A New Look at the Old Errand: A Radical Strain in American Thought

Richard F. Moore
Loyola University Chicago

Follow this and additional works at: https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_theses

Recommended Citation
https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_theses/2684

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 License.
Copyright © 1972 Richard F. Moore
A Thesis
Submitted
to
The Department of Political Science
Loyola University
Chicago, Illinois
as
a requirement for a
Master's Degree

April 12, 1972
Richard F. Moore
A NEW LOOK AT THE OLD ERRAND:

A RADICAL STRAIN IN AMERICAN THOUGHT
TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION............................................................ 1

Chapter
I. EUROPEAN AND AMERICAN HISTORICAL
   BACKGROUND....................................................... 5

   English Puritanism
   The Netherlands
   The Social Upheaval in England,
     Oliver Cromwell and the New
     Model Army
   The Puritan Planting in America

II. ROGER WILLIAMS................................. 49

III. A NEW LOOK AT THE OLD ERRAND............ 95

BIBLIOGRAPHY.................................................... 110
INTRODUCTION

The subtitle of this thesis and the title of the third chapter signify an important point. Roger Williams has long been considered a democrat rather than a man of theology. This thesis denies his democracy and affirms his motivation to be singularly theological. Coming to the New World for the Puritans was referred to as an "Errand into the Wilderness." Williams took the idea of Errand to a position beyond which the Massachusetts Puritans wished. This thesis takes a new look at that Errand of Puritanism, as conceptualized by Williams, in an attempt to identify in him a radical strain in American thought. The strain is separatism as a social doctrine.

Separatism is the removal from one social system to another of those persons unable to exist within the present, social system because of ideas or actions that are not sanctioned or tolerated by the present system. The beliefs of a separatist are such that they must be either sanctioned or tolerated, or else the separatist will not be able to attain the fulfillment sought through his ideas and actions. Being unable to attain the goal sought within the existing system is, for the separatist, a situation intolerable and one demanding removal to an environment more suitable for his beliefs.
Separatism is a complete removal and does not recognize as separatism partial withdrawals, temporary exiles or internal agitations for change. While each of these may lead to separatism if the change sought is not attained, they are not a complete break from the existing system.

On the other hand, separatism need not exclude some kind of relationship with the society from which one has separated, nor does it mean an exclusion from the larger community of which the one separated from is a part. The relationship, however, must not constitute a re-joining of the system.

Roger Williams withdrew from the Massachusetts Colony and founded Rhode Island when the Massachusetts leadership became unalterably opposed to his religious views and sought to prevent their free expression and growth. While no longer a participant in the Massachusetts government, Williams remained an active part of the American, colonial community and the British Empire, serving them with dedication and honor. He functioned as an English Ambassador to the Indian Nations of America, bringing benefit to all of the American colonies. Such a political function could even include travel to Massachusetts as "official, state business" and not constitute a re-joining of that colony.

Two radicalisms existent in Williams' thought have a direct relationship to his separatism as a radical doctrine. Salvationist-perfectionism is the radical, primary motivation and typology is the radical methodology for the interpretation of biblical history and teaching. Important also to
the strain will be Williams' belief in the freedom of conscience and the subsequent belief in the separation of the civil and religious authority. Separatism as a radical strain is in contrast to the more traditional uses of reform which seek to work within a system for change, utilizing compromise and moderation.

The doctrine of separatism executed by Williams upon the Massachusetts Colony was in effect more than a separation of the religious and civil authority. It was a more total separation in all areas of society. Williams' religious separation is an important factor in this more total separation.

Roger Williams is one of the more significant and original, American proponents of separatism as a social practice to achieve an end. His act of separatism was perpetrated upon an established society, the Massachusetts Colony.

The radicalism of Roger Williams developed within a social climate of both reform and radical movements. The Protestant Reformation affected things religious. The Renaissance contributed to the philosophical and scientific and the English Revolution affected the political and economic aspects of the times. Puritanism developed within this historical setting as a social movement, that is, with political, economic and religious aspects to it. Roger Williams came to America from England as a Puritan, but his Puritanism was more radical than that of the majority of Puritans, and later he became a Seeker.

Chapter I will explore the historical background of
Roger Williams in order to place him in an historical perspective prior to the identification of his radicalism in Chapter II. Chapter III will summarize and analyse the findings of Chapters I and II and offer some conclusions.

Since this thesis revolves around the identification of a radicalism, it will be necessary to define radicalism. Radicalism is that which favors a reconstruction of life on a social base different from that which exists at a given time and demands that the new and reconstructed base be achieved through a process of return to the pure form, the real and basic matter of things. This is the criterion against which we will measure Williams' thought.¹

CHAPTER ONE

European and American Historical Background

The radicalism in Roger Williams, identified in the introduction, will be substantiated in Chapter II and summarized and commented upon in Chapter III. It is necessary to present the historical environment in which Puritanism and, subsequently, Roger Williams developed. Chapter I will attempt this.

The radicalism of Williams had its immediate origin in the spirit of the Reformation and Renaissance while also having roots in the age old questions of authority, order and liberty. Man's search for the good had developed different systems, institutions, cultures and societies throughout history. It would be no different in Roger Williams.

The Protestant Reformation more than any other historical movement affected the climate from which Puritanism developed. Although the Renaissance in the South made its way to the North, the major Renaissance effect upon that Reformation had Northern characteristics. The Middle Ages died slowly in the North. A powerful movement of awakening piety began to develop in Germany, England and the Netherlands in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

Since the Roman Church began it faced challenges to
its theology, organizational practices, and temporal power. One of the times of greatest challenge, imagination and new synthesis was the period 1500-1700: The Renaissance/Reformation. Peasants, monarchs, nobles, the new middle class and from the religious themselves came the challenges. These challenges had economic and political overtones as well as theological. They ranged from high level intellectual inquiry to petty superstition, discrimination and persecution. The formulations of these challenges spread from mysticism to intricate cannons of dogma and from pacifistic love to violent fanaticism. One of the most significant of the new intellectual movements, for Western civilization as a whole and for America most particularly, was Puritanism. Many of the intellectual foundations of Puritan philosophy and theology bore resemblance to many other movements and theologies, but the immediate historical heritage of Puritanism was within the intellectual climate of the Northern European Renaissance.²

In the thirteenth century, adventing Martin Luther, a quiet, yet significant, pietism emerged within the German nations. This new mysticism took many forms, some heretical and some not. Originally it developed as a return to the simple origins of early Christianity. Love of God, as taught and practiced by Christ, was seen as an end itself, as opposed to salvation as the aim and end of religion. An

anonymous, mystical tract appeared titled "The German Theology" underscoring the simple practice of love of God. Martin Luther claims to have been influenced by it. A German, Dominican friar, Master Eckhart, and his disciple, Johann Tauler, preached this principle during the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. Thomas a Kempis published "The Imitation of Christ" in the Netherlands, stressing that true Christians must imitate Christ in every way, avoiding the outer trappings of organized religion that lure men astray from the simple way.

In the second half of the fifteenth and the early sixteenth centuries Northern Europe turned to the classics. It did so with a Christian eye, attempting to find a more humane and moral philosophy rather than the pagan one. Humanism, as it was called, had its greatest proponent in Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam. Previous Roman challenges had been less organized, intellectually as well as physically, and less revolutionary in scope. Religious dogma was deemphasized and thus church authority, doctrinal and ecclesiastic, were challenged. The Gospel replaced dogma, with its simple lesson of Christ, love. These early reformers, like Erasmus,

...asserted that the reading of the Bible and the early church fathers would put an end to scholastic subleties, and Christ would be taught simply and plainly. In spite of the conservative character of the Protestant Reformation and the protests of the reformers that they were not advocating anything new—that they were only returning to the teaching of the primitive church based on the New Testa-
ment--the movement was in fact open rebellion.³

Such a prescription was a forerunner of Luther and had proponents such as the prince of the humanists, Erasmus, St. Thomas More and John Colet in England, Johnn Reuchlin in Germany and Jacques Lefeuere d' Etaples in France. Others such as Wyclife in England and Huss in Bohemia criticized the Church for its sacramentalism and subsequent failure to preach and teach, prescribing a, "...return to the reasonable and simple teachings of Christ," and "...the necessity of making the Scriptures intelligible to the masses in translation...."⁴ Although not achieving the revolt that Luther did, they certainly shook the authority of the Roman Church at its very foundation.

To assert a principle that implied the right of private judgement was to appeal from the authority of the church to the individual and to make it possible for laymen, learned and unlearned, to reject the authority of the priesthood.⁵

These early reformers, and later ones as well, appealed to an existing and written authority for confirmation and for the right to a personal choice in matters of conscience. Authority thus turned from the Church and the clergy to the Bible. Early access to it by the citizenry was limited, if not discouraged. Biblical translation into the vernacular, as well as the many commentaries and interpretations that followed, did provide the people with a direct access and

⁴Ibid. ⁵Ibid.
fanned the fires of a burning quest. The Bible became a replacement for both the organized Church and the sacramental system. It replaced "...the Church as a source of authority, but in the long run more importantly, study of the Bible came to supercede the Sacraments of the Church as a means of Grace."^{6}

The humanist movement had existed in the Netherlands and mysticism in Germany, but the major religious revolt came in the second decade of the sixteenth century in the figure of Martin Luther. Luther proposed that, as St. Paul said in his Epistle to the Romans, "The Just shall live by Faith." He believed that if one possessed faith he would be saved, and the outward trappings of the organized Church, including the Pope and clerics, were unnecessary for salvation. The German princes welcomed his challenge, with as much political as religious interest. The break from the Roman Church, however, was cause for concern by the humanists; and Erasmus, their leader, did not support it. The humanist believed that man could work out his own destiny and did not like at all the Lutheran denial of free will. The eventual establishment of a new but equally dogmatic church proved too much for them.

The Lutheran reform was as much affected by political conditions as it was by the impetus of man's quest for religious change from Roman authority. Assuming Luther was a sincere theologian, it can also be fair to say that he under-

stood the success of his reform to be in its acceptance by the leading segments of the German nations. This was understood by any practical reformer, unless he sought the stake and martyrdom rather than reform. They accepted his challenge to Rome, and by 1546 nearly half of Germany adopted the new church. When the Anabaptists and other radicals rejected Lutheran precepts in favor of the "inner-light," believing salvation a private affair of the spirit, Luther once again relied upon the political segments of the German nation for support.

The Lutheran Reformation listed heavily in the direction of institutional and sacramental religion. Throughout the Augsburg Confession, which contains the jewels of the Lutheran faith, there is a constant appeal to the authority of Scripture; but the Wittenberg theologians who drew up the document omitted no word to emphasize how much Lutheranism had in common with Catholicism....In the long years that followed the publication of the Augsburg Confession, the Lutheran churches became established churches, and "apologies" and "formulas," more detailed and scholastic than the Augsburg Confession appeared.

The failure of the Lutheran Reformation, in the context of a return to the pure faith, rests in its failure to abolish dogma and intricate practices. While retaining its "faith alone" precept, it returned to dogma and practices and invited a further reformation in search of the pure faith. Lutheranism encouraged a further quest and invited radicalism when "the dry rot of dogma and orthodoxy set in... men and women, finding no inspiration in the established churches, turned to mysticism, quietism, and various forms

7Stephenson, pp. 13-14.
The man more closely considered as influencing Puritan development was John Calvin. Of all those individuals in the Reformation, he alone affected it most. The sixteenth century saw the religious reform of John Calvin and Huldreich Zwingli. Protestantism in Germany was peculiarly Lutheran. Protestant churches in other countries of Northern Europe, with the exception of the Anglican Church, were Reformed churches following the thought of Calvin and Zwingli.

Switzerland was in a perfect geographical position for the great ideas of all aspects of the social awakening. Situated between Germany, France and Italy, having solid ties in commerce as well as being one of the freest and most democratic states in Europe, it benefited from the Renaissance. Zwingli established the Reformed Church in Zurich in 1525, founding his teaching on the authority of the Bible. Much of the outward manifestations of the Roman Church were abolished: sacraments, celibacy, feasts, relics etc. He maintained that the Sacrament of the Last Supper was a commemorative service. He was a practical reformer, adopting much of the Erasmian concepts as a philosophy of life.

The publication of Calvin's "Institutes of the Christian Religion" in 1536 brought additional spirit to the Reformed Church. This work spread Protestantism to

---

9 Ferguson and Bruun, pp. 382-383.
many non-Lutheran countries. While very similar to Lutheran thought, Calvinism emphasized the majesty and power of God as the saving grace for man as opposed to Luther's "faith as salvation." With the establishment of Geneva as the Reformed citadel, Calvinism was firmly planted.

Calvinism is a religion of the book; it is a system which does not rest on reason—only on Scripture, which Calvin took literally. More than Luther, Calvin found in the Bible a law which regulates the Christian life. Calvin believed in justification by faith, but he carried the doctrine out even farther than did Luther. He went to predestination....A man is elected to salvation, and nothing that human nature can do is able to frustrate the purpose of the Almighty. A man is not saved by good works, but he must do good works whether it helps him or not. A man does not even know if he has faith.10

Calvinism was a disciplined and authoritarian religion, in that the true church held only the elect while the visible church both the elect and non-elect. No salvation could be attained outside of the visible church and all of its members had to conform to its discipline or be damned. It enforced self-discipline. Calvinism demanded toleration by the state. If the state abused the church, then the state would receive the vengeance of God.

Puritanism was very much a reformation within a Reformation, and Williams an even further extension of reform. Puritanism sought to return to simple devotion of the word of Christ without the trappings of the traditional, established church. In this the Puritan movement was within the

---

10Stephenson, pp. 13-14.
Reformation as begun by Luther and Calvin, but, Puritanism reacted to their establishment of traditions, official ceremonies and hierarchies. What Puritans had argued against in the Roman Church, they now argued against in the Protestant churches of Luther and Calvin.

Roger Williams developed in the Puritan movement. Like the other serious Protestant reformers he saw salvation as his ultimate objective. In this he differed little with Luther, Calvin or Puritan. Williams wanted a more complete return to simple worship and the word of Christ. In this his general thrust was Protestant, as was Luther and Calvin's departure from the Protestant Reformation and the Puritan movement within it. While his separatism was certainly radical, and he was in a minority in his separatist act, there was a separatist tradition in the left-wing of the Reformation. The Anabaptists, the Plymouth Puritans and the Dutch Reformation all established separatist movements. Williams' typological method of biblical interpretation, however, gave him both impetus for that separation and made him a virtual minority of one in that belief, even amongst the more radical sects of the Reformation.

Williams, an Englishman, inherited both the Continental traditions of the Reformation and more particularly the English and Dutch ones. The latter were more significant in his development. English religious developments as well as political and economic ones were affective. Dutch, religious thought and humanism were significant contributors to Williams' thought.
Puritanism, as a movement, developed in England during the last half of the sixteenth century. While its intellectual origins were common to the spiritual quest for the good life, it found its particular home in the English Church's agitation for reform. The Church of England broke with Rome in the 1530's. When Elizabeth took office the revolt had taken on definite Protestant aspects.

It was a movement for reform of that institution, and at the time no more constituted a distinct sect or denomination than the advocates of an amendment to the Constitution of the United States constitute a separate nation.... Puritanism was the belief that the reform should be continued, that more abuses remained to be corrected, that practices still survived from the days of Popery which should be renounced, that the Church of England should be restored to the "purity" of the first-century Church as established by Christ Himself.\\n
Within the overall English Reformation two divisions developed, the Anglicans and the Puritans. The Puritans maintained their loyalty to Church and Crown. The Puritans, however, wanted the reform to go further than Henry VIII had taken it and indeed further than Elizabeth had taken it. It became distinctly a Protestant Reformation, while the Anglican wished to halt the reform at the stages to which the Crown had brought it.

The Anglican Church although attempting a true spirit of Protestant Reformation, disestablishing monasteries.

---

correcting Papal abuses and shedding some of the "Romish"
trappings, remained a conservative one. Its tie to the
English Crown, with that institution's political designs and
absolutism, coupled with English society's general moder­
tion, did not allow for radical reform. Some of the reforms
themselves, as time went on, regressed, with the Anglican
Church reestablishing ecclesiastical and episcopal practices.

Although not wishing separation from the Anglican
Church, the Puritans wanted to be able to practice their
beliefs within services modified to express those beliefs.
They favored little, if any, ecclesiastical and episcopal
organization or ritual and believed in the common ministry.
Scripture played the prominent role in their service as op­
posed to prescribed prayer and readings. This Puritan
"revolt" within the English Reformation reached its pin­
nacle in the New Model Army and the acquisition of rule by
Oliver Cromwell in 1646-1648.

The historical origins of English Puritanism, prior to
its development as a movement within the English Reforma­
tion, were in the early part of the sixteenth century as a
part of the Protestant Reformation of Northern Europe.
William Tyndale, a London ecclesiastic, in 1524 went to
Germany to translate the Bible into the English vernacular.
In so doing he defied both temporal and church authority, a
prefiguration of Puritan reformation. He wished to consult
with Martin Luther and bring prohibited books back with him
from European, Reformation authors.12

Tyndale was a translator, not a movement leader. Much of his work was concerned mainly with the thought of Luther. Historian M. M. Knappen maintained in a 1939 volume that Tudor Puritanism was not a local development, but a Continental one imported, more accurately smuggled, into England by English sympathizers with the Continental-Protestant Reformation.

Tudor Puritanism generally conformed to this pattern of dependence on the ideas of foreigners, though it later shifted its allegiance to other individual leaders beyond the channel. It was not an indigenous, English movement, but the Anglo-Saxon branch of a Continental one, dependent on foreign theologians both for its theory and for its direction in practical matters.13

William Tyndale was an acquaintance of the humanists John Colet and Erasmus. He was also part of the university trained reformers of his generation in England who were moderate and cautious in their reform. This reform movement itself was Continental in its intellectual origin, since it depended almost completely on Erasmian and even Lutheran thought.

Erasmian humanism did not favor the breaking of law, temporal or spiritual, but instead favored the moderate, but determined, agitation for reform from within. Tyndale, however, was unable to convince the ecclesiastic "powers to be" that a vernacular Bible should be done. Several of his

13 Ibid., p. 4.
English translations of other works had gained him only criticism as a heretic. He sought support from without, and found it amongst London merchants, many of whom were touched by the Lollard heresy, still keeping the memory of John Wycliffe alive. These merchants were very independent, with Continental contacts through trade and travel. Their economic class position put them also very clearly in opposition to both temporal and ecclesiastic authorities. They were the rising middle class.

Once on the Continent, Tyndale was exposed to the full brunt of the social revolution. In addition to Luther, he was exposed to Zwingli, the Anabaptists and various sectarian movements. The "justification by faith" and the dependence upon the Bible were strong influences for Tyndale. In 1525-1526 the New Testament was completed in the vernacular and smuggled across to England. The London merchants and the growing party of Tyndale associates, known as the emigre party, were achieving success.

During the five years immediately following the publication of the New Testament the emigre party grew in numbers and influence. As its members took the leadership of the reforming movement, they drew both Erasmian and Lollard into their camp and, in spite of official opposition, successfully propogated their ideas in England.

Lollardy was an heresy attributed to Wycliffe which, relying on the authority of the Bible and calling for a return to the simpler Christian life, denied the validity of most church practices and questioned even the authority of ecclesiastics, including the Pope. It denied, for instance, the validity of pilgrimages, the veneration of saints, the power of the clergy to grant absolution for sins and even denied the material presence of Christ's body in the Eucharist. Lollardy had its impietus from the disputed Papacies of Urban VI and Clement VII.
The most important feature of their development was the trade in contraband books supplied by the refugees on the Continent.\footnote{Knappan, p. 19.}

The early English Reformation was moving from Erasmian humanitarianism to a more decidedly Protestant one and its chief influence was Continental, not local. The English Puritans had a direct, Continental heritage of Protestant reform amidst the more moderate humanist and later Anglican one. Puritanism stayed true to this Protestant heritage and protested, a major portion of it even separating at a later date. The Puritan movement in England was the Anglo-Saxon branch of the Continental, Protestant Reformation, with an English cultural twist, affected to no small degree by Crown politics and the newly emerging middle class, urban setting. It was with this middle class and urban tie that Puritanism, as a reform, became intertwined with the democratic thrust known as the English Revolution, and in fact can well be argued an inseparable partner of it.\footnote{Ibid., p. 4.} \footnote{Ibid., Chapters II and III.}

English politics, Henry VIII style, and foreign affairs played an important role in the English Reformation. Henry courted Catholics, then Anglicans, then Erasmians, then Protestants, depending on the political situation at home and the foreign situation abroad. On the whole, the religious situation came up Anglican-Catholic under Henry.\footnote{Ibid., Chapters II and III.} After Henry, the throne passed to Edward VI and the emigres continued to grow. But then the scepter passed to Mary
Tudor and her attempt to reestablish the Roman Church made the emigres heretics once more.\textsuperscript{18} As they traveled in their exile, they came under the influences of French and German Reformed movements at Frankfort, Germany, Calvinism via Zurich and Congregationalism via circumstance. The emigres moving and worshiping together formed in fact a congregation, a "gathered church" as they were called, making rules and electing officers. Such a condition dictated by the circumstances of exile, found Congregationalism conducive to the environment of their religious reform. This independency foreshadowed almost a century, Oliver Cromwell's favor of the Independents during the Puritan upheaval.\textsuperscript{19}

With the acquisition of the Crown by Elizabeth, the Puritan hopes rose. The Elizabethian Settlement, as her religious "treaty" with the reformers was called, proved no great patron for Puritanism. A totally political being, Elizabeth cared no more for Puritans then she did for Catholics. To her, they all were pawns in the political game of intrigue. She outmanuevered the Puritans, forcing them into a separatist stance in the Vestarian Controversy.\textsuperscript{20}

From about 1568 to 1573 Puritanism enjoyed a bit of a revival, again mainly due to political conditions, rather than an acceptance of their religious views by the populace.

\textsuperscript{18} Ibid., Chapters IV and V.

\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., Chapters VI, VII and VIII.

\textsuperscript{20} The Puritans had objected to the use of clerical vestments during services as a manifestation of "popery" and a turning away from the simple practice of religion.
The collapse of the anti-reform rule of Mary Queen of Scots in Scotland provided Puritans with a breathing spell while Elizabeth once again turned to pressing political problems. After several more ups and downs at the hands of court intrigues, the Puritans embarked upon a Presbyterian structure from about 1574-1583 with bishops, deacons and the rest. The acceptance of this moderate Puritan movement by Elizabeth was dictated by outside considerations, the influx of Catholic Jesuit missionaries into England. She could not have a disunited, English polity, just when she faced a Papal threat. She saw the Papal threat to be as much a political one (Rome was allied with France and Spain) as a religious one. During this time Church leadership came to veterans of the Marian exile. 21

Between 1583 and 1585 once again Puritanism took a harsh turn. Anglican leadership unfortunately passed from the Continental exiles to John Whitgift, a dedicated "checker" of Puritan advancement. He set about his task as Elizabeth prepared for war with Spain. During this time Puritanism began to amass support from the legal profession against the designs of Whitgift. The lawyers began to fear that their acquired "position" was being threatened by the ecclesiastic formalism manifesting itself in "courts," not following the English law and thus threatening their domain. Elizabeth again divided and conquered well, and once again

21 The veterans of the Marian exile were reformers who fled England during Mary Tudor's rule and were generally from the emigre party on the continent.
the Puritans were thwarted.

So the Puritans fell back once more on the idea of reformation without tarrying for official sanction. But now, instead of the negative tactics of discarding surplices and omitting required ceremonies, more positive measures were taken, and in a different field. The attempt was made to set up a presbyterial system of ecclesiastical government within the framework of the established church. . . . The next step was the construction of a formal discipline . . . to this all the brethren could be expected to subscribe and conform without delay. 22

The haunt of separatism lingered as long as Puritanism never really achieved its desired end. The program of the Puritans under Elizabeth was to attain further church reforms without actually adopting a method of active resistance. Most of the Puritans worked through the established, church constitution.

But passive resistance was compatible with a somewhat more vigorous policy, and from the time of the first serious break with the Queen there were seldom lacking a few ardent radicals who were willing to form conventicles with a separate and distinct ecclesiastical machinery. The lingering medieval horror of sects and the ill repute of the Continental Anabaptists, who had adopted this form of church government, hindered such activities. But a kind of specious logic favored them. If it was sound policy to withdraw from the corrupt Roman communion, why not from the corrupt Anglican one? 23

We have seen how, as was stated earlier, that within the Reformation, Puritanism developed as a more radical, reformist movement than Luther, Calvin or even the Anglican Church had developed. Puritanism argued for a continuing of the reform started by the Reformation; a renewal to the principle of a simple, more pure following of the Word of

Christ without the ceremonies, hierarchies and practices of
the established churches and now the Anglican one. True
worship, effective worship for man must be one shorn of
disturbing and "Popish" practices and unfettered from cum-
berson ceremonies, laws and clergy. Man must live by the
word of Christ and, to do so effectively, be free of cere-
monies and traditions which keep him from this simple wor-
ship and hence salvation.

Roger Williams would agree, but would argue further
that man must himself be free and unfettered from all inter-
ferences, religious and otherwise, in order to pursue his
salvation. Only a free man, one who possessed freedom of
conscience could properly begin to seek his salvation. This
belief of Williams, along with his typological interpreta-
tion of the Bible, would result in a separatist action.
Williams' belief in the freedom of conscience for man, was
influenced by the Dutch Reformation and humanism.

The latter part of the sixteenth century saw the be-
ginnings of Puritan separatism as an organized force.
Around 1570 Richard Fitz set up a separatist organization
complete with elder, deacon and a covenant. Other sepa-
ratist congregations organized. About 1580 the celebrated
separatist Robert Browne appeared, authoring several works
viciously attacking the Anglican Church as un-Christian.
Browne pushed passive resistance to its outer limits. Rad-
ical Puritan after radical Puritan lashed out strongly
against Anglican abuses, but all efforts, no matter how
radical, stopped short of total separation, maintaining
their passive resistance and submission to the law of the Crown. As the sixteenth century closed, the Crown strongly urged the more radical Puritans to emigrate once more. They did, settling in Amsterdam. Their Confession of Faith in 1596 still held the doctrine of passive resistance and the authority and responsibility of the secular arm to pursue false ministers and maintain the true ones. 24

Although Puritan reform stopped short of separatism and the abandonment of passive resistance and obedience to the magistrate, a definite chapter in separatism had been written, even if it was a preface. Roger Williams in America would write the next chapter. After the death of Elizabeth, James the VI of Scotland took over the British Crown in 1603. Tudor Puritanism was now put to a Stuart test and it fared no better. The Monarch proved its continuation of Elizabethan opposition to the Puritan program. Tudor Puritanism had, while beaten by the Monarchy, remained short of revolution and always on the track of reform. Their radicalism in thought far exceeded their actions. It laid a firm foundation, however, for the New Model Army a half century later and Roger Williams some decades in the future.

The Netherlands

Throughout the history of Puritanism the influence of the Netherlands is referred to, but in passing rather than in a direct way. The Puritan exiles, the emigres, of the

24Ibid., p. 314.
sixteenth century, from whom the intellectual origins of congregationalism and separatism arose, moved through Germany and the Netherlands. The recorded history of their exile was of Englishmen in a foreign land, and understandably so, since it was written by Englishmen or later Americans within the English tradition. While Luther was properly treated as a German in these histories, other more continental influences were present, such as Erasmus of the Netherlands and Calvin and Zwingli of Switzerland. The thought of Luther and Calvin certainly influenced Puritanism. Luther gave it the needed spark for agitation of reform and Calvin gave it theological arguments and a Protestant system. Historically, however, the Reformed churches of the Netherlands did more to influence Puritanism than history, that is English history, allows.

The contest which culminated in the acquisition of English power by Oliver Cromwell and the New Model Army, and from which contest the Brownite, separatists, the Pilgrim Fathers and Roger Williams were influenced, began in the Netherlands. The Dutch did more than found New Amsterdam (New York), they greatly influenced the pilgrims who settled at Plymouth, Roger Williams who found Rhode Island and Thomas Hooker who infused new life into Connecticut.

The armed contest began in Holland, and lasted there for eighty years before it was transferred to England. In its early days, nearly a hundred thousand Netherlanders, driven from their homes by persecution, found an asylum on British soil. Throughout it was a Puritan warfare. The Earl of Leicester, sent by Elizabeth to aid the rebellious Netherlanders, was politically in sympathy with
the English Puritans. The grandfathers and fathers of the men who fought with Cromwell at Nonesy and Dunbar received their military training under William of Orange and his son, Prince Maurice. Thousands upon thousands of them, during a period of some seventy years, served in the armies of the Dutch Republic. Many others, driven out of England by Elizabeth and her successors, settled in Holland, and a still larger number went there for business purposes, engaging in trade and manufactures, while keeping in close relations with their native land. Some of the refugees, after a residence of years among the Puritans of the Netherlands, emigrated to America; others returned to England, and took up arms under the Long Parliament.... The Pilgrims who settled Plymouth had lived twelve years in Holland. The Puritans who settled Massachusetts had all their lives been exposed to a Netherland influence, and some of their leaders had also lived in Holland. 25

Douglas Campbell in his exhaustive history of Puritanism traces the effect of the Dutch on American thought and institutions, concluding that we owe more than we think to the Dutch in the area of democratic thought, especially as preservers of Greco-Roman culture through the Renaissance. The ablest Northern European of both the Renaissance and the Reformation was Erasmus of Rotterdam, the Netherlands.

The impact of feudalism, while strong in most of Europe, took little root in the Netherlands. The civilizations of Greece and Rome and all of the soul of the Renaissance was preserved there. In addition, the people had a genuine and long history of democratic practices and institutions and were fiercely independent of outside imposition; witness the trouble that the Holy Roman Empire and

Spain had in attempting to subject it to a "Romish" submission. Religious liberty was a fact there when toleration was but a weak hope in England. The Netherlands was an advanced civilization while England was still peeping out of its feudal imprisonment. Even English historians writing of their founding fathers

...cross the Channel and describe the Anglos and Saxons in their early home upon the continent. That home was so near to the Netherlands that the people of Holland and the conquerors of Britain spoke substantially the same language, and were almost of one blood....The Netherlands stood as the guide and instructor of England...When the Reformation came in which Northwestern Europe was new-born, it was the Netherlands which led the van, and for eighty years waged the war which disenthralled the souls of men. Out of that conflict, shared by thousands of heroic Englishmen, but in which England as a nation hardly had a place, Puritanism evolved—the Puritanism which gave its triumph to the Netherlands Republic, and has shaped the character of the English—speaking race.27

The Netherlanders were not only a democratic peoples, but ones who mixed a love of labor and culture well. Painting, music and drama were appreciated by all classes of the society. It was not uncommon for the laboring man to possess paintings and attend concerts. Labor guilds and fraternal associations were in existence, with care for the aged and the dispensing of equal justice foreshadowing cen-

26 The Spanish Army and some of its best officers failed. In trying they killed a large percentage of the Netherlands populace and ravaged their lands. These sturdy and independent peoples resisted in every way, including the flooding of their own lands by scuttling the dykes. The famed William of Orange brought fame to this resistance and made of himself a national patriot.

turies of Western civilization.

In all the principal cities of the Netherlands were to be found the so-called Guilds of Rhetoric. There were associations of mechanics and artisans, who amused themselves with concerts, dramatic exhibitions, and the representation of allegories, where some moral truth was set forth decked out in all the splendor of costume that art could devise and wealth supply. These performances constituted the chief amusement of the people, and they were always more or less instructive. Certainly their existence throws much light upon the general intelligence. 28

The Reformation had deep roots in the Netherlands. Early "Romish" heresies flourished there since the middle of the twelfth century. Long before Tyndale printed a Bible in the vernacular in England or Luther one in Germany, a Dutch version from the Vulgate was printed in the vernacular in 1477. The great Erasmus made an original translation of the New Testament in 1516. Six years later Luther followed and in 1526 Tyndale published his English version and did it at Antwerp in the Netherlands! The first full English translation of the Bible did not come until 1535, the work of Miles Coverdale, who did it in the employ of Jacob von Meteren of Antwerp, the father of the Dutch historian, Emanuel! This 1535 edition did not find its way to England until 1538. Before then, more than fifteen editions of the complete work and thirty-four of the New Testament were printed in Dutch and Flemish. These vernacular translations were widely read, discussed and argued by the Dutch populace, as was never done in Germany or England. Even

28 Ibid., pp. 161-162.
the one early English attempt at a vernacular Bible in 1361 by Wycliffe was amongst Flemish emigrants at Norfolk in England. 29

The Revolution in the Netherlands, 1555-1574, greatly affected English and Puritan history. In 1567 the Duke of Alva, sent by Phillip of Spain, entered the Netherlands to subdue it and pursue the Inquisition. Thousands of Netherlanders died and equally thousands fled across the channel for refuge. Their existence on English soil brought Dutch influence to the English homeland. 30

In 1575 the University of Leyden was founded in the Netherlands. It led in all disciplines. Its accomplishments pre-date the later discoveries of other nations. Douglas Campbell in Volume I of his work gives an impressive list on pages 220-223. 31 Of great importance was Leyden's work in classical languages, unlocking the ancient past, theology and investigating existence. When independence from sovereign and national pride were not even ideas yet in Europe, and only some small amount of religious toleration even discussed, the Netherlands formed the Union of Utrecht in 1579 and formally met for these purposes at the Hague in 1581.

By its provisions the contracting parties agreed to remain forever united as if they were one province. Each state was, however, to manage its own internal affairs, and preserve all its ancient liberties. Questions of war and peace, and those relating to the imposition of duties,

29 Ibid., pp. 162-163. 30 Ibid., pp. 177-196.
31 Ibid., pp. 220-223.
were to be decided by a unanimous vote of all the states; in other matters the majority were to decide. A common currency was to be established. And, finally, no city or province was to interfere with another in the matter of religion.

This agreement was a model for democratic nations centuries later in their constitutional development. A translation of the principles of the Union of Utrecht were found among the papers of Lord Somers the Englishmen who is supposed to have used it as a model for the Declaration of Rights by which James II abdicated and William and Mary ascended to the throne. This was a century after Utrecht. Still a century after Somers and the Declaration of Rights, the Declaration of Independence was written announcing that the American colonies were independent of Great Britain. One cannot help but wonder if the American founding fathers didn't read this document before writing their own great contribution.

Various Reformation sects appeared early in Holland. The Anabaptists, and later the Mennonites, appeared as early as 1522 and during times of persecution many fled to England. Lollardy existed under the influence of Wycliffe in the fourteenth century amongst Netherland weavers settled at Norfolk in England. During Protestant persecutions of the late 1500's in the Netherlands, thousands were exiled in England. Later, more Netherlanders of artisanry and manufactures came to England. In London and Norwich the

---

32Ibid., pp. 233-234.

33Ibid., pp. 234-235.
Netherlands made important settlements and were the strongholds of English Puritanism. From this area would come the Brownites and separatism and the early Pilgrim Fathers, who organized their first congregation here, and most of the Puritans who later settled New England.34

Robert Browne took charge of a congregation at Norwich in 1580, half of whose population was comprised of Netherland refugees engaged in manufactures. It was a separatist congregation that settled first in Leyden and then founded the Plymouth Colony in America. The men most influential in the exodus of the Pilgrim Fathers were William Brewster, the Reverend John Robinson and William Bradford. In 1608 one hundred of the early Pilgrim congregation found themselves in Amsterdam. In 1609 they moved to Leyden. John Robinson was a theological student at Leyden University in 1615 and emigrated with about a third of the original English emigrants to Plymouth in America in 1620. Roger Williams was a scholar read in the Dutch language, and when in America, put to practice many of the Dutch Reformed ideas concerning liberty of conscience and the relationship between church and state. He read the Dutch works to the poet John Milton.35

The Social Upheaval in England, Oliver Cromwell, and the New Model Army

Passing from the Elizabethan Age we now turn our considerations briefly to Oliver Cromwell, the New Model Army

34 Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 177-207. 35 Ibid.
and the social upheaval as influences happening in England and exhibiting some of the same aspects of Puritanism as did the Massachusetts founders and Roger Williams. The significant point in this discussion is that the New Model Army and the Massachusetts, Puritan Colony are Puritan reformers, but not to the point of freedom of conscience, as was Williams. As an interlude to the discussion of the social upheaval in England let me quote from a footnote in Campbell's work concerning the Holland influence during the time of Cromwell.

Fairfax, Essex, Monk, Warwick, Bedford, Skippon, and many others—in fact, the men who organized the Parliamentary army—received their military training in the Low Countries. The famous Ironsides of Cromwell were trained by Colonel Dalbier, a Hollander, and the same officer did a much more important work by giving Cromwell his first instruction in the military art, teaching him, as Carlyle says, 'the mechanical part of soldiering.' The first judge advocate of the Parliament's army was also a Hollander, Dr. Dorislaus.36

I have identified Puritanism as a movement with roots in the Reformation, the Continental Reformation. The Puritans who settled Plymouth Colony in 1620 were part of the group of Englishmen who had emigrated from London to Holland during the persecution of the Brownites and were near separatists, if not full separatists. These Pilgrims were primarily religious emigrants, spurned by the religious persecution of the new Stuart King, James I. The Great Migration of 1630 to Massachusetts had a broader base of discontent than only religion and the religious base itself

36 Ibid., Preface.
was broader.

The Continental Reformation was a much more radical one than the English one. England's Reformation, although strongly influenced by Puritanism and for a time under Puritan rule, was primarily an Anglican Reformation. While the Lutheran Church in Germany moved toward an organized religion of a conservative nature, and even many aspects of Calvinistic theology organized itself in presbyters, the Anglican Church was the more conservative. Within the Reformation, Continental and English, a major strain thrust itself toward a purer way and the rediscovery of Israel. While the early, English, reform movement of the sixteenth century was more Puritan and Calvinistic in its thrust, once the Elizabethan Age ended, Anglicanism stayed the reform. Puritanism, still alive as a religious reformation, became more decidedly engaged with other social conditions.

While the rule of James I marked Puritan persecution, the rule of Charles I began the seeds of general, social discontent. During Charles' reign, 1625-1649, economic and political problems were added to religious ones. The older forms of revenue for the Crown were proving increasingly insufficient and additional ones, ever more burdensome and irritating to the populace, had to be added. The simple agrarian economy, easy to tax and easy to maintain, was now developing into a multi-varied one with manufactures, artisanry, fishing, trade, and even law and medicine. The expanding fields of science were unlocking new secrets and providing new methods. With each new economic product and
market, the English Crown could be counted on for a new tax.

The expanding economic situation provided changes in the political one. The new economic conditions provided new classes of people. These classes, in addition to gaining a new economic status, began to demand services and favors from the Crown. Each new class demanded new considerations from the government. As the Royal Court proved somewhat inadequate to service these classes as they demanded, they looked to other political structures for a better organization and support. Increasingly, these rising middle classes, between the courtiers and the poor, became associated with Parliament. They favored a limitation on the Monarchy and a more active role for the Parliament. The development of urban centers began also to place new pressures on the old government. Charles became embroiled in foreign intrigues, risking valuable fortunes and taking valuable time away from growing domestic strife.

The discontent was for more than burdening taxation. It was uniquely associated with the growing affluence and power of the people of England. As the people became more economically prosperous, they wanted a greater measure of freedom in their social life, especially in the choice of political power and their personal, religious beliefs. Religion, such a dominant force from the heritage of the Middle Ages, became a major part of that social thrust. Man, in search of the good life, was pressuring the powers that be for a greater measure of liberty.

By the eve of the year 1629 a major economic crisis...
sion loomed over England. The Thirty Years War was well under way on the Continent, disrupting important trade with involved nations and upon which trade England depended. The many wars in which Charles involved England bankrupted his treasury and weakened England's ability to protect its seacoast and shipping lanes, contributing to additional monetary losses. Coupled with the failing trade situation due to the European wars, bad harvests attributed to even greater losses.

As unsold stocks of cloth accumulated at the docks merchants could buy no more and manufacturers ceased weaving as their own surplus piled up; thus weavers and spinners were thrown out of work. These, with little money in their pockets, found provisions scant and prices high. Though usually able to maintain themselves above the level of the poor they now sank to that rank. Distress spread all over the country. Scarcity of food in one section had been relieved by carting in the surplus from another, but that was soon cut off as people refused to allow food to be taken away. This depression began in the year 1629, exactly timed to follow the failure of the King's foreign wars.37

In addition meat, fish and wheat became scarce and in some areas non-existent. Disorders erupted in the urban and country areas. Recovering slowly from the first depression and wars, a second depression and foreign involvement brought social destruction to England in 1640. The Plague came in devastating eminence in 1625, 1630 and 1636.

If times weren't bad enough, Charles promoted trouble with Parliament. The famous first three Parliaments of

Charles ended in their quick disbandment. Their furor increased over Charles' absolutism and incompetence. When the King demanded money and Parliament refused, he abolished it and resorted to ever increasing new and even illegal taxes. When Parliament demanded that the Duke of Buckingham, Charles' right hand, be made accountable for his abuses, the King imprisoned the leaders, including prominent Earls and the famous British patriot Sir John Eliot.

In 1628, Charles called his third Parliament in desperation. He needed money for his debts and foreign excursions. After two futile attempts for funds with previous Parliaments he reluctantly consented to the famed Petition of Right.

...that no tax, gift, or loan should be exacted without a vote of Parliament, that no one should be imprisoned for refusing to pay, and that billeting and martial law should no longer be applied to civilians. This was a step toward national freedom almost as important as Magna Carta. Forced by his needs, Charles unwillingly accepted it.38

Despite the Petition, Charles went his merry way until eventually Civil War was inevitable, with Englishmen killing Englishmen, Charles eventually executed and Oliver Cromwell emerging as a Puritan dictator.

The Great Migration began in 1630 and carried through the Civil Wars and the entrenchment of the New Model Army and Oliver Cromwell. Those who migrated are generally considered to have done so for religious reasons. While religion certainly was a factor, it was not the only or dominant one. Religious persecution was one sign of general

---

38 Ibid., p. 189.
social instability in England after the beginning of the reign of Charles I, unlike the sixteenth century religious ones that were tied closely with the Reformation. Those who fled during the Great Migration did so because of the general social instability. Of those who migrated to America, two out of three went to Anglican and other colonies rather than the Puritan ones.

Of those who went solely for security.... they flocked to the southern colonies and to the West Indies.... Yet a still stronger incentive caused the Puritans to draw apart from the others and settle in New England. This spur was their religion, and of it history has much to tell.39

While religion certainly played a part, historians must also look to the other social conditions of the times for a complete analysis of Puritan development in Europe and their migration to the New World. A basis of religion alone will be incomplete, especially in the seventeenth century, for many of the migrating Puritans. We will see later, however, that for the Puritan divine, the minister, religion and salvation were his motivation.

Three distinct groups of Puritans were recognizable by the time of the Great Migration and made especially clear in the New Model Army and the reign of Oliver Cromwell. The Presbyterians were loyal to the Crown, but favored a limited Monarchy and an active role for the Parliament. They

...had led the attack on absolutism and dominated the earlier phases of the struggle

39Ibid., p. 231.
with Charles....It stood for adherence to the Covenant, the establishment of Presbyterianism on the general lines laid down by the Westminster Assembly, and the suppression of every other doctrine and order. It was opposed to toleration, and was in general less interested in liberty than in reform....They would have a national Presbyterian church, and would suppress its rivals, but the church should be controlled by the state.  

The Independents, who could tolerate a mild Presbyterian form of church rule, but must have in turn a guaranteed toleration of the dissenting brethren, were generally anti-clerical and formalistic in religion. Most favored the "gathered" churches, congregational, concept. They supported Parliamentary government as the best one possible. They also believed in a church and state separation, at least non-interference, and a liberty of conscience or toleration.

The third grouping was the parties of the left. They were the most radical and diverse. These parties, ...

...the sectaries, religious and political, were a heterogeneous company among whom the winds of doctrine assumed the proportions of a tempest. They were descended from the Separatists and Anabaptists....Among themselves they agreed in little save the belief in a total separation of church and state and the demand for liberty of conscience....Two significant types of opinion emerge among the sectaries. The one...is predominantly democratic in tendency, and ultimately secular in aim, though it maintains its emphasis on liberty of conscience and at times adopts the language of religious enthusiasm. This is the...Levellers...the political doctrinaires....The second is at bottom neither democratic in tendency nor secular in aim. It emphasizes not the rights of

the people, but the privileges of the Saints, and it looks forward to the millenium (which always seems to be just around the corner) when the Saints shall inherit the earth and rule it with, or on behalf of, Christ.41

Of these three groups, the ones settling Plymouth in 1620 were sectarian and separatist in origin, but the ones that settled Massachusetts in 1630 were a mixture of Independents, Congregationalists, left-wing Puritans, separatists and Anabaptists. The Massachusetts settlers tended more toward Independency and Congregationalism.

A complete discussion of Oliver Cromwell is unnecessary to the development of our American strain. It is to a discussion of Puritanism as a whole. Let it suffice for our purposes here that Oliver Cromwell and the New Model Army represented the militancy to which Puritanism, from Presbyterian to sectary, could be committed, and the breadth of that militancy, encompassing all social reforms. If ever a case was made for the proper form of liberty to attain justice and the abuses to which idealism could go, the acquisition of power by Oliver Cromwell made it. There would be Puritan militancy in America, both separatists and magistrates.

Throughout the paper I have made references to left-wing Puritanism and sectarians. A brief historical identification of the more important ones should familiarize the

reader with them.

The prominence of the sectaries, as most of the early Puritan chroniclers referred to them, came particularly during the two Civil Wars in England and especially under the New Model Army and Oliver Cromwell. Two sectaries appear, at least in the context of this paper, to be most influential on left-wing Puritanism. They are the Levellers and the Free Church. While both of these were decidedly religious in origin, their affect on American, political thought has been significant.

The Leveller Party had a short-lived existence, 1646-1649, but its heritage to the Puritan movement and America is larger than its chronological record. Calvinism had a militancy inherent in it. While professing a stringent "chosen few" doctrine of predestination and obsessed with an underlying sense of sin, it also fostered a militancy of individualism. Aspects of Calvinism so developed, that the chosen few "saints" broadened to include everyone as patented "saints." In addition they embraced a utopianism based in natural law theory.

The immediate background of the Leveller party was therefore the explosive controversies of the late 1630's and early 1640's when the disintegrative forces inherent in militant Puritanism collided with a government that had become increasingly rigid in its theology, authoritarian in its politics, and desperate in its economics. The Leveller fight for full freedom of religion, for a constitutional democracy, and for a laissez-faire economy was as unexpected product of this collision. 42

42 Frank, p. 11.
The Levellers agitated for freedom of religion, despising government that prescribed approved religious forms. Their belief in a constitutional monarchy was the facility to achieve their religious end. The Leveller believed that the free exercise of religion should not receive clerical or legal interference. Thus they pushed toward a militant anti-clericalism. Their history gave the Puritan heritage the wealth of people who believed that one's religion should not be restricted by the government of the state or the church. It also gave it its very definite democratic thrust. Massachusetts Puritanism would reject the Leveller kind of theory, but Roger Williams would adopt its spirit.

Their position in the New Model Army was strategic and influential. Like all the sectaries, they were forceful, dogmatic and unrelenting, thus the most effective soldiers in the "holy" war. Their religious tracts are some of the most revolutionary of the Civil War period. Their importance for us, however, is that they manifested the extremes of left-wing Puritanism, and in a broader sense, of the Protestant Reformation, particularly Calvinism. This manifestation was the unrelenting opposition, to the point of violent revolution and self-sacrifice, to political governments and religious hierarchies that foisted upon them systems and beliefs they themselves did not hold. Historical-

ly somewhat mislaid, but equally as important, was the strong and positive insistence on the missionary propagation of their ideas and a system they believed as right for man. Unfortunately their constantly defensive position, emphasized their opposition to the intolerance of the Monarchy, Anglicanism and the Presbyterians, but deemphasized their own intolerance of anyone else's beliefs. This Level- ler intolerance, after the execution of the King and the rise to power by Cromwell, surfaced and was dealt with by no less a Puritan radical than Oliver Cromwell himself.

The Free Church has been broadly defined to include many left-wing Protestant denominations, Baptists, Quakers, Hutterites, Methodists etc. and narrowly defined to include mainly the Baptists. For this paper, neither interpretation is central to our interest in the Free Churches. What is important is the influence on religious toleration and religious separation that they had. The Free Churches were radical in their theology, anti-establishment, holding that man should be genuinely free to believe and practice as his conscience dictated without interference from the civil magistrates, this led to a belief in the separation of church and state, or at least in state toleration. In response to persecution and domination they more often separated from society, founding their own "societies" where such religious toleration was practiced. This separating tendency, as wed to the non-interference in religion of the civilian authorities, is the heritage of the Free Churches most important to this work. The Baptists, the leading
element of the Free Church movement, claim Roger Williams as the first real Baptist founder in the New World.44

Aspects of the Puritan migration to America have already been covered in previous pages. Important to review is the fact that the Puritans who migrated here in 1620, the Pilgrims at Plymouth and in 1630 the Great Migration to Massachusetts were radical and from the left-wing of Puritanism. While radical, they certainly were not the most radical. The Levellers, Fifth Monarchy Men, the more militant Anabaptists and Quakers generally were not amongst them in any influential numbers. As Puritans they were generally Congregationalists and Independents. Also important is that this Puritan aspect of the migration to Massachusetts was but one part of a larger one to America from England. The Massachusetts planting represented but one-third of those who did migrate at this time. While the Puritans dominated the Massachusetts Bay Colony, Anglicans, Catholics, various Protestant, religious groups and non-believers settled the upper-eastern border and the southern part of America.

As it was pointed out earlier, the Puritans who settled Massachusetts were middle class artisans and manufactures, who were escaping the economic and political chaos of the rules of James I and Charles I, as much as they were searching for religious liberty. The complexion of the migration

44Durnbaugh, Chapter I. See also Louise Fargo Brown, The Political Activities of the Baptists and Fifth Monarchy Men in England During the Interregnum (Washington, D.C., 1912).
to Massachusetts Bay was left-wing Puritan and economic middle class. It was motivated as much by political and economic depression in England as it was for religious reasons.

The Puritan Planting in America

While the Pilgrim planting at Plymouth was of separatist origins, the Brownites, whose emigration was from England to Holland to America, the Massachusetts Colony was non-separatist in origin. This point is the key difference between the Massachusetts Colony and Roger Williams. In 1623 Dorchester (England) fishermen had established a fishing company in Gloucester (America). After the venture failed, they attempted to make it a haven for the poor.

...a group of prominent Puritans...organized the New England Company. The history of Massachusetts Bay Colony begins with the arrival at Salem of their agent, John Endicott, and his followers in 1628. During the next twelve years some 20,000 colonists would follow Endicott to New England. Only a minority would be Puritans, but the control would be in their hands.

A charter incorporating the Massachusetts Bay Company was granted in 1629 by Charles I. It, of course, had nothing to say about matters ecclesiastical. Nevertheless, the company did make provision for ministerial support and decreed that "convenient churches" should be built. The settlers were permitted to choose their mode of church government.

In the spring of 1629, two non-Separatist Puritan ministers, Samuel Shelton and Francis Higginson, arrived at Salem and within a few months had organized a church with a congregational polity. The congregation adopted a Confession of Faith and a Covenant...Thus was born the first non-Separatist church in America.45

Importantly, Massachusetts from the start was not founded as a tolerant colony for reformists, not allowing all manner of religious belief to exist. Civil magistrates were entrusted with enforcement authority in certain religious areas. The first General Court in May of 1631 deemed that to be admitted as a freeman and have the franchise one would have to be a member of one of the churches in the colony. Later, failure to attend church services or reject parts of the Bible were punishable by fines, beatings and banishment. Massachusetts, although of religious dissenter stock in England, was planting its version of what established Christianity should be.

The success of the Massachusetts Bay Colony lies in the important difference between it and Plymouth. That difference was not a religious one. Plymouth was more radical, Brownites, than the Massachusetts founders, Puritan Independents (Congregationalists). Plymouth was settled by religious Seekers. The Bay Colony had them, as leaders to boot, but they also had businessmen and skilled laborers, the important difference for success. The virtual oligarchy of control by Puritan leaders, both ecclesiastical and civil, would reach its zenith with the banishments of Roger Williams in 1635 and Anne Hutchinson in 1638. That same control would later degenerate into the witch-hunts that so shamefully are recorded.

A strict policy against innovation was estab-

---

46 Samuel Eliot Morison, Builders of the Bay Colony (Cambridge, 1930), Chapter I.
lished by a synod of the clergy in 1648 and enforced by an act of the General Court in 1651. It was only at the end of the century that the forces of opposition to the Puritan oligarchy began to assert more and more control over the colony. 47

The Plymouth fathers had separated from the Church of England and founded independent churches of their own. The Massachusetts fathers did not separate and thought of themselves as a part of that church, but a reforming part. Massachusetts Bay was settled "...by men who had never forfeited their legal standing...their migration reflected the widespread belief that in Europe even the general cause of protestantism was hopeless." 48 The fathers of Massachusetts rejected separatism and "...adhered to the principle of uniformity in the hope that they might eventually realize a uniformity of their own—a reformed uniformity." 49

The Pilgrims were looking for a place to practice their beliefs in solitude and with less a zeal for expansion throughout the countryside and more a mission to build a model for the world. The Massachusetts Puritans were an industrious and expansive group in both economic and religious matters, and thus their thrust was more positive and dominant.

The Massachusetts Colony was an extension of the Reformation whereby man attempted to rule the political by the

47 George M. Waller, ed., Puritanism in Early America (Boston, 1950), p. VII.
49 Ibid., p. 72.
word of the theological. The Massachusetts emigres brought to America a singular solution, through which, the complex problems of society could be resolved.

A due form of government in Massachusetts was to be an object-lesson for the resolution of the religious dissension of an erring world.... From its inception the colony was consciously dedicated to achieving the uniformity to which all reformers had aspired. It was to prove that the Bible could be made a rule of life, that the essentials of religion could be derived from Scripture, and then reinforced by the enlightened dictation of godly magistrates. It was to show that these essentials included polity as well as dogma, and that the one legitimate polity was Congregationalism.50

To attempt this harmony, or true uniformity, the leadership of the colony could not in any way allow separation. Separation would strike a death blow to the uniformity they were seeking. To this end the Massachusetts leadership resisted all separatists attacks with fire and sword, for any such doctrine would threaten their reformist design. Roger Williams challenged that design and had to be expelled. Expulsion was the only alternative to allowing his design to destroy the Massachusetts design of the divines.

It was to convince the world that a government could admit the Puritan claim for delimitation of the civil supremacy by the Word of God without sacrificing a genuine control over the nation's Church, that the King of England could easily permit the churches of England to become Congregational without destroying their continuity or altering the fabric of society. It was, in short, to demonstrate conclusively that Congregationalism could and should be a competent state religion.51

50Perry Miller, Orthodoxy in Massachusetts, 1630-1650: A Genetic Study (Cambridge, 1933), pp. 149-150.
51Ibid., p. 150.
While set upon a religious path, it is well to recall that these founders, with their ministerial and theological oriented leadership, had amongst them a majority of tradesmen, fishermen, artisans and other industrious types. The commercial development of Massachusetts attests to their economic, missionary zeal as well as their religious. Textiles, trapping, fishing, farming, herding, artisanry, all flourished. A variety of industries blossomed from the Bay Colony. It is well to remember that the Puritan emigration of the 1630's was from the economically depressed merchant and tradesmen groups of England during the hard times under Charles I, as well as the religious oppressed of Archbishop Laud, Charles' faithful Anglican repressor of Puritanism. Such economic hard times that produced depression in England, motivated skilled labor and merchants to seek new markets for their services and wares. Failures in agriculture and stock led to farmer and herder emigres.

Many of the towns mentioned in the early letters and journals of the Puritan settlers contained skilled workers and were those worst hit by England's economic depression. Requests for men with the skills of wheelright and carpentry were made. Particular talents were mentioned in their chronicles as necessary and vital to the common cause of the colony.52

52"The Company's Second General Letter of Instructions to Endicott and His Council," and "New England's Plantation" (an anonymous journal account), in Chronicles of the First Planters of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay, From 1623 to 1676, ed. Alexander Young (New York, 1970--First Published in 1846), Chapters VI and XII.
The emigres were decidedly of the new, middle class that had developed along the waterfront towns of England, in London and amongst the squire gentry, and had a significant, urban air to them. The left-wing, Puritan radicalism of the Reformation theology had as its subtle partner in Massachusetts the economic and urban radicalism of the burgeoning, new, middle class, with its incipient social reformist zeal and individualist strain. While apparently contradictory they were nonetheless there.

The challenge to left-wing Puritanism came from within itself. The Reformation challenged and revolted against traditional Roman Catholicism. Within England the Anglican Church broke with Rome. The Puritans sought further reform, pushing their quest toward Independent and Congregational church polities. When Archbishop Laud proclaimed the Reformation achieved at Anglicanism, the Puritans pushed on. When Cromwell proclaimed it achieved at Independency, Congregationalism and modified Presbyterianism, the sectaries, separatists and Baptists pushed on. So too when the Massachusetts Bay Colony announced it achieved reform at Congregationalism, Roger Williams pushed on.

Within the Protestant Reformation lay the seeds of Separatism, Seekerism and Agnosticism. The protest, to continue on its determined path, must go to that which Roger Williams took it.
CHAPTER TWO

ROGER WILLIAMS

Roger Williams was born in London around 1600 in a middle class and moderately well-to-do section just outside the old walls of the city, an area called Smithfield. His childhood witnessed all of the social struggles that befell England during the reigns of James I and Charles I, the royalty of the Duke of Buckingham and the persecutions of Archbishop Laud. Puritanism being a movement of the middle class, especially strong amongst the merchants (Methodism would be the radical movement for the poor and oppressed), Smithfield was a Puritan stronghold. His family belonged to the parish of St. Sepulchre, and young Roger may very well have witnessed the execution of the Arian heretic Bartholomew Legate in 1619. Legate, like the later Roger Williams, was a Seeker. Young Williams, while learning the Bible and absorbing the Puritan ideas also witnessed, as did all other Englishmen of his time, the glory and pomp of old England; the defeat of Spain, the fairs, markets, stage drama (Shakespeare) and the affairs of Court. John Milton, William Shakespeare, the Duke of Buckingham, Sir Edward Coke, Oliver Cromwell, Captain John Smith and Sir Francis Bacon were all known to Williams. Sir Edward Coke
was his patron at the Charterhouse School. 53

Roger Williams entered Charterhouse School in 1621 and went on to Pembroke College of Cambridge University, graduating with an A.B. in 1627 at about twenty-three. John Milton attended Cambridge at the same time. Ben Jonson was Poet Laureate shortly before Williams entered the university. Shakespeare published his first play, just before Roger Williams entered Cambridge, although they had been performed on stage for some years. 54

In 1629 Roger Williams left Cambridge and lived at Otes in Essex as a chaplain to Sir William Marsham. Marsham was a country nobleman, a background in marked contrast to Williams' urban environment in London. He now was exposed to the gentile life of the country squire, about the same time the Massachusetts Bay Company was negotiating for a charter and preparing for settlement in America. Marsham was a member of the company and thus Roger Williams would be familiar with it. In 1629 the charter was granted. John Winthrop, a wealthy Suffolk lawyer, went to Massachusetts as its first governor in 1630. 55

After marrying in 1629, Williams and his wife sailed for Boston in December of 1630 from Bristol on the ship Lyon. Upon arrival Williams refused a ministry because the

53 Oscar Straus, Roger Williams: The Pioneer of Religious Liberty (Freeport, 1970; First Published in 1894).
54 Ola Elizabeth Winslow, Master Roger Williams: A Biography (New York, 1957), Chapter VII.
55 Ibid.
church had not yet separated from the Church of England. His refusal announced the beliefs which would be central to his thought: freedom of religious thought and speech from the interference of both religious and civil authorities, bishops or magistrates. This early declaration was not new to those in Massachusetts who knew him in England. His opinions were well known to John Cotton and Thomas Hooker who had heard him argue that he did not join in the use of the Common Prayer because it smacked of "Popery" and idolatry. While not moved to any immediate action, the leadership of the colony was disturbed by such attitudes, especially amongst fellow ministers. His belief in tolerance and of the separation from the English Church disappointed the colony. They would be unable to tolerate such views. 56

Several months later he was asked to be a minister at Salem, but the Massachusetts authorities influenced Salem to revoke their invitation and Williams went to Plymouth for two years before returning to Salem. It was during this time that he broadened his interest and knowledge of the American Indian. Even though Plymouth had been of separatist origins, the realities of the Massachusetts existence and its English support made the colony fear Williams' wish to separate church and state. They thought that his thinking would lead them to an Anabaptist position. He returned to Salem and preached there. About this time John Cotton and Thomas Hooker arrived in the colony. It was but a mat-

56 Emily Easton, Roger Williams: Prophet and Pioneer (Boston, 1930), p. 135.
ter of time when the teachings of Roger Williams would promote controversy and force a confrontation with the magistrates. In 1635 by an act of the General Court of Massachusetts Bay he was banned from the colony. Specifically, he refused to recognize the civil enforcement of the First Table (the first four Commandments). He denounced the requiring of an oath from an unregenerated man by a magistrate, insisted that the churches purify themselves by making a break with the Church of England and refused to recognize the charter of the colony as legal since the King had no right to grant land that didn't belong to him. The land belonged to the Indians, according to Williams.

He fled to Providence and founded the colony of Rhode Island where he remained the rest of his life. Here his thought moved from Puritan, to Baptist, to Seeker. During the Antinomian crisis in Massachusetts, Anne Hutchinson joined him in Rhode Island. As both a religious and civil leader in Rhode Island, he later returned to England as an ambassador, negotiated for England and the colonies during the Indian War and published many of his famous tracts on liberty of religion and speech. He died in 1683.

The importance of the contribution of Roger Williams to the issues of religious liberty, freedom of conscience and the separation of the civil and religious authority has not been hidden in recent American literature. The fact

that theology was his major and only consideration as an effort to attain salvation has not been widely studied. In recent times, the major American author to deal with the thought of Roger Williams in this light has been Perry Miller. The basic foundation of the Perry Miller thesis, that the cast of the mind of Roger Williams was theological and his primary motivation an effort to achieve a perfect salvation, is accepted in this work. 58

Roger Williams dedicated himself to the ministry of Christ. That ministry was a search for the proper way to salvation for both himself and others. All else would be subservient to that search and nothing should fetter or interfere with it. He was a minister of religion in the accepted sense of the term. John Winthrop, founder of the colony of Massachusetts Bay in New England attests to his ministerial authenticity in his journal with an entry dated March 5, 1631: "The ship Lyon, Mr. William Peirce, master, arrived at Nantasket. She brought Mr. Williams, (a godly minister,) with his wife...." 59 In addition Williams had been known in England for his theological orientation to


leading ministers such as John Cotton and Thomas Hooker. With the exception of his work concerning the language and culture of the American Indian, all of the works of Roger Williams are concerned with theological and biblical questions. The entire thrust in each of his writings was unavoidably religious as may be evidenced by a random sampling of his works. He would quite often demonstrate a theological point or present a biblical passage by the use of both allegories and metaphors.

In a passage that also will later substantiate his separation, Williams declares that the "Garden of the Churches" of both the New and the Old Testament are separated from the world by a wall. When man destroys this separation by forgetting that his real mission in life is a spiritual one, then he invites God's punishment and the destruction of the worldly. To be saved in the only way that matters, spiritual salvation, man must dedicate his life to the "Garden of the Church."

First the faithful labours of many witnesses of Jesus Christ, extant to the world, abundantly proving, that the Church of the Jews under the Old Testament is the type, and the Church of the Christians under the New Testament is the Antitype, were both separate from the world; and that when they have opened a gap in the hedge or wall of Separation between the Garden of the Church and the Wilderness of the world, God hath ever broke down the wall it selfe, removed the Candlestick, and made his Garden a Wilderness, as at this day. And that therefore if he will ever please to restore his Garden and Paradise again, it must of necessitie be walled in peculiarly unto himself from the world, and that all that shall be saved out of the world are to be trans-

60 Easton, p. 135.
planted out of the Wilderness of world, and added unto his Church or Garden.61

Passages presented later for other identification will demonstrate that Williams' primary motivation was salvation. Williams believed that the faithful must necessarily enforce a separation between the holy and the unholy, and that many of the faithful have suffered being dedicated to the faith of the holy.62 Thus, for Williams, a spiritual salvation was the object of life's work for all men. Anything less than this objective would be the seeking of an evil end.

The primary motivation of Roger Williams was a radical one. A spiritual salvation, as has been commonly held in that tradition, is a union with God in a life both wholly perfect and spiritual.63 Such a salvation as described in the Judeo-Christian tradition is radical in line with our definition earlier. It seeks a reconstruction of life on a base different than at what it is presently constituted. Life on earth is a preparation for the life in the "next." Further, salvation seeks in that new base, the "next life," the pure and root form, simple union with the Creator. The Judeo-Christian salvation is a perfectionism. It seeks a

62 Ibid., p. 393.
63 The word perfect refers to such references as "perfectly happy," "all knowledgeable," "all holy," i.e., sinless and the word spiritual refers to an absence of worldliness.
perfection, an existence beyond the commonly accepted fallible and imperfect existence of man on earth. Attainment of a new existence different than on earth is sought. A union with God in the next life is a wholly spiritual existence. Union with the Omnipotent Being, as God is defined in Judeo-Christian tradition, is a perfect existence. Roger Williams' primary motivation was radical because it sought a salvationist-perfectionism, a union with God.

This thesis is not concerned with Roger Williams' primary motivation though such motivation is considered in it as being definitely related to the later, radical action, separatism, as espoused by him in the course of his seeking perfect salvation. It is not proposed in this thesis either that particular radical and primary motivations have direct causality to particular and radical actions.

Typology, a particular method of biblical interpretation and the theory of the separation of the civil and religious authority are two additional concepts that had an effect upon the radical action of separatism espoused by Roger Williams. Typology relates the Old to the New Testament and attempts to discover symbolic meanings in the Old Testament. It makes it unnecessary and irrelevant to be concerned with actual, historical facts of biblical and Old Testament Israel. The method becomes a figurative drama enacted for a literal-minded people and a rehearsal for the Christian teachings of the New Testament. The entire "cast" of the Old Testament is considered as types, which the anti-types of the New Testament condemn with the true Christian
lessons.

Roger Williams no doubt was exposed to this method. He attended a good preparatory school, the Charterhouse School, and Cambridge University. Typology in literature was common in allegory. John Milton at this time was both a poet and a Puritan. In fact they attended the same university and are reported to have been acquaintances. Williams on some of his visits to England supposedly read Dutch to Milton who didn't know the language. Many of the Reformation writings and Puritan thrust came out of the Netherlands. Various religious sects through history, most particularly the Alexandrine Jews, have used typology. At Cambridge Roger Williams was a student of theology and would have been familiar with it. The Greek language used the allegorical method, especially in Homer. Typology was introduced to Christianity in the third century. Practical scholars through history have opposed the method as an imaginative, capricious and unobjective subversion of the simple truths as taught in the Bible.

Williams used typology far beyond what he is even given credit. Both the "Bloody Tenent of Persecution" and "The Bloody Tenent Yet More Bloody" abound with typological reference, often used to explain or give credence to the theory of the separation of the civil and religious authority, freedom of conscience, toleration in opposition to persecution and to separatism. John Cotton attempted to

64 Miller, p. 34. 65 Ibid. 66 Ibid.
deal with this typology in a chapter by chapter criticism of the "Bloody Tenent of Persecution." Williams in turn rebutted with a tract entitled "The Bloody Tenent Yet More Bloody." In the examination of Chapter XXI of Cotton's reply to the "Bloody Tenent" Williams deals with an Old Testament reference concerning the effect of the existence of the Tares of Wheat amongst the good corn, as a parable of the existence of evil amongst the good. Cotton had argued that the civil authority has the duty to weed out the wicked and protect the holy from evil. Williams arguing for a separation of the civil and religious authority, referred to the Bible and interpreted the various biblical passages Cotton had cited as but types or lessons from a story to which the true Christian would avoid. Cotton had presented them as lessons presented in historical fact. Cotton specifically cites the Old Testament reference of the toleration of Jezabel in the city of Thyatera as an example of the church being guilty of evil. Williams rebuts vehemently. "No, no you have missed the point of the passage, Master Cotton." For Williams the Lord doesn't need the help of a civil power to punish religious evils. His majesty alone is sufficient and He is not vulnerable to a lack of power to punish evil. Using a biblical reference to Thyatira Williams corrects Cotton's literal interpretation.

...It is true, that the church at Thyatira, tolerating Jezabel to seduce, was guilty, yea and I add the City of Thyatira was guilty also if it tolerated Jezabel to seduce to fornication. But what is this to the point of the issue to wit, whether the City of Thyatira should be guilty or not in tolerating Jezabel in that which the City
judgeth to be idolatry and false worship?

Jezabels corporal whoredoms (sinning against civility or state of the City) The City by her Officers ought to punish, lest civil order be broken, and civility be infected, etc. but Jezabels spiritual whoredomes, the civil state ought not to deal with but (there being a church of Christ then in Thyatira, and the spiritual whoredomes there taught and practiced) I say the church in Thyatira, which in the name and power of Christ was armed sufficiently to pass and inflict a dreadful spiritual censure, which God will confirm and ratifie most assuredly and undoubtedly in heaven.

Williams proved and justified the separation of the civil and religious authority by applying a typological methodology to the relation of the Old Testament to the New. He did so by citing God's nature and the senseless, illogical and un-Christian persecution by a civil authority of religious evils that did not break the civil peace. In another passage from the "Bloody Tenent Yet More Bloody," dealing again with the separation of the civil and religious authority, Williams takes Cotton to task for having cited Moses as an example of God allowing the non-separation of the civil and religious authority.

I desire Master Cotton to shew me under Moses, such spiritual censures and punishments beside the cutting off by the civil sword: which if he cannot do, and that since the Christian Church anti-types the Israelitish, and the Christian laws and punishments the laws and punishments of Israel concerning religion, I may truely affirme, that the civil state which may not justly tolerate civil offenders, etc. yet may most justly tolerate spiritual offenders, of whose Deliquency it hath no proper cognizance.


68 Ibid., p. 149.
Williams comments that, "those Scriptures concern a ceremonial land in a ceremonial time, before Christ..." in referring to the Old Testament writings being cited by Cotton. 69 Christ in the Old Testament is considered by Williams as both mystical and real. 70 Israel is referred to as mystical and the coming of Christ as the antitype. 71 The best demonstration is an exchange between Cotton and Williams directly concerning the interpretation of a biblical passage. Cotton interpreting it literally and Williams typologically.

...but (dear truth) deliver your minde concerning the last passage, to wit, Elizahs act in stirring up Ahab to kill all the Priests and prophets of Baal: This act (saith Master Cotton) was not figurative, but moral; for (saith he) Ahab could not be a figure of Christ, nor Israel after their Apostacie, a type of the true Church: Besides, blasphemers ought to die by the law; and Ahab forfeited his own life, because he did not put Benhadad to death for his blasphemy, I Kings 20.

Truth. Christ Jesus is considered two wayes, Christ in his person, and Christ mystical in his church, represented by the Governors thereof. Some say that Israel was not in Ahab's time excommunicated and cut off from Gods sight, until their final carrying out of the land of Canaan, 2 Kings 17. and that Israel remained (though none of Gods in respect of her apostacy, yet) Gods in respect of covenant, until the execution of the sentence of excommunication or divorce: and therefore that Ahab, as King of Israel, Gods people (until Israel ceased to be Israel) was a figure of Christ, that is, Christ in his presence, in his governors, in his church, though faln to idolatry under admonition, not yet cast off. 72

The theory of the separation of the civil and religious

authority, as held by Williams, is interwoven with his typology. Williams separated the Church of the Old Testament from the Church of the New Testament in his typological interpretation. Williams states that God will punish acts against His law without the civil authority. Through typology Williams saw the Old Testament as a type to which the teachings of Christ in the New Testament were the antitype.

...The Church of the Jews under the Old Testament is the type, and the Church of the Christians under the New Testament is the Antitype, were both separate from the world; and that when they have opened a gap in the hedge or wall of Separation between the Garden of the Church and the Wilderness of the world, God hath ever broke down the wall it selfe, removed the Candlestick, and made his Garden a Wilderness, as at this day.73

Using the typological method, Williams demonstrates that Israel and the law of Moses cannot be cited as justification for the use of civil authority to enforce religious laws. When Cotton cited Israel, Moses, the Tares of Wheat and Jezabel at Thyatira as examples of justification for the civil punishing religious evils, Williams retorted as follows:

...Jezabels corporal whoredoms (sinning against civility or state of the City) the City by her Officers ought to punish, lest civil order be broken, and civility be infected, etc. but Jezabels spiritual whoredoms, the civil state ought not to deal with....74

I desire Master Cotton to shew me under Moses, such spiritual censures and punishments beside the cutting off by the civil sword: which if he cannot do, and that since the

74 Caldwell, Vol. IV, p. 146.
Typology, as used by Roger Williams, is significant to understand his eventual radical act, a complete separation of religious and civil authority from the Massachusetts Colony. It is his typological interpretations that the whole of the Puritan ministry would oppose. A definite relationship between this typology and the theory of the separation of the civil and religious authority would exist. The typology of Roger Williams provided him with a particular view of history from which particular interpretations could be related to subsequent theories and actions. It is this method of interpretation that is central to his thought and to his differences with the Massachusetts divines and most ministers in the Protestant, Calvin-Luther tradition. Through typology the meaning of the entire Old Testament, the New Testament as the Old related to it, Israel and even the coming of Christ all took on a meaning and significance different than the more traditional method of interpreting the Bible. The traditional presented a continuous historical record showing the power, glory, and teachings of a divine God. Typology contrasted the Old to the New, achieving an actual break between the two.

I have purposely used passages that were used to

\[75\text{Ibid., p. 149.}\]
identify the typology of Williams to also identify the theory of the separation of the civil and religious authority in order to underscore the relationship between the method of Williams and the various theories held by him. Further passages in Williams' thought will be considered to demonstrate the relationship between the theory of the separation of the civil and religious authority and specific issues such as freedom of conscience, civil toleration, religious liberty and persecution.

The "Bloudy Tenent of Persecution" published in 1644 offers some of the most explicit comments concerning the separation of the civil and religious authority. The "Bloudy Tenent" was somewhat independent of Williams' earlier "Examination of Cotton's Letter," but its content is related to it. It specifically deals with the cause of conscience for which Williams claims Massachusetts is persecuting him.

Williams identifies in this tract what the civil and religious authority owe each other and the basis of authority for the civil magistrate. He argues that civil power, being of a human origin and constitution, can be but only of human origin. The civil power owes three things to the religious authority: 1) Approbation (sanction), 2) Submission i.e., in those things Godly the civil power leaves to God and 3) Protection. Unless these are granted and a distinction made, says Williams, the civil authority is on false grounds.

Peace. Some will here aske, what may the Magistrate then lawfully doe with his Civill horne or power in matters of Religion? Truth. His horne not being the horne of that Unicorn or Rhinocerot, the power of
the Lord Jesus in Spirituall cases, his sword not the two-edged sword of the Spirit, the word of God (hanging not about the loines or side, but at the lips, and proceeding out of the mouth of his Ministers) but of an humane and civil nature and constitution, it must consequently be of a humane and Civill operation, for who knowes not that operation followes constitution? and therefore I shall end this passage with this consideration:

The Civil Magistrate either respecteth that Religion and Worship which his conscience is persuaded is true, and upon which he ventures his Soule: or else that and those which he is persuaded are false.

Williams warns Cotton that the magistrate who lends his civil authority to matters religious violates the rightful separation of the two and goes against the intent and practice of God and His first ministers, the Apostles. To prove this, Williams once again goes to Scripture and reminds Cotton of the abuses of political and ecclesiastical authorities being wedded amongst the princes of Europe and the church, especially the Roman Church. He calls forth passages from Numbers 23 and Psalms 92 where the unicorn or rhinoceros represents the authority of God and a bull represents the civil authority. The reference to horns refers to civil power.

...yet I confidently affirme, that neither the Lord Jesus nor his first ordained Ministers and Churches (gathered by such Ministers) did ever weare, or crave the help of such hornes in Spiritual and Christian Offaires: The Spirituall power of the Lord Jesus in the hands of his true Ministers and Churches (according to Balaams prophesie Number 23) is the horne of that Unicorne or Rhinocerot (Psalms 92) which is the strongest horne in the world, in comparison

---

of which the strongest horns of the Bulls of Basan breake as sticks and reeds. Historie tells us how that Unicorne or one-horned Beast the Rhinocerot, take up a Bull like a Tennis ball, in the theater at Rome before the Emperour, according to that record of the Poet.77

Speaking specifically to the power of the magistrate, Williams identifies the role of the magistrate. In doing so he soundly castigates Cotton and the Massachusetts magistrates who judged him guilty of violating the laws of Massachusetts, without distinguishing the civil from the religious. He does so, again with the use of the typological method of biblical interpretation.

All lawful Magistrates in the World, both before the coming of Christ Jesus, and since, (excepting those unparaleled typical Magistrates of the Church of Israel) are but Derivatives and Agents immediately derived and employed as eyes and hands, serving for the good of the whole: Hence they have and can have no more Power, then fundamentally lies in the Bodies or Fountaine themselves, which Power, Might, or Authority, is not Religious, Christian, etc. but natural, humane and civill.78

This passage also underscores a previous point, one quite often unnoticed, concerning Israel as an exception to the theory of separating the civil and religious authority. He excepts Israel on the ground that it was the perfect type in the Old Testament, to which only the coming of Christ was needed as an antitype. Again, to Williams Israel was the prefiguration of Christ, the perfect state where all religious and civil authority were one. No such state existed before or since.79

77Ibid., p. 370. 78Ibid., p. 398.
In an exchange of letters between John Cotton and Roger Williams first appearing in London in 1644, Williams ends his "Letter of John Cotton Examined and Answered" by asking Cotton if Christ walked the earth at this time what church would he join, what ministry would he practice and what government would he set up? As if the questions themselves weren't destructive enough to Cotton's arguments, Williams then reminds him of the persecution that he himself had suffered at the hands of magistrates who went against God's intent and scriptural lessons. He felt he had been persecuted for his religious beliefs in spite of the fact that no civil disorder had taken place or could be proven. He asks Cotton once again if Christ did again walk the earth "...what persecution he would practice toward them that would not receive Him?" 80

In some of his most explicit and probably angriest language and with specific reference to persecution and punishment by civil authorities in religious matters, Williams, in the "Bloody Tenent Yet More Bloody" sums up the case for separation of civil and religious authority and those that persecute, against the reason of God, for beliefs not of the civil order. He again states that Israel is but a type and that the non-separation of civil and religious authority was not contrary to his theory. Israel was the only true prefiguration of Christ and the one true, scriptural Church before Christ. The sword of Israel was

spiritual and not civil, since it was the Church of Christ before Christ. He argues further that civil magistrates get their power from the people and thus can only act in civil affairs, whereas, God's ministers receive their power from God and thus can only act in religious matters. 81

The separation of the civil and religious authority as held by Williams thought was not radical in the same way as his primary motivation, salvationist-perfection. His primary motivation was radical by definition and devoid of its application to specific theories or actions. The theory of separation of the civil and religious authority was radical by definition, but only to the society of the Massachusetts Colony as it existed at that time. It would not be radical in present times in the United States, since a separation of the civil and religious authorities exist today as a matter of policy. To propose such a theory would be to propose no change at all, but would instead merely assert something that already exists in modern America. The seeking of a salvationist-perfectionism is radical today as then because no such situation exists in this life. By definition it can only exist in the next life. The difference should be noted, but it doesn't take away from the radical thrust of Williams' thought as applied in 17th century, colonial Massachusetts.

Roger Williams proposed that freedom of conscience was a necessity for the proper seeking of Christ's true Church.

Any persecution, whether by civil or religious authorities, that sought to interfere with such seeking was against the spirit of the true Church and God Himself. In such an instance, civil authorities must be most tolerant of the Seekers. This belief took Williams one step closer to the radical action of separatism. He now argued not only for the freedom of restriction and persecution in religious matters from the civil authority, but from the religious as well. Williams argues that no one minister of God or civil magistrate, should interfere with the conscience of a man seeking his salvation, no matter how wrong or how right that man may be. It is here that Williams uncovers for us the name of the religion that he practiced; he was a Seeker. Persecution of a man's conscience by either civil or religious authorities is an act unlawful, un-Godly and anti-Christ. Any authority constituted on such a persecution, whether it be church or state, is wrongfully constituted and preventing man from pursuing his conscience as he sees fit. It is here that some modern observers see Williams as only the political libertarian, the "Irrepressible Democrat" and the "Gentle Radical."82 This thesis recognizes that Williams was primarily theological and sought salvation. All else serve this end and social systems and institutions were subservient to his theology. As such he was not primarily a democrat, but rather chose democratic means as facilities to achieve a theological end.

In a letter to the Church of Salem written shortly after July, 1635, Roger Williams asserts the right of the congregation as being greater than the authority of the officers of the church. Williams had sent various letters to the Salem congregation, but the officers of the church had withheld them from the congregation.

We have not yet apprehended it to be the choice of the officers of a Church, when public letters are sent from sister Churches, to deliver or not to deliver the letters unto the body; we acknowledge it their liberty and duty to order wisely for convenience and due reason of presenting the Church with them, but wholly to conceal or suppress the letters we see not. Our reasons are, amongst others, these two: 1st, because they are the Church's, not the officers. The Church hath the right which the officers may not assume unto themselves....Our 2nd reason is, because the presence of our Lord Jesus is most especially promised and...to the whole body met together in his name, than to one or all the elders....

Williams quite clearly states that the congregation of a church, the congregation of those seeking Christ, are greater than a church's elders. Williams reasoned that since those seeking were the true congregation, elders or officers of a church are there to serve them and not to dictate to them. He also argues that the truth of the Lord comes to those who seek, to the whole body of the believers and not just to its elders or leaders. Freedom of conscience to Williams was more than a political or church issue, it was an issue of liberating the person from that which would pre-

vent him from seeking the true church and hence salvation. Anyone who restricted or persecuted did so against God Himself. As he put it, "...the Doctrine of Persecution for cause of Conscience, is most evidently and lamentably contrary to the doctrine of Christ Jesus, the Prince of Peace." 84

Roger Williams compared the material world with a ship, with on board many souls of different origins and beliefs. The captain of the ship rules the ship in matters of seamanship, but does not tell the passengers what to believe. Even the Christian pilot cannot tell fellow christians what to believe.

So that the thread of Navigation being equally spun by a believing or unbelieving Pilot, yet is it drawn over with the gold of Godliness and Christianitie by a Christian Pilot while he is holy in all manner of Christianitie, I. Pet. I. 15. But lastly, the Christian Pilots power over the Soules and consciences of his Sailers and Passengers is not greater then that of the Antichristian, otherwise then he can subdue the soules of any by the two-edged sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, and by his holy demeanor in his place, etc. 85

The extent to which Roger Williams practiced freedom of conscience himself is shown in two separate tracts. Williams did not favor the Quaker Church nor did he believe in paganism, but these two tracts are living proof of his desire not to interfere with the right of persons who wished to believe in such doctrines. Rhode Island allowed any religion or none at all to be practiced within its boundaries. Several Quakers, the most famous of whom was George Fox.

---

engaged in theological controversy with those not believing in Quakerism in the American colonies. In Massachusetts they were persecuted, but in Rhode Island they were not. Williams, however, publicly debated leaders of the Quaker Church in Rhode Island, bitterly disagreeing with their thought, but never violating and even defending their right to that thought. That debate is recorded in the tract: "George Fox Digged Out of his Burrows." He didn't persecute them because of his political or libertarian views, but, as previous passages pointed out, to do so would be to interfere with a man's seeking of God and salvation. To fool with that would be to desecrate the holy. Political liberty was but the facility to protect this.

In the tract "Christenings Make Not Christians" Williams defends against his fellow Christian ministers the role he had had amongst the Indians. Williams had become quite a famous expert on the American Indian, even publishing a tract, "A Key to the Language of America," dealing only with the language and culture of the tribes to which he was exposed. He became quite famous as an ambassador and peacemaker during the many Indian incidents in the early colonies. The tradition for all Christian ministers was to be missionaries when amongst the heathens. Williams, sticking to his belief that the purity of the seeking is to be protected at all cost, that is the freedom of ones conscience, argued that christenings and the imparting of holy doctrine or teachings, does not make a Christian. Only a real conversion done through an unfettered seeking is truly Chris-
Poking at both the logic and conscience of John Cotton in the opening of "Mr. Cotton's Letter Examined and Answered," Williams asked Cotton to explain the paradox of Christian Massachusetts. On the one hand it espouses that all men live together with Jesus Christ, yet will not allow some persons to live within their colony and breathe the common air. He, of course, is referring to the Massachusetts practice of allowing in their midst only those who believed in the religious beliefs of the colony. The others were prosecuted if not repentent.

Mr. Cotton
Beloved in Christ.

Answer. Though I humbly desire to acknowledge my selfe unworthy to be beloved and most of all unworthy of the name of Christ and to be beloved for his sake: yet since Mr. Cotton is pleased to use such an affectionate compellation and testimoniall expression to one so afflicted and persecuted by Himselhe and others (whom for their personal worth and godliness I also honour and love) I desire it may be seriously reviewed by Himselhe and Them, and all men, whether the Lord Jesus be well pleased that one, beloved in him, should (for no other cause then shall presently appeare) be denied the common aire to breath in, and a civill cohabitation upon the same common earth: yea and also without mercy and humane compassion be exposed to winter miseries in a howling Wilderness.

Roger Williams as pointed out previously argued in his writings that the punishments and persecutions of Israel in Scripture were types, types of spiritual not civil punishments and persecutions. He considered as being in error.


those who preached and practiced civil punishment and persecution for spiritual wrongs. Their error was by scriptural misinterpretation. To further expand his point that not even the *spiritual* should enforce religious opinion, Williams states that a peaceful congregation can be achieved, if that is the only end desired. It will, however, be through enforcement and not knowledge of the truth of Christ Jesus by the faithful. Williams was answering the claim of John Cotton that no church ever prospered from a congregation separated from its ministers.

Ans. The want of peace may befall the truest Churches of the Lord Jesus at Antioch, Corinth, Galatia, who were exercised with great distractions. Secondly, it is a common character of a false Church, maintained by the Smiths and Cutlers Shop, to enjoy a quiet calm and peaceable tranquility, none daring for fear of civil punishment, to question, object, or differ from the common road and custom. Thus sings that great whore the Antichristian Church....

A heretic for Williams was one who went against the Word of God. As such he was guilty of a spiritual and not a civil wrong. He tells John Cotton that the Massachusetts Puritan belief that it is the duty of a good Christian to persecute heretics is based upon a false reading of Scripture. The Puritan divines commonly cited scriptural evidence upholding the just punishment of heretics by the civil state. Williams refers to one such citation in the scripture: Titus and the Church of Crete. The passage demonstrates the importance of both his typological interpretation of Scrip-

---

88 Ibid., p. 332. 89 Ibid., p. 383.
ture and the role of the civil authority, the magistrate and freedom of conscience. As shown below Titus who punished a heretic was a biblical type. A type that demonstrated the purpose of religious excommunication and not civil punishment.

First then, Titus, unto whom this Epistle and these directions were written...he was no minister of the Civill State, armed with the majestie and terour of a materiall sword, who might for offences against the Civill state, inflict punishment upon the bodies of men...Titus was a minister of the Gospel or Glad Tidings, armed only with the Spiritual Sword of the Word of God.... Therefore these first and second Admonitions were not civill or corporall punishments on mens persons or purses, which the Courts of Men may lawfully inflict upon Malefactors: but they were reprehensions, convictions, exhortations, and perswasions of the Word of the Eternall God, charged home to the Conscience...which being despised and not hearkened to...follows rejection; which is not a cutting off by heading, hanging, burning, etc. or an expelling of the Country and Coasts: neither of which...Titus nor the Church at Crete had any power to excercise. But it was that dreadful cutting off from that visible Head and Body, Christ Jesus his Church...the putting away of the evil and wicked person from the holy Land and Commonwealth of Gods Israel... where it is observable, that the same word used by Moses for putting a malefactor to death in typical Israel, by sword, stoning...is here used by Paul for the Spirituall killing or cutting off by Excommunication....

In the "Blody Tenent" Williams describes several aspects of the basis of his persecution for conscience sake. One of them is what we have already demonstrated, the proper separation of the civil and religious authority according to Scripture. The others demonstrate Williams' belief in the absolute freedom of conscience, at least in things religious

---

from any authority, civil or church and his preparation for his eventual separation.

I acknowledge that to molest any person, Jew or Gentile, for either professing doctrine, or practicing worship merely religious or spiritually, it is to persecute him, and such a person...suffereth persecution for conscience.

...This distinction is not full and complete: For beside this...a man may also be persecuted, because he dares not be constrained to yield obedience to such doctrines and worship as are by men invented and appointed. So the three famous Jewes were cast into the fiery furnace for refusing to fall down before the golden Image.91

Williams states that the civil and religious powers should not tamper with the consciences of men. They should not even condemn as wrong those ministers who believe that persons who fall from the fundamentals of religion can be saved. Thus Williams, as a Christian minister, undermines not only the practices and forms of worship, but the very foundation of the "ingredients" of salvation. At the end of the passage he even infers that this lesson is found in Scripture: typology again.

To this distinction I dare not subscribe, for then I should everlastingly condemn thousands, and then thousands, yea the whole generation of the righteous, who since the falling away (from the first primitive Christian state or worship) have and do err fundamentally concerning the true matter, constitution, gathering and governing of the Church: and yet farre be it from any pious breast to imagine that they are not saved, and that their soules are not bound up in the bundle of eternall life.92

All persecutors, says Williams, claim that they operate in the name of truth, justice, law and order. As all perse-

91 Ibid., p. 63. 92 Ibid., p. 64.
cutors of Christ claim, they persecute evil for Christ. In fact, the worst of persecutors may well be those who persecute in Christ's name. The persecution of conscience, for Williams, hurts both the true and the erroneous conscience, not as its persecutors claim, only the evil ones.\textsuperscript{93} Persecutors pretend to preserve and save, but persecution can only destroy. They interfere with the one human instrument which can seek the true way and find salvation, the free conscience.\textsuperscript{94} Jesus Christ Himself, says Williams, is the perfect example of one persecuted in the name of truth and justice and called a heretic by the people.\textsuperscript{95} The righteousness of the persecutor is far greater than those who have found Christ. The righteous persecutor is against the persecution of those who believe as he does. He is for persecution, in the name of God, truth, justice etc. to those who do not believe as he believes.

For will my honoured and beloved friend not know me for feare of being disowned by his Conscience? Shall the Goodness and Integrities of his Conscience to God cause him to forget me?...Oh how comes it then that I have heard so often and heard so lately, and heard so much, that he that speaks so tenderly for his owne, hath yet so little respect, mercie or pitie to the like consciencious persuasions of other Men? Are all the thousands of millions of millions of Consciences, at home and abroad, fuelled onely for a prison, for a whip for a stake, for a Gallowes? Are no Consciences to breathe the Aire, but such as suit and sample his?....

But what makes this to Heretickes, Blasphemers, Seducers, to them that sin against Conscience (as Mr. Cotton sayeth) after

\textsuperscript{93}Ibid., pp. 77, 81-83.\hfill \textsuperscript{94}Caldwell, Vol. IV, p. 422.
\textsuperscript{95}Ibid., p. 468.
Conviction?

First,...He was a tyrant that put an Innocent Man into a Beares-skin and so caused him as a wild Beast to be bruted to Death.

Secondly, I say this is the common cry of Hunters or persecutors...and why, but for crossing the persecutors Consciences,....

This is the autory of the Pope and Prelates, and of the Scotch Presbyterians, who would fire all the world, to be avenged on the Sectarian Heretickes, the blasphemous Heretickes, the seducing Heretickes....

Roger Williams maintained that the defenders of the peace who persecute for conscience sake are the real peace breakers.97 The evils of conscience, spiritual, should be punished only by God. He cited the Tares of Wheat in Scripture as an example where the bad grew along with the good and the bad was thrown away at the harvest. The harvester of good and bad in things of conscience is God.98 The ministers of God must restrain themselves from persecuting consciences or requiring the civil authority to do it.99 He was attacking both the minister who exhorted the civil authorities to punish spiritual wrongs as well as those societies that combine the ministry and the magistrate in the same person. Civil punishments do not heal spiritual wrongs and, in fact, can multiply them. The spread of Christianity is an example of the success caused by persecution. Spiritual injustices and punishments are to be judged by God only.100


100 Ibid., p. 124.
Roger Williams was very bitter about the fact that Christian ministers would persecute for causes of conscience. He felt that persecution, if it came at all, should come from pagans. Martyrdom for Christianity at the hands of pagans could be worthwhile, but by Christians would be tragic. On this ground Cotton and other Puritan divines in Massachusetts were accused of being anti-Christian.

...Doth not that persecutor that hunts or persecuteth a Turke, a Jew, a Pagan, an Anti-Christian, (under the pretence that this Pagan, this Turke, this Jew, this Antichristian sins against his owne Conscience) doth not this persecutor, I say, hould a greater Errour, then any of the foure, because he hardens such Consciences in their errours by such his persecution, and that also to the overthrowing of the civil and humane societies of the Nations of the World, in point of civill peace?\textsuperscript{101}

Persecution against conscience is not bad because of fondness for libertarian principles, but because liberty, as a facility, is the only way to really find salvation. Persecution of consciences that are in error hardens error and doesn't correct it. Only freedom of conscience can allow an open mind to let the light of Jesus and the way of salvation into man's soul.

Truth. Sweet Peace, that which hath in all Ages powred out the precious blood of the Sonne of God, in the bloud of his poore sheepe, shall never be found whited (as Mr. Cotton insinuates) in the bloud of this most heavenly Shepheard: That which hath maintained the workes of Darkness 1600 yeares under the bloudie Romane Emperours, and more bloudie Romane Popes, hath never tended to destroy, but build and fortifie such hellish workes. That which all experience (since Christ's

\textsuperscript{101}Caldwell, Vol. IV, p. 474.
time) hath shewn to be the great Fire-brand or Incendiarie of the Nations, hath powred out so many Rivers of bloud about Religion, and that amongst the (so called) Christian Nations. That Tenent, I say, will never be found a preserver, but a bloudie destroyer both of Spiritual and civill peace.\textsuperscript{102}

In the closing of a piece written to the clergy of England, Scotland and Ireland, Williams woefully states that little of the spirit of the love of Jesus Christ exists. Self-love and righteous, persecuting consciences deform our search for Christ and salvation. We have fallen to the worship of conventions and traditions. These can only be the prelude to the belief in a doctrine of persecution to all who don't believe in these forms.\textsuperscript{103}

In the concluding passages of the "Bloudy Tenent" Williams was still a bit hopeful that, somehow, someway, God's truth will show man the error in persecution of conscience and ends affirming his belief in God: "...the Doctrine of Persecution for cause of Conscience, is most evidently and lamentably contrary to the doctrine of Christ Jesus the Prince of Peace. Amen."\textsuperscript{104}

The "Bloudy Tenent Yet More Bloudy" ends on a somewhat different note. While still believing in God and having faith in his wisdom and justice, Williams has not righted the wrong of his persecution. Massachusetts is as adamant as ever in its decision. He concludes this piece with a resignation to persecution and a certain comfort in his

\textsuperscript{102} Ibid., pp. 474-475. \textsuperscript{103} Ibid., p. 529.

exile.

Truth. But see (my heavenly sister and true stranger in this Sea-like restless, raging World) see here what Fires and Swords are come to part us! Well; Our meetings in the Heavens shall not thus be interrupted, our Kisses thus distracted, and our eyes and cheeks thus wet, unwiped: For me, though censured, threatened, persecuted, I must profess, while Heaven and Earth lasts, that no one Tenant that either London, England, or the World doth harbour, is so heretaul, blasphemus, seditious, and dangerous to the corporal, to the Spirituall, to the present, to the Eternall Good of all Men, as the bloudie Tenant (how ever wash't and whited) I say, as is the bloudie Tenant of persecution for cause of Conscience. 105

For Williams freedom of conscience was a facility that allowed man to seek the true way and persecution for conscience sake was a barrier to the only true religion, Seekerism. Williams felt that the true church was one devoid of all forms ie., prayer, ceremonies, traditions etc., and instead a simple and whole-hearted seeking. He lamented how mankind had set up so many different forms and kinds of religions, all missing the fundamental matter of a true church, the teachings of Christ and salvation. 106

...Gods promise assures us, that his people returning from Captivity shall seek him, and pray, and find him, when they seek him with their whole heart. 107

To Roger Williams whole hearted seeking was the true Church of Christ and the only way to find him and attain salvation.

One point must be made before discussing the issue of separation in Williams' writings. Though he promoted the separation of the civil and religious authority and the freedom of conscience from persecution, Williams was not a civil anarchist. He believed and stated so, that a breaker of the civil peace must and should be punished, even if he did so in the name of conscience and religion. Punishment could be just only if there existed the separation of the civil and religious and freedom of conscience. Punishment would then be for a breach purely of the civil peace. If it was as it existed in Massachusetts, no such civil punishment could be justly carried out in those cases where punishment was to protect the official religion of the Colony. 108

...the conscience of the civil Magistrate must incite him to civil punishment...If the conscience of the worshippers of the Beast incite them to prejudice prince or state, Although these consciences be not...(commonly convinced of the evil of his fact but) persuaded of the lawfulness of their actions; yet so far as the civil state is endamaged or endangered, I say the sword of God in the hand of the civil authority is strong enough to defend it self, either by imprisoning or disarming, or other wholesome meanes, etc. while yet their consciences ought to be permitted in what is merely point of worship, as prayer, and other services and administrations. 109

Roger Williams espoused the theory of separatism, separation from the existing social structure when it failed to allow the consciences of men to freely seek Christ and salvation. As long as Massachusetts would enforce a particular

109 Ibid., pp. 143-144.
religion, then it was best to separate from the colony to better seek the Lord and salvation. Williams did not become a separatist only because Massachusetts began to persecute him for his religious beliefs. Separatism was existent in his thought as early as during the period of his education in England. The crucial point is, however, that separatism for Williams followed logically from both his primary motivation, salvationist-perfectionism, and the theory of the separation of the civil and religious authority with its various sub-theories, freedom of conscience, religious liberty, etc. This is not to say that a particular radical and primary motivation causes a particular radical action. It does say that for Roger Williams, both his primary motivation and the secondary theory had an apparent determination on his radical action of separatism. Two things should be identified in his thought to maintain this point: 1) that which demonstrates a determining relationship between the primary motivation and the secondary theory and his separatism, and 2) separatism as chronologically existent in his early life. The second point will be dealt with first.

Roger Williams held the religious views, including that of separatism, which eventually led to his confrontation with the Massachusetts magistrates, when in England. While I have been unable to pinpoint the exact time at which Williams became a dedicated Seeker and accepted separatism as a modus operandi when confronting a persecuting and erroneous church, I have been able to determine that when he sailed for Massachusetts his Seeker and separatist views had
already formed and matured.

In refusing the offer of the Boston Church, he was but steadfast in his old and well-known opinion....At first coming to the new country, he plainly announced the controlling beliefs of his thought, that he meant to make the controlling principles of his life....110

The case can be made that Williams, if not a mature seeker and separatist when he sailed for Massachusetts, was well on his way. One of the best pieces of evidence for this position is Williams' refusal of a ministry immediately upon arriving at Boston because the colony had not separated from the old church in England.

At a court holden at Boston...a letter was written from the court to Mr. Endecott to this effect: That whereas Mr. Williams had refused to join with the congregation at Boston, because they would not make a public declaration of their repentance for having communion with the churches of England...and, besides, had declared his position, that the magistrate might not punish the breach of the Sabbath, nor any other offence, as it was a breach of the first table....111

This passage recorded on April of 1631 by Winthrop, is significant because it recognizes his views of renouncing those churches that had not separated from the old and in addition it identifies his theory of the separation of the civil and religious authority at an early date in Massachusetts. The identification in Williams' thought which demonstrates a determining relationship between his primary motivation and secondary theory and his separatism will be considered below.

110 Ralph Barton Perry, Puritanism and Democracy (New York, 1944), p. 71.

The events and issues leading to the banishment in October of 1635 by the civil authorities of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, with the full consent and urging of the ministers of the churches of Massachusetts, can be viewed from the writings of three of its original participants; John Winthrop, Governor of Massachusetts until 1634 and during much of the controversy over Williams; John Cotton, a correspondent with Williams concerning many major issues and Roger Williams himself.

In November of 1633 Winthrop recorded in his Journal that Williams had stated that he felt the church at Salem might, "grow in time to a presbytery or superintendency, to the prejudice of the churches 'liberties.'" In December of that same year the governor and magistrates met at Boston to discuss a treatise that Roger Williams had forwarded them challenging the Christianity of Europe and the King's patent i.e., his right to lawfully grant the colonists land in New England. The treatise had originally been sent to the governor and council of Plymouth.

...among other things, he disputes their right to the lands they possessed here, and concluded that, claiming by King's grant, they could have no title, nor otherwise, except they compounded with the natives. For this, taking advice with some of the most judicious ministers, (who much condemned Mr. Williams's error and Presumption) they gave order, that he should be convened at the next court, to be censured, etc. There were three passages chiefly whereat they were much offended: 1, for that he chargeth King James to have told a solemn public lie, because in his patent he blessed God that he was the first Christian

112 Ibid., p. 113.
prince that had discovered this land, 2, for that he chargeth him and others with blasphemy for calling Europe Christendom, or the Christian world; 3, for that he did personally apply to our present king, Charles, these three places in the Revelations, ....

At the court proceedings Williams evidently presented himself in such a way that satisfied the court, for Winthrop records that he "...gave satisfaction of his intention and loyalty so it was left, and nothing done in it." In July of 1635 another General Court was called concerning certain statements made by Roger Williams. The charges against Williams as laid down by

...the magistracy and churches for divers dangerous opinions, viz. 1, that the magistrate ought not to punish the breach of the first table, otherwise than in such cases as did disturb the civil peace; 2, that he ought not to tender an oath to an unregenerate man; 3, that a man ought not to pray with such, though wife, child etc.; 4, that a man ought not to give thanks after the sacrament nor after meat, etc.; and that the other churches were about to write to the church of Salem to admonish him of these errors....

The court considered the charges and all of the magistrates and ministers found, as Winthrop records, that these teachings of Williams "...to be erroneous, and very dangerous, and the calling of him to office, at that time, was judged a great contempt of authority." The magistrates and ministers put pressure upon the congregation at Salem to rebuke Williams who was a minister there. The Salem Church had instead sent letters of rebuke to the other churches, ministers and magistrates in the colony who did not support Williams. The

\[113\text{Ibid., pp. 116-117.} \quad 114\text{Ibid., p. 117.} \quad 115\text{Ibid., p. 154.} \quad 116\text{Ibid.}\]
Salem Church had petitioned the General Court in Massachusetts for some land. The court refused to consider the petition while Roger Williams, their minister, was being held in contempt of their authority. In addition the deputies of the Salem Church would not be received at General Court until they should rescind their criticism of the other churches, ministers and magistrates. From the several pages of discourse taken from Winthrops Journal one may glean: 1) the references to both ministers and magistrates at the court and 2) Williams' request that the Salem Church separate from the others (not to have communion with them). The first strengthens Williams' claim of the non-separation of the civil and religious authority in the Massachusetts Colony and the second demonstrates his separatism as a means to a true church.

In October of 1635 Williams was still holding on to his views and was therefore banished from the colony. He was given six weeks in which to leave. At a later General Court it was found that he not only had not left, but holding onto his views, he was still meeting in his house to discuss with others his doctrines. When the court finally sent an enforcement party to his house, he had left for the wilderness several days before.

Nearly ten years later in a tract entitled "Mr. Cotton's Letter Lately Printed, Examined and Answered" Roger Williams, referring to the charges against him, states:

117Ibid. 118Ibid., p. 163.
I acknowledge the particulars were rightly summed up, and I also hope, that, as I then maintained the rocky strength of them to my own and other consciences satisfaction...I shall be ready for the same grounds, not only to be bound and banished, but to die also, in New England, as for most holy truths of God in Christ Jesus.¹¹⁹

Williams admitted that while the Massachusetts civil authorities in conjunction with the Massachusetts, Puritan ministry, banished him, his exile was voluntary, that is, self-inflicted since he persisted in his views after continuous warnings and knowing well the eventual action the magistrates would have to take. Williams agreed only that his voluntary act was applicable to the religious and not the civil authorities. He saw no violation of civil law. He argued with Cotton that if this was a civil violation and banishment, why for religious reasons, and if a religious violation why a civil banishment and not a religious excommunication. Williams typology underscores his thinking on this point. To Williams, the Old Testament lesson concerning banishment was a religious one only, an excommunication. Since the stories related in the Old Testament were but fiction to teach a lesson, the physical banishment portrayed did not take place, but was emphasized to teach the moral lesson. Williams accuses Cotton not only of banishing him civilly for religious wrongs, an argument that would have been considered strange and somewhat dangerous if Williams had his way, but also of misreading the Bible, a charge much stronger and more deeply getting at the real split be-

¹¹⁹Ibid., p. 325.
tween Williams and the ministers. As he put it:

... I confess it was my own voluntary act: ... and lastly his (God's) act in enabling me to be faithful in any measure to suffer such great and mighty trials for his names sake. But if by banishing my self he intend the act of civil banishment from their common earth and aire, I then observe with grief the language of the dragon in a lambs lip. Among other expressions of the dragon are not these common to the witnesses of the Lord Jesus rent and torn by his persecutions? Go now, say you are persecuted, you are persecuted for Christ, suffer for your conscience: no, it is you schisme, heresey, obstinancy, the devil hath deceived thee, thou has justly brought this upon thee, thou hast banished thy self ....

Secondly, if he mean this civil act of banishing, why should he call a civil sentence from the civil state .... Why should he call this a banishment from the churches, except he silently confess, that the frame or constitution of their churches is but implicitly national .... for otherwise why was I not yet permitted to live in the commonwealth, except for this reason, that the commonwealth and church is yet but one, and he that is banished from the one, must necessarily be banished from the other also ....

John Cotton in a work entitled "A Reply to Mr. Williams His Examination" refers to the banishment of Williams as a civil act, though he recognizes his religious heresey. Cotton uses a strict civil rhetoric, such as, seditious in justifying Williams' civil banishment. Although Cotton upholds the banishment as a correct, civil one, it should not be lost that the religious heresey of Williams was also being prosecuted. The Massachusetts Colony was sworn to uphold the official religion and therefore Williams' civil disobedience and religious heresey were the same. In the last passage he states that Williams refused to desist from

120 Ibid., pp. 325-327.
his actions and therefore the state had no alternative but to remove him from the colony.

...whereas the truth is, his banishment proceeded not against him, or his, for his own refusal of any worship, but for seditious opposition against the patent, and against the oath of fidelity offered to the people.

2. That he was subject to the civil estate, and laws thereof, when yet he vehemently opposed the civil foundation of the civil estate, which was the patent: and earnestly also opposed the law of the general court, by which the tender of that oath was enjoined: and also wrote letters of admonition to all the churches, whereof the magistrates were members, for deferring to give present answer to a petition of Salem, who had refused to hearken to a lawful motion of theirs.

3. That he did but separate from the spiritual society of a church, or Saints: whereas he both drew away many others also....

4. In that he maketh the cutting off of persons, them and theirs, branch and rush, from civil territories, a far more heinous and odious offence in the eyes of the Lord Jesus, than himself to cut off, not only himself and his, branch and rush, but many of his neighbors (by sedition) from spiritual communion with the churches, and all the churches from communion with Christ. As if the cutting of persons, them and theirs, branch and rush, from the covenant, and spiritual ordinances in the Church, were a matter of no account in respect of cutting off from civil liberties in the territories of the commonwealth.

...though he was openly convinced in open court...that he could not maintain his way, but by sinning against the light of his own conscience.121

Roger Williams and John Cotton in their correspondence refer to the points of banishments in different ways and with different emphasis. But, basically, they agree. According to Perry Miller, the charges against Williams are summed up as follows: 1) the colony could not hold title to its land

by the charter given it by the King since the land never belonged to the King, but to the Indians, 2) no unregenerated man could legally be required to pray or take an oath, 3) it was illegal for persons to hear ministers who had not repented from their service in the parish or Anglican churches in England. As such he was requiring the Massachusetts Church to separate from the English Church and 4) civil power be restricted to civil acts and not to religious concerns or causes of conscience. In some references it is stated that the magistrate be denied enforcement of the first four of the Ten Commandments, "the First Table." The general meaning is clear, however, civil power is to be restricted to the "outward state of mankind."^122

In the thought of Roger Williams there is a definite relationship between his primary motivation of salvationist-perfectionism and subsequent views of the true church and how best to seek it and his act of separatism. Separatism for Williams was more than a last resort when all else fails, all else meaning the conversion of others. This was a central part to his belief of the true church. For Williams, separatism was an act of spiritual purification from past evils as well as the physical removal that occurred in 1635.

For Williams a church may be put together and dissolved without any disturbance of the civil peace. This counters the argument of the magistrates that separation, such as

demanded by Williams in the case of the Massachusetts churches from the English Church, was dangerous to the civil peace. He also condemns as puritan hypocrisy the belief in using civil power in religious cases: why should only a particular religion be enforced? Doesn't justice demand that all religions be protected? The best protection a civil power can give religion is to protect it from interference and persecution. Persecution is the real breaking of the civil peace.

Peace. The church can least of all be forced: for as it is a spiritual society, and not subject to any civil judicature...so is the combination of it voluntary, and the dissolution of it in part or whole is voluntary, and endures no civil violence, but as a virgin... she forceth not, nor can be forced by any civil power.

Truth. But lastly, if it be justice to preserve the Society of the church, is it not partially in a near civil State to preserve one only society, and not the persons of other Religious societies and consciences also? 123

By this statement Williams clearly makes religion, and religious action, independent of the civil authority. In order to successfully seek the true church and obtain salvation man must be free from any outward obstruction to such a spiritual exercise. Hence the Christian church must be separated from any antiChristian and other interferences. A true or pure church required a pure seeking:

...That as yet their souls are farre from the knowledge of the foundation of a true Christian Church, whose matter must not only be living stones, but also separated from the rubbish of Antichristian confusions and dese-
Williams maintained that the churches of the Old and New Testament are separate. The Old Testament presented a spiritual type to which the real situations of the New Testament were antitypes. People who have promoted this separation have suffered persecution of conscience by both pagan and religious zealots. 125

...the Church of the Jews under the Old Testament in the type, and the Church of the Christians under the New Testament in the Antitype, were both separate from the world; and that when they have opened a gap in the hedge or wall of Separation...God hath...made his Garden a Wilderness. 126

Williams went so far as to say that one who was a member of a false church belonged to a false Christ. Separation from the false church was absolutely necessary before one could join the true church and find the true Christ. Williams frames his point in a question.

Hence upon that former distinction that Christ in visible worship is Christ: I demand, whether if a godly person remain a member of a falsely constituted Church, and so consequently...of a false Christ, whether in visible worship he be not separate from the true Christ? 127

Demonstrating the importance of his typology, Williams uses the example of Israel in the Old Testament to underscore the separation proposed in the passage above as in other passages. Israel was the one, true, spiritual type in scrip-

ture, nothing before or since has been equal to it. To cite Israel as a justification for the non-separation of the civil and religious authority and the persecution of religious evils by the civil authority, is to misinterpret the Bible. 128

For Williams whole hearted seeking devoid of forms, doctrines and ceremonies was the true church or the true way to Christ and salvation. Civil or religious authority must not interfere. When God's people are led astray, they must repent completely of their past before they can rejoin the true seekers of Christ. 129 God's people cannot serve both a true and a false church at the same time. 130 This was an argument against Cotton's argument that the mission of the Massachusetts Puritans was to separate, from the evils of the Anglican Church, without completely separating from the Church of England. Cotton argued moderation. He stood between one extreme, the Anglican Church and another, separatism. For Williams this was no separation, no true church at all, but hypocrisy. Total repentance from the old sins, a complete separation from the past was the only answer. 131 Moderation would result in a hypocrisy, Godly persons remaining members of a false church and therefore of a false Christ. 132

Williams, in conclusion, saw separatism as a means to
1) repent completely from old sins—a necessity, an absolute

128 Ibid., pp. 356-357. 129 Ibid., p. 346.
130 Ibid., p. 352. 131 Ibid., p. 376. 132 Ibid., p. 354.
requirement before one could even embark on the true path to Christ and salvation, and 2) a necessity when civil and religious powers refuse to allow persons to "seek with a whole heart." Williams' religious motivation, the seeking of the true salvation, and his various theories from that motivation, typology, separation of civil and religious authority, freedom of conscience et al. all determine for him a necessity, an imperative to action, a need to separate completely to find salvation. For Williams, not to separate, is not to find God and not finding salvation of the soul. He felt it was necessary to separate from past sins (repent) and, if necessary, separate from a society that inhibits the search for the true God and salvation.

...I ask, Whether it be not absolutely necessary to his uniting with the true Church, that is, with Christ in true Christian Worship, that he see and bewail, and absolutely come out from that former false Church or Christ, and his Ministrie, Worship, etc. before he can be united to the true Israel, must come forth of Egypt before they can sacrifice to God in the Wildernes. The Jewes come out of Babel before they build the Temple in Jerusalem: The husband of a woman die, or she be legally divorced, before she can lawfully be maried to another: the graft cut off from one, before it can be ingrafted into another stock: The Kingdome of Christ, (that is the Kingdome of the Saints, Dan. 2. & 7.) is out out of the mountain of the Romane Monarchie. Thus the Corinthians I Cor. 6. 9, 10, 11. uniting with Christ Jesus, they were washed from their Idolatrie, as well as other sins: Thus the Theffalonians turned from their Idols before they could serve the living and true God, I Thess. I. 9. and as in Pagainisme, so in Anti-christianisme, which separates as certainly (though more subtilly) from Christ Jesu. 134

CHAPTER III

A New Look at the Old Errand

At the outset of this thesis I stated that I would identify in Roger Williams a radical strain in American thought. I further stated that the radical strain would be identified as separatism, and that while there are many possible inputs for separatism as a radical doctrine, the separatism in Williams would be motivated by a salvationist-perfectionism and a method of historical interpretation called typology. Both the motivation and the method were identified as radical and were said to have a direct relationship to his separatism. The evidence presented in Chapter II has documented that the bent of Williams' mind was theological. His preoccupation with theological considerations, his commitment to the ministry and the theological content of his writings all substantiate this.

Roger Williams was preoccupied with salvation. Christian salvation is the attainment of a state of perfection, a spiritual union with God. Williams believed that all of man's energies, his entire life, should be directed toward gaining this salvation. This he believed to be the only and perfect end for man, the only legitimate human goal, toward which all men must strive. Anything less than this goal was not only erroneous but un-Christian, and thus, an
evil one. The motivation of Roger Williams was a salvationist-perfectionist one.

Religious salvation is generally considered a perfection. The apparent redundancy in the term salvationist-perfectionist is an underscoring of the obsession with which Williams pursued his goal and dedicated his entire life and all of his energies to attain it.

Typology is a particular method of interpreting biblical history and teachings. The Old Testament, under this method, is but a series of mythical dramas relating types, to which the real drama of the New Testament was the anti-type. Typology drove a wedge between the New and Old Testaments, destroying the continuity of the Bible and the tradition which the vast majority of Christianity held. Those that believed in the continuity of the Bible maintained that everything in it was true, factual and revealed by God, its author. Acceptance of typology would destroy this thesis and make the life and teachings of Christ, not the revelations of God, the central importance of the Bible. Williams was not denying the divinity of God the Father, but rather basing his theology upon the life and teachings of Christ. Christians judged this not only to be heresy, but also ridiculous; and further characterized it as "a windmill in his head."

Separatism was the radical doctrine for Roger Williams and that which is identifiable in him as a radical strain. His salvationist-perfectionist motivation and his typological interpretation of biblical history are his singular signifi-
cance and major contribution to the radical strain of sepa-
rationism. The relationship between his motivation-methodology
and the doctrine of separatism is a major one. While sep-
aratism as a radical doctrine can exist with other motiva-
tional and methodological inputs, for Williams, they were
the determining factors for his radical separatism.

In this thesis I put forth a definition of radicalism
against which the separatism, the salvationist-perfectionism
and the typology of Roger Williams would be measured. Rad-
icalism is that point of view which favors a reconstruction
of life on a social base different from that which exists at
a given time and demands that the new and reconstructed base
be achieved through a process of return to the pure form,
the real and basic matter of things.

Separatism as social practice is radicalism according
to my definition. The separatism of Roger Williams was rad-
ical in that Williams proposed that the new base to be re-
constructed be one that was a return to the root form, the
simple and basic matter of things. As was presented in
Chapter II, Roger Williams advocated that organized religion
return to a simple and root form. For him this meant the
elimination of all of the more traditional practices and
forms in religion, such as, prayer, religious rites and ec-
clesiastical hierarchies. Williams carried the Protestant,
reform spirit to the extreme of stressing only the word of
Christ and a simple searching for salvation.

The ministry was a spiritual teacher of the word of
Christ and a guide for man in his search for salvation.
Each parish church would be an independent congregation and not part of an organized, church hierarchy. Roger Williams advocated a complete and total separation from the traditional churches. As a proponent of separatism from the Roman Church, he had the company of the Protestant Reformation. As a proponent of separatism from the Anglican Church, and even further the Puritan congregations, he was advocating an even more radical doctrine. Separating from the English, Protestant Movement was one thing, but founding it upon a base different than the base of its English, Protestant traditions was a complete religious separation. English Protestantism held the continuity of the Bible, the recognition of ecclesiastical hierarchies and some rites and practices. Roger Williams, as was pointed out earlier in this chapter and in Chapter II, did not accept these and thus founded his religious beliefs on a new base.

The separatism of Williams was more than a religious one, however. The search for salvation was, for Williams, one that demanded non-interference from the political sphere as well as the religious one. When various aspects of society began to interfere with man's search for salvation, whether they be religious, political or economic, then man must separate from that society and found one that will allow him an unfettered search for salvation. The separatism of Roger Williams, upon further investigation, has social implications beyond its more apparent religious one. It is radical not only in religion, but also in its more social aspect.
The motivation of Roger Williams, salvationist-perfectionism, is also radical. Measured against our definition of radicalism, it favors a reconstruction of life on a social base different from that which now exists. The perfect salvation, according to Williams, was the union with God in the "next" life, a base different than the one that exists in "this" life on earth. The new base, salvation, is also a return to the pure and root form. According to Christianity, the attainment of salvation is the return to the origin of all life, God. God is a simple and root form, in that He is the only origin of all that is and is pure and omnipotent spirit, uncomplicated by restrictions, physical or spiritual. As the origin of all that is, union with God (salvation) is the return to the basic matter, the origin of all things. Since God is omnipotent in this description, He is true perfection. Union with a perfect Being is the attainment of the participation in a perfection. The participation in a state of perfection is very much different than which now exists. The salvationist-perfectionism of Roger Williams is a radical motivation.

Typology is a radical interpretation of history, biblical history. It interpreted biblical history in a way different than what had been done before; a different base than what had existed. It destroyed the traditionally accepted interpretation. As a method of interpretation it aided the return to the pure and root form, in that it stressed the life and word of Christ and the attainment of the pure and root goal of all men, union with God (salvation). Typology
was a radical methodology that contributed to a radical motivation.

Some of the concepts that were a result of the motivation of Roger Williams were somewhat radical too. The theory of the separation of the civil and religious authority was radical in that it sought a reconstruction of life on a social base different than what existed. Rather than returning to the root and pure form, it contributed to the return to the root and pure form in that it was a desirable separation for Williams to better promote the search for salvation. The same would apply to the concepts of freedom of conscience, religious liberty, anti-persecution and toleration that Roger Williams promoted. These concepts, unlike Williams' motivation, methodology and separatist doctrine, did not retain their radicalism. In the passing of history, they became the existing base. In most of the Western nations, like the United States, Britain and France they became a part of the political guarantee of liberty. The American Bill of Rights is the prime example. These concepts never measured up fully to the definition of radicalism. Their relationship to a return of society's ideology and organization to a root and pure form was vague, if not non-existent. Whatever radicalism was inherent in these tactics is a result of their temporary and parochial utility for Williams in pursuing his core point of view.

In early research, I thought that the wilderness would play an important role in Williams' thought. Because of this, it will be of value to make passing reference to the
effect that the wilderness had upon the Errands of Puritanism and Roger Williams. The record presented in Chapters I and II demonstrates that Roger Williams was radical and separatist before emigrating to the American wilderness from England and Holland. The Brownites, in fact, were more radical in their separatism in England and Holland than in America where they settled at Plymouth, eventually joining with the Massachusetts Colony. The American territory offered a sprawling, undisciplined, untouched, seemingly boundless geographical area from which man could carve out a piece of the real world and shape it to his version of destiny. Social experiments ranging from radical to moderate have been recorded in our history, and continue to be so today. The wilderness of America that attracted and nurtured Puritanism and Roger Williams was not necessarily a physical one. It was an unusual chance for man to expand his horizon and build new foundations. Such an environment as America offered was ready made for Roger Williams.

Roger Williams' contribution to the American, radical strain of separatism was historically an important one. The Plymouth Puritans before him had separatist origins and the Massachusetts Colony had some separatist seeds within it. Other radicals existed during this time, such as, Ann Hutchinson and the Quakers. Roger Williams, however, is the earliest, recorded, significant contribution to separatism in American history. The existence of such a contribution early in our history (130 years before our own Declaration of Independence) lays an early foundation and precedence for
separatism to exist in the American experience.

As a separatist Williams is important today. The word radical and revolution are used with the frequency that Mickey Mantle and "cool" were a decade or two ago. While the social problems existent today are somewhat more complex than those in Williams' time, the Williams experience in separatism can be a great help to the social scientist who studies today's social phenomena. The separatist strain in Roger Williams can be of benefit in studying various social doctrines today in order to determine if they have rejected the existing foundations and principles of society and are attempting to re-found them on other bases. Williams' input to his separatist doctrine was theologically motivated and was made up of particular, religious formulations. The input to other social doctrines may also be motivated by some theological considerations. The question of the significance of primary motivations, especially theological ones, should be raised.

The separatism of Roger Williams is also significant in a broader, historical context. An attempt should be made to plot the radical strain of separatism in American thought through history, measuring and examining the various and diverse inputs to it. Several major separatist theories can be identified and shown to be the more significant and repeated contributors to the general strain. The results of such documentation and measurement can be of great benefit to social scientists studying the present and anticipating the future. It would help us deal with radicals more sensi-
ibly than the oligarchy dealt with Roger Williams. A single, separatist strain with a variety of theoretical inputs is a worthwhile, intellectual undertaking.

I have identified the motivation of Roger Williams as salvationist-perfectionism. I have further identified it as theological in base and radical in nature. It has been stated here that the primary motivation of Roger Williams bears a direct relationship to his separatist doctrine. Future work in this area should consider just how direct and what kind of relationship exists. A probable consideration from the work I have done to date is, that the existence of a motivation, such as salvationist-perfectionism, in a society not of its own kind, itself demands a separatist doctrine to fulfill its own identity. In this context then, the motivation of Roger Williams determined the radical and separatist doctrine, was the origin of his radicalisms and the foundation for all of his thought. The significance of theology to Roger Williams is that it is central to his thought and the controlling factor in his primary motivation.

The second most important factor in Williams' separatism was his biblical method of interpretation, typology. While motivation is primary to a doctrine, methodology is an important, secondary contributor. Typology did not determine his theological motivation. It did give direction and degree to his separatist doctrine. The very unorthodox interpretation of biblical history that typology offered, mythologized the Old Testament and placed the life and teachings of Christ in the forefront. This contributed to Williams' emphasis on
a root religion, one that de-emphasized practices and procedures and stressed the attainment of salvation through the simple worship and imitation of the teachings and life of Christ. The quite complete break typology demanded between the Old and New Testament, contributed to the radical difference between the established churches and religion as Roger Williams saw it. The methods by which history is interpreted is related to the way in which the interpreter acts upon that history in the present and future.

Typology is also significant to the thought of Roger Williams. Typology, as a radical method of historical interpretation, directed the salvationist-perfectionism of Roger Williams into specific radicalisms. Salvationist-perfectionism demanded the attainment of a religious perfection. As such it was a radicalism. The particular aspects of Williams' theology that prescribed specific, religious tenets and principles were quite often determined by Williams' typology in companion with his primary motivation. The most explicit example of this is Williams' belief in a simple and root religion as the best one for the attainment of salvation, a central part of the typological method.

The various religions describe salvation according to their interpretations and religious tenets. While all agree generally that it is the attainment of a union with a God, they do not necessarily agree on how to attain it. Roger Williams believed that salvation was best attained when the religion was simple and root, that is unfettered with rites, practices and ecclesiastical hierarchies and according to the
word of Christ. Williams further separated the Old and New Testaments; the Old being figures of types of which those in the New were the anti-types. As such the Old Testament was a collection of myths, related to teach a lesson and not an historical accounting of a people. Williams believed such, not because he believed in salvation, but because he believed in the typological interpretation of biblical history. Typology in Roger Williams determined the direction and content of his radical motivation, and further the direction and content of his radical doctrine of separatism.

The theory of the separation of the civil and religious authority, freedom of conscience, religious liberty, anti-persecution and toleration are all existent in the thought of Roger Williams. Their existence, however, is not in the same way or as important as are the primary motivation and typology. These aspects of Williams' thought are the result of his primary motivation and typology. Believing, as Williams did, that nothing in society should interfere with man's seeking of salvation, the separation of the civil and religious authorities, freedom of conscience and the rest were but political prescriptions for unfettering man's search for salvation. They were not theological principles nor were they prescribed as democratic ones. They were simply and only social prescriptions that aided man in attaining his salvation, not in living more politically free or living a better life here on earth. It must be remembered that the only important thing for Roger Williams, was attaining salvation. All things must either aid in that or at
least not hinder it. The various political prescriptions that he offered were merely of this type.

As was stated in the previous paragraph, Roger Williams was not a democrat. He did not intend to offer political prescriptions for the sake of making man free on earth or even creating a better life materially. His only goal was salvation and his mission on earth was providing the best possible way to achieve it. As such, the various political ideas that present themselves in his thought do so to allow man to attain salvation in the next life, not to free him for a democratic one here on earth. The attainment of democracy was never a goal of Roger Williams. The attainment of salvation was, for Williams, the only objective.

Any democracy that was achieved in Rhode Island was done so only as a means toward the achievement of salvation. Concepts associated with democracy today, such as, freedom of religion and the separation of church and state, were held by Williams specifically because a state religion or the suppression of an unauthorized one prohibited his view of the best way to attain salvation.

Democracy, for the purpose of this paper, allows man the widest possible latitude for the pursuit of happiness, while not infringing upon the pursuit of another. An important factor in democracy is that it is sought and treated as both an end in itself and the useful facility for the pursuit of other ends, if other ends are desired.

What then of Roger Williams' contribution to American thought or more particularly the American, democratic tradi-
tion? Not all contributions to democracy or more accurately, liberty, are themselves democratic. Often many of them are quite the opposite. Puritanism was not a record of democracy in our history, but rather a record of an authoritarian system which evolved, or perhaps "decayed" toward democracy. The Puritan experience is a history of a people reacting to authoritarianism and shaping themselves and their institutions into a democracy. It is a record of the democratic thrust within man exploding outward.

Roger Williams provided American thought and democracy with a challenge; a non-democratic goal and a set of beliefs and actions to support it. Puritanism and Roger Williams were challenges to democracy. They would demand existence within the society that existed at the time. The existing society would have to find a way to deal and cope with Puritanism and Roger Williams, and ultimately to either allow them existence within its walls or repress and exclude them. Society would be challenged to allow Williams thought the widest possible latitude of existence without suppressing it. On this score Williams and democracy failed in Massachusetts, but won in Rhode Island. The contrast between the Massachusetts and Rhode Island experiments, both a part of American development, was the contribution of Roger Williams to American democracy. Roger Williams challenged the development of a democratic society at a time and within a society where one did not exist.

Roger Williams was a religious Seeker and as such provided a challenge to American democracy. As a Seeker, he
never found salvation through established churches, religious rituals, laws and practices, but rather sought it through a socially unfettered and simple search. This kind of search required that society be more than tolerant. That search may have been at odds with certain social goals, traditions and laws, and therefore required an almost, absolute non-interference. In the practice of Seekerism exists many libertarian consequences. The scientist or the journalist who seek the truth require the protection of democracy. The scientist and journalist in this context, however, seek from democratic foundations and for democratic preservation. The Seekerism of Williams was from non-democratic foundations and for a non-democratic goal, religious salvation. Roger Williams contributed to American thought and the development of democracy by providing it with a challenge, a challenge that would test the principles of liberty, toleration and democracy itself.

Roger Williams was a radical. His challenge to the development of American democracy was as a non-democratic radical. Since his time, radicals and radicalisms have frequently challenged the dominant ideology in American democracy, and are experiencing today radical challenges to our system. Future works should measure and compare the thought and contribution of Roger Williams with others who might be considered radical. It is not the purpose of this paper to identify or undertake these future attempts, but to simply point the way for possible, future applications of the thought of Roger Williams, a genuine and original American radical
who pursued his "Errand into the Wilderness."


Garrett, John. Roger Williams: Witness Beyond


APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis submitted by Richard F. Moore has been read and approved by members of the Department of Political Science.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content and form.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

\[\text{Date: 10/12/72}\]

\[\text{Signature of Advisor} \]