

<County: Northamptonshire>  
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 <Text: Treatise against religious orders>

<Tranche 1>

<fol. 38r>a-3en for seynt poul seiþ . þe *seruaunt* of god it is . not nedeful  
 to stryuen but now-a-daies for goddis cause . for *synne* a-3en hym  
 we striuen not but for oure owne cause . for wrong a-3en vs-self  
 a-3en holy writ þat biddiþ . seche þou not *veniance* . ne haue  
 no mynde of þe wrong of þi cyteseyns / þanne oure bateil  
 ben not a3en þe enemys of god . þat ben of mysbileeue ; but  
 a3en oure neyeboreþ þat ben of good bileue . a-3en holy writ  
 in which seiþ þe wise man on þis wise / who so wil be vengid  
 he shal fynde *veniaunce* of god . & kepyng he shal kepyn his *synnes*  
 for3if þi neiebore þat noieþ þe ; & þanne þe *synnes* þat þ<sup>u</sup> preiest  
 fore shul ben for-3yuen þe . A+man reserueþ ire to a+man ; & of god  
 he sechiþ for3ifnesse . þerfore haue mynde on þin ende . & lef of to  
 ben enemy & siþen *cristen* lordis . bern þer swerd to encresen holy  
 chirche bi chasteisyng of goddis enemys . & for goddis cause .  
 for þe whiche encrese men shul 3elde rekenyng . at þe day  
 of dom . as seiþ seynt austyn . & *opere* seyntis . & now in our~ tyme  
 we seen oure enemys of mys-bileeue encresen in so myche þat  
 cristendom is lasse þan it was in tyme of þe foure doctoures of  
 holy chirche bi þe þridde part ; as it is knowen bi þe encrees  
 of saracenys . 3he and forþermor þe enemys of god . not one  
 ly wiþ-owten forþ encresen ; but also wiþ-inne / as ben symonye  
 nes vsureris & apostatas . þe whiche ben þe chef cause . of alle  
 þe werris among men þanne oure lordis ou3ten for to dreden  
 þat ri3t as þer eldris ben sauýd . for þe encres of holy chirche  
 bi destroyng of saracenys . & bi lettyng symonyenes vsureris & a  
 postatas . to dwelle wiþ-inne þer lordschipis / so oure lordis  
 but if þei ben repentaunt er þei dien . shul ben dampned / first  
 for þei lesen þe cause of god a-3en þe saracenys & *opere* enemys

of hym & pursuen þer owne cause in destrucconn of þer neye  
 boris & of hem-self þe secounde for þei pursuen þer enemys  
 wiþ-owte forþ . & lefen to pursuen þer more enemys wiþ-inne  
 forþ . þe whiche ben þer prestis symonyenes . þer marchundis  
 vsureris & þer religious . apostatas / & þe þridde for þei sh  
 wen . boþe in word & dede þat þei louen more þer bodies . þan  
 þer soulis & þei loouen more temporel godis & lordschipis þan  
 þer neiebores bodies or soules a-3en þe loue of god : . þat looyeþ  
 eche creature . aftir is þat he haþ 3yuen it goodnesse þanne for  
 þe defaute þat men don not to þe bateilis of god : is þe cause  
 of þis veniance of bateilis & plees among vs-self / 3he &  
 siþen þe macabees seiden in word & in deede . þat it was  
 bettere to þem to dien in þe bateile of god þan to seen þe  
 <fol. 38v>yuel of þer owne puple : myche more au3ten cristene lordis to seyn  
 þat it were : bettere for hem to dien in bateilis of god . þan to  
 seen þe yuel . þat regneþ now in cristis chirche . & to seen þe  
 encrease of Saracenys : þat ben enemyes of oure bileeue & si  
 þen þoo ben þe moste cause <gap> of þis delful veniaunce of ba  
 teilis among vs-self / þat ben moste holde to don þe gostli bateil  
 of god & don þem not . þe whiche ben worldly clerkis & worldly  
 religious for þei ben most holdon to don penaunce for þer owne  
 synnes . & for þe puplis & most in ydelnesse lyuen to þe nurch  
 yng of þer fleish & mayntenaunce of þer worldly worschipis þan  
 worldli clerkis & worldly religious ben most cause of þes ba  
 teilis be-twen cristene men / & þerfore seyþ seynt gregeri þat þe  
 enchesoun of þe fallyng of þe puple ben euele prestis ; whom  
 þei seruen for to han þoo þat ben cruel lordis . þat mayn  
 tenen þat . þat now is sacrilege . al-þof in þer eldris tyme  
 it was almes dede . for þanne þei 3euen possessiouns to  
 holi chirche . were oneli spendid among cristene pore men  
 & nedi but now it is spendid in mayntenaunce of symonye  
 & apostasie & oþer greuous synnes & þerfore lordis in þat . þat  
 þei meyntenen . þe forseid sacrilege . lettynge þe bateil of  
 god ; it is skilful þat þei ben punschid bi violent wiþholding  
 & takyng away of þer temporel goodis boþe meblis & vn  
 meblis . þe whiche is cause of þer bateil . for þat þat þei enne  
 nemyn oþer men it is skilful þat þei ben ennememyd þem-self &  
 þerfore ri3t as siknesse . <mrg>may not be hald to þe tyme þat þe cause of þe siknesse</mrg> be  
 destroyid ; ri3t so may neuere þis gre

uous veniaunce of bateilis cesen . to þe tyme þat temporel posses  
 siouns ben taken a-wey fro symonyenes & apostatas & 3yuen  
 to hem þat ben pore . <sup>[&]</sup> nedy & membris of holy chirche : & to whom  
 it is couenable . suche possessiouns to han for in veyn folowen  
 men or lordis þer title anentis man til þei han stablid þer-tile anen  
 tis god . þis <sup>[be]</sup> wiche is doying iustice vp-on þe puple / & first vp  
 on þe prestis of þe chirche . as crist shewide in dede . whanne he ex  
 saumplide þe lordschipe . & þe regalie of kyngis . aftir þat he had  
 de takyn his worschipe of þe puple . as for kyng of israel . & very  
 sone of kyng dauib / he 3ede first to þe temple & purgide it  
 & seide þat his hous shulde . ben clepid hous of preiere : & not hous  
 of marchaundise / & þerfore biddiþ god bi þe prophete e3echiel / þoo  
 þat han power to don iustice vp-on his puple . þat þei begynnen  
 it first . vp-on his seyntuarie / & þus for þis ende . þei han þer lord  
 shipis & þer power as witnessiþ dauid in þe sauter booc . & seyþ . //  
 / God 3af to þem regiouns of folk & þei hadden traueilis of pupilis  
 <fol. 39r>for þei shulden kepe his iustice . & for þei shulden . <sup>[loke]</sup> þat his lawe  
 were kept / & for it is gret mercy of . <sup>[god]</sup> þat he hæþ 3ouyn his power  
 of veniaunce doying for synne . þat for his his puple . bi litil suf  
 feraunce of peyne 3ouyn of man . my3te scapen þe more pey  
 ne for þer synne þat shulde ellis ben 3oue bi god one / for  
 as seyþ seynt petur / it is hidous & ferful to fallen in-to þe  
 hondis of god / þe whiche whanne he doib eny-þing . bi hym-  
 self ; he doib passyngly / þerfore whanne he doib eny veniaunce  
 by hym-self he doþ it passyng. <sup>[ii]</sup> þat ony man . <mrg>may</mrg> or can / þerfore  
 monn lordis seen . if þei chastisede hem . þat ben men of holy chir  
 che . puttynge hem in þer degre as crist ordeynede hem wiþ  
 takyng a-wey þe ocasioun of þer synne . þanne shulde oure peyne  
 þat we han seruyd for our~ synne . ben lesse & gostly bateilis  
 of god ben don . of þe clergie & bodily bateilis of god ben don  
 manli of seculer lordis knowlechinge þe power of god . wiþ  
 macabeis . þe whiche preisyng god . seiden it is li3t to god to  
 close manye men in þe hondis of fewe / for in multitude of  
 þe host . is not in victorie of þe bateile . but from heuene is streng  
 þe & þanne shulde þis veniaunce of bateile cesen & alle opere .  
 <gap for initial capital> E ferþe veniaunce is now general discencoun þur3-out al holy  
 chirche . of whiche spekiþ seynt poul þe apostil to tesalony  
 sencis . seyinge in þis wise / þat þe day of dom shal not  
 come but þer come first bi-forn discencoiun & be shewid þe man

of synne . þe sone of *perdicoun* . þe whiche is aduersarie & enhaun  
 sid vp-on al þat is seid god or heried . so þat in þe temple  
 of god he shal siten . shewyng hym-self as þo3 he were god /  
 þanne now *cristene* men shul reden in þis veniance & vndur  
 stonde þat siþen þis *veniaunce* of discencoun is þe next sig  
 ne goyng befor *anticrist* as witnessen þe forseid wordis of  
 seynt poul . / þerfore ri3t as þe comyng of *crist* was bi-forn seynt  
 Jhon þe baptist . in tyme whan þer was pees ouer al þe world .  
 as witnesseth þe gospel of luc . ri3t so in tyme of discencoun ouer  
 al þe world shal *anticrist* ben prechid / not on oon messag~ oneli.  
 as *crist* seyþ in Jhon þe baptist / but in manye messangeris  
 ful of deuysioun & enuye . to þe more mayntenynge of þer symo  
 nye . & apostasie . þane wiþ doing of penaunce / þei shul not *pre*  
 chen *anticrist* as dide seynt Jhon *crist* : but in pompe & pride of þe  
 world lettynge in al þat þei monn men to don penaunce in  
 folowing openli þe steppis of *crist* . as men mai se now-a-daies  
 þerfore as seynt Jhon prechide in comyng of *crist* . þat þe ax of

## <Tranche 2>

<fol. 53r>þe fifte maner of folk is . þat defenden to 3yue tribute to lordis lest  
 þei þei lesen þer fleishly fredam more charyng þe fredam of  
 þe fleish . þan þe fredom of þe spirit . as dide þis Judas of galile  
 wiþ opere scribis & pharisees . þat sou3ten occasioun how þei my3ten .  
 do *crist* to deþe þe sexte maner of folc . is þat feynen hem-self  
 to don al þing þat þei don . in þe gostli *seruyse* of god . for þei  
 wolden not traueilen wiþ þer hondis . ne ben sogetis to lawe of  
 lordis as þis Judas of galile mouyde þe Jewis of whiche maner  
 of men spekith dauid in þe sauter seiynge . þat þei ben not in þe  
 traueile of men ; & wiþ men þei shul not be scurgid þat is to seie .  
 þat is þur3 iustise of seculer lawis / & þerfore heeld hem pride & ben  
 couered in þer shrewidnesse / & þerfore tellith dauid þer destruccoun in þis  
 wise . what maner wise þei ben maad in desolacoun . sodeynli þei  
 faileden for er wickidnesse . lord as slep of men þat risen in  
 þe cite : þer ymage þou shalt turne to nou3t / þanne siþen oure re  
 ligious ben of þe firste maner men not oneli defending þem-self  
 & preisynge to ben clepid prophetis in þe puple . but to ben clepid  
 most holy men þat ben lyuyng . 3he as þei seyn bi monye in  
 maner of lyuyng for holier þan þe apostelis . in-as-myche as þe

apostelis lyueden not so contemplatif lif as don oure religi  
 ous . now þat ne caren not for þer bodili liflode . as muste ne  
 de þe apostelis . for þer grete porenesse / & þis þei defenden wiþ  
 multitude of oþer men þat þei clepen þer good doeris . more  
 þanne bi resoun of bileue / and also siþen oure religious ben  
 of þe secunde maner of men in þat . þat þei besegynge þe  
 flodis of Jordan þat is lettynge þe ryueris of ri3t wesdom wil  
 not suffren any of hem alle to ben opynli punshid whanne he  
 opynly trespasiþ . ne wil not seyn to holy chirche aftir+two vn  
 derid nymyngis . ne+putten hem out of þer felowshipe as  
 an etnyk & a publican . whanne þei witen hem worse þan ony  
 seculer as þei were holde to don . bi þe lawe of god : but lest  
 þer ypocrisie were knowen wiln priueli puttyn hym in prisoun . for  
 men shulde wene þat þer were none but goode men  
 among hem more chargyng þe schaundre of speche of  
 men . þanne þe schlaundre of synne anentis god / also siþen  
 þei ben of þe þridde maner of puple . turnyng away þe  
 puple aftir hem . & not aftir crist . in þat . þat þei maken þe pu  
 ple more to bileue in yer lettris of fraternytes . þan graun  
 tid bi men & not bi crist : more þanne in cristis grauntyng . þe whiche  
 3yueþ mercy : & for3yuenesse of synne after þe mercy & for3yue  
 nesse . yat þei don to þer neieboris . // Also siþen þei ben þe fer  
 þe maner of puple doying al þing þat þei don of hem-self  
 <fol. 53v>& for hem-self . in þat . þt þei of þer owne wil & of þe autorite of holy  
 writ beggen or procuren to þem more wordly good . þan is nedeful  
 to þe pore sustenance of hom for þei wolden feden wel þer owne wom  
 bis . & of þat . þat leueþ . þat wil not gon in þer wombis maken  
 hem curious chirkis curious housis costli cloþis & wast mene ; for  
 to ben holden noble . holy & worshipful . seruyng god in þis wo  
 rld . as diden þes pharisees for þei wolden be semeli in þe  
 si3t of þe puple : also þei ben of þe fifte puple lettyng tribute to be  
 3yuen to lordis . lest þei lesen þer fleshly fredom . in þat þat þei be  
 inge more riche þan þe pore puple wil not helpem hem to paien  
 þer dettus þat þem owe to don to þere lordis . as rente or tribute as  
 þe pore puple helpen hem whanne þei weren more nedi . 3he & whan  
 ne þei ben folowyng & defendinge . þe fleshly priuylegijs of men  
 leuen þe priuylegis of crist . þat is looue of porenesse & of pacience  
 ben of þis fifte puple . þat more chargen þe priuylege of þe fre  
 dam of flesh þan priuylege of þe fredom of spirit Also þei ben

of þe sixte puple . in þat þat þei challenge þe seruise of god  
 to þem-self . for þei wolden not ben sogetis to þe seruise of þer  
 lordis . as whanne men seyn . þat þei shulden traueylen . wiþ  
 þer hondis . þei answeren þat mari chees . þe bettur~ part þat  
 is contemplatif lif is bettur~ þan actif . þe seruise of god  
 bettere . þan þe seruise of men / but whan men seyn . þat þei  
 shulden not pleten . as seiþ seynt poul / þe seruant of go it is  
 not nedeful to pleten . þei answeren contrariouly to hem-self þat  
 actif lif is bettere . þanne contemplatif . lif & þe obeisaunce don to þer  
 priour is bettere þan obeisaunce don to holi writ . or to þer ow  
 ne rewle þerfore as þingis contrariouly to hem-self . & as a kyndam  
 deuydid be-twen hem-self & as stondyng more bi þe ordenaunce  
 of men þan bi þe ordenaunce <sup>[of god]</sup> mut nede sodeynly pershen / but  
 who þat is Gamaliel abiding þe 3ilding of god . loke þat heie  
 not . but abide god & wirke <sup>[3ee]</sup> manli & his herte shal ben confortid  
 for god comynge shal comyn & shal not tarie ;  
 <gap for capital t>O þis þei seyn a-3en þat in þis wise profesiede of vs lincoln  
 Bradewardyn armacan kilmyngton wiclyue & manye  
 opere & in torne . þat þer prophecie is but desiryng of veniaunce  
 of þer owne enuye þei hem-self persheden & we ben euere þe len  
 ge þe strenghe / but to þis we answeren / þat lincolne aftir þ<sup>t</sup>  
 he hadde 3yuen his bokis to þe frere menouris & myche  
 of his opere godis in tokne þat he loouede hem if þei wolde  
 be stronge in þe cause of god & aftirward seynge in spirit &  
 in experience þat þei weren cowardis in ye cause of god & þat þey  
 sou3ten more þe preysyng of men in þis world þan þe preising of god &  
 <fol. 54r>þ<sup>t</sup>+signes outward weren ful of lesyngus . he prophesiede no-þing of hym  
 self but declaride þe prophesie of þe holy gost : þat speeken peter  
 & poul & oþe seyntis . þat clepen þem sectus of predicoun many wynter  
 or þei camen & þus dide armacan & wiclyue & alle þese opere  
 not of enuye but of looue þat þei hadden to ye lawe of crist  
 & to encrese of ye puple in kepyng it / & þerfore þei perschiden not .  
 but as we hopen ben grete seyntis in heuene for ri3t as in þe ty  
 me of crist . it was medeful to shewen & openen crist to þe puple  
 & þerfore þo þat diden it were seyntus ; ri3t so a3en þe comyng  
 of antecrist it is nedeful to shewe & openen þe malice of anticrist  
 & his sectus whiche ben þe forseid religious now & þerfore lin  
 colne & armacan þat hulpen þer to ben now seyntis in heuene  
 & in-as-myche as þes seyntis . & opere men þat ben now han told



oftere & more openli þe defautus of oure religious now & þei  
 amende þem not but encresen þer malice . as þe pharisees a3en  
*crist* . þe more ; þe more þei tresoren to þem þe wraþe of god / & þer  
 fore ri3t as þe more <exp>s</exp>i<exp>3</exp>t is enclosid in ye cloude : þe feerliere it  
 brestip out . & makip þe grettere þundur~ & a grettere leityng /  
 ri3t so þe more þes religious . þei tresoren to hem of þe wrathe  
 of god in þe cloude of þer lyues ; þe feerliere it shal bresten out  
 vp-on hem þat þei shuln not witen it to þe more knowyng  
 of þer malice to alle men . in-as-mych as mo men han told it  
 þem before . & to þe grettere þundryng of wundryng vp-on hem  
 þerfore þe multipliying of hem now . is to þe more confusion of  
 hem . & also it is but witesse of þe world & of false men & not  
 witnessyng of god & of trewe men . þat seyn þat manye men  
 ben clepid in signes & fewe men ben chosun in deedis / & siþen  
*cristene* men witen wel . þat þanne god wil wirkyn wel for his  
 puple ; destruccoun of his enemys & þeris . whanne his glorie mai  
 ben most shewid & knowen & þis is whanne his enemys ben most  
 strong to þe si3te of þe world & most sikir . & his puple most  
 meke & left of power . þanne if oure religious ben now herest  
 in þer malice & most strong & siker as anentis þe world & þe pu  
 ple of god þat shulde wiþstonden hem most of vnpower &  
 bi þer persecucoun m<sup>[e]</sup>lakid : þanne now þe glorie of god shulde most  
 ben shewid to wirkyn his ri3t wesdom vp-on hem <sup>[&]</sup> to þe confu  
 sioun . of his puple . In þis wise god ledde his puple in-to þe lond  
 of bihest destroyng his enemys whanne þer synne was most &  
 his puple mekid bi traueile as of nonnpower of hem-self / þerfore  
 siþen our~ religious now-a-daies . blasfemen a3en god gnra  
 ting part of þer desertis & conspiren wiþ þe prinsis of pristis . to þe  
 quenchyng of þe lawe of *crist* . & to þe destroyng . of hem þat