of Harmar, was the cosmopolitan and continental extent of his interests. A great exponent of Euclid and Ptolemy, Savile established his professorships in geometry and astronomy in 1619.[16] Savile's years in Oxford were an 'age of benefactors',[17] and the legacies of Savile and Sir Thomas Bodley contributed as much to the proper administration of the University as it did to its learning. Savile's major project after 1604 was the compilation and editing of the works of Chrysostom, a work which drew him into the Second Oxford Company of translators for the King James Version, along with the master of University College, George Abbot. Abbot and, perhaps even more so, Thomas James at the Bodleian,[18] were strongly anti-Catholic, and their scholarly work often came with a polemical tinge, justifying the historical and patristic legitimacy of the English Church.[19] Savile's work involved foreign ambassadors, Greek scholars, and printers, with contacts in Venice and the Hague promoting the text around such centres of European humanist learning.[20] As the first English editor of Chrysostom's works in 1586, Harmar was an important contact.[21] The King James Version translators represented the pinnacle of this achievement—with translators ranging from the ceremonialist Lancelot Andrewes to those with Puritan leanings such as Thomas Holland. The theological compromise reached at Hampton Court in 1604 by King James was borne out in Oxford by the range of figures involved in this scholarly effort.

What does this have to do with Pink and Twisse? Savile used to keep rooms in Merton which were frequented by the religious and literary figures he frequented in Oxford, among them George Abbot, who would begin his twenty-two-year spell as archbishop of Canterbury in 1611. In 1618, Abbot commissioned Savile to produce an edition of *Causa Dei contra pelagium*, a text on divine and free will of the fourteenth-century archbishop of Canterbury Thomas Bradwardine. His assistant in this text on debates about Arminianism and free will was William Twisse. Working towards his doctorate in divinity, Twisse is very likely to have been taught by Robert Abbot, Regius Professor of Divinity, and a figure supported by the King for his attacks on continental Roman Catholic texts. Pink was also working towards his own Bradwardine featured heavily thereafter in Twisse's polemical attacks on the 'Oxford Platonist' Thomas Jackson, firstly under the title *A discoverie of D. Iacksons vanity* in 1631.[22] Bradwardine's texts—which have been compared with those of John Wycliffe—had an important significance for the theological debates of James I's reign: in the words

[16] See William Poole, 'Sir Henry Savile and the Early Professors', in *Oxford's Savilian Professors of Geometry: The First 400 Years*, ed. Robin Wilson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022), pp. 3–27.
[17] ibid., p. 8.
[18] See Paul Nelles, 'The Uses of Orthodoxy and Jacobean Erudition: Thomas James and the Bodleian Library', *History of Universities* 22 (1), 21–70, esp. p. 21.
[19] As discussed more generally in Quantin, *The Church of England*, p. 142.
[20] Scott Mandelbrote, 'Calculators in Divinity: Henry Savile and Thomas Bradwardine', *Erudition and the Republic of Letters* 6 (2021), 116–37.
[21] William Carr, 'Savile, Sir Henry (1549–1622) in *Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. Sidney Lee (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1885–1900), L, 367–70. As Quantin points out (p. 110), the first editions of Savile's Chrysostom were expensive—initially the price of 'a pair of oxen'.
[22] Sarah Hutton, 'Thomas Jackson, Oxford Platonist, and William Twisse, Aristotelian', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 39 (1978), 635–52.

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of Scott Mandelbrote, Savile's Bradwardine 'testified to royal faith in the power of the printed word to determine political and religious debate'.[23] Such faith in the use of the Church Fathers to help establish a coherent confessional identity in England, and to offer an intellectual case against continental Catholicism, is typical of Jacobean policy. George Abbot typified this policy, for his 'anxious[ness] to avoid damaging disputes over nonconformity in favour of intensive preaching and a joint front against the menace of Rome'.[24] That was a standpoint supported by the large majority of the institutions of learning in Oxford, and one to which both Pink and Twisse could give their support. It was endeavours such as those at Oxford that allowed Joseph Hall to coin the popular phrase: '*Stupor mundi Clerus Britannicus*': the British clergy is the wonder of the world.[25]

Savile, Thomas James, both Robert and George Abbot, and Twisse himself all enjoyed the support of the King, and had previously been backed by Archbishop Bancroft.[26] Robert Pink would be elected at the 'insistence' of the same king in 1617.[27] The editing and publication of theological texts such as Bradwardine by Twisse and others was fully in line with the intellectual leanings of the monarch. Twisse had in fact already earned royal favour. In the summer of 1613, the king appointed him chaplain to Elizabeth, Princess Palatinate. Elizabeth's marriage to the Palatine Elector, Frederick V, was one of the grandest occasions in Jacobean England; a royally ordained sermon given by Lancelot Andrewes of Ely lavished praise on the unity of the reformed churches in England and the Palatinate.[28] Twisse's German heritage cannot have been irrelevant to the appointment. Travelling to Heidelberg,[29] he made the acquaintance of German theologians, but returned only two months later, in the September of 1613, as New College had appointed him to the rectorship of Newton Longville in Buckinghamshire.[30] But his royal service would continue to be important to Twisse, and his well-renowned preaching at Oxford would gain him the reputation of a master of learning—as a fierce disputant, but one keen to stay within the confines of his college and his parish. That attachment to institutional privacy would not last the outbreak of the English Civil War, but it lasted long enough for him to operate in the same Oxford as Robert Pink in the increasingly divided 1620s. Pink has been largely absent from this narrative thus far, mainly because his academic career tended towards the simple trajectory set out by Anthony Wood. Yet he did not remain anonymous. The figure of John White is a bridge that spans the divide between the two, but his example also suggests the increasingly testing waters beneath.

White (1575–1646) was born at Stanton St John, just outside Oxford. The village had been in the hands of New College since the mid-sixteenth century. His family was high-flying, including a former warden of New College, headmaster of Winchester, and lord mayor of London.[31] His

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[23] Mandelbrote, 'Calculators', 119.
[24] Kenneth Fincham, 'Oxford and the Early Stuart Polity', in in *The History of the University of Oxford, Vol. IV: Seventeenth-Century Oxford*, ed. Nicholas Tyacke (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), pp. 178–210, at p. 185.
[25] Quantin, *The Church of England*, p. 113.
[26] In contradistinction to Peter Lake's formulation of 'avant-garde conformists' in the first two decades of the seventeenth century, this group might be seen as 'Calvinist conformists'.
[27] Penry Williams, 'From the Reformation to the Era of Reform, 1530–1850', in *New College Oxford 1379–1979*, ed. John Buxton and Penry Williams (Oxford: The Warden and Fellows of New College, Oxford, 1979), pp. 44–71, at p. 53.
[28] This illuminating episode is put in context by Quantin, p. 155.
[29] Possibly alongside the composer Orlando Gibbons, who had been called to provide musical accompaniment to Frederick V and his new wife on the journey.
[30] E. C. Vernon, 'Twisse, William (1577/8–1646)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (23 September 2004) <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/27921> (Accessed: 28 December 2024). Newton Longville had been in the possession of New College since 1441, having been given by the Crown: *A History of the County of Buckingham: Volume 4*, ed. William Page, Victoria County History [VCH] (London: Constable, 1927), pp. 425–9.
[31] David Underdown, *Fire From Heaven: Life in an English Town in the Seventeenth Century*, (London: HarperCollins, 1992), pp. 24–5.

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great-uncle had been given the rectorship of Stanton St John when he became warden in Oxford. It was by these connections that White's father got a lease on the manor house of Stanton St John, and White went as a scholar to Winchester in 1587, the year before Pink.[32] Elected a fellow in 1595, White became MA in 1601, and was appointed rector of Holy Trinity, Dorchester, in late 1605.[33] Essentially a conforming Calvinist, he was seen to have encouraged his parishioners to live more pious and generous lives after a disastrous fire hit Dorchester in 1613. He eventually became deeply involved in the Massachusetts Bay Company which had started establishing transatlantic Puritan communities—a cause with which Twisse was familiar.[34] Stanton St John had Puritan inhabitants: the grandfather of the poet John Milton had disowned his son of the same name (a composer) for converting from Protestantism to Catholicism—and it was from the daughter of a Stanton landowner that the more famous of the two took his first wife.[35] By the middle of the 1630s, White began to endure the antipathy of Archbishop Laud, since Dorchester had become a base of rebellion against the Ship Money levy, and since White himself refused to use the notorious *Book of Sports*. In this he was very much like Twisse, who had taken on the parish of his hometown of Newbury, and began publishing the flaming predestinarian texts for which he was known.[36] Just like Twisse, White escaped some of the more sinister attention of the ecclesiastical authorities due to his support in the provinces.

Yet an earlier incident highlights how the cultural politics of Puritanism and the *Book of Sports* divided Twisse from Pink most starkly. In the list of Winchester Scholars for Pink's entry year of 1588 is listed one Robert Adyn, also from Dorchester, who would become a Fellow of New College in 1596.[37] A Robert Adyn is listed as a fierce Catholic recusant who proved one of White's greatest enemies in Dorchester.[38] In a Star Chamber libel case of 1608, one John Conditt enters some verses of Adyn's as evidence—verses written against a 'Puritan knave' who repressed the dramatic societies of the local area.[39] It is a typical tale of a Jacobean culture-clash in the years around the *Book of Sports*. Conditt was a 'disciple' of White, and reflected his stand against the landed wealth of Dorchester which had, in their eyes, led to the town's near-destruction by fire.[40] Adyn ended up spending much of his life in a Dorchester gaol, but the quarrel emphasised the controversial nature of White's puritanical ministry. Just like Twisse at Newbury, his relationship with New College had faded away. White's case is illustrative of wider trends by which boundaries between 'Puritans' and their opponents were becoming more sharply defined.

In the meantime, White's home village of Stanton St John had been changing hands. In 1620, Pink was elected Warden of New College, having become ordained a deacon in 1614 and performed the role of senior proctor in the University from 1610. He succeeded Arthur Lake, who had headed the New College team of Bible translators. Lake kept his living at Stanton St John until his death, but in 1620 the rectorship passed to the new Warden Pink, who had been elected as Warden in 1617. Lake had been a successful warden, but he was emblematic of the early Jacobean college: a strong Calvinist who wished to join his friend John White in his ventures to New England with the Massachusetts Bay

[32] Kirby, *Winchester Scholars*, p. 153.
[33] Rory T. Cornish, 'White, John (1575–1648)', *ODNB* (23 September 2004) <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/29255> (Accessed: 28 December 2024).
[34] Christopher Hill, *The English Bible and the Seventeenth-Century Revolution*, (London: Allen Lane, 1993), p. 139.
[35] *A History of the County of Oxford: Volume 5*, ed. Mary D. Lobel [VCH] (London: Oxford University Press, 1957), p. 283.
[36] William Poole, 'Early Oxford Hebraism and the King James Translators (1587–1617): The View from New College', in *Labourers in the Vineyard of the Lord: Scholarship and the Making of the King James Version of the Bible*, ed. Mordechai Feingold (Leiden: Brill, 2018), pp. 59–81, at p. 76.
[37] Kirby, *Winchester Scholars*, p. 153.
[38] Underdown, *Fire from Heaven*, p. 29, where Adyn is also described as 'a cranky individual'.
[39] C. E. McGee, 'Puritans and Performers in Early Modern Dorset', *Early Theatre* 6 (2003), 51–66, at pp. 57–58.
[40] ibid, 58.

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Company, Lake was nevertheless perfectly able to navigate the religious politics of the University while not avoiding contentious religious matters.[41] Thomas James could be seen as a similar figure.

Pink's approach to religious controversy was different. By and large, he shied away from confrontation and supported the growing powers of his day—broadly described as the High Church men of the Durham House group.[42] Importantly, he was joined by a new Bishop of Winchester; Thomas Bilson, Twisse's uncle and a fervent supporter of Archbishop Bancroft's accommodating politics in the 1610s, was replaced two years later by Lancelot Andrewes. Bilson had been very influential: an 'intellectual role model for many of the aspiring scholars of the Jacobean college'.[43] Little survives of Pink's personal thoughts on the controversial matters of theology in his own time: what is clear is that he was deeply influenced in his rule of New College by those at the head of larger institutions, the University and the bishopric of Winchester. Andrewes took up the latter in 1618, and in 1619 John Prideaux became vice chancellor of the University. With Pink, they helped to shape the shifting religio-politico climate of the two Wykehamist institutions and of Oxford, particularly after the Synod of Dort.[44] By the start of the 1630s, the institutional links which tied Pink and Twisse together were fraying. The final part of this article will concentrate on two years—1636 and 1643. Joseph Mede is the penultimate character introduced to the story.

Mede was a biblical scholar, who attended Christ's College, Cambridge. He was made BA in 1607 and MA three years later. As renowned as a scholar as Twisse was as a catechist, Mede struck up a correspondence with the vicar of Newbury, in which Twisse asked for his views on various theological subjects, particularly the keeping of the Sabbath.[45] On the most controversial issues of the day, Mede was 'settled in favour of moderation and episcopacy', and enjoyed the support of none other than Lancelot Andrewes for his appointment to the King Edward VI fellowship at Cambridge.[46] Andrewes even asked him to become his chaplain.[47] Whereas John White's opposition to the *Book of Sports* brought him into conflict with rivals and religious authorities in Dorchester, Mede, like Twisse, resorted more to his books than to any more public displays of rebellion. His 1627 text *Clavis Apocalyptica* was translated into English in 1643 as *The Keys of Revelation*, and touted as one of the most important millenarian texts of his day.[48] Mede kept up an intellectual correspondence with many of the leading 'Baconian' 'country party' of the years leading up to the Civil War, especially with figures such as Samuel Hartlib.[49] When *Keys of Revelation* was translated in 1643, the preface was written by Twisse, who claimed that he had been persuaded from a position of scepticism to accept much of Mede's millenarian belief.[50] Mede's work in the 1630s highlights the continued flowering of scholarship and intellectual experimentation in Oxford and Cambridge.

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[41] Underdown, *Fire from Heaven*, p. 25.
[42] See Anthony Milton, 'Unsettled Reformations, 1603–1662', in *The Oxford History of Anglicanism: Volume I: Reformation and Identity, c. 1520—1662*, ed. Anthony Milton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 63–83.
[43] Poole, introduction to Richard Zouche, *Fallacy/The Sophister*, p. 29.
[44] The Synod of Dort provided a testing case for the more certain definitions and terms of late Jacobean religious discussion: see Twisse's *The Doctrine of the Synod of Dort and Arles* ([Amsterdam: Successors to G. Thorp, 1631?]).
[45] See Joseph Mede, *The Works of the Pious and Profoundly-Learned Joseph Mede, B. D., Sometime Fellow of Christ's Colledge in Cambridge* (London: Roger Norton, for Richard Royston, 1672), pp. 837–8.
[46] Bryan W. Ball, 'Mede [Mead], Joseph (1586–1638)', *ODNB* (28 May 2015) <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/18465> (Accessed: 28 December 2024).
[47] ibid.
[48] Although Mede would have been keen to disassociate himself from the more subversive political groups that espoused millenarian beliefs in the 1640s
[49] Hugh Trevor-Roper, 'Three Foreigners: The Philosophers of the Puritan Revolution', in *The Crisis of the Seventeenth Century: Religion, the Reformation, and Social Change* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2001), pp. 219–71.
[50] Hill, *The English Bible*, p. 304.

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Yet the first years of Pink's wardenship had already highlighted the move away from the easy collegiality of high churchmen and Puritans at New College and similar institutions. One of his first actions as warden was to write a letter of congratulation to Bishop Andrewes.[51] In 1620, Andrewes and Pink had both attempted, only somewhat successfully, to eradicate the practice of corrupt elections to the fellowship.[52] Pink was fully accommodated to the new generation of high churchmen who took the most important bishoprics at the same time as Laud became archbishop, among them Richard Neile and Walter Curle. By the start of Archbishop Laud's tenure as chancellor of the University in 1629, Pink had become one of the most important figures in Oxford, although Laud himself 'possessed unprecedented authority over the university'.[53] In 1634, the churchwardens of Newbury, Twisse's parish, had been ordered by Laud's vicar-general to move their communion tables, which they had still refused to do three years later.[54] The same year, Pink was given a great mark of support by the archbishop, and made vice-chancellor of the University for two years. When his term came up in 1636, he was one of the four chosen to draw up the Laudian Code of Statutes for the University.[55] Laud was still displeased with the extent of Calvinist opposition lurking at Winchester College, but his letters to Pink express his fellow feeling: in 1630 Laud wrote that 'ye ill barridbge of some men towards me in thiss busyness shall never alter me from your selfe'.[56] Pink's reply highlights a crucial element in his character and his career, rather than the more aggressive insistence of Laud:

> There wildernesse will I hope one date tyre out and bee wearie of it selfe; for as yet they give it no somuch as a breathing tyme, nor doe I, for anie interest of my owne, at all oppose it, but rather turne my other cheeke to them, meane to do so till their owne outrages instifie mee against them for my sufferance.[57]

The issue of contention was the continued abuse of the fellowship, largely at Winchester. Richard Neile, bishop of Winchester and a keen ally of Laud's, had not resolved the issue, which 'bitterly divided' the fellowship.[58] The election to the headmastership at Winchester most provoked the fellows, some of whom elected an alternative candidate to the one anointed by Laud. The archbishop was incendiary in a letter during his Visitation of Winchester in 1635, where he tells the vice-chancellor that, 'I have not been so well used as I might', and asks him that 'you do expressly mention therein this leave which I have given you . . . that they may not hereafter object this power of yours against mine and my successors'.[59]

Laud's relationship with Pink had a more than intellectual impact on the college. Following the archbishop's predilection for the 'beauty of holiness', the mediaeval stained glass was restored in

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[51] Francis W. Steer, *The Archives of New College, Oxford: A Catalogue* (London: Phillimore, 1974), p. 70.
[52] Robert F. W. Smith, '[Warden Robert Pink and the Disputed Election of 1620]', *New College Notes* 6 (2015), no. 9.
[53] John Maddicott, 'Rector Prideaux and Chancellor Laud, 1630–6', *Between Scholarship and Church Politics: The Lives of John Prideaux, 1578–1650* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022), pp. 253–93, at p. 253.
[54] Nicholas Tyacke, 'Anglican Attitudes: Some Recent Writings on English Religious History, from the Reformation to the Civil War', *Journal of British Studies* 35 (2) (1996), 139–67, at p. 160.
[55] Although, as Poole notes in his introduction to *The Sophister/Fallacy*, p. 16, the burden of work fell largely on Brian Twyne and Richard Zouche.
[56] Letter from William Laud to Robert Pincke (15 October 1630), New College Archives, Oxford, NCA 3098.
[57] Letter from Pincke to Laud (1 November 1630), New College Archives, Oxford, NCA 3098.
[58] A. J. Hegarty, 'Pinck, Robert (*bap*. 1573, *d*. 1647)', *ODNB* (3 January 2008) <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/22289> (Accessed: 28 December 2024).
[59] *The Works of the Most Reverend Father in God, William Laud, D. D. Sometime Lord Archbishop of Canterbury: Vol. VI Part II* (Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1857), p. 433.

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the chapel, a new case for the organ acquired, and marble flooring installed across the building.[60] Having somewhat hid behind something of a veil of the 'hot Protestant' variety away from university matters in the years of Pink's education, the New College of his wardenship was visible in its conformity with central diktat.[61] This article has sought to argue how the parallel careers of Pink and Twisse shine light on the priorities and position of New College during the first decades of the seventeenth century—and it is by picturing the dramatic change in the fortunes of the college in the final part of this picture that the greatest divergence of the two can be better described. In some ways, both Pink and Twisse reached the highpoint of their careers in 1643, though in very different ways.

By 1642 New College was a Royalist stronghold inside the Royalist capital of Oxford. Pink had begun setting up a 'pro-royalist militia made up of Oxford students and fellows' with the weapons he had stored up in the college muniment tower.[62] These forces were ineffectual, but in a way which links Pink and Twisse once again, attracted the attention of Pink's nemesis, William Fiennes. A former William Fiennes. A former student of New College, Fiennes had been a leading critic of the Caroline policy, and had taken up the role of High Steward of the University in 1641. On 10 September 1642, Pink was arrested by Fiennes, and sent to London, where he was imprisoned two days later at Winchester.[63] Released on bail in January 1643, Pink was twice more chosen vice-chancellor after the election of William Seymour to the senior role. Yet he was tired out by the crises, and was inactive for the rest of the Civil War. Late in 1647, Pink suffered a severe fall in the Warden's Lodgings at New College, and died only a few days later, on 2 November 1647.[64] On Pink's death, a new warden was chosen: John White of Dorchester. Yet White refused to go back to Oxford; he claimed he was too ill.[65]

The first years of the Civil War were also the most public for Twisse.[66] He had sided with the forces of Parliament in Newbury until it was captured by Royalists. Prince Rupert, the son of Elizabeth of Bohemia, attempted in vain to persuade him to return to the cause of the Crown.[67] Twisse's supralapsarian publications during the 1630s—particularly *Vindicae Gratiae* of 1632—had established his place as one of the leading Puritan theologians, and he was chosen as prolocutor (chairman) for the Westminster Assembly called in Parliamentarian London for 1643.[68] Joining him were William Fiennes, and John White.

Like Pink, Twisse was tired out by the storms of the Civil War, though he gave a stirring opening sermon in the nave of Westminster Abbey, on John 14:18: 'I will not leave you comfortless.'

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[60] Gervase Jackson-Stops, 'Gains and Losses: The College Buildings, 1401–1750', in *New College Oxford 1379–1979*, ed. John Buxton and Penry Williams (Oxford: The Warden and Fellows of New College, Oxford, 1979), pp. 193–232, at p. 204.

[61] The extent of New College's Calvinist and Protestant leanings in the late sixteenth century is attested to by Poole in his introduction to *The Sophister/Fallacy*, pp. 28–9, taking against Williams, 'From the Reformation to the Era of Reform', pp. 49–51.

[62] David Parrott, 'The British Civil Wars and the Defence of Oxford', *New College Notes* 11 (2019), no. 6, p. 2.

[63] Hegarty, 'Pinck, Robert' and Firth, 'Pinck or Pink'. There is some disagreement as to whether he was imprisoned at Putney or Westminster, as Wood writes of his arrest: 'after the return of the Masters, Dr. Pinke, the Deputy Vicechancellor, repaired thither to deprecate for himself, but they as perfidious persons laid hands on him as a Delinquent, sent him to London to the Parliament, who forthwith by order committed him Prisoner to the Gate-house at Westminster': Anthony à Wood, *The History and Antiquities of the University of Oxford, in Two Books*, ed. John Gutch (Oxford: Printed for the Editor, 1792–6), II, 448.

[64] Hegarty, 'Pinck, Robert'.

[65] Cornish, 'White, John'.

[66] He had also turned down Wykehamist preferment, having rejected the wardenship of Winchester College.

[67] Vernon, 'Twisse, William'.

[68] Among the best examples of Twisse's views come in the posthumously published *The Riches of Gods Love* (Oxford: Printed by L. L. and H. H. for Tho. Robinson, 1653), p. 9: 'the greatest part of men are reprobated, even those that are called . . . Damnation is no otherwise avoidable by man, then by avoiding sin the cause thereof'.

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Yet his support for the maintenance of the *Book of Common Prayer* was opposed by the younger radicals.[69] The Assembly moved to the Henry VII Chapel, before changing to the more secluded Jerusalem Chamber, where Twisse presided over the sessions with John White on his side acting as an assessor. In his mid-sixties by the start of the Assembly, Twisse was not as lively as the other, more politically minded, divines who joined him; his reputation was, as Robert Baillie put it, 'merely bookish' even if he was also 'doubtless the most able disputer in England'.[70] Before long, Twisse's authority over the gathering had declined. In March 1645 he fainted while preaching at St Andrew's, Holborn, and he died on 20 July 1646, having been taken to his house in the same area. He was given a state funeral in Westminster Abbey, at which the warden of Winchester College, John Harris, gave the sermon. At New College, however, a splendid memorial with requisite likeness and tribute was made for Pink in the antechapel. Nothing of the kind was made for Twisse, although there is an obvious case for his scholarship having outstripped most of his Wykehamist generation. Twisse was buried in Westminster Abbey, but at the Restoration, his bones were thrown out and heaped into the large churchyard of St Margaret's Church.[71]

The life of John Harris, who was born in the same year Pink progressed to Winchester College,[72] recounts many of the central figures in the lives of both Twisse and his political adversary Pink. He was labelled second only to John Chrysostom by Henry Savile, wrote a biography of Arthur Lake, and he took a rectorship at Meon-Stoke in Hampshire, very near to where many of the Pink family continued to live. He took part in the Westminster Assembly and was a friend of William Fiennes's son, Nathaniel. He was a fellow during the first years of Pink's wardenship.[73] Like Twisse and Pink, he was a highly charitable man.[74] His career is yet another example of the strong bonds that linked Wykehamists and others through institutional and intellectual ties.

This article has therefore sought to argue that Twisse were starker than may be expected. Their intellectual and religio-political differences were certainly not insurmountable for much of their lives. In a manner unique to the early seventeenth century, they were also tied together by institutional bonds for the support of learning at New College and at Winchester College. Although no record of their correspondence survives, the characters introduced in religio-political choices were so closely linked. Although Twisse was taken further from New College by his convictions in the 1630s, his friendship with John Harris displays a continuing loyalty. What took him apart so violently from figures such as Pink were the breakdown of those close boundaries that had previously existed at New College—between political and scholarly pursuits and the relevance of confessional allegiance.[75] The relevance of the scholarship that went on in Oxford to the political and religious priorities of the day had profited the careers of both men: but the tragedy of this story is that the same relevance was all too real to the New College of the 1640s—a college in which drill was performed in the cloisters and armaments stored in its walls.

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[69] Vernon, 'Twisse, William'.

[70] The first quote is from ibid., and the second from James Reid, *Memoirs of the Lives and Writings of those Eminent Divines, who convened in the famous Assembly at Westminster, in the Seventeenth Century* (Paisley: Stephen and Andrew Young, 1811–15), I, 46.

[71] Vernon, 'Twisse, William'.

[72] 1588, see above.

[73] Gordon Goodwin, 'Harris, John (1588?–1658)', in *Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. Sidney Lee (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1885–1900), XXV, 13.

[74] See the relevant *ODNB*; the most lauded example is that of Pink, who gave the patronage of the parish of Wootton to New College, as well as purchasing an annuity for the apprenticeship of young people in Stanton St John.

[75] For an example more touching and more fulsome than the one set out in this article, see William Poole, 'A New Year's Gift from 1600', *New College Notes* 17 (2022), no. 5, esp. p. 3.

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Early modern Wykehamists were fond of composing poetry, of variable quality, in honour of their masters. That institutional loyalty was at the centre of the melancholy tone pervading the verses composed *In Honour of the Right Worshipfull Doctour Robert Pincke*, published in 1648:

> Were I a Wit I'de weepe in Verse,
> And drench the Dropsi'd sun in Teares.
> I'de make each Muses eye to run,
> Like a new sprung Helicon.
> You Schollers might methinks devise,
> Meanes to distill old Tragoedies,
> In greifes Alymbeck till there flowes,
> From thence a Quintissence of woes.[76]

Robert Pinke (oil on panel) by Paul van Somer (*c.* 1572–1621) (circle of), New College, Oxford, NCI 631
© Courtesy of the Warden and Scholars of New College, Oxford

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[76] James Howell et al., *In Honour of the Right Worshipfull Doctour Robert Pinke, Doctour of Divinitie, and Warden of New Colledge in Oxford* ([Oxford: H. Hall], 1648), p. 5.

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