

## *The problem of adiaphora and religious controversies in England in the late 1550s–1560s*

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*The article provides the analysis of two religious conflicts which took place in England in the early years of the «Elizabethan religious settlement», namely, the Crucifix controversy (1559–1560) and the vestiarian controversy (mid-1560s). The investigation of these discussions gives an opportunity to trace the development of the adiaphora concept, i. e. the idea that certain religious matters are indifferent for the salvation. During the first controversy the leading parts were played by the newly appointed bishops. They argued upon the possibility of images to be used at churches and during the Divine services. Whereas some of them considered it as idolatry, which was directly forbidden by the Second Commandment, the others held that images were tolerable as long as they were not worshipped, consequently, it was the right of the Queen either to establish them or to ban them from churches. The discussions of the mid-1560s were different. All participants of the vestiarian controversy agreed that the matters in question belonged to the area of adiaphora. The ecclesiastical authorities used this statement as a reason to prove the possibility of enforcement of religious uniformity by the Royal decrees. Their opponents, on the contrary, insisted that the «indifference» of vestments and other disputable subjects implied the right of each minister to handle them in compliance with his own consciousness. As a matter of fact both controversies exceeded the limits of particular problems such as tolerability of images or necessity of vestments. Their significance is determined by the discussions of the concept of adiaphora, the understanding of «indifference», and the right of the monarch as the Supreme Governor of the Church of England to interfere in these matters. Thus, the results of the controversies at issue had a significant influence upon the Anglican doctrine of the later ages.*



Key words: [Church of England](#), [adiaphora](#), [«Elizabethan religious settlement»](#), [Crucifix controversy](#), [vestiarian controversy](#)

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