

The Reception of Romans 13:1-7 during the English Reformation

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The candidate confirms that the work submitted is his own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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Abstract

This thesis is a reception history of the successive readings of Romans 13:1-7, and it reveals that St. Paul's commands were ubiquitous in political and theological discourse during the English Reformation (c.1530-1603). This research demonstrates that Romans 13 is indispensable to understanding sixteenth-century debates touching politics and religion because it suffused the very immediate concerns of Christians such as the nature of spiritual and worldly power, duty, obedience, resistance, loyalty and conscience. This study examines an exhaustive collection of historical and contemporary sources in order to plot the reception. This approach differs greatly from past and present studies of the Reformation because it reveals the concrete interaction between the text and reader, and demonstrates how early modern political and religious thought were directed by interpretations of Romans 13.

In viewing the Reformation through the reception of Romans 13, this thesis recognises that the exegesis of the participants of the English Reformation was part of a continuous conversation. This appreciation in turn permits us to trace the response of each successive reader of Romans 13 and observe their application of it in their present. The interpretations of Paul's commands during this period of religious antagonism generated radical theories concerning the nature of temporal and spiritual government. The interpretation of Scripture was a highly contested, and both sides of the religious divide sought to occupy the same ground: true obedience to God. Therefore, this thesis provides a unique lens to observe how early modern political and religious thought was directed by interpretations of Romans 13. As a consequence the voices of the participants are heard not only be through their contributions to the meaning of Scripture in their present but also in the momentous and lasting political concepts they forged.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	- iii -
Abstract	- iv -
Contents	- v -
Abbreviations	- viii -
Introduction	- 1 -
Chapter 1: Readings of Romans 13 before the Reformation	- 12 -
Introduction	- 12 -
Ignatius to Augustine (ca.107-ca.440)	- 12 -
Gelasius I to Aquinas (c.492-1274)	- 21 -
Boniface VIII to Marsilius of Padua (ca.1290-1324)	- 28 -
Ockham to Colet (ca.1347-ca.1497)	- 35 -
Conclusion	- 43 -
Chapter 2: Romans 13 in the Continental Reformation	- 46 -
Introduction	- 46 -
Desiderius Erasmus	- 47 -
Martin Luther	- 50 -
Philip Melanchthon	- 59 -
Huldrych Zwingli	- 64 -
The Radicals and the Sword	- 67 -
John Calvin	- 70 -
Conclusion	- 74 -
Chapter 3: The Obedience of Christian Men (1521-36)	- 79 -
Introduction	- 79 -
A ‘pernycyous doctryne’: Luther’s Legacy	- 80 -
Controversy, Heresy and More	- 85 -
A Great Matter	- 90 -

A Policy of Persuasion I	- 95 -
Defending the Royal Supremacy	- 101 -
Conclusion	- 107 -
Chapter 4: Reaction, Reform and Retreat? (1536-47)	- 111 -
Introduction	- 111 -
The Conservative Reaction	- 112 -
Reform and Retreat?	- 118 -
Advancing the True Religion	- 128 -
Conclusion	- 138 -
Chapter 5: Romans 13 during the Reign of the New Josiah (1547-53)	- 143 -
Introduction	- 143 -
Establishing the Kingdom of Josiah	- 145 -
A Duty to Reform	- 155 -
‘subjectes so disobedient’: The Rebellions of 1549	- 162 -
Conclusion	- 174 -
Chapter 6: Obey God Rather than Men (1553-58)	- 178 -
Introduction	- 178 -
Non-resistance I	- 179 -
The ‘mallitious and cruell assualtes of her enemies.’	- 190 -
Dethroning Romans 13	- 195 -
Conclusion	- 209 -
Chapter 7: A Challenge from Within (1558-1603)	- 214 -
Introduction	- 214 -
<i>Adiaphora</i>	- 215 -
Admonition Controversy	- 231 -
A French Dilemma	- 238 -
Martin Marprelate	- 245 -
Conclusion	- 252 -

Chapter 8: A Challenge from Without? (1558-1603)	- 256 -
Introduction	- 256 -
A Policy of Persuasion II	- 257 -
Catholic Loyalism	- 265 -
Non-resistance II	- 270 -
The Archpriest Controversy	- 278 -
Conclusion	- 283 -
Conclusion	- 288 -
Appendix: Biblical Texts and Key Variations in Translation	- 298 -
Bibliography	- 301 -

Abbreviations

‘Act in Restraint’	‘An Act that the appeals in such cases as have been used to be pursued to the see of Rome shall not be from henceforth had nor used but within this realm’, in <i>The Tudor Constitution: documents and commentary</i> , ed. by G.R. Elton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960), pp.353-58.
APW	<i>Augustine: Political Writings</i> , eds. by E.M. Atkins and R.J. Dodaro (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).
BL	British Library.
CCS	<i>The Crisis of Church and State 1050-1300: With Selected Documents</i> , ed. by Brian Tierney (Toronto: University of Toronto Press in association with the Medieval Academy of America, 1988).
CWE	<i>Collected Works of Erasmus, 66 Vols.</i> (Toronto; London: University of Toronto Press, 1974—).
CWTM	<i>The Complete Works of St. Thomas More, 14 Vols.</i> (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1963—).
DHB I	<i>The Decades of Henry Bullinger, Minister of the Church of Zurich, The First and Second Decades</i> , ed. by Thomas Harding trans. by H.I. for the Parker Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1849).
FIG	<i>From Irenaeus to Grotius: A Sourcebook in Christian Political Thought</i> , eds. by Oliver O’Donovan and Joan Lockwood O’Donovan (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1999).
Foxye, TAMO	<i>The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online</i> (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: http://www.johnfoxe.org

- Institutes* 1536 John Calvin, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. Ford Lewis Battles (Grand Rapids: Wm. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Revised Edition 1989).
- Institutes* 1559 John Calvin, *The Institutes of Christian Religion*, Volume I and II, trans. Ford Lewis Battles, ed. by John T. McNeill (London: S.C.M. Press, 1960).
- Letters of Ambrose* *The Letters of S. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan* (Oxford: James Parker and Co., 1881).
- LW *Luther's Works, American Edition*, 55 Vols. eds. by J. Pelikan and H.T. Lehmann (Philadelphia: Fortress Press; St. Louis: Concordia Press, 1955-86).
- OCS *Obedience in Church and State: Three Political Tracts by Stephen Gardiner*, ed. by P. Janelle (New York: Greenwood Press Publishers, 1968).
- OL I *Original Letters Relative to the English Reformation, written during the reigns of King Henry VIII., King Edward VI., and Queen Mary: chiefly from the archives of Zurich*, Vol. 1, trans. and ed. by Hastings Robinson for the Parker Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1846).
- PPE *Proceedings in the Parliaments of Elizabeth I*, Volume I 1558-1581, ed. by T.E. Hartley (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1982).
- STC *A Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland and Ireland and of English Books Printed Abroad 1475-1640*, first compiled by A.W. Pollard and G.R. Redgrave; 2nd edn, ed. by W.A. Jackson, F.S. Ferguson and Katherine F. Pantzer (London: Bibliographical Society, 1976-91).
- Skinner, Foundations II* Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought. Volume Two: The Age of Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978).
- TAPW *Aquinas: Political Writings*, ed. and trans. by R.W. Dyson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

TCD

The Tudor Constitution: documents and commentary, ed. by
G.R. Elton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960).

All quotations are in the original spelling, but I have transcribed the thorn as ‘th’, abbreviations for ‘the’ and ‘that’ and contractions have been silently extended. Italicisation or emphasis found in citations are contained in the original text unless otherwise stated. All Biblical citations are taken from *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with Apocrypha: New Revised Standard Version*, ed. Michael D. Coogan, 4th edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

Introduction

In his commentary on chapter thirteen of St. Paul's Letter to the Romans (1558) the Italian Reformer, and former Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford, Peter Martyr Vermigli contended:

For the pope has so absolved both himself and his clergy from all public power and authority that he now has princes subjected to himself and he allows the great monarchs of the Christian world to kiss his feet...He creates emperors and casts them down when it suits him. He takes away kingdoms and carries off spoils when he chooses.¹

Such criticism of the papal supremacy at the time of Elizabeth I's accession to the throne was anything but extraordinary. Nevertheless, Vermigli informed Elizabeth that she was 'preserved by divine power' and he urged her to follow the example of King David, and her 'outstanding' brother Edward, by restoring the 'evangelical religion' that had been lately 'trodden underfoot.' He informed Elizabeth that Kings serve God twice: firstly by adhering to the faith, and secondly by sanctioning laws that promote godly acts. For Vermigli the examples of Old Testament Kings and the illustrious Emperors Constantine, Theodosius and Charlemagne all demonstrated that religion belonged to her charge and as a godly magistrate she stood in God's place. Consequently, as His representative upon the earth it was her duty to defend both Tables of the Divine Law and in doing so she will rebuild God's Temple that currently lay in almost ruin.²

Vermigli's commentary on Romans 13 and the epistle to Elizabeth exemplify the battle for authority over spiritual affairs that had occupied Elizabeth's predecessors over the past three decades. Additionally, Vermigli's words show that the English Reformation did not just concern Englishmen. The challenge made to the papal autonomy over the Word of God brought not just religious change but provoked many to reconsider the structures of political power. Paul's commands to obey 'the higher powers' forced Christians across Europe to answer fundamental questions concerning obedience to authority. The answers to this vexatious question were, in part, shaped by national landscapes but they also had a much wider significance because the discourse produced in seeking these solutions reached international audiences. The participants on either side of the highly charged polemic almost continually hurled theological grenades at one another; some exploded upon impact causing instant havoc but others lay dormant and it was only when the ground in which they were buried shifted that their impact became

¹ Peter Martyr Vermigli, 'Commentary on Romans 13', in *The Peter Martyr Reader*, eds. by John Patrick Donnelly, S.J., Frank A. James III and Joseph C. McLelland, trans. by Torrance Kirby (Kirksville Mo.: Truman State University Press, 1999), pp.223-37 (p.225).

² Peter Martyr Vermigli, 'To Queen Elizabeth,' in *Life, Letters, and Sermons*, Vol.5 of the Peter Martyr Library, trans. and eds. by John Patrick Donnelly (Kirksville, Mo.: Thomas Jefferson University Press, 1999), pp.170-7.

devastating. Romans 13 not only energetically participated in this epochal change but also the process of accommodation and negotiation which followed.

Romans 13 resonated throughout the charged polemical exchanges of the Reformation but the text itself has not been afforded the extensive study it so urgently demands. The influence of Paul upon Christianity is incalculable. Nevertheless, Steven R. Cartwright has noted, 'Within the two thousand years of Christian history, the Apostle Paul is second only to Jesus in influence and the amount of discussion and interpretation generated.'³ More specifically R. Ward Holder has asserted that 'The sixteenth century was a Pauline age.'⁴ The commands of Romans 13:1-7 are indispensable to understanding sixteenth-century debates touching politics and religion because the text spoke to the very immediate concerns such as the nature of temporal and spiritual power, duty, obedience, resistance, conscience and loyalty. Paul revealed that God was the font of all authority upon the earth and those which ruled did so by His delegation. If the Christian resisted their ruler they resisted God. Civil governance was, then, a divine ordinance and these authorities were entrusted with the coercive power to punish the wicked and protect the good, and in doing so they encouraged righteousness. The Christian was divinely commanded to respect and obey the 'powers that be' and pay tribute. By rendering obedience to earthly rulers they fulfilled their duty to God and this should not be done for fear of repercussion but for sake of conscience.

These instructions appear straightforward but the reality of human life, as always, complicated matters. Romans 13 made no effort to address the very real possibility of unrighteous rule. Paul's commands raised searching questions concerning the limit to civil power and if wicked rulers could be recognised as 'ministers of God.' Therefore, Romans 13 was discussed with increased frequency during the early modern period because the relationship between the governors and the governed was irreversibly altered by the religious diversity the Reformation introduced. As Alec Ryrie has recently stated: 'Christians have always taken the precise definition of doctrines immensely seriously, and they have always disagreed over those definitions, often reviling each other, and sometimes worse.'⁵ The difficulty lay in the living nature of a faith in which revelation is part and parcel of the everyday life of the faithful. David Parris has noted: 'The church is guided by its interpretation of the Bible, is actualised by its obedience to the Word of God, and as a result, is an assembly which is constantly constituted anew in each historical horizon.'⁶

³ Steven R. Cartwright, 'Introduction', *A Companion to Paul in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Steven Cartwright (Leiden: Brill, 2013), pp.1-9 (p.1),

⁴ R. Ward Holder, 'Introduction—Paul in the Sixteenth Century: Invitation and a Challenge', in *A Companion to Paul in the Reformation*, ed. by R. Ward Holder (Leiden: Brill, 2009), p.1-12 (p.1).

⁵ Alec Ryrie, *Being Protestant in Reformation Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p.1.

⁶ David Parris, *Reception Theory and Biblical Hermeneutics* (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2009), p.xi.

Christians are by necessity dual beings; they are expected to adhere to the Word of God and observe the commands of their government. For many during the Reformation this duality caused a great crisis of conscience. In England the changeable religious policies of a fluctuating civil government induced long held assumptions of fealty to vacillate as the commands of Romans 13 placed Christians in a theological 'Catch-22'. As John Calvin wrote, 'Men are sustained and comforted by their consciousness of good actions, but inwardly harassed and tormented when conscious of having done evil.'⁷ But the debate of how far obedience was to be extended to worldly rulers was neither a contemporary concern nor was it uniquely a Catholic or Protestant controversy. Both sides of the religious divide sought to occupy the same ground: true obedience to God. However, neither could, or would, recognise the right of the other to inhabit that space. The answers to their dilemmas were to be found in Scripture and God's Word must only sanction one brand of truth. But the Bible contains no explicit political theory, it promotes no singular version of an ideal political life and nor does it indicate clear preference for any particular governmental regime.⁸ Nevertheless, the historical books of the Old Testament do offer the fundamental building blocks for Christians to pragmatically examine their relationship with God, and develop theories of legitimate human authority and government which will guide them towards salvation.

However, Romans 13 has always provided its reader with difficulty because its exegesis directly affects the Christian's interaction with everyday life. By the early modern period Paul's command had become so ubiquitous in conversations concerning the relationship between the rulers and subjects there was almost no need to reference it directly. But the Reformation, along with other historical conflicts between temporal and spiritual power, demanded authoritative precedent for schism. The sixteenth-century religious challenge brought urgent attention to texts such as Romans 13, I Peter 2:13-17 or Matthew 22:21 which provided much needed validity and authority. Those that upheld these principles demonstrated a central tenet of Christianity: obedience to God. When considering the historical reading of Scripture it is difficult to determine whether the interpreter is approaching the text for revelation or deliberately selecting passages in order to find confirmation. It is fair to say that the participants of either side of the numerous Reformation debates and conflicts would sincerely believe that they engaged in exegesis as opposed to *eisegesis*. Unless the latter is discernible we must assume the former.

⁷ John Calvin, *The Epistles of Paul The Apostle to the Romans and to the Thessalonians*, eds. by David W. Torrance and Thomas F. Torrance, trans. by Ross Mackenzie (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1960), p.49.

⁸ Michael Walzer, *In God's Shadow: Politics in the Hebrew Bible* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2012), pp.xii-xiii.

The importance of Romans 13 has been long recognised. In fact, Gordon Rupp stated that Romans 13 was the '*locus classicus*' of the Reformers.⁹ He was joined by J.W. Allen whose classic study of sixteenth-century political thought claimed that Romans 13:1-7 contained 'what are perhaps the most important words ever written for the history of political thought.'¹⁰ Furthermore, Quentin Skinner observed, that Martin Luther considered Romans 13 'the most important passage in the whole Bible on the theme of political obligation...[and was] the most cited of all texts on the foundations of political life throughout the age of the Reformation.'¹¹ Other scholars, have supported these claims and Ernst Bammel has added that the opening seven verses of Romans 13 'became perhaps the most influential part of the New Testament on the level of world history.'¹² In Alec Ryrie's *The Gospel and Henry VIII* (2002) and his recent *Protestants: The Radicals who Made the Modern World* (2017) the importance of Romans 13:1 is demonstrated with the verse being used as an epigraph to a chapter in each book.¹³ Diarmaid MacCulloch asserted that Romans 13:1 is seen 'as the most important text of the magisterial Reformation.'¹⁴

As a consequence Romans 13 demanded further study. The Apostle's call for obedience appears, on the surface, to be quite straightforward. Some readers pragmatically locate Paul's commands in the past, advice to Christians living in a persecuting Roman state, but most read the message to provide revelation to their present. However, its reading has always been problematic because its meaning is far from transparent and its significance has been augmented by successive receptions. According to David C. Steinmetz 'The meaning of a biblical text is not exhausted by the original intention of the author.'¹⁵ Indeed, David B. Gowler contends that: 'the 'meaning' of the text does not reside alone in the creative genius of its author; there is a complex correlation between a text and the contexts in which a text has been read and reread, including a specific relation between creator and contemplator.'¹⁶ Therefore, this study recognises that there is a dynamic, living relationship between the text and its readers. Indeed,

⁹ E.G. Rupp, *Studies in the Making of the English Protestant Tradition* (Cambridge: University Press, 1947), p.74.

¹⁰ J. W. Allen, *A History of Political Thought in the Sixteenth Century* (London: Methuen and Co., 1960), p.132.

¹¹ Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought, Volume 2: The Age of Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), p.15. [Hereafter Skinner, *Foundations II*].

¹² Ernst Bammel, 'Romans 13', in *Jesus and the Politics of His Day*, eds. by Ernst Bammel and C.E.D Moule (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp.365-83 (p.365).

¹³ Alec Ryrie, *The Gospel and Henry VIII* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p.58 and *Protestants: The Radicals who Made the Modern World* (London: HarperCollins, 2017), p.40.

¹⁴ Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Reformation: Europe's House Divided 1490-1700* (London: Penguin, 2004), p.156.

¹⁵ David C. Steinmetz, 'Theology and Exegesis: Ten Theses', in *A Guide to Contemporary Hermeneutics: Major Trends-in Biblical Interpretation*, ed. by Donald K. McKim (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 1986), p.27.

¹⁶ David B. Gowler, 'Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation: Textures of a Text and its Reception', *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*, 33:2 (2010), pp.191-206 (p.203).

the readers of Romans 13 contained within this study are in no way passive recipients of Paul's commands.

By revealing the reception of Romans 13 we can avoid falling into the trap of simplistic polarity between obedience and resistance. The responses to what appeared to be Paul's black and white demand for obedience were in fact a colourful spectrum. The doctrines of non-resistance espoused by Luther and William Tyndale are significantly different to the obedience doctrines of John Ponet and Christopher Goodman. It is important not to conflate positions like quietism with obedience or passive disobedience with resistance. Those that opposed the policies of a king were not necessarily harbouring a secret desire to cut his throat. The difference between resistance and disobedience is not semantic. Moreover, refusing to obey the wicked commands of a ruler and showing obedience to God is not radical and nor is it an articulation of resistance theory. All Christians would readily accept that obedience to God was fundamental.

Nonetheless, the notion that it was a Christian's duty to remain resolutely loyal to a pagan or heretical temporal government was a contentious assumption even before Europe's long Reformation. Ideas concerning obedience and sovereignty were embedded in the patristic and medieval texts handed down to the inhabitants of the early modern world. The humanists of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries may not have produced a seminal work of political philosophy but they created 'a climate of thought' in which the reformers of the sixteenth century would flourish.¹⁷ As a result the textual, philological and literary techniques of the Renaissance humanists were inherited by great scholars like Desiderius Erasmus and applied not only to the classics but also Scripture. The rallying call of *ad fontes* contained for many an understanding that the study of languages provided a gateway to understanding the Bible. Thus, historical truth would be an ever more potent weapon against hostile theology, providing both a means of salvation and evidence against Rome's corruption. The Bible contained a cache of weapons to be discharged in theological warfare and these scriptural missiles were often launched in polemical exchanges 'without reference to their original meaning or context'.¹⁸

Consequently the patristic and medieval interpretations of Scripture which were handed down to the participants of the Reformation knew nothing of the artificial periodic dividing lines constructed by modern-day historians. Few reformers would disagree with the fourteenth-century Franciscan Nicholas of Lyra's interpretation of Romans 13:1 that stated 'This is indeed a divine decree because those who are superior rule the inferior, and those who are inferior obey

¹⁷ James Hankins, 'Humanism and the origins of modern political thought', in *The Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Humanism*, ed. Jill Kraye (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p.118-41 (pp.118-19)

¹⁸ Frederic Seebohm, *The Oxford Reformers: Cole Erasmus and More* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1914), p.17.

them, as is evident in the natural body.¹⁹ Exegesis of Scripture would be successively read down the ages. To overlook interpreters' struggles to reconcile the commands of Romans 13 with fidelity to the Word of God risks placing the political thought of reformers in a theological vacuum. Just as their predecessors had done, Catholics and reformers turned to the Church Fathers, such as Augustine of Hippo and John Chrysostom, for authoritative solutions to their dilemmas. These readings of Romans 13 clearly demonstrate Steinmetz's proposal that 'The most primitive layer of biblical tradition is not necessarily the most authoritative.'²⁰ Therefore, it is more accurate to speak of the Reformation as being a product of centuries of progressive intellectual thought and religious reform rather than a triumph over clerical corruption and tyranny.²¹

Many important surveys and studies only mention Romans 13 fleetingly, and the majority fail to draw their reader to the importance of Paul's commands at all. Some scholars have investigated Romans 13, but they have done so in isolation. Steinmetz and Richard A. Muller produced two essays examining the interpretation of Romans 13 in selected works by Philip Melanchthon, Theodore Beza and John Calvin. Steinmetz identified both similarities and differences in the exegesis of Calvin and Melanchthon but he also recognised that his study only dealt with a few works.²² Muller unsurprisingly found more agreement between Calvin and his successor Beza but he contended the latter displayed evidence of independence of thought and offered a 'more nuanced' approach to the text.²³ In his substantial discussion of authority in German reformation thought, Ralph Keen has shown that 'Romans 13 provides the surest signal of a Reformer's attitude to secular rule, for the term "minister of God" demands to be defined.'²⁴ The significance of the text had been greatly enhanced by Torrance Kirby who has noted the centrality of Romans 13 in the political theology of Peter Martyr Vermigli.²⁵ In two valuable essays David M. Whitford also discussed Romans 13. The first considered briefly the Pauline command in the context of tyranny in which the Magdeburg Confession (1550) 'reframed'

¹⁹ Nicholas of Lyra, 'Romans 13: The Christian and the State', in *The Bible in Medieval Tradition: The Letter to the Romans*, eds. and trans. by Ian Christopher Levy, Philip D.W. Krey, and Tomas Ryan (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2013), pp.268-71 (p.268).

²⁰ Steinmetz, 'Theology and Exegesis', p.27.

²¹ Steven E. Ozment ed., *The Reformation in Medieval Perspective* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1971).

²² David C. Steinmetz, 'Calvin and Melanchthon on Romans 13:1-7', *Ex Auditu* 2 (1986), pp.74-81.

²³ Richard A. Muller, 'Calvin, Beza and the Exegetical History of Romans 13:1-7', in *The Identity of Geneva: The Christian Commonwealth, 1564-1864*, eds. by John B. Roney and Martin I. Klauber (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1998), pp.39-56.

²⁴ Ralph Keen, *Divine and Human Authority in Reformation Thought: German Theologians on Political Order 1520-1555* (Nieuwkoop: De Graaf Publishers, 1997), p.119.

²⁵ Kirby's contribution to the field is extensive. Thus, I will draw attention only to two pertinent contributions: Torrance Kirby, "'The Charge of Religion Belongeth unto Princes": Peter Martyr Vermigli on the Unity of Civil and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction', *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, 94:1 (Dec., 2003), pp.161-74, and 'Political Theology: The Godly Prince', in *A Companion to Peter Martyr Vermigli*, ed. Torrance Kirby, Emidio Campi, and Frank A. James III (Leiden: Brill, 2009), pp.401-22.

Romans 13 to make resistance a duty. The second is a more general, but enlightening essay which, in part, argued that the Petrine dictate to obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29) would eventually supplant Romans 13.²⁶ More recently, Glenn Burgess has affirmed that it was from Romans 13:1-2 that the reformers 'learned that the state and its rulers were nonetheless part of God's providential design and legitimately commanded the obedience of Christians.'²⁷

Wilfred Parsons made an important contribution to the study of Romans 13 with two essays covering the period from Ignatius of Antioch to Hincmar of Rheims (ca.107-ca.882). Parsons persuasively suggested that the Church Fathers did not make a distinction between the office and the holder of power unlike later interpreters, such as Isidore of Seville.²⁸ Glen Bowman considered Romans 13 in the context of Elizabethan Catholics and convincingly argued that their engagement was determined by a number of factors: such as governmental pressure or the likelihood of papal or Spanish intervention. These Catholic writers applied Romans 13 in defence of their loyalty to Queen Elizabeth but then cited it to advocate exemption from wicked magistrates and make the distinction between power and rulers.²⁹ Víctor Manuel Morales Vásquez and Robert Evans both prioritise the influential hermeneutical approaches of Hans George Gadamer and Hans Robert Jauss.³⁰ Consequently, their merit lies more in their discussion about *Rezeptionsgeschichte* or the legacy of understanding rather than Romans 13, which is essentially rendered to case study status.³¹

There has been only one study that focuses upon English interpretations of Romans 13 during the period covered by this thesis. Liam J. Atchison's 2007 doctoral dissertation did consider Romans 13 during the English Reformation, albeit focusing on a slightly different time period (1532-1649) to the present study. He was entirely correct to insist that 'Romans 13:1-7 was the most authoritative text of any kind on the subject and extent of obedience to the civil

²⁶ David M. Whitford, 'The Duty to Resist Tyranny: The Magdeburg *Confession* and the Reframing of Romans 13', in *Caritas et Reformatio: Essays on Church History in Honor of Carter Lindberg*, ed. by David M. Whitford (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2002), pp.89-101 and 'Robbing Paul to Pay Peter: The Reception of Paul in Sixteenth Century Political Theology', in *A Companion to Paul in the Reformation*, eds. by R. Ward Holder (Leiden: Brill, 2009), pp.573-606.

²⁷ Glenn Burgess, 'Political Obedience', in *The Oxford Handbook of the Protestant Reformations*, ed. Ulinka Rublack (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp.83-99 (p.84).

²⁸ Wilfrid Parsons. S.J., 'The Influence of Romans XIII on Pre-Augustinian Christian Political Thought', *Theological Studies*, 1:4 (Dec., 1940), pp.337-84 and 'The Influence of Romans XIII on Christian Political Thought II. Augustine to Hincmar', *Theological Studies*, 2:3 (Jan., 1941), pp.325-46.

²⁹ Glen Bowman, 'Elizabethan Catholics and Romans 13: A Chapter in the History of Political Polemic,' *Journal of Church and State*, 47:3 (Summer, 2005), pp.531-44.

³⁰ Most specifically, Hans George Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (London: Sheen and Ward c.1979), and Hans Robert Jauss, *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, c.1982).

³¹ Víctor Manuel Morales Vásquez, *Contours of a Biblical Reception Theory: Studies in the Rezeptionsgeschichte of Romans 13:1-7* (Goettingen: V&R unipress, 2012); Robert Evans, *Reception History, Tradition and Biblical Interpretation: Gadamer and Jauss in Current Practice* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014).

powers in sixteenth- and seventeenth century England.³² There is merit in Atchison's discussion of the influence of Lollardy, humanism and John Colet upon Reformation readings of Romans 13. However, the discussion of the reigns of Henry VIII and Edward VI are condensed in a single combined chapter. The study also focused on a narrow set of works, based upon 'availability', the 'statue' of the writer and the 'originality' of the interpretation. The rule of Mary I is largely dominated by only three writers—John Ponet, Christopher Goodman and John Knox—and subsequently lacks contextual balance. Romans 13 is mainly considered during the reign of Elizabeth I in two contexts, the mission of Jesuit William Allen and *A Homily against Disobedience and Wilful Rebellion* (1570). Atchison's study limits itself to English writers and does not place the text in the wider context of historical or contemporary European readings of Paul's letter. As a consequence Atchison's thesis is significantly narrower in its purview than the scope of this study. Therefore, this study provides most comprehensive study into the reception of Romans 13:1-7 during the English Reformation (c.1530-c.1603).

This reception history is an exercise in selecting and collating both the vast number of fragmented and concrete interactions with Romans 13 during the English Reformation and giving them a clear narrative frame. The intention is not to focus on any particular historical reader of Romans 13, but instead to reveal how people recontextualised, responded, interpreted and applied the meaning of the text in their present. The reader actively engages in dialogue with both past and contemporary exegetes and this interaction has an influence upon them regardless of whether they accept or reject their interpretations. Therefore the meaning of Romans 13 is not merely located in the historical past, it is co-determined by other factors such: as the historical context of the interpreter, tradition, or present circumstance. The interpretation of Scripture is constantly moving forward and carrying along with it past exegesis and placing it in the present. As a consequence, it is perhaps more appropriate to speak in terms of 'receptions' in the plural because this study has adopted a chronological framework in order to appreciate the history of the text's interpretation. This approach has ensured that the array of historical and contemporary interactions with Romans 13 does not become a scrapbook of disparate references that contain no context or enlightenment into the profound influence of the text.

In order to understand a Christian's duty of obedience to God it is necessary to take a more nuanced approach than simply defining the English Reformation as a process imposed from above or below. Instead we should understand this period of change as a cocktail of consonant and opposing forces. The participants, whether rulers, clergy or commonality, all

³² Liam J. Atchison, 'The English Interpret St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans Chapter Thirteen: From God Save the King to God Help the King, 1532-1649' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas, 2007), p.8.

engaged themselves in compromise and negotiation, and their solutions were shaped by interactions with people from both England and continental Europe. Fully understanding the importance of Romans 13 requires a close analysis of a large range of contemporary writings, ranging from sermons, biblical commentaries, political and religious treatises, personal letters, and constitutional documents. This study reveals that in the early stages of the Reformation two fundamental political principles were commonly established directly from Romans 13: temporal authority was derived from God and resistance to it was forbidden. Reformers perceived that there was no exemption from the obligation of obedience to rulers whether they be noble, bishop or pope.

However, Paul also placed a responsibility upon rulers to use their ordained power to ensure moral behaviour by praising the good and executing wrath upon those that do evil. The text very clearly reveals God to be *the* origin of all power. This exegesis of Romans 13 saw an elevation of the prince over the pope, fundamentally striking at the heart of the long established doctrine of papal supremacy. The primacy of spiritual power was founded upon what is considered to be a divine sanction: Christ conferring to Peter 'the keys of the kingdom of heaven' and also stating 'you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church' (Matthew 16:18-19). By arguing that Romans 13 testified that the spiritual estate was subject to the temporal power, even a tyrannical one, the reformers were able to reject the concept of papal supremacy. They now claimed that the pope had usurped the authority of the prince and was in direct violation of God's Word. As a consequence reformers such as William Tyndale would assert that God had made the King the judge over all, and anyone that judged or resisted the King was also judging and resisting God.³³

As Romans 13 deals directly with obedience and obligation it is of little surprise that the text generally receives greater attention at times of political strain or conflict. Therefore, the text became decidedly pertinent in an English realm besieged by the internal pressures of royal supremacy, popular rebellion, changes to religion and concern over the succession, and the external threat created by events such as the excommunication of the sovereign or the threat of foreign incursion. The two were in effect compounded by each other.

In viewing the Reformation through the reception of a ubiquitous text, exegesis can be recognised as part of a continuous conversation. This study recognises that there is a dynamic, living relationship between the text and its readers. Indeed, the readers of Romans 13 contained within this study are in no way passive recipients of Paul's commands. By examining a wide array of material chronologically it is possible to trace the response of each successive reader of

³³ William Tyndale, *The Obedience of a Christian Man*, ed. by David Daniell (London: Penguin Classics, 2000), p.39.

Romans 13 and observe their application of it in their present. This approach allows us to hear more clearly the voice of the participants and provides a unique lens to view this critical period which is not offered by previous or current scholarship. This approach differs greatly from the seminal works by Geoffrey Elton, Quentin Skinner, Richard Rex and Eamon Duffy because it reveals the concrete interaction between the text and reader, and demonstrates how early modern political and religious thought were directed by interpretations of Romans 13.

This thesis follows a roughly chronological structure. The opening two chapters of this study are a chronological survey of the historical exegesis of Romans 13 and they reveal the interpretations of the text that most directly informed the participants of the English Reformation. Chapter one covers the period from Ignatius of Antioch to John Colet and considers an extensive range of commentaries, letters, homilies and tracts which consider Romans 13. This survey identifies many of the most significant historical interpretations of Romans 13 that provided the intellectual and theological bedrock to early modern understandings of the relationship between temporal and spiritual power. Chapter two considers the exegesis of Romans 13 during the continental Reformation. This chapter reveals that the Reformation provided new and radical concepts concerning the relationship between political and spiritual power. These two opening chapters demonstrate that many of the interpretations of Romans 13 that infused the English Reformation were located in a long historical reception.

Chapters three and four consider the reception of Romans 13 in England during the reign of Henry VIII. Chapter three plots the influence of the Pauline commands between the publication of two significant books: Henry's *Assertio Septem Sacramentorum* (1521), and Stephen Gardiner *De vera obedientia* (1536). This chapter explores the influence Romans 13 had in the establishment and enforcement of the Royal Supremacy, and looks at assumptions, justifications, and methods employed by the government to persuade dissenters to conform. Moreover, it reveals not only the powerful stimulus historical and continental exegesis had upon Henrician readers, but also the centrality of Romans 13 in their development of a radical concept of divine princely power. Chapter four considers centrality of Romans 13 in Henry's pursuit of doctrinal unity, and the aspirations of the religious conservative and reformers. It gives attention to the reaction against the religious policies of Henry VIII and the attempts by reformers to usher the King into pursuing further reform of the Church. These chapters show that Romans 13 was crucial in the campaign to inform, persuade and instruct subjects of the obligation to obey God's anointed.

Chapters five and six concern the influence Romans 13 had during the reigns of Edward VI and Mary I respectively. Chapter five recognises the role Romans 13 played in winning hearts and minds in the battle to establish an evangelical kingdom, accomplish further reform of the Church and enforce obedience. It considers the role of Romans 13 had in the construction of an

image of godly kingship, and the duties of the governors and the governed. Moreover, the chapter recognises the decisive role continental made in Edwardian interpretations of Romans 13. Chapter six discusses the centrality of Romans 13 to Christian obedience following restoration of Catholicism in England. It recognises the adherence to the policy of passive disobedience, and the initial irenic approach to heresy by the Marian regime. Moreover, the chapter considers in detail the Christian's understanding of their obligation of obedience to both God and civil government during a period of increased persecution. These chapters demonstrate that the exegesis of Romans 13 was central to establishing fealty and imposing order in religiously divided realms.

The final two chapters consider the significant challenges to Elizabeth's authority over the English Church from both within and without. Chapter seven examines the threat to the doctrine of Royal Supremacy from Protestants who read Romans 13 in an attempt to diminish the authority of the magistrate within the Church. This chapter also pays attention to exegesis of Romans 13 that informed the influential of concepts concerning government and the theories of resistance that were espoused by Protestant writers following the religious violence in France. Chapter eight turns to the role of Romans 13 had in the changing policies expressed by Elizabeth's Catholic subjects. It considers the role Romans 13 played in finding a solution to the dilemma of obedience and patriotism during a time that England was plagued by external threats from Europe. These final chapters witness that Protestant and Catholic exegesis of Romans 13 developed understandings of government and Christian obedience that were equally radical and innovative.

In revealing the reception of Romans 13 this thesis provides a greater awareness of how the text made an integral contribution to the development of early modern religious and political thought. The voices of the participants are not only heard through their contributions to the meaning of Scripture in their present but also in the momentous and lasting political concepts they forged. Additionally, a central ambition of this study is to locate the English Reformation within the wider landscape of political and theological thought. England was not detached from historical interpretation nor was it isolated from European political and religious thought. The process of reform differed depending the religious sentiment of the sovereign. In just over a decade England experienced four different monarchs, all of whom adopted distinct religious policies and as a consequence Romans 13 read and re-read in order to provide t revelation. The participants of the English Reformation were inheritors of over a millennium of exegesis and while new interpretations of Romans 13 were embraced, Englishmen also contributed radical interpretations of their own to the history of political thought. By considering the reception of Romans 13, this thesis re-evaluates a fundamental component of both English and European history which the vast Reformation historiography has currently not explored.

Chapter 1: Readings of Romans 13 before the Reformation

Introduction

A central theme of this thesis is that each generation of Paul's readers has been influenced, shaped even, by those readers who proceeded them. Romans 13 provided the foundation for discussions on the relationship between temporal power and the Church throughout the history of Western Christendom. The commentators of the medieval and early modern world saw themselves as standing in a direct and unbroken line from Paul via the Church Fathers. The sixteenth-century reformers may have believed that the Bible was hidden from the people in an occult language but its teachings had been, and remained, central to the lives of both the learned and laity. There was a fundamental belief that what was handed down from their predecessors in the form of glosses, commentaries, homilies and treatises was the divinely inspired revelation of God's will. The Church Fathers also provided theologians of all eras with an authority, an antiquity that predated the rise and corruption of the papacy. If the bedrock of Tertullian, Augustine, or Chrysostom could be shown to support contemporary exegesis it would justify the sixteenth-century reformers' claim to be recovering God's ancient truth rather than teaching innovation.

But the very nature of the Christian's relationship with Scripture both illustrates and problematises its reception: God's Word is revealed and its interpretation is almost continuously contested. While God was understood to be the primary author of the Gospel, patristic, medieval and early modern commentators and readers listened to the interpretation of their forefathers but they, in turn, added their own. Therefore, biblical exegesis reflected both tradition and present circumstance. The Bible is a living text. However, this chapter is not intended to be exhaustive study into the political and theological views of each historical reader but instead this survey is limited to their reading of Paul's command for political co-operation. This chapter presents the significant interpretations of Paul's commands that provide the foundations upon which radical concepts such as the Two Kingdoms, Royal Supremacy, and popular sovereignty were built. Consequently, this chapter takes a chronological approach to reveal the important receptions of Romans 13 that influenced the participants of the most important event of the sixteenth century.

Ignatius to Augustine (ca.107-ca.440).

The readings of the Epistle to the Romans by the Church Fathers Ignatius, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origen, John Chrysostom and Augustine should be considered within the diverse theological climate in which they resided and interacted. For Ignatius, Romans 13 was concerned with

ensuring pride did not prevent a Christian's subordination and duty to the ecclesiastical authority. He stated: 'let us then be careful not to oppose the bishop, that we may be subject to God.'¹ Nonetheless, this subordination was reciprocal as this duty of obedience extended 'to one another, as Jesus Christ was subject to the Father, and Apostles were subject to Christ and to the Father, in order that there may be a union of flesh and of spirit.'² Curiously, he made no reference to the Bishop of Rome and because he limited his discussion to obedience toward spiritual authority he remained silent on the matter of a Christian's subjection to temporal rule. However, in refuting Gnostic belief, Irenaeus was compelled to discuss the origin of worldly power when he was confronted with an immediate challenge from a conflicting world-view which understood Satan to be the source of earthly power.³

Initially Irenaeus grounded his refutation of the dualist understanding of worldly power in King Solomon's proclamation that 'the heart of the king is in the hand of God' and it was through Him that kings reigned and justice administered.⁴ These words were consequently supported by Romans 13:1, which not only commanded obedience to the 'higher powers' but provided worldly authority with a divine ordination rather than one corrupted by sin. Irenaeus explained that these 'ministers' were divinely appointed because people no longer feared God and the 'dread of the sword' was imposed to restrain evildoers under law and justice. Irenaeus understood that legitimate temporal government was a benefit to mankind: by wielding the sword entrusted them by God rulers provided a protective layer against evil and assisted in the fight against Satan.⁵ This divine purpose was also recognised by Tertullian who added that earthly powers should be feared and were 'an attendant of God for your good.' Nevertheless, obedience was not an opportunity for the Christian to retreat from the faith and avoid martyrdom. Rather, it challenged Christians to live well and forced them to recognise worldly authorities as the 'assistants of divine judgement.'⁶ Therefore, Eric Osborn is correct to state that Tertullian had 'found a place for the Roman empire in the divine purpose.'⁷

Indeed, Tertullian understood that the earthly power should be respected and tribute must be made so long as it pursued 'proper interests.' He insisted that Emperors know who has provided them their life and empire, and it is in this power alone that they stand second only to

¹ Ignatius of Antioch, 'To the Ephesians', in *The Apostolic Fathers*, trans. by Kirsopp Lake (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1912, reprinted 1975), pp.172-95 (p.179).

² Ignatius of Antioch, 'To the Magnesians', in Lake, *The Apostolic Fathers*, pp.196-211 (pp.209-211).

³ Walter Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity* (London: Fortress Press, 1971), pp.54-94,

⁴ Proverbs 21:1.

⁵ Irenaeus, 'Against Heresies, Book V', in *The Writings of Irenæus*, Vol. II, trans. by Alexander Roberts, DD., and W.H. Rambaut, A.B. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1869), pp.54-157 (pp.119-21).

⁶ Tertullian, 'Antidote for the scorpion's sting (*Scorpiace*)', in *Tertullian*, Geoffrey D. Dunn (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), pp.74-96 (p.94).

⁷ Eric Osborn, *Tertullian: First Theologian of the West* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p.84.

God.⁸ Nevertheless, Tertullian makes it clear that despite the eminent power of the emperor 'the human person [belongs to] God alone.'⁹ This anthropological approach was developed further by Origen of Alexandria who was 'culturally and linguistically closer to Paul than any other major interpreter.'¹⁰ Origen's approach to Romans 13 stressed the distinction between the 'spirit' and 'soul' and argued that Paul 'would never have said, Let every spirit be subject to authority, but "every soul."' This exegesis required the need for the soul, and only the soul, to be submissive. He overlaid Paul's bipartite anthropology of mankind with a Platonist tripartite identification: the highest part being the spirit, followed by the soul and then the flesh, and this permits the assignation of regulatory conditions upon mankind's behaviour.¹¹ A being 'united' with God is 'one spirit with him' but those disconnected, or not yet connected, possessed 'a common soul' which was, in part, worldly and 'shackled by pre-occupations.'¹² It was because of this disconnection from God, he contended, that Paul had commanded 'every soul be subject to the higher authorities.'

Origen recognised two authorities with distinct origins of power. The earthly authority, he insisted, was bestowed with power by God's wisdom.¹³ However, those which 'we call upon' to take ecclesiastical office should not 'love power' but instead have 'great humility' and be reluctant to attain 'the common responsibility of the church of God.' Those 'chosen as rulers in the church' are restrained by God and by acting in accordance with Scripture they would not 'defile any of the appointed civic laws.'¹⁴ The ecclesiastical office should aid rulers with 'divine help' because despite their 'fortune' or 'genius' emperors were not 'gods' and the authority provided by their divine ordination was granted 'in accordance with their own impieties and not in accordance with God's laws.'¹⁵ This understanding of the origin of power placed a limitation upon the Christian's obedience towards the temporal power because commands which forced them into committing licentious, savage or blasphemous acts must never be obeyed.

⁸ Tertullian, 'Apology', in *From Irenaeus to Grotius: A Sourcebook in Christian Political Thought*, eds. by Oliver O'Donovan and Joan Lockwood O'Donovan (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1999), pp.25-6 (p.26). [Hereafter *FIG*].

⁹ Tertullian, 'Antidote', p.94.

¹⁰ Joseph W. Trigg, *Origen* (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), p.49.

¹¹ Origen, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, Books 6-10, trans. by Thomas P. Scheck (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2002), p.222. Erasmus would later do this in the *Enchiridion militis christiani* (1501). See *Collected Works of Erasmus*, Vol. 66, ed. by John W. O'Malley (Toronto; London: University of Toronto Press, 1988), pp.41-54. [Hereafter *CWE*]

¹² Origen, *Commentary*, p.222.

¹³ Origen, *Contra Celsum*, trans. by Henry Chadwick (Cambridge: The University Press, 1953), p.504.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.510.

¹⁵ Origen grounds the need for rulers to receive spiritual guidance is found in I Timothy 2:1-2. See Origen, *Contra Celsum*, p.509 and *Commentary*, p.223.

Nevertheless, Christians must not deliberately arouse the wrath of the emperor or court martyrdom because they must hold true to the precepts of Romans 13:1-2.¹⁶

For Origen rulers, like all of mankind, were imperfect and could descend into impiety. By applying an analogy of the body and the senses he contended that worldly power could be subverted: the gifts of sight, hearing and thought are all given by God for good purposes but they can be misused for impious or wicked intent.¹⁷ Origen had now advertised the greatest conflict upon the Christian's conscience in terms of their relationship with the civil power: the conflict between Paul's command that resisting authority was resisting God's ordinance and Acts 5:29 which instructed they obey God rather than men. He resolved this problem by stating that as God's servants all rulers should observe established divine and natural law but any that subvert their power no longer execute His Will. Therefore, Romans 13:2 only applied to those authorities which were not a terror to the good rather than rulers which persecuted the faith. It was only by resisting the former that Christians will procure their own damnation. Nevertheless, Origen expressed unease with Paul's designation that the earthly authority was a 'minister of God' and he attempted to resolve this by more precisely defining the apparent symbiosis between the office of earthly power and the spiritual.

Consequently Origen confined the jurisdiction of rulers to the earthly realm and defined their authority through the duty of punishing the violators of both divine and civil law as outlined in Romans 13:4. The duty to punish wrongdoers was confined to the 'worldly judge' and this was why Paul rightfully named this avenger of evil 'a minister of God.' As such, only the wicked should fear the law because observant Christians living in accordance with love no longer live 'under the law of the letter but under the law of the spirit.'¹⁸ But Christians were not immune from persecution if they dishonoured temporal rulers by failing to live in quietness. This torment will be inflicted because of their rebelliousness, not their faith in God, and assuredly 'there would be a case against them that is worthy of death, but it would be a death unworthy of merit.'¹⁹ In his exegesis of Romans 13, Origen did not attempt to outline any notions of resistance or seek to introduce a sense of antagonism between the two distinct powers: spiritual and temporal.

Around a century later Ambrose, bishop of Milan was evidently more bullish following the Roman Empire's increased commitment to Christianity.²⁰ We now witness a more strict demarcation between the ascribed roles of bishop and emperor. Henry A. Myers contended that

¹⁶ Origen, *Contra Celsum*, p.501.

¹⁷ Origen, *Commentary*, p.223. Irenaeus also noted that divine origin ministers could descend into tyranny but these impious rulers would not escape God's judgement. See Irenaeus, '*Against Heresies*', p.120.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.223-6.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.226.

²⁰ See H.A. Drake, 'The Impact of Constantine on Christianity,' in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Constantine*, ed. by Noel Lenski (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp.111-36.

Ambrose was 'determined to see the interests of the Church well served, and he had no sympathy for any independent sphere of secular authority which could ignore these interests.'²¹ Moreover, Boniface Ramsey has stated that the Christian leadership was not seeking to antagonise the relationship between the church and senate but rather 'replace one form of the sacred with another' and the role Ambrose played in this process was crucial.²² Ambrose's attitude is revealed in his famous declaration that 'The emperor is within the church, not above it' and he further reiterated this by insisting that imperial law was beneath that of God because the former 'can compel a change in the timid, but they cannot inspire faith.'²³ Ambrose's confidence in asserting the power of the Church over imperial authority is demonstrated in two memorable incidents. Firstly, following the burning of synagogues in Callinicos, Ambrose firmly reminded the Nicene Emperor Theodosius I that not only did he owe his *imperium* to God but likewise he was subject to divine law in pre-eminence.²⁴ Secondly, after an atrocity in which the inhabitants of Thessalonica were massacred he commanded Theodosius to do penance and refused him the sacrament.²⁵

A bishop had very publically humbled an emperor. Consequently, the event has led some to believe that Theodosius had been excommunicated by Ambrose but what is certain is that the emperor did perform penance in an open show of humility.²⁶ This event demonstrated, as Lester L. Field, Jr. noted, that 'In matters of religion and morals, the Christian *imperium* served Christ, and if the emperor did not humble himself before the Church, it humbled him.'²⁷ This event will have demonstrated to contemporaries that the *imperium* had been subdued by the *sacerdotium*. Just as telling was that Theodosius had been humiliated at the hands of the Bishop of Milan and not the higher ecclesiastical authority of the pope. Furthermore, the incident, as Myers noted, 'was to furnish medieval churchmen in the West with an important precedent,

²¹ Henry A. Myers, *Medieval Kingship* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1982), p.38.

²² Boniface Ramsey O.P., *Ambrose* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), p.5.

²³ Ambrose, 'Sermon against Auxentius (Epistle 75a)', in *FIG*, pp.70-75 (p.75) and Ambrose, 'Letter XXI. [To the Most Clement Emperor, his Blessed Majesty Valentinian, Bishop Ambrose sends greetings]', in *The Letters of S. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan* (Oxford: James Parker and Co., 1881), pp.137-42 (p.140). [Hereafter *Letters of Ambrose*]. Recently the bishop of Milevis, Optatus, had professed that an Emperor's only superior was God and even pagan judges were 'ministers of the Will of God.' However, he also expressed a sentiment that closely echoed Ambrose by asserting that 'the State is not in the Church, but the Church is in the State.' See Optatus of Milevis, 'Against the Donatists', in *The Work of St. Optatus, Bishop of Milevis, Against the Donatists*, trans. by O.R. Vassall-Phillips (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1917), pp.1-297 (p.135; p.177; p.132).

²⁴ Ambrose, 'Letter XL [To the Most Gracious Prince and Blessed Emperor his Majesty Theodosius, Bishop Ambrose sends greetings]', in *Letters of Ambrose*, pp.357-69 (p.267).

²⁵ *Letters of Ambrose*, pp.324-29.

²⁶ Myers maintains Theodosius was excommunicated but Neil B. McLynn disagrees. See Myers, *Medieval Kingship*, p.41 and McLynn, *Ambrose of Milan: church and court in a Christian capital* (Berkeley; London: University of California Press, 1994), pp.326-28 respectively.

²⁷ Lester L. Field, Jr., *Liberty, Dominion, and the Two Swords: On the Origins of Western Political Theology (180-398)* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998), p.232.

showing the supremacy of the Church over secular rulers where their claims to power conflicted.²⁸ The bishop of Constantinople, John Chrysostom certainly did not enjoy the hegemony exercised by Ambrose. Chrysostom encountered a powerful enemy in Theophilus of Alexandria when he became embroiled in a controversy over the doctrines of Origen, leading to his deposition and banishment.²⁹ Nevertheless, his homilies on the Epistles to the Romans, according to Víctor Manuel Morales Vásquez, 'have asserted themselves as the most significant patristic instances of the history of reception of Rom.13.1-7.'³⁰

Indeed, what made the homily so important to sixteenth-century discussions about the relationship between temporal and spiritual power, from Martin Luther through to Catholic lawyer Pierre de Belloy, was Chrysostom's endorsement of a hierarchical structure: rulers above subjects, husband above wife and man over woman. This was God's natural order occurring in the body and amongst all creatures. Without it there would be discord. Chrysostom recognised God's laws were introduced not to overthrow the commonwealth but rather to provide a better ordering of it and to teach mankind not to establish worthless and futile laws.³¹ The sentiment contrasts markedly to that of Ambrose. Chrysostom declared that it was the duty of all, including monks and priests, to be subject unto the higher powers and he rejected the notion that this was subversive to religion. Consequently, he emphasised that Paul's instruction was to 'be subject' not 'obey' and the Christian must consent because 'this is of God's appointment.' Although Chrysostom recognised 'there is no power but of God' he did not concede that this signified that all rulers were 'elected by God'; only that the temporal office was established by His wisdom.³² Consequently, those who resisted the worldly authority resisted God as the creator of these laws.

Therefore, Romans 13 was placed in its historical context and Chrysostom understood Paul's injunctions as protective and preventative. The Apostles lived under Pagan not Christian rule and their teachings and deeds had generated false accusations of 'sedition' as it appeared they had attempted to subvert the established institutions of government. The precepts of Romans 13 curtailed these allegations but disobedience provided no valid defence and provoked both the scorn of earthly authority and God. Nevertheless, Chrysostom, like Irenaeus, believed

²⁸ Myers, *Medieval Kingship*, p.41.

²⁹ W.R.W. Stephens, *Saint John Chrysostom, His Life and Times: A Sketch of the Church and the Empire in the Fourth Century* (London: John Murray, 1880), pp.286-25; Krastu Banev, *Theophilus of Alexandria and the First Origenist Controversy: Rhetoric and Power* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

³⁰ Víctor Manuel Morales Vásquez, *Contours of a Biblical Reception Theory: Studies in the Rezeptionsgeschichte of Romans 13.1-7* (Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2012), p.184.

³¹ John Chrysostom, 'Homily XXIII', in *The Homilies of S. John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople on the Epistle of St. Paul the Apostle to the Romans* (Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1841), pp.392-405 (p.392).

³² *Ibid.*, pp.392-93. Chrysostom's assertion rests on a very precise reading of Romans 13: '[Paul] does not say, for there is no ruler but of God; but it is the thing he speaks of, and says, there is no power but of God. And the powers that be, are ordained of God.'

temporal power was a blessing because it served a divine purpose: it protected the weak and maintained order by punishing the wicked. As such, both subject and ruler should assist each other in pursuing the will of God.³³ Chrysostom had produced an accomplished, sympathetic, practical and insightful 'contribution to the exegesis of the epistle—a contribution which no commentator on Romans worth his salt is ever likely to ignore.'³⁴

However, the fourth-century author known as Ambrosiaster understood earthly authority and law as operating like a tutor facilitating people to a higher degree of righteousness which was essential in order to be imputed with mercy.³⁵ As a work commonly mistaken for Ambrose the Ambrosiaster commentary was 'widely admired and imitated throughout the Middle-Ages...[and] was appreciated by humanists and reformers alike.'³⁶ Therefore, his role must be recognised in developing the analogical relationship between godly and human law. Ambrosiaster understood that because God was the author of both natural and earthly law, both must be followed. Romans 13 testified that God had entrusted the administration of the *ius divinum* to the divinely appointed ministers, not only to prevent the repudiation of temporal power as 'a merely human construction' but also to subject those that did not fear God to earthly power by means of the assertion that all who resist authority will not escape the judgment of God. One striking assertion would have enormous resonance during the Reformation period: rulers 'have the image of God, because everyone else is under his head' and they are 'created' for the purpose of ensuring good conduct and punishing those that offend.³⁷

The notion of *rex imago dei* was a recurring feature of Ambrosiaster's writings on kingship. Indeed, Sophie Lunn-Rockliffe noted that he recognised that only their power was divine and their authority to punish evildoers was based 'on three concepts: fear of God, fear of the law, and fear of the ruler.'³⁸ Similar language can be found in the *Epistle to Barnabas*: 'Thou shalt be subject to the Lord, and to [other] masters as the image of God, with modesty and

³³ John Chrysostom, 'Homily XXIII', pp.394-97.

³⁴ C.E.B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The Epistle to the Romans*. Vol.I (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1975), p.33.

³⁵ Ambrosiaster, '*Commentary of Romans*', in *Commentaries on Romans and 1-2 Corinthians*, trans. and ed. by Gerald L. Bray (Downers Grove., Illinois: IVP Academic, 2009), pp.1-118 (p.100).

³⁶ Joshua Papsdorf, "'Ambrosiaster" in Paul in the Middle Ages." In *A Companion to St. Paul in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Steven Cartwright (Leiden: Brill, 2013), pp.51-77 (p.51). Gerald Bray. 'Translator's Introduction', in *Commentaries on Romans and 1-2 Corinthians*, trans. and ed. by Gerald L. Bray (Downers Grove., Illinois: IVP Academic, 2009), pp.xv-xxiii (p.xxii). The obscurity of the commentary has not diminished its prestige. See Alexander Souter, *The Earliest Latin Commentaries on the Epistles of St. Paul: A Study* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1927), p.44, and John B. Payne, Albert Rabil Jr and Warren S. Smith Jr., 'The Paraphrases of Erasmus: Origin and Character', in *CWE* 42, p.xviii.

³⁷ Ambrosiaster, '*Commentary of Romans*', pp.100-1.

³⁸ Sophie Lunn-Rockliffe, *Ambrosiaster's Political Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p.139.

fear.³⁹ However, following a straightforward reading of Romans 13:4, Ambrosiaster insisted that the discipline inflicted by God's 'ordained rulers' was necessary because He does not wish people to perish by 'particular judgment' and the tutelage of worldly power is an attempt to prevent damnation.⁴⁰ Ambrosiaster maintained the distinction between the law of righteousness and the earthly law under 'God's deputy' but insisted upon their mutual dependency. With Augustine of Hippo we more firmly discern an exegesis of Romans 13 that demonstrated the interweaving of the temporal and spiritual spheres. Nevertheless, Augustine's political philosophy should be approached with a degree of caution because, as Paul Weithman noted, he did not compose a treatise devoted to the topic and nor did he 'elaborate a philosophical theory of politics, if by that is meant a synoptic treatment of those central questions which relies on theoretical devices contrived for the purpose.'⁴¹

Augustine was forced to exist in world in which the political and the spiritual could not be, or even conceived to be, anything other than fundamentally bound. Therefore, his exchanges with the dualists and Donatists offer only a fragmented reading of Romans 13 and this fitted an agenda in which he not only refuted heresy but pursued the establishment of Catholic Christianity as the religion of the world.⁴² Subsequently he admitted to the existence of two laws. He argued that while the pious are content to live in adherence with the 'eternal law', those which are not have imposed upon them temporal law. Augustine did not seek to exempt those serving only the temporal law from subjection from the eternal law because he recognised that all just laws are derived from the latter.⁴³ Wilfred Parsons explains:

Followed out, his theory of law, accepted by the Church, will remake the world and will, in fact, create what we call Christendom, a politico-religious order designed to unite mankind, by bending the supernatural to the uses of the temporal state.⁴⁴

³⁹ The Epistle of Barnabas, in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers. Translations of The Writings of the Fathers down to A.D.325, Vol. I. The Apostolic Fathers—Justin Martyr—Irenæus*, eds. by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899), pp.137-49 (p.148).

⁴⁰ Ambrosiaster, '*Commentary of Romans*', p.101.

⁴¹ Paul Weithman, 'Augustine's political philosophy', in *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine*, eds. Eleonore Stump and Norman Kretzmann (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp.234-52 (p.234).

⁴² Mark Reasoner, *Romans in Full Circle: A History of Interpretation* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), p.132.

⁴³ Augustine, 'On Free Will (*De Libero Arbitrio*)', in *Augustine: Earlier Writings*, ed. and trans. by J.H.S. Burleigh (London: SCM Press, 1953), pp.102-217 (p.131).

⁴⁴ Parsons, S.J., 'From Augustine to Hincmar', p.327.

Consequently Augustine understood that God was the provider of all worldly kingdoms, whether good or bad, and even if His purpose was not always revealed, He will grant power and *dominium* unto those which are judged most convenient.⁴⁵

Nevertheless, by acting righteously the Christian will, as Romans 13:3 confirmed, be praised. Therefore, Augustine argued that ‘even if an unjust authority condemns you, God who is just will crown you.’⁴⁶ The Christian was not released from their obligation of obedience towards even unjust rulers because he contended ‘it is one thing to wish to use well unjust power, and it is another thing to use unjustly just power.’⁴⁷ In a letter to the Proconsul of Africa he provided a slight recognition of the existence of Two Swords in that Apringius was reminded that as the possessor of the temporal sword he bore it not in vain and as a revenger he enjoyed ‘powers here that I do not possess.’ Additionally, in a letter to the vicar of Africa, Macedonius, Augustine concluded that while people must fear the holder of the temporal sword the reciprocal love between subject and ruler must be preserved.⁴⁸ Augustine claimed Paul’s command to ‘be subject to the higher authorities’ was a warning to Christians not to be puffed up with pride and believe they were above subordination to earthly rulers. Consequently he adhered to Paul’s bipartite anthropology by insisting that mankind consisted of body and soul. The physical aspect of man required the support of the temporal office and thus should be subject unto it. Whereas his spiritual aspect, which was faith in God, must never submit to anyone that desired ‘to destroy that very thing in us through which God deigned to give us eternal life.’⁴⁹

The Christian would eventually ascend into Heaven where temporal authority is extraneous; until then, Augustine asserted, the faithful must endure their condition for the preservation of social order, remain faithful and render obedience as God had commanded. However, Romans 13:2 is then inverted and this subtle *eisegesis* permitted Augustine to consider the verse within the context of Christian persecution. He insisted that Paul ‘does not say “Do what is good and the *authority* will praise you,” but: “do what is good and you will have praise of *him*.”’⁵⁰ Augustine’s *eisegesis* differed from the others discussed above because he had

⁴⁵ Augustine, ‘*The City of God*’, in *The Works of Aurelius Augustine, Bishop of Hippo: A New Translation. Vol. 1. The City of God, Volume 1*, ed. by Marcus Dods, D.D. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1913), p.216.

⁴⁶ *Augustine: Political Writings*, eds. by E.M. Atkins and R.J. Dodaro (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p.123. [Hereafter APW].

⁴⁷ Augustine, ‘On the Good of Marriage [*De bono conjugali*]’, in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, Volume III. St. Augustin: On the Holy Trinity, Doctrinal Treatises, Moral Treatises*, ed. Philip Schaff, D.D., LL.D., (Grand Rapids: WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1956), pp.399-413 (p.406).

⁴⁸ APW, p.64; p.82.

⁴⁹ Augustine, ‘Propositions from the Epistle to the Romans’, in *Augustine on Romans*, text and trans. by Paula Fredriksen Landes (Chico, California: Scholars Press, 1982), pp.2-49 (p.41).

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p.43. My emphasis.

deliberately inverted the source of approval away from the temporal ruler to God alone. He then added that whether the authorities tolerate or persecute the faithful God will still praise them and this is achieved either by their allegiance to God or through 'the crown of martyrdom.' However, the ruler remained God's servant irrespective of his condition because in this way he was he reigned for the good of the people even 'though it be for his own evil.' Augustine confined the authority of rulers firmly to the earthly sphere and resistance in such matters was strictly forbidden because their power was ordained by God. Nevertheless, this subjection should not be rendered 'halfheartedly' but out of 'pure love' and 'they should neither hate them nor seek their praise through deceit.'⁵¹

Gelasius I to Aquinas (c.492-1274).

Towards the end of the fifth century Pope Gelasius I professed that the 'world is chiefly ruled' by the royal power (*potestas*) of the emperor but sacred authority (*auctoritas*) belonged to the priesthood. He proposed a duality of power, or Two Swords, a doctrine grounded upon Luke 22:38: 'They [the disciples] said "Lord, look; here are two swords." He replied; "It is enough."' The Two Swords possessed their own function and dignity, with the sacred authority of the priest being of greater weight because it must 'answer for the kings of men themselves at the divine judgement.' The emperor was subject to the spiritual power in matters of salvation. Therefore, royal power must 'piously bow the neck' to the sacred authority and submit 'rather than rule.'⁵² Gelasius believed that the temporal power must not judge but learn of divine things. Despite an emperor receiving authority from God, he was the son rather than the ruler of the Church.⁵³ The Church was ordered by succession with the pope being head (*principatus*) of the Body of Christ and in organic terms head (*caput*) of the physical body (*corpus*).⁵⁴ However, Gelasius went further and asserted that imperial power was bestowed by God as a divine favour (*beneficium*) rather than by right.⁵⁵

This notion contrasted with that of Isidore of Seville who contended that the prince often held 'the highest position of power within the Church' because they possessed the capability to enforce discipline with terror when the priest was unable to accomplish the same

⁵¹ Augustine, 'Propositions from the Epistle to the Romans', p.43.

⁵² Gelasius I, 'Letter to the emperor Anastasius (494)', in *The Crisis of Church and State 1050-1300: With Selected Documents*, ed. by Brian Tierney (Toronto: University of Toronto Press in association with the Medieval Academy of America, 1988), pp.12-14 (pp.13-14). [Hereafter CCS].

⁵³ R.W. Carlyle and A.J. Carlyle, *A History of Mediæval Political Theory in the West: Vol.I. The Second Century to the Ninth* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1964), p.187.

⁵⁴ Janet Coleman, *A History of Political Thought: From the Middle Ages to the Renaissance* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), p.65.

⁵⁵ Walter Ullmann, *The Growth of Papal Government in the Middle Ages: A study in the ideological relation of clerical to lay power* (London: Methuen & Co., 1970), p.84.

by exhortation.⁵⁶ Despite the professions of Gelasius and Isidore the papacy would be emancipated from the imperial crown by the spurious *Donation of Constantine* which was used as proof of the supremacy and universality of Roman jurisdiction over temporal rulers.⁵⁷ However, the *Donation* went much further than asserting that Constantine I acknowledged that the imperial throne possessed no spiritual authority. It pronounced not only the pope to be vicar of Christ but also that the successor of Peter is granted by Constantine imperial sovereignty 'over the four principal sees, Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople, and Jerusalem, as also over all the churches of God in all the world.'⁵⁸ The author of the *Donation* sought to establish the pope's imperial crown constitutionally, and the subtext was that no emperor had the right to dictate to the papacy.

The *Dictatus Papae* (1075) of Gregory VII drew heavily from the Gelasian Two Sword theory and declared a papal theocracy consonant with the Donation of Constantine. In a fractious period of discord between papacy and empire Gregory insisted that his papal office was infallible and possessed both supreme jurisdiction and imperial sovereignty upon earth.⁵⁹ Consequently, he outlined a number of special papal prerogatives: universal jurisdiction above worldly judgment, the right to 'enact new laws according to the needs of the time', the authority to depose both bishops and emperors, all princes must kiss his feet and the power to absolve subjects from their fealty to 'unjust men.'⁶⁰ The *Dictatus Papae* was essentially a collection of aphorisms which outlined the papal supremacy but it contained no clear definition of the relationship between the pope and civil law.⁶¹ Therefore, these principles were fiercely contested by Emperor Henry IV who 'drew a clear line separating the papal office from the individual' during his moves to depose the pope.⁶² During the subsequent Investiture Contest

⁵⁶ Isidore of Seville, '*Sentences, Book 3*', in *FIG*, pp.206-9 (p.208). Walter Ullmann states: 'Isidore's views on the function of the prince might be described as a paraphrastic elaboration of Pauline doctrine [especially Romans 13]. The function of the king standing as he does within the Church is the strengthening of sacerdotal directives: his function is the support of the sacerdotal words by the princely "terror." This is his *raison d'être*.' See Ullmann, *Growth of Papal Government*, p.29.

⁵⁷ For a more in-depth discussion of the documents origin see Ullmann, *Growth of Papal Government*, p.58 ff.

⁵⁸ '*The Donation of Constantine*', in *FIG*, pp.229-30 (p.229).

⁵⁹ This can be further ascertained by his letter to the German princes and clergy (1077) in which he rhetorically asked 'if the See of St Peter decides and gives judgment in heavenly and spiritual things, how much more in things earthly and secular?' See Gregory VII, 'To the German Clergy, Princes, etc., regarding a Safe-Conduct to Germany', in *The Correspondence of Pope Gregory VII: Selected Letters from the Registrum*, trans. by Ephraim Emerton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), pp.122-23 (p.123).

⁶⁰ '*Dictatus Papae*', in *FIG*, pp.242-43 (p.242).

⁶¹ Kenneth Pennington, *The Prince and the Law, 1299-1600: Sovereignty and Rights in the Western Legal Tradition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), p.9.

⁶² Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology* 6th edn (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1981), p.58.

Henry refused to recognise Gregory as pope and he sternly professed that not only was God alone his judge but also that he could only be deposed should he deviate from the true faith.

Henry determinedly reminded Gregory that: the true pope St. Peter had exclaimed “Fear God, honor the king” (I Peter 2:17). You, however, since you do not fear God, dishonour me, ordained of Him.⁶³ In response, Gregory reminded Henry that the pope was given the power to bind and loose and not kings. Gregory believed that he was fulfilling his divinely conferred commission by defending Christ’s Church, deposing Henry and releasing Christian subjects from their sworn allegiance to the rebellious emperor.⁶⁴ In the prolonged conflict he ultimately turned to the great pillar of papal primacy Matthew 16:18-19, that stated the Church was built upon Peter and Christ had given him the keys to the kingdom of heaven and whatever he bind upon earth would be bound in heaven. Gregory asked: ‘Are kings excepted here? Or are they not of the sheep which the Son of God committed to St Peter?’ He insisted that Christ had bestowed upon Peter unique authority: the power to open and close Heaven and the authority to judge upon the earth. The power of the keys made Peter prince above all others on earth and Christ’s priests were ‘fathers and masters of kings and princes.’⁶⁵ Henry, on the other hand, was equally resolute: his power came directly from God and Gregory was usurping royal power by ignoring Christ’s own confirmation of the existence of Two Swords.⁶⁶ What eventually emerged was the concept of a papal monarchy that placed popes firmly above earthly princes. As Colin Morris noted ‘since the clergy were answerable for the souls of laity, the *sacerdotium* appeared superior to the *regnum* and popes to kings.’⁶⁷

Peter Abelard’s commentary on Romans avoided such controversy. Like Chrysostom he placed Romans 13 in historical context. Abelard believed Paul’s command for ‘every rational creature’ to willingly subject themselves to the earthly powers was issued to refute the erroneous contentions of newly converted Christians who thought it was wrong to serve temporal rulers or even that their power was not established by God. Importantly he recognised that both good and evil princes may serve God’s purpose with the former being a ‘divine favor’ and the latter being either a test of faith or His vengeance against wicked men. Abelard believed that because earthly power was of God it was intrinsically good but those which work with the Devil or abuse this authority by participating in wickedness ‘have an evil will from themselves.’ This understandably rested upon the notion that God did not establish sin but he does permit

⁶³ Henry IV, ‘Letter of Henry to Gregory refusing to recognize him as pope (1076)’, in *CCS*, pp.59-60 (p.60).

⁶⁴ Gregory VII, ‘Deposition of Henry by Gregory (February 1076)’, in *CCS*, pp.60-1 (p.61).

⁶⁵ Gregory VII, ‘To Hermann of Metz, in Defence of the Papal Policy toward Henry IV’, in *The Correspondence of Pope Gregory VII*, p.167-9.

⁶⁶ Henry IV, ‘Letter of Henry to the German Bishops (1076)’, in *CCS*, pp.61-2 (p.62).

⁶⁷ Colin Morris, *The Papal Monarchy: The Western Church from 1050-1250* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), p.2.

its existence, which necessitated a distinction between the office and individual. Subsequently it was acceptable to resist a tyrant because the subject would be withstanding wickedness that did not pertain to the divine office. Alternatively, it was not permitted to resist a just ruler because this will infringe upon his legitimately established power.⁶⁸

Nonetheless, the emergence of a hierocratic theory of papal governance is clearly visible in Bernard of Clairvaux's declaration that the pope is blessed with a *plenitudo potestatis*. Despite the pope possessing plenitude of power in temporal and spiritual affairs, Bernard still warned Pope Eugenius III, in his "mirror" for the papal office, that while his Apostolic authority was supreme it was incorrect to believe it was the only divinely ordained power. Paul's use of the plural 'powers' in Romans 13:1 confirmed the existence of 'intermediate and lesser' authority by gradation from the supreme power of the pope.⁶⁹ Bernard was not alone in this exegesis. Hugh of St. Victor endorsed this structure of hierarchy and declared 'The spiritual power excels the earthly...in honor and dignity' because the worldly power is established by the spiritual and 'it may judge it if it has not been good.'⁷⁰ It was the duty of the temporal powers to not only safeguard their own authority but also that of the pope and Bernard reminds the reader of Paul's assertion that those which resist the power, resist the ordinance of God (Romans 13:2). The context in which Bernard gave this advice to Eugenius is important. For much of Eugenius' pontificate he was forced to reside outside of Rome because the extension of papal power was opposed by reformers such as Arnold of Brescia and Giordano Pierleoni who supported the communal revolution which sought to replace papal governance with a senate.⁷¹

Nevertheless, Bernard insisted upon the unique privilege of the Apostolic See and he places the temporal sword under the jurisdiction of the papal office. In doing so it was necessary to tackle Christ's problematic command that Peter must sheath his sword in John 18:11. Bernard's solution proved to be instrumental in defining the papal supremacy. He contended this command did not deny Peter and his successor's possession of the material sword but rather that Christ had implied it should not be drawn by their hand. Consequently, both swords belonged to the Church: 'The spiritual sword should be drawn by the hand of the priest; the material sword by the hand of the knight, but clearly at the bidding of the priest and at the command of the emperor.'⁷² This reading of Scripture supplanted the jurisdiction of wielding the

⁶⁸ Peter Abelard, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, trans. by Steven R. Cartwright (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2011), pp.83-398 (pp.343-5).

⁶⁹ Bernard of Clairvaux, *Five Books on Consideration: Advice to a Pope*, trans. by John D. Anderson and Elizabeth T. Kennan (Kalamazoo, Mich.: Cistercian Publications, 1976), p.101.

⁷⁰ Hugh of Saint Victor, 'De Sacramentis Christianae Fidei (c.1134)', in *CCS*, pp.94-5 (p.95). Hugh drew biblical support for this from I Corinthians 2:15.

⁷¹ I.S. Robinson, *The Papacy 1073-1198: Continuity and Innovation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp.27-8.

⁷² Bernard of Clairvaux, *On Consideration*, pp.117-18.

sword of coercion granted to the temporal power in Romans 13 and placed it under the authority of spiritual sword. In doing so the pope was furnished with *plenitudo potestatis*. As Walter Ullmann noted, 'He [the pope] is therefore bidden by the *sacerdotium* to act and use force for the good of the whole Christian body politic.'⁷³ Nevertheless, the power of kings was considered by Bernard to be merely supplementary to the papacy.

The coercive function of kings was also considered by John of Salisbury in the extensive *Policraticus* which also serves as a 'mirror', this time for princes. In Book IV he explored the difference between a prince and a tyrant and concluded the former is 'obedient to law, and rules his people by a will that places itself at their service.' Despite upholding the papal supremacy he did not debase the temporal power and John considered, like Ambrosiaster, that 'the prince is the public power and a certain image on earth of the divine majesty.'⁷⁴ Moreover, John asserted that 'the greatest part of the divine virtue is revealed to belong to the prince...and by divine impulse everyone fears him who is fear itself.'⁷⁵ As Romans 13 stated, all power is of God and the prince was 'a substitute for His hand' to ensure everyone understood 'His justice and mercy.' It was not permitted to resist, or even oppressive, princes because he argued, much like Irenaeus and Chrysostom, they were 'divine dispensation' for the sake of the subjects' discipline. While tyranny was an abuse of ordained power it could be used, as Romans 13 affirms, by God as a remedy for sin or, put another way, as a means of using 'wickedness for goodness.' Therefore, intrinsically: 'All power is good since it exists only from Him from whom everything good and only good exists.'⁷⁶

John then appealed to the *Codex Justinianus* in order to bind princes under the obligation of their own regional law. He warned them not to assume they were permitted to undertake anything that conflicted with 'the equity of justice.'⁷⁷ Consequently, he asserted, resembling Bernard of Clairvaux, that the prince's power as 'a minister of God' was inferior to that of the pope because the coercive sword was delivered to him by the Church. The prince's duty as a 'minister' did not entail the performance of the higher duties of sacred law but rather those which were an indignity for priests, such as the duty to punish evildoers revealed in Romans 13:4. The superior function of the priest, John explained, was witnessed by the suspension of Emperor Theodosius I by Ambrose because 'he who is in the possession of the authority of conferring a dignity takes precedence over him who is himself conferred with a

⁷³ Ullmann, *The Growth of Papal Government*, p.432.

⁷⁴ John of Salisbury, '*Policraticus*', in *John of Salisbury: Policraticus*, ed. and trans. by Cary J. Nederman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p.28.

⁷⁵ John of Salisbury, '*Policraticus*', p.28.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p.202.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p.29.

dignity.⁷⁸ Moreover, the Decretals of Pope Innocent III insisted that the power of consecration afforded pope's the right to examine any imperial candidate and even oppose their elevation if he deemed them unsuitable.⁷⁹ His biblical support for this was threefold: (1) Deuteronomy 17:18 which asserted that priests should determine upon controversies in temporal matters; (2) the allegory of the keys found in Matthew 16:19; and (3) the example of Melchizedek of Salem's two-fold dignity of king and priest.⁸⁰ Therefore, Innocent had purposely positioned the papacy to be the superior arbitrator of any temporal conflict which disturbed the peace and order of Christendom.⁸¹ However, Rome did not possess the machinery to directly conduct worldly affairs and despite Innocent's notions of absolute power the truth was that his rhetoric had exceeded reality.

Dominican Thomas Aquinas considered the political world to be part of God's larger universal kingdom and its authority extended from, and was directed by Him as part of the natural order. Despite his enduring influence Aquinas had relatively little to say about the relationship between the temporal and spiritual worlds.⁸² What he did say was potentially explosive. He followed Aristotelian principles understanding mankind to be a "political animal" endowed with reason in order to 'participate intellectually and actively in the rational order of the universe.'⁸³ While Aquinas recognised the positive value of worldly authority, he also understood it to be an 'institution of human right' (human law) derived from 'natural reason.' However, the distinction between believers and unbelievers arises from divine right (divine law) which is founded upon grace but this 'does not abolish the dominium and authority of unbelievers over the faithful.'⁸⁴ The king is entrusted with 'supreme ruling power in human affairs' but because man cannot enjoy divinity through human virtue alone divine rule is needed.

⁷⁸ John of Salisbury, '*Policraticus*', pp.32-3.

⁷⁹ Innocent displayed his intension not to infringe the rights of emperors by paraphrasing Luke 20:25 'Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's, and unto God the things which are God's', and Romans 13:7. However, he did reserve for the papacy the power to refuse to consecrate any elected king which was 'a sacrilegious man or an excommunicate, a tyrant, a fool or a heretic.' See Innocent III, '*Per Venerabilem* (1202)', in *CCS*, pp.133-4.

⁸⁰ Brian Tierney, "*Tria Quippe Distinguit Iudicia...*" A Note on Innocent III's Decretal *Per Venerabilem*', *Speculum*, 37:1 (Jan., 1962), pp.48-59 (p.49; p.56).

⁸¹ Augustinian theologian Giles of Rome, a century later, understood that the decretal provided the pope with universal lordship over all matters even if he chose not to do so 'regularly and generally.' Giles of Rome, '*On Ecclesiastical Power*,' in *Giles of Rome On Ecclesiastical Power: The De ecclesiastica potestate of Aegidius Romanus*, trans. by R.W. Dyson (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1986), p.159.

⁸² I am drawing from Dino Bigongiari's "Introduction" in *The Political Ideas Of St. Thomas Aquinas: Representative Selections* (New York: Hafner Publishing, 1957), pp.vi-xxxvii and Alexander Passerin d'Entrèves, *The Medieval Contribution to Political Thought* (New York: The Humanities Press, 1959), pp.19-43.

⁸³ d'Entrèves, *Medieval Contribution*, p.21.

⁸⁴ *Aquinas: Political Writings*, ed. and trans. by R.W. Dyson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp.257-73 (p.271). [Hereafter *TAPW*].

Thus, Aquinas attempted to keep the two spheres distinct but he still insisted that all kings were subject to the 'Vicar of Christ...as if to the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.'⁸⁵

This assertion appears to conflict with his much less hierocratic distinction, born of Matthew 22:21, that in matters which 'pertain to the civil good, the secular power should be obeyed before the spiritual.' Aquinas was not suggesting that spiritual power was lower than the temporal. Instead he made a distinction between them, with the temporal subject to the spiritual in things pertaining to the salvation of the soul and the spiritual subject to the temporal in matters concerning the civil good.⁸⁶ The conjoined power of the pope placed him at the summit of both spheres and he was, like Melchizedek, *rex et sacerdos*: the embodiment of the two authorities. Aquinas had affirmed the papal supremacy. The Church can intervene in worldly matters and the 'right of dominion or authority' of earthly rulers could be deprived by the Church if they became heretics or schismatics. The pope by right of his universal authority possessed this right of deposition from God 'because unbelievers, by reason of their unbelief, deserve to lose their power over the faithful, who are made children of God.'⁸⁷ Nevertheless, the Christian still was under the obligation to obey the temporal authority because it possessed its power from God.

However, Aquinas inserted a condition upon obedience by suggesting a distinction between the office and the individual. He contended that obedience was dependent upon how the authority was obtained (i.e., through violence) or how it was subsequently used (i.e., the power commanded subjects to commit evil). In the first instance rulers should still be obeyed despite their unworthiness but in the second there was no such obligation. In fact, Aquinas argued, subjects were 'obliged to disobey it, as did the holy martyrs who suffered death rather than the impious commands of tyrants.'⁸⁸ Therefore obedience to princes was only binding 'insofar as the order of justice requires it' and disobedience was permitted provided they avoid scandal.⁸⁹ Shockingly, he alluded to the possibility of active resistance. A ruler who descended into tyranny or attained power through violence cannot demand obedience because their commands are not 'of God.' This was an exegesis of Romans 13:3 that accentuated legitimate rulers as God's ministers for good and a terror only for the wicked. Moreover, Romans 13:4 defined the duty of the ruler to be virtuous and to govern for the benefit of the realm not his

⁸⁵ *TAPW*, pp.5-52 (p.41).

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p.278.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p.271. Aquinas does not provide any solid evidence of this. He immediately follows up this declaration with the rather languid words 'But the Church sometimes does this, and sometimes she does not.'

⁸⁸ Thomas Aquinas. 'Commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard', in *Aquinas Selected Political Writings*, ed. A. P. D'Entrèves and trans. J. G. Dawson (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1948), pp.180-7 (p.183).

⁸⁹ *TAPW*, p.71; p.144.

own.⁹⁰ Those who resist a just ruler were 'made guilty in conscience' but Aquinas had identified a limit to Paul's commands. This interpretation, unlike that of Abelard, leaves no room for the appointment of wicked rulers as an instrument of divine punishment for sin. If a ruler seized dominion against the will of the people and the people had no recourse to another superior authority to pass judgement upon the invader: the man which liberates them by slaying the tyrant should be praised and rewarded.⁹¹

Boniface VIII to Marsilius of Padua (ca.1290-1324).

The legacy of Innocent III and his successors bore witness to the extreme limits of the power of the Roman Church. Both the dogma and canon law developed in support of the papal monarchy were accepted and the right of the pope to intervene in the affairs of princes universally recognised.⁹² However, the quarrel between Boniface VIII and Philip IV of France over the king's wish to subjugate all within his realm to royal authority and draw upon the resources of the French Church produced political dynamite.⁹³ Boniface was not apprehensive in defending the supreme power of the papacy against Philip's 'so horrid an abuse' of temporal power and he commanded the nation's prelates disobey their king or risk laicisation.⁹⁴ At its core this dispute concerned national sovereignty. Boniface attempted to amend Philip's obstinacy with the bull *Ausculda fili* (1301) which re-asserted papal primacy and warned the king not to be fooled into believing that he had no earthly superior or that he was not subject to 'the head of the ecclesiastical hierarchy.' Boniface insisted that maintaining such error not only made Philip an unbeliever but also placed him 'outside the fold of the good shepherd.'⁹⁵ Philip reportedly burnt the decree and his loyal nobles condemned Boniface's conduct as wicked trickery.⁹⁶ In return Boniface promulgated what has been described as 'probably the most famous of all the documents on church and state that has come down to us from the Middle Ages': the bull *Unam Sanctam*.⁹⁷

Unam Sanctam's primary concern of was unity of the Church and this permitted Boniface to explicitly profess the doctrine of *plenitudo potestatis*. While the bull was a bold statement, it contained little innovation being essentially a restatement of the Gelasian

⁹⁰ *TAPW*, pp.22-24.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p.75.

⁹² A.C. Flick, 'The New Challenge to Medieval Papalism', in *Philip the Fair and Boniface VIII: State vs. Papacy*, ed. Charles T. Wood (New York: Holt, Pinehard and Winston, 1967), pp.13-7 (pp.13-4).

⁹³ For in-depth studies on the two main protagonists see T.S.R. Boase, *Boniface VIII* (London: Constable and Company, 1933) and J.R. Strayer, *The Reign of Philip the Fair* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1980).

⁹⁴ 'The Bull "Clericis Laicos," 1296 A.D.', in *Select Historical Documents of the Middle Ages*, trans. and ed. by Ernest F. Henderson (London: George Bell and Sons, 1907), pp.432-34 (pp.432-34).

⁹⁵ Boniface VIII, 'The bull *Ausculda Fili* (December 1301)', in *The CCS*, pp.185-186.

⁹⁶ This incident is discussed in greater detail by Boase, *Boniface VIII*, pp.297-312.

⁹⁷ Brian Tierney, *CCS*, p.182.

ecclesiology of the Two Swords as enlarged by Gregory VIII and compounded by Bernard of Clairvaux. Paul's revelation that there is no power but of God and the powers that be are ordained of God was employed as proof that the two swords were arranged subordinately with the higher spiritual sword regulating the temporal. Boniface insisted that this hierarchy was proven by the emanationist logic of the *Lex Divinitatis* (law of divinity) in which the lowest in the heavenly hierarchy was to be led to the highest through intermediaries.⁹⁸ This Pseudo-Dionysian logic neatly complied with the doctrine of Christ's Vicar ruling over the universal monarchy of the Church. Consequently, Boniface had provided a reading of Romans that demonstrated a gradation of power: 'powers are not arranged immediately by God: earthly power is ordained by spiritual power and is led to God by spiritual power.'⁹⁹ The fame of *Unam Sanctum* exceeded its effectiveness but the reaction from France was robust and led to accusations of heresy, simony and usurpation being made against the pope.¹⁰⁰ Consequently, the papacy suffered from chronic injuries and the bearing plotted by Innocent III would ultimately prove to be unnavigable.

Nonetheless, Boniface had polemical support. Giles of Rome's hierocratic tract *De ecclesiastica potestate* (ca.1302) was a wholehearted, if repetitive, defence of papal monarchy.¹⁰¹ The tract bears the influence of Aristotle and Aquinas' moral political philosophy and subsequently Giles advocates the subordination of the temporal sword. Despite this, Giles maintained that both good and evil princes must be obeyed because they provided spiritual profit. The protection provided by the good prince assisted their perfection but under the evil prince Christians were forced to overcome temptation and were consequently purified. The subjection of Christians to princes only pertained to 'bodily matters' but their obedience to the spiritual sword was preeminent because this 'strikes through to the soul and can separate it from the communion of the faithful for disobedience, the soul is slain by that sword.' This exegesis placed the sublime power of 'the Supreme Pontiff' above all temporal powers by reason of the soul. The spiritual power was 'more exalted and noble' than any earthly authority because the soul was 'more excellent and noble' than the flesh. The spiritual life was more excellent than the earthly.'¹⁰²

⁹⁸ Boniface VIII, 'The bull *Unam Sanctum* (November 1302)', in *CCS*, pp.188-89 (p.189).

⁹⁹ David Luscombe, 'The '*Lex divinitatis*' in the Bull *Unam Sanctam* of Pope Boniface VIII', in *Church and Government in the Middle Ages*, eds. by C.N.L. Brooke, D.E. Luscombe, G.H. Martin and Dorothy Owen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), pp.205-21 (p.218).

¹⁰⁰ Boase, *Boniface VIII*, p.327.

¹⁰¹ See T.S.R. Boase. 'The Pope's Political Dynamite', in *Philip the Fair and Boniface VIII: State vs. Papacy*, ed. Charles T. Wood (New York: Holt, Pinehard and Winston, 1967), pp.60-65 (pp.62-64).

¹⁰² Giles of Rome, *On Ecclesiastical Power: The De ecclesiastica potestate of Aegidius Romanus* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1986), pp.6-7.

Therefore Giles insisted that both the government of the earth and the Christian's salvation demanded a strict ordering of the two swords. Giles also applied emanationist logic to insist that the power of kings had always been preceded by the spiritual dignity because royal rule was instituted through the priesthood upon God's will. Otherwise, he contended, it was 'not kingship, but robbery.' The Pauline assertion that there was no power but of God was confronted by Giles stipulating that it was one thing to derive existence from God but quite another to derive existence by His special command.¹⁰³ This interpretation made the same distinction between the office and the individual that Abelard had previously drawn. Consequently temporal authority, by way of its divine ordination, was intrinsically good but because rulers could abuse power, the important difference between power held by God's command or His permission was revealed.¹⁰⁴ Giles was now following in the footsteps of Aquinas. He stated that unfaithful rulers were undeserving of the ordained office and they should be deprived of all lordship unless they were 'regenerated through the Church' and made worthy.¹⁰⁵ This unmitigated apologetic drew on a specific reading of Romans 13 to advocate a hierocratic structure of government that placed the Vicar of Christ at the summit of both the spiritual and temporal realms: the pope was truly sovereign upon the earth.

The notion of papal *plenitudo potestatis* was taken to the extreme by James of Viterbo. The power of the pope was elevated to almost equal that of Christ upon the earth because, James argued, he acted principally, absolutely and universally upon His behalf.¹⁰⁶ What makes James's argument so distinct is that he departed from the normative distinction of dual power. His conception of 'royal power' was defined as the possession of *potestas iurisdictionis*, something the pope enjoyed because the world was a 'single universal *regnum* or realm.' This he identified completely with the Church.¹⁰⁷ James subscribed to Aquinas' understanding of the pope's twofold power as priest and king which rendered him superior to all rulers upon the earth and afforded him unlimited kingship. Similarly the functions of the temporal power within the Church were defined as coercive and rulers should inspire love by kindness and devote themselves to increasing the faith. Once again, a wicked king was not conceived to be a true

¹⁰³ Giles of Rome, *On Ecclesiastical Power*, p.11; p.50. Giles noted that whereas the distinction between kingly and priestly power can be first formally seen upon Moses' delegation of temporal disputes to judges in Exodus 18, he subsequently argued their first king, Saul, was actually appointed by Samuel and therefore regal power 'was appointed at the Lord's command, but only through the ecclesiastical power.'

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.77-8.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p.68; p.80.

¹⁰⁶ James explained this elevation thus: 'And he is called the Vicar of Christ both inasmuch as Christ is simply man, because he is priest, and inasmuch as He is both God and man, because he is also a king; and so he is indeed truly called God's vicar.' See James of Viterbo, '*De regimine Christiano*', in *James of Viterbo On Christian Government*, ed. and trans. by R.W. Dyson (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1995), p.86.

¹⁰⁷ Charles Howard McIlwain, *The Growth of Political Thought in the West: from the Greeks to the end of the Middle Ages* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1932), p.260.

king.¹⁰⁸ This distinction of 'royal power' borrowed from Bernard of Clairvaux's recognition that while the material sword was possessed by the spiritual authority it could not be drawn by its own hand. Instead the spiritual power guided the hand of the temporal authority. Therefore, in words that echo that of Giles of Rome, the earthly power held the sword 'as its commander.'¹⁰⁹

The two powers were to assist one another and their harmony was only disrupted if earthly rulers abused their divinely entrusted authority. Worldly kings were servants of the true *regnum* and James dismissed the premise of temporal supremacy, alluded to in Romans 13 and I Peter 2, because all men were judged by the pope acting upon God's behalf. This position as the highest judge upon the earth afforded the Vicar of Christ the power to correct, excommunicate and depose a temporal king. The pope's judicial power was legitimate because, James argued (sounding like Hugh of St. Victor), the kingly office was conferred upon them 'through the spiritual power.'¹¹⁰ As Michael Wilks explains, 'Natural law gives any *populus* the right to appoint its governor: divine law requires that lay rulers should be instituted by the pope.'¹¹¹ Henceforth, because the temporal power is related to nature and the spiritual to grace, the latter 'forms and perfects' the former and this cannot be achieved 'unless it is ratified, approved and confirmed by the spiritual.' This confirmation is witnessed in the coronation ceremony in which the bishop anointed the king and in doing so he demonstrated both the piety of the lay ruler and his approbation. However, James did not declare that impious or unconfirmed rulers were illegitimate or should be resisted. Instead he insisted that they were simply imperfect and they should be tolerated 'for the sake of avoiding scandal.' Nevertheless, like Aquinas, he declared that the Church maintained the right to depose them because of their unbelief.¹¹²

However, the papal monarchy was not universally accepted. The anonymous author of a tract known as the *Rex pacificus* declared that temporal authority was 'the only source and the sole foundation of all real, that is, coercive power.'¹¹³ The *Rex pacificus* also emerged from the hostility between Boniface and Philip the Fair but rather than advocate papal monarchy, it

¹⁰⁸ James of Viterbo, '*De regimine Christiano*', p.121.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., p.143. Giles argued that the Church possessed both the spiritual and temporal sword: the first 'as user' and the second 'as commander.' See Giles of Rome, *On Ecclesiastical Power*, p.24.

¹¹⁰ James of Viterbo, '*De regimine Christiano*', pp.104-5.

¹¹¹ Michael Wilks, *The Problem of Sovereignty in the Later Middle Ages: The Papal Monarchy with Augustinus Triumphus and the Publicists* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), p.297.

¹¹² I James of Viterbo, '*De regimine Christiano*', p.103; p.141.

¹¹³ Walter Ullmann, 'A Medieval Document on Papal Theories of Government', *The English Historical Review*, 61:240 (May, 1946), pp.180-201 (p.184). The *Rex pacificus* strongly dismisses James of Viterbo's suggestion that the pope held equal power to that of Christ on earth by arguing Christ had power over the sacraments and could work miracles, the pope could not. See *Quaestio de potestate papae (Rex Pacificus)/ An Enquiry into the Power of the Pope: A Critical Edition and Translation* by R.W. Dyson (Lewiston, Lampeter: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1999), pp. 89-90.

contended that there were two Vicars of Christ: one spiritual and one temporal. The former was indeed the pope but the existence of the latter was proven by Romans 13 and he acts 'on God's behalf in temporal government.' It was upon this temporal Vicar of Christ, being king or emperor, that the foundation of society was formed and without him a commonwealth could not be stable.¹¹⁴ The tract refuted James of Viterbo's understanding that the pope's power to bind and loose on earth was a *potestas iurisdictionis* that belonged only to kingly authority. Instead the *Rex pacificus* insisted that this was not a temporal power but a spiritual one and could not be used to conclude that the pope possessed true royal authority. Therefore, the power of the pope was strictly limited to the spiritual realm and the tract contended that I Peter 2:17 demonstrated that the first Vicar of Christ had not endeavoured to diminish the honour of kings.¹¹⁵

The *Rex pacificus* foreshadowed two formative tracts which also had their origin in the conflict between the French King and the pope: John of Paris' *De potestate regia et papali* and Marsilius of Padua's *Defensor pacis*.¹¹⁶ John of Paris produced a tract that not only represented the indignation of Philip and his advisors but which was 'Perhaps one of the greatest works of political theory written at this time.'¹¹⁷ The primary authority for John's investigation into the relationship between the *regnum* and *sacerdotium* was Scripture and his 'concern was to prune away exegetical accretions, to restore texts, which had been pressed into hierocratic service, to their traditional meanings.'¹¹⁸ This led him to confront vexatious issues such as the origin and magnitude of spiritual and temporal authority and the deposition of ecclesiastical and royal power. But his conclusions particularly contrasted with those of Giles of Rome. For John both princes and popes were chosen by human beings. Consequently he noted Paul's words in Hebrews 5:1 which stated that priests were 'ordained for men.' He then argued that while these sacred ones (*sacerdotes*) had power conferred upon them by God this was limited to duties within the Church. The duties of preaching, delivering the sacraments and spiritual correction comprised no direct temporal power or jurisdiction.¹¹⁹

John agreed with Bernard of Clairvaux and Hugh of Saint Victor in that the spiritual power was more exalted than the temporal because it concerned salvation.¹²⁰ However, he departed from their understanding of the Two Swords by arguing that the coercive power of the

¹¹⁴ *Rex Pacificus*, p.98; pp.77-8.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.96; p.59.

¹¹⁶ See Ullmann, 'Medieval Document', pp.180-201.

¹¹⁷ Brian Tierney, *CCS*, p.195-6.

¹¹⁸ J.A. Watt, 'Introduction', in *John of Paris: On Royal and Papal Power*, trans. by J.A. Watt (Toronto: The Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1971), pp.9-63 (p.43).

¹¹⁹ John of Paris, 'On Royal and Papal Power', pp.81-2; pp.151-157.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p.94.

material sword is held by the temporal prince in exclusivity. As Joseph Canning has noted, 'God had implanted the natural instinct whereby Christians could rightfully institute a variety of different political communities and governments, to realize the good life under a range of diverse conditions.'¹²¹ To support this John assumed that God found it 'inappropriate that one person alone should be entrusted with diverse duties as priestly function and royal lordship.'¹²² For this reason God made the prince His minister in Romans 13 and provided him with the temporal sword. There was a distinct duality in John's concept of power and he declared the argument that princes received their temporal power from the pope was 'absurd' and 'inconsistent.' Such contentions, John believed, were contrary to the canon of Scripture because Paul declared the ruler was a minister of God, not the minister of the pope.¹²³ Therefore the power of the pope and that of the prince 'are related in an order of dignity, not of causality; the one does not have its origin in the other.' Both powers are created by Him without intermediary and Romans 13 explains this relationship appropriately as both the spiritual and the temporal are limited by their respective means.¹²⁴

The political philosopher Marsilius of Padua wrote the *Defensor pacis* for the very purpose of refuting the 'perverted' and 'pernicious' hierocratic arguments which attributed to the papal *plenitudo potestatis*.¹²⁵ In this opposition to papal monarchy, Alan Gewirth states, 'Marsilius set up a thoroughgoing control of the temporal power over the spiritual.'¹²⁶ This conclusion was not arrived at by a recourse to diametric, heretical or controversial polemic, but instead this radical interpretation was reached by consulting the very same authorities upon which his predecessors had also drawn.¹²⁷ Consequently the *Defensor pacis* argued that the temporal power should be supreme because it was the most suitable authority to preserve tranquillity in life by providing a suitable hierarchy of able people to coerce and adjudicate. As Marsilius stated, 'The authority to make the law belongs only to those men whose making of it will cause the law to be better observed or observed at all.' This was not to claim the source of power is human, and nor did he seek to circumvent the Pauline precept that all power is of God.

¹²¹ Joseph Canning, 'Ecclesiastical Authority and Jurisdiction in the Thought of John of Paris', in *John of Paris: Beyond Royal and Papal Power*, ed. Chris Jones (Turnhout: Brepolis, 2015), pp.35-48 (p.40).

¹²² John of Paris, 'On Royal and Papal Power', p.117.

¹²³ John even goes so far as stating that to claim 'that royal power came first directly from God and afterwards from the pope is quite ludicrous.' *Ibid.*, pp.123-4.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p.192; pp.142-61.

¹²⁵ Marsilius of Padua, 'Defensor pacis', in *Marsilius of Padua, The Defender of Peace. Volume II: The Defensor pacis*, translated with an introduction by Alan Gewirth (New York: Columbia University Press, 1956), p.5.

¹²⁶ Alan Gewirth, *Marsilius of Padua, The Defender of Peace. Volume I: Marsilius of Padua and Medieval Political Philosophy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1951), p.9.

¹²⁷ Marsilius draws upon: Ambrose, Augustine, Aquinas, Bernard of Clairvaux and Peter Lombard.

Instead he advocated a popular sovereignty that attuned with Romans 13 in which its ultimate source of power was divine.

Nonetheless, Marsilius did not advocate absolutism or appeal for citizens to endure 'another's despotism.' Rather, he argued, the freedom of the citizen was better served by a system of law that appears to be 'imposed on himself.'¹²⁸ A civil despot was as hazardous to a nation's peace as the ill-conceived doctrine of *plenitudo potestatis* demonstrated by the hierocratic Papal Monarchy. The divine origin of the priesthood was not in question and neither was the superiority of the divine law. But what Marsilius did challenge was the assertion that the Church possessed an intrinsic authority to rule. As Janet Coleman explains:

The separate canon law, has, for him, no validity and papal decretals are nothing other than oligarchic ordinances, issued without reference to the will and without the consent of the human legislator [the civil power] of any community. Without such consent the church's laws cannot be coercive or binding in the external forum of civil life.¹²⁹

The heart of the matter was, then, that the Papal Monarchy lacked coercive force because it did not possess the sword of wrath mentioned by Paul in Romans 13. For Marsilius, Christ had purposely prohibited the Apostles, and their successors, from holding any judicial or coercive authority over the temporal powers.¹³⁰ Instead their authority was found in their teaching and living by example.¹³¹ Furthermore, Paul had taught that all men, including the priesthood, must be subject to the coercive power of the temporal judges or rulers and these could not be resisted unless they command something contrary to the 'law of eternal salvation.' Therefore, Marsilius insisted upon obedience even unto evil or infidel rulers and if any 'soul' resisted these 'ministers of God' they showed contempt for His divine teaching.¹³²

The temporal power should act, Marsilius insisted, in accordance with fixed law and mirror the customs of that society. They must then perform their duty as the 'minister of God' by executing His wrath upon evildoers (Romans 13:4). It was the 'human legislator' alone, by delegation from the citizens, that truly possessed *plenitudo potestatis* and not the papacy which had usurped its civil power from the people. The presumptuous papacy with their 'insatiable appetite for temporal things' had assumed for themselves plenitude of power and in doing so they wilfully violated the divine commands of Romans 13. He drove this point home by conflating several biblical verses to argue that these false teachers urged rebellion against their masters according to the flesh, whether good or froward, and in doing so they resist the

¹²⁸ Marsilius of Padua, '*Defensor pacis*', p.47.

¹²⁹ Janet Coleman, *A History of Political Thought: From the Middle Ages to the Renaissance* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), p.137.

¹³⁰ John 18:11.

¹³¹ Marsilius of Padua, '*Defensor pacis*', p.114; p.155.

¹³² *Ibid.*, p.130; p.134.

ordinance of God. By upholding the papal supremacy, Marsilius contended, 'the bond[s] and nexus of every city and state would be destroyed.' These important connections were something found and maintained in the 'mutual allegiance and faith of subjects and rulers,' and this, according to Cicero, was 'the foundation of all justice.' Those seeking to disturb the civil tranquillity by destroying this connection between rulers and subjects did so only to fulfil their own ambition to acquire the power, overthrow government and enslave the people. As a result they and those which subscribe to their doctrines would ultimately only achieve the eternal destruction of their souls.¹³³

Ockham to Colet (ca.1347-c.1497).

The refutation of papal claims to *plenitudo potestatis* made by Marsilius were intensified by English scholastic philosopher and Franciscan William of Ockham, who vociferously pronounced that Pope John XXII was a heretic and must be automatically ousted from the Chair of St. Peter.¹³⁴ Ockham's denunciation had its roots in the 'last great struggle' between empire and papacy: the bitter contest between Emperor Lewis of Bavaria and John XXII. A particular facet of the dispute was the question of "apostolic poverty" which not only divided the Franciscans but forced John align himself with a particular side. Subsequently, the spirituals (*Fratellini*) allied themselves with the excommunicated emperor and withdrew from papal obedience. Nevertheless, the Franciscans and the emperor recognised a common enemy. Lewis claimed imperial authority immediately of God but John asserted the legitimate source of this power was the papacy and he alone could ratify emperorship. The Franciscans fought for inviolable rights guaranteed in Scripture following a series of pronouncements from the papacy that claimed *dominus* over the Order's property. Therefore, at the heart of both conflicts was the question over the limit to the pope's authority and a questioning of the papal claim to *plenitudo potestatis*.¹³⁵

Ockham believed the pronouncements of the pope to be inconsistent with his predecessors. In fact, by imposing his false views this made the pope a heretic. Furthermore, the pope, like all heretics, was liable to correction and Ockham attested the notion of papal

¹³³ Marsilius of Padua, '*Defensor pacis*', pp.353-354. The biblical references are identified as Romans 13; Ephesians 6:5-7; I Timothy 6:1-2; Titus 2:9, 3:1 and I Peter 2:18.

¹³⁴ This argument is built upon twelfth-century bishop of Pisa, Huduccio, who believed a pope who had fallen into heresy 'became liable to judgement as a private individual.' See Brian Tierney, *Foundations of the Conciliar Theory: The Contribution of the Medieval Canonists from Gratian to the Great Schism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955), pp. 60-7. Citation on p.60.

¹³⁵ See H.S. Offler, 'Empire and Papacy: The Last Struggle', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6 (1956), pp.21-47, Philotheus Boehner, 'Ockham's Political Ideas', *The Review of Politics*, 5:4 (Oct., 1943), pp.462-87, Janet Coleman, 'Property and Poverty', in *The Cambridge History of Medieval Political Thought c.350-1450*, ed. J.H. Burns (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp.607-48 and McIlwain, *Growth of Political Thought*, pp.267-77.

infallibility 'smacks of manifest heresy.'¹³⁶ The greater crux of Ockham's argument was historical and lay in what he believed to be the antecedence of imperial power over that of papal. Quite simply, since the high priests of the Old Testament did not possess *plenitudo potestatis* in temporal things then neither should the pope.¹³⁷ Additionally, Ockham found it difficult to accept that Christ would have bestowed absolute authority upon a single individual who had the power to extinguish the rights and liberties of princes and their subjects.¹³⁸ The basis for papal supremacy, found in the allegory of the keys, was condemned as being 'not only false, and dangerous to the whole community of the faithful, but even heretical.' The pope must respect the rights of Kings and mortals and not impose upon them a burden.¹³⁹ The premise, outlined by James of Viterbo, that the power to bind and loose should be understood to have given Peter power equal to that of Christ without exception was strongly refuted. Additionally, the notion that the pope could release any Christian from subjection to the prince was held directly against not only Romans 13 and I Peter 2 but an even wider range of proof texts which, he claimed, bound them to obedience. The papacy could not possess *plenitudo potestatis* because 'the pope cannot annul apostolic teaching.'¹⁴⁰

Ockham accepted that involvement with temporal matters was seen to be compatible with apostolicity and the power of the Apostles consisted only of what was revealed by in His words and deeds. The papacy should restrict itself only to spiritual concerns.¹⁴¹ Ockham confirmed the existence of Two Swords but he strictly disentangled them in order to deny that either power possessed universal jurisdiction.¹⁴² His argument was not nimble exegesis but rather a logical and rational recourse to Scripture to answer questions pertinent to his faith and present. Therefore, as the emperor received his power directly from God, without the pope as intermediary, and he was 'judge not only of all Christians but of all morals everywhere.'¹⁴³ The historical antagonism presented by the resistance shown to kings by Moses and the Maccabees was addressed by tacking Romans 13:5 head-on: there was a distinction between ordained and

¹³⁶ William of Ockham, *A Short Discourse on the Tyrannical Government Over Things Divine and Human*, ed. by Arthur Stephen McGrade and trans. by John Kilcullen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p.35; p.63.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p.37. For Ockham's discussion of *On Consideration*, see pp.40-43.

¹³⁸ Charles C. Bayley, 'Pivotal Concepts in the Political Philosophy of William of Ockham', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 10:2 (Apr., 1949), pp.199-218 (p.205).

¹³⁹ Ockham, *Discourse on Tyrannical Government*, p.21; p.54.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.37-38. These additional texts were I Timothy 6, Ephesians 6, Colossians 3 and Titus 2 and 3.

¹⁴¹ Takashi Shogimen, *Ockham and Political Discourse in the Late Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p.167.

¹⁴² Arthur Stephen McGrade, *The Political Thought of William of Ockham: Personal and Institutional Principles* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), pp.168-9. The only occasions in which either power could interfere in the sphere of the other was in a time of crisis: for example the temporal society was plunged into disbelief or if the pope falls into heresy.

¹⁴³ William of Ockham, 'Eight Questions on Papal Power', in *FIG*, pp.466-9 (p.469).

permitted power. He argued that power granted by God must always be obeyed, however, 'permitted power' was to be obeyed to avoid the wrath of the ruler 'in case greater evil or damage results.' Consequently he argued, obedience merely for fear of wrath will make disobedience permissible.

Ockham placed Paul's commands very specifically in their historical context. The Apostle, he contended, spoke of ordained power, whether pious or unbelieving, and he was speaking directly to Romans in order to affirm that obedience to legitimate power was requisite of all Christians.¹⁴⁴ Therefore, 'true judicial power' was held of all 'ordained power.' The obligation of obedience bound believers and unbelievers 'by God's precept and natural law to honor father and mother...and set up secular powers over themselves.' Nevertheless, temporal government was instituted out of 'necessity' and rulers, whether believers or not, can be replaced if they became ill-suited.¹⁴⁵ This power of deposition lay with the people because, he asserted, the ruler held their office by 'election.' Ockham did not advocate popular monarchy but rather stated that by transferring their power to a ruler the people accepted that he would provide his own 'elected' successor. Therefore, each ruler that succeeded the other did so not by 'right of birth' but by the choosing, or election, of the outgoing holder. Furthermore, Ockham's use of the administration of the Roman Empire as his framework for government allowed him to call upon the members of the Senate, as further 'electors,' to correct or even depose an errant emperor.¹⁴⁶ The culmination of Ockham's contemplation over the matter of temporal and spiritual power was their logical, even practical, limitation and that the rights and liberties granted to mortals by God and nature collectively should be respected by the Two Swords.

The political themes discussed by English philosopher and theologian John Wyclif also challenged the universal authority of the pope. The assertion that salvation depended upon submission to the Supreme Pontiff contained within *Unam Sanctam* was entirely redefined with Wyclif refusing to accept Boniface would have intended such obvious blasphemy.¹⁴⁷ For Wyclif the pope must simply have intended to uphold the truism that no salvation can be found outside of the Church (*Extra Ecclesiam nulla salus*).¹⁴⁸ This understanding required him to reconsider the structure of the Church and in doing so Boniface's jurisdiction was confined only to the Church

¹⁴⁴ William of Ockham, *Discourse on Tyrannical Government*, p.79.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p.91.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.158-60.

¹⁴⁷ Wyclif writes, '*ideo non debet supponi in domino papa tanta blasphemia.*' John Wyclif, *Tractatus de Ecclesia*, edited with critical and historical notes by Johann Loserth (London: Trübner & Co. for the Wyclif Society, 1886), p.26.

¹⁴⁸ Paul Avis, *Beyond the Reformation? Authority, Primacy and Unity in the Conciliar Tradition* (London and New York: T&T Clark, 2006), p.62.

in Rome. As Michael Wilks has shown, Wyclif argued that 'The whole Church is a number of national, territorial entities, nestling together like peas in a pod, but each one capable of being taken independently and apart from the others.'¹⁴⁹ Wyclif had radically altered the relationship between temporal and spiritual power. This was exemplified by his understanding of the Pauline precept that there is no power but of God which affirmed that the prince is a servant of God within a monarchy founded upon Grace. Therefore, if the king ruled honourably and according to Divine Law he acquired 'the friendship of God as His true vicar' and subsequently he was rightfully placed over all human beings. Wyclif understood that 'although the king in the rule of his kingdom cannot match God' as the vicar of God he should try and imitate His Lordship.'¹⁵⁰

Wyclif claimed, much like the *Rex pacificus*, that there existed two Vicars of Christ. The king should act in a way reminiscent of 'the divine presence in the age of the Old Testament' by restraining the disobedient and the priest operating 'in the age of grace' should perform his ministry with mildness and humility. These 'two vicars' did possess equal dignity in Christ as regards their attributes, but the 'function' of kingship was superior to that of the priesthood. This was explained almost arbitrarily in that when Melchizedek is announced as *rex et sacerdos* his royal title is given first.¹⁵¹ Furthermore, as Stephen E. Lehey explains:

The bishop, bearer of spiritual authority, corresponds to the humanity of the Incarnation through the gentleness of his ministrations, while the king corresponds to the Incarnation's divinity through being an image of God's lordship on earth. The king is Vicar of Christ the heavenly king, while priests are vicars of Jesus the man; here Wyclif is refuting the papal hierocrats by turning on its ear their chief justification for papal fullness of power, that the pope is vicar of Christ.¹⁵²

This perception steered Wyclif close to supporting Augustinian Friar Thomas Ashburn's notion that the pope was the vicar of St. Peter and the king was the vicar of St. Paul. As Michael Wilks has shown, Ashburn declared the pope to be only the vicar of St. Peter, whose function was to teach, and the king the vicar of St. Paul 'who held the sword and determined that kings should not carry it in vain.'¹⁵³

¹⁴⁹ Michael Wilks, 'Royal Patronage and Anti-Papalism from Ockham to Wyclif', in *Wyclif: Political Ideas and Practice*, by Michael Wilks (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2000), pp.117-45 (p.154).

¹⁵⁰ John Wyclif, 'On the Duty of the King', in *Readings in Medieval Political Theory 1100-1400*, eds. by Cary J. Nederman and Kate Langdon Forhan (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2000), pp.221-9 (pp.223-4).

¹⁵¹ John Wyclif, 'The King's Office', in *FIG*, pp.509-10 (p.509). See specifically Genesis 14:18.

¹⁵² Stephen E. Lahey, *Philosophy and Politics in the Thought of John Wyclif* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p.176.

¹⁵³ Wilks, 'Royal Patronage', p.143. *Continuatio Eulogii* published in *Eulogium (historiarum sive temporis)...Vol. III*, ed. Frank Scott Haydon (London: Longman, 1863), pp.333- 421 (p.338).

Wyclif still insisted that the pope should be obeyed, in the respect that he was, like all bishops, a preacher of God's Word. While he should advise kings on divine matters he did not possess any universal jurisdiction over any territorial church other than his own. Nevertheless, Wyclif's concept of two vicars needed to address the vexatious issue of kings that descended into tyranny. He asserted that if a king is found to be masquerading in his faith or committing evil 'he will be reprov'd by God and distain'd by everyone.'¹⁵⁴ These tyrannical kings still deserved honour because their power was conferred upon them by God for the benefit of His Church and servitude must be given 'however damnably they may abuse it.' The Christian must then honour the king as the holder of a divinely appointed office and simultaneously deplore his evildoing. Therefore, tyrants remained kings 'only in a qualified sense.' They did not deserve to hold kingly office and in this way they possessed an '*unformed power*' not equated to lordship. But this nominal standing of kingly power still, he argued, provided grounds for them to be bestowed with goods and continued honour.¹⁵⁵

However, a contemporary of Wyclif, the philosopher and theologian Jean Gerson, rejected the concept of Papal Monarchy and instead outlined a hierarchy in which Christ alone was king of a monarchical church with the pope as His vicar. This hierarchy organised the entire universe to reflect the structure of heavenly Jerusalem and support for his claim that 'all power, whether political or spiritual, is characterized by hierarchy and order' was found in Romans 13:1.¹⁵⁶ The distinction between the office and the individual was still necessary because the hierarchy he conceived consisted of both divine and human elements.¹⁵⁷ The hierarchical ecclesiastical structure itself was perfect but the human that bears the office was subject to human frailty. Consequently the power of the Church was divided into the '*power of order*' which consisted of Christ's mystical body, the members and those administering the sacraments; and the '*power of jurisdiction*' derived immediately from Christ through His Law and through additional authority derived from 'human organization or donation by secular princes.'¹⁵⁸ The Supreme Pontiff sat at the summit of the Church by God's authority but his power was 'instituted *through the mediation of men*' by election and consecration, and this was exercised 'through the mediation or human ministry or grant.'

The existence of two swords was not denied but Gerson asserted that because earthly realms did not have unity in civil law, the spiritual sword 'can be extended without difficulty' to reach those places the material sword cannot. Therefore *plenitudo potestatis* was understood

¹⁵⁴ Wyclif, '*On the Duty of the King*', p.224.

¹⁵⁵ Wyclif, '*The King's Office*,' p.510.

¹⁵⁶ Louis B. Pascoe, S.J. *Jean Gerson: Principles of Church Reform* (Leiden: Brill, 1973), p.22.

¹⁵⁷ Zofia Rueger, 'Gerson, the Conciliar Movement and the Right of Resistance (1642-1644)', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 25:4 (Oct.-Dec., 1964), pp.467-86 (p.472).

¹⁵⁸ Jean Gerson, '*On Church Power and the Origin of Law and Right*', in *FIG*, pp.520-529 (p.521).

to be the 'power of order and of jurisdiction supernaturally' which Christ provided Peter 'as his vicar and first monarch' in perpetuity and the keys were 'given for the church and its unity.'¹⁵⁹ The Church itself was protected from human frailty, schism or a power vacuum provided by a vacant Chair of St. Peter by a conciliar assembly.¹⁶⁰ This concept of a Supreme Pontiff was a world away from the universalism of *Unam sanctum* because Gerson proposed that *plenitudo potestatis* resided formally and absolutely in the *whole* Church: the pope merely exercised this power. The General Council of the Church possessed greater power to reform practice of both head and members and it represented, at least in principle, every power and every political regime, papal, imperial, royal, aristocratic, and meritocratic.¹⁶¹ The General Council's authority possessed legitimate power to judge, even depose, a pope if, like any other monarch, he descended into tyranny or refused correction because in doing so he was failing to fulfil the duties of office.¹⁶² This was, as Quentin Skinner identified, 'an unhesitating and extremely influential statement of the claim that the Council unquestionably possesses supreme power over the Church.'¹⁶³

For the English jurist and political theorist John Fortescue the origin of monarchical power was entirely different. He observed that 'kingly power is good, although it were begun by wicked men.' Fortescue steered closely to Aquinas and Giles of Rome with the contention that 'kingly elevation' was established in the law of nature and all kings rule under its guardianship.¹⁶⁴ Despite this origin, God still approved of kingship and even willed it. This conclusion was drawn from Deuteronomy 17:14-15 in which God promised the people of Israel a king to reign over them and from this he discerned that kingly dignity was not only 'good' but also 'loved and confirmed of the Lord.'¹⁶⁵ He defined England's government as a mixed administration being both *politicum et regale* because kings are unable constitute laws without the consent of the

¹⁵⁹ Gerson, 'On Church Power', pp.524-5.

¹⁶⁰ This was entirely logical step because Gerson was a student of French conciliarist Pierre d'Ailly. See Francis Oakley, *The Political Thought of Pierre d'Ailly: The Voluntarist Tradition* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1964).

¹⁶¹ Gerson, 'On Church Power', p.527.

¹⁶² See Brian Patrick McGuire, *Jean Gerson and the Last Medieval Reformation* (University Park, PA.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005), p.207 and Skinner, *Foundations II*, p.42. Cajetan (Tommaso de Vio) rejected Gerson's conciliar principals. However, despite his papalism he did concede that the papal office was distinct from the man who possessed his authority directly from God as stated in Romans 13. In this way a heretical pope can be deposed. See Cajetan. 'On the comparison of the authority of pope and council (1511)', in *Conciliarism and papalism*, eds. by J.H. Burns and Thomas M. Izbicki (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp.1-133 and 'The Divine Institution of the Pontifical Office Over the Whole Church in the Person of the Apostle Peter (1521)', in *Cajetan Responds: A Reader in Reformation Controversy*, ed. and trans. by Jared Wicks (Eugene, Oregon: WIPF & Stock, 2011), pp.105-44.

¹⁶³ Skinner, *Foundations II*, p.40.

¹⁶⁴ John Fortescue, 'De Natura Legis Naturæ', in *The Works of Sir John Fortescue, Knight, Chief Justice of England and Lord Chancellor to King Henry the Sixth*, Collected and Arranged by Thomas (Fortescue) Lord Clermont (London: Printed for Private Distribution, 1869), pp.63-372 (p.200).

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p.205.

people. However, this was not popular consent but the consent of parliament which was a sign that kings must take appropriate counsel.¹⁶⁶ He also recognised the reverse was also true: the people could not make laws without the authority of the king and the realm was subject to his dignity held by succession.¹⁶⁷ The power of the king was elevated to resemble God within his kingdom because his laws '*regaliter et politice* are like the law by which God governs the blessed in heaven, where they reign together with Christ.'¹⁶⁸

In his didactic dialogue, *De laudibus legum Angliae* (ca.1470), Fortescue astonishingly declared that both Deuteronomic and human law were sacred because both commanded what is honest and forbade anything contrary.¹⁶⁹ The argument was then compounded with the assertion that the keepers of just laws are by virtue called priests. He defined this function etymologically: a priest was somebody 'who gives or teaches holy things, and, because human laws are said to be sacred, hence the ministers and teachers of the laws are called priests.' Consequently, by way of Romans 13, he added because all power is of God 'laws that are promulgated by man are decreed by God.'¹⁷⁰ The mixed polity of England required that any King that sought to change the laws of the realm for private pleasure could be justly considered a tyrant.¹⁷¹ In order to support his argument Fortescue identified Nimrod as the archetypal tyrant and this permitted his distinction between *regendo* and *dominium*: the tyrant's lordship was defined not as *rex* but 'only royal dominion.'¹⁷² Tyrants who subjugated the people in establishing *dominium* had usurped the name of king but this tyranny was subsequently consented to by the people when they provided protection from the injuries of others (*a ceterorum iniuriis*).¹⁷³ Fortescue contended that tyrannical power can be legitimised by the people but a ruler that becomes oppressive and reigns only for his own pleasure by disregarding the laws and customs of the realm should be deposed.¹⁷⁴

However, the Oxford lectures on Romans by Christian humanist John Colet, much like Chrysostom and Ockham, placed Paul's instructions in historical perspective. As Daniel J. Nodes

¹⁶⁶ Alan Cromartie, *The Constitutionalist Revolution: An Essay on the History of England, 1450-1642* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p.24.

¹⁶⁷ Fortescue, '*De Natura Legis Naturæ*', pp.205-6.

¹⁶⁸ J.H. Burns, 'Fortescue and the Political Theory of Dominion', *The Historical Journal*, 28:4 (Dec., 1985), pp.777-97 (p.782).

¹⁶⁹ John Fortescue, '*In Praise of the Laws of England*', in *Sir John Fortescue: On the Laws and Governance of England*, ed. Shelley Lockwood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp.1-80 (p.6).

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p.7. Fortescue also appeals to the words of warning Jehoshaphat, King of Judah, gave to his judges in II Chronicles 19:6; "'Consider what you are doing, for you judge not on behalf of human beings but on the LORD'S behalf.'"

¹⁷¹ Fortescue, '*In Praise of the Laws of England*', p.17. In both of the above texts and his *De dominio regale et politico* he uses the example of Nimrod. For biblical account of Nimrod see Genesis 10.

¹⁷² John Fortescue, '*The Governance of England*', in *Sir John Fortescue: On the Laws and Governance of England*, ed. Shelley Lockwood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp.83-123 (p.85).

¹⁷³ Burns, 'Political Theory of Dominion', p.786 and Fortescue, '*In Praise of the Laws of England*', p.19.

¹⁷⁴ Fortescue, '*De Natura Legis Naturæ*', p.218.

asserts, Colet was 'aware of history and shows concern for understanding the context of the biblical texts he treats of in his commentaries.'¹⁷⁵ His exposition of Romans 13 was a departure because he looked for a practical explanation for Paul's command for Roman Christians to obey their pagan rulers. Consequently Colet argued that Paul offered 'prudent' advice by directing Christians to 'act circumspectly' in order not to antagonise the Roman authorities. Colet concurred with Chrysostom that Paul's injunctions were protective and preventative. They provided a safeguard for the infant Church against accusations of sedition and Colet contended that Paul wished Christians to render Nero and the Roman magistrates tribute and obedience but also fear and honour. This was necessary for deference to God who permitted unbelievers to rule and Paul admonished Christians to remain faithful, endure persecution and meet evil with good. However, Colet believed Paul had another purpose and claimed he only called for non-resistance because 'of the possibility of its one day coming to pass, that the letter of his should make its way into Roman hands.'¹⁷⁶

This remarkable conclusion revealed that Colet reconsidered the motivation for Paul's command to be subject to the higher powers. John B. Gleason considered that Colet believed that Paul would have 'found it inconceivable' that those who possessed the undeniable truth would have followed the commands of pagan rulers; even in matters which did not directly contravene their faith.¹⁷⁷ Instead, Colet believed that Paul wrote circumspectly in order not to place himself and Roman Christians in jeopardy. Moreover, the command to obey magistrates as 'ordained of God' was a device to not only induce them to be merciful towards 'the inoffensive Christians' but also to curry favour. Therefore, Colet, as P. Albert Duhamel notes, 'is not primarily concerned with theoretical or doctrinal content, but identifies himself in spirit and purpose with St. Paul as he wrote the Epistle to the Romans.'¹⁷⁸ Colet accepted that Paul had declared that the pagan Roman magistrates should not be resisted because they were placed in governance by Divine Providence and will remain there until 'such time as the will of God allows.'¹⁷⁹ For Colet, Paul's words were not disingenuous but 'the earnest words of a living man addressed to living men, and suited to their actual needs.'¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁵ Daniel J. Nodes, 'The Demarcations of "Blotterature" and "Literature" in John Colet's Latin Prose', in *John Colet on Ecclesiastical Hierarchy of Dionysius*, ed. by Daniel T. Lochman and comments by Daniel J. Nodes (Leiden: Brill, 2013), pp.83-100 (p.98).

¹⁷⁶ John Colet, *An Exposition of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, Delivered as lectures in the University of Oxford about the Year 1497*, ed. J.H. Lupton (London: Bell and Daldy, 1973), pp.91-2; p.97.

¹⁷⁷ John B. Gleason, *John Colet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), p.130.

¹⁷⁸ P. Albert Duhamel, 'The Oxford Lectures of John Colet: An essay in Defining the English Renaissance', *The Journal of the History of Ideas*, 14:4 (Oct., 1953), pp.493-510 (p.497).

¹⁷⁹ Colet, *Exposition of Romans*, p.97.

¹⁸⁰ Frederic Seebohm, *The Oxford Reformers: Colet, Erasmus and More* (London: J.M Dent & Sons, 1914), p.20.

Conclusion

This survey has shown the broadening of the reception of Romans 13:1-7 over time. The early interpreters of Paul all recognised his commands within their immediate horizons, and they sought to discern the nature and purpose of civil power. What their exegesis revealed was that the earthly power was an instrument of God created to suppress evil and preserve order in a corrupted world. The temporal power was recognised to be an integral part of God's natural order created to assist divine judgment, and guide subjects to Christ. So long as rulers pursued appropriate interests they had to be respected. Therefore, obedience to the earthly authorities was conditional upon their accordance with God's law. A Christian must never obey the evil commands of a corrupt ruler. This revealed something that would be a persistent burden upon the Christian's conscience: the antagonism between Paul's demand to obey the higher powers and Peter's command to obey God rather than men. The dilemma of disobedience was reconciled by the acknowledgment that any ruler who subverted their divinely ordained power no longer executed God's will. What appeared to be an unambiguous command for obedience to the worldly power was conceived to apply only to righteous earthly authorities and not those that terrorised the good or persecuted the faith.

What soon emerged was an influential exegesis of Romans 13 that outlined a strict hierarchical structure. In doing so an explicit distinction was made between the ruler and the office in which only the latter was established by God's wisdom. This distinction did not absolve any subject from disobedience because those that resisted the worldly authority not only provoked scorn but also trespassed against God's law. As such Romans 13 demonstrated that Christians were subject both to temporal and spiritual law. Moreover, Paul had rejected any notion of resistance because worldly powers had been legitimately ordained of God and must be obeyed. Therefore, it was recognised that two authorities existed upon the earth and each had a distinct origin of power. This duality of power found lucid articulation in the immensely influential Two Sword theory, which demanded that the sacred *auctoritas* of the priest was of a greater dignity than royal *potestas*. What followed was an expression of papal theocracy that rejected any suggestion of fallibility, but demanded supreme jurisdiction and imperial sovereignty throughout the earth. The theory of Two Swords did not deny that the worldly power was divinely ordained or that obedience to its commands was a religious duty, because it recognised that obedience was an act of love towards God. Nonetheless, the bishops comprehended that as a minister of God, even a Christian emperor was part of the Church and consequently he was subject to the correction of the spiritual sword.

The dramatic expression of monarchical papal power recognised that the burden placed upon the bishops was far weightier than that of temporal authority because they were accountable for the salvation of all men upon the earth. The spiritual power was believed to be

bequeathed a unique power and accordingly the *sacerdotium* was superior to the *regnum* because the later ruled only over the physical. The hierocratic theories of governance that proceeded blessed the pope with a plenitude of power over both spiritual and temporal affairs. The sword of coercion bestowed upon the earthly powers by Romans 13 was placed firmly under the jurisdiction and guidance of the papal office. The papacy was conceived to be the supreme arbitrator of all conflict that disturbed the peace within Christendom, and this assumed upon the pope the two-fold dignity of *rex et sacerdos* previously enjoyed by Melchizedek. The papal claim to plenitude of power provoked princes, theologians and philosophers to consult Romans 13 for divine guidance in order to better define the obligations of the higher powers.

The revolutionary concepts concerning sovereignty, conscience and duty that materialised placed a limitation upon obedience to civil authority by challenging the legitimacy of oppressive worldly authority. The fundamental demand for obedience to rulers contained in Romans 13 was maintained but rulers that fell into unbelief lost their right to rule over the children of God, and it was the right of the successor of St. Peter to depose heretical or schismatic kings. Two conditions were stressed: temporal authority should be obeyed only insofar as their commands remained virtuous, and the legitimacy of the ruler was conditional upon how their power was obtained. Any ruler who obtained power by violence or descended into tyranny could not demand obedience because their commands were no longer 'of God.' However, this was not a manifestation of a theory of resistance but rather an accentuation of the Pauline precept that only pious rulers were ministers of God ordained to protect the good and be a terror only for the wicked. In this way rejecting the commands of impious rulers was perceived to be confirmation of Romans 13 because believers must obey God and His true ministers who foster virtue and preserve order by punishing wickedness.

The concept of papal *plenitudo potestatis* and Two Sword theory was vociferously reinforced by the emanationist logic of the *Lex Divinitatis* which was employed to confirm that intermediaries led the lowest to the highest in the heavenly hierarchy. This precise hierarchy maintained the Pauline precept that all power was of God, but also explicitly distinguished between royal power and the superior authority of the priesthood. It declared that deriving existence from God was in no way commensurate with deriving existence by His especial command. The pope procured *potestas iurisdictionis* and consequently he possessed the supreme power to correct and depose temporal rulers for unbelief. Despite the universal authority of the pope the necessity of the temporal authority was not denied and it continued to be defined in Pauline terms: rulers should punish the wicked, inspire love and kindness, and dedicate themselves to increasing the faith. However, the concept of Papal Monarchy was not universally endorsed and opponents refused to accept that God found it appropriate for a single person to be entrusted with the enjoined power of *rex et sacerdos*. In fact, opponents of papal

supremacy believed that Romans 13 had unmistakably confirmed that God had placed the material sword directly into the hand of the temporal ruler without intermediary.

The theory of Papal Monarchy was countered by a reaffirmation of a duality of power that elevated the authority of the temporal power because of its ability to preserve order by providing a suitable hierarchy to adjudicate over and create law. However, the king office had not been elevated the quasi-divine status of *rex imago dei* because God's appointed earthly ministers were not furnished with administration over the *ius divinum*. Instead, this theory of government recognised that *plenitudo potestatis* belonged to the temporal power, as human legislator, and it held its authority by delegation of the people. The priesthood had no coercive power because it did not possess the material sword; by falsely assuming such power the papacy directly violated Romans 13. This was a highly influential and a coherent argument for popular sovereignty that was in tune with the Pauline commands because the ultimate origin of all power was God. As a consequence, the divinely appointed rulers should be respected, and even when the office was abused by a tyrant all Christians should remain in servitude otherwise they showed contempt towards God's law.

The true exegesis of Romans 13 was a fiercely contested battleground and the place of the temporal authority in both the corrupted world and the Church was a recurrent theme. Most of the interpreters of Romans 13 confirmed the precept that temporal rulers were ordained of God but it was their place in God's natural order that caused considerable vexation. The patristic and medieval readers of Paul provided distinct interpretations, but none conclusively solved the dilemma of obedience or provided conclusive formulations concerning the correct division of worldly and spiritual authority. The notion of papal *plenitudo potestatis* that was built upon the theory of the Two Swords would have an enduring legacy that reached well into the Reformation period. However, the elevation of the power of the prince during the latter middle ages would provide sixteenth-century reformers with concepts such as magisterial supremacy and popular monarchy. These formative interpretations of Romans 13 created the intellectual and theological bedrock to the subsequent Reformation readings of the text.

Chapter 2: Romans 13 in the Continental Reformation

Introduction

Albert Schweitzer opened his book *Paul and His Interpreters* (1912) by stating: 'The Reformation fought and conquered in the name of Paul.'¹⁸¹ The exegesis of Romans 13:1-7 is integral to understanding the political and religious landscape of the sixteenth century because the Reformation was a Pauline movement. The Christian had a dual nature, simultaneously a member of God's spiritual kingdom and subject to worldly government. The Reformation, unlike any previous European crisis, placed enormous tension upon this duality. The Reformation was, of course, a religious event but it was also a political one. The first generation of sixteenth-century reformers were infused with the powerful energies of humanism and the printing press. Both were employed to dramatic effect in the service of religion. As Diarmaid MacCulloch has stated: 'printing turned out to be good for Protestantism, for a religion of the book needs books.'¹⁸² While both Desiderius Erasmus and Martin Luther were dedicated to learning and reform, their visions of the Church would differ dramatically. One central ideal they shared was that it is the duty of the Christian prince to ensure the health of the Church. This duty was greatly informed by reading Romans 13.

Romans 13 dominated what we now refer to, anachronistically, as "political theology." Nevertheless, it is wrong to talk about matters being "religious" or "political" because it is a distinction that the inhabitants of the medieval and early modern world would surely balk. Romans 13 brought into sharp focus the responsibilities of the governing and the obligations of the governed. During the Reformation the Pauline affirmation that the powers that be were ordained of God would challenge the conscience of the Christian unlike any other period in history. Reformers such as Martin Luther, Philip Melancthon, Huldrych Zwingli and John Calvin all brought urgent attention to a collection of verses that required almost constant reassertion of the principles contained within. By adhering to these principles, Christians upheld the central tenet of faith: obedience to God. But as the Reformation detached nations from Rome, it also threatened to divide nations and separate subjects from their temporal princes, the ordained 'ministers of God.' The relationship between prince and subject was now more fraught than ever before because for the first time in almost a millennia nations were faced with internal religious hostility. Romans 13 spoke directly about this relationship. Just as their medieval predecessors

¹⁸¹ Albert Schweitzer, *Paul and His Interpreters: A Critical History*, trans. by W. Montgomery (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1912), p.2.

¹⁸² Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Reformation: Europe's House Divided 1490-1700* (London: Penguin, 2004), p.72.

had done, early modern Christians listened to the authoritative teaching of the past and consulted Scripture to receive revelation about their present dilemmas.

Desiderius Erasmus

The influence that John Colet had upon Erasmus' reading of Paul is difficult to ascertain but their warm friendship is undeniable.¹⁸³ The two shared a similar approach to the Epistle to the Romans, as both sought to place Paul's teaching in its historical context and interpret it as a whole.¹⁸⁴ Reading Erasmus' *Annotations on Romans* (1516), it is clear that he drew upon many of the same authorities discussed in the previous chapter.¹⁸⁵ Erasmus often simply reported opinions that concurred with his own analysis, but this did not prevent him from concluding that Origen's tripartite understanding of mankind was 'more clever than true.'¹⁸⁶ For Erasmus the Apostle's application of the word 'soul' had a simpler meaning. Its use was to ensure the command for obedience exempted no one: something which may be avoided with the more ambiguous word 'person.' He considered Paul's demand for obedience to pagan rulers was issued because some Christians 'under the pretext of religion' had refused to submit and risked disarray.¹⁸⁷ The Apostle taught obedience to 'all entrusted with public authority' but he made the exception 'for the interests of faith and piety.' There was no room here for any notions of resistance. Instead, for the sake of order Christians must sometimes bear ungodly rulers and Erasmus noted Chrysostom's distinction that Paul 'does not say merely "obey," but "be subject."' ¹⁸⁸

Erasmus restated this position on evil rule in his *Paraphrases on Romans* (1517). However, he added that provided the ruler's demand did not offend God the Christian should not provoke or invite persecution by refusing his will. Even if the ruler prescribed a law that appeared to be unjust, it must still be respected because Christ had neither sanctioned nor condemned it. Quite simply, Erasmus contended, God had given little thought to them 'because he had more important things to do.'¹⁸⁹ He stressed the need to obey those that 'bear a sort of

¹⁸³ The traditional account of Erasmus being inspired by Colet's 1499 St. Paul's School lectures by Fredric Seebohm, *The Oxford Reformers*, and Joseph H. Lupton, *The Life of John Colet* (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1887) has been strongly challenged by John B. Gleason *John Colet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989).

¹⁸⁴ Catherine A.L. Jarrott, 'Erasmus's Annotations and Colet's Commentaries of Paul: A Comparison of Some Theological Themes,' in *Essays on the Works of Erasmus*, ed. Richard L. DeMolen (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1978), pp.125-44 (p.137).

¹⁸⁵ Most notably Origen, Ambrose, Ambrosiaster and Chrysostom.

¹⁸⁶ Albert Rabil, Jr. *Erasmus and the New Testament: The Mind of a Christian Humanist* (San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 1972), p.119. *CWE* 56, p.346.

¹⁸⁷ Erasmus restated this opinion: 'The state stands firm through order, it ought not to be disturbed under the pretext of religion.' See *CWE* 42, pp.1-90 (p.73).

¹⁸⁸ *CWE* 56, p.347. Also see John Chrysostom, 'Homily XXIII,' p.393.

¹⁸⁹ *CWE* 42, p.74.

image of God' because by punishing the wicked, the ruler performed God's work. Indeed, for the correct execution of their duties the magistrates would be lauded by Erasmus as 'ministers of God.' Consequently, by way of Romans 13:3, he contended that by living appropriately the wrath of the magistrate should hold no fear because rulers were only a terror for evildoers. The Christian must obey magistrates for the sake of their conscience because acting otherwise provoked in themselves obstinacy and sedition. Moreover, disobedience disturbed God's chosen order, for which they will be justly punished.¹⁹⁰

Erasmus' successively revised *Adages* (1500-35) are significant because they reflect an almost Ambrosiastian demand that princes should seek to emulate God. The closer the prince imitated to God 'the more magnificent he is.' While a good prince reflected God by governing for the wellbeing of his people, the evil prince replicated the Devil by creating disaster to the disadvantage of his realms and subjects. Therefore, he declared: 'There is something divine about a beneficent prince, but no wild beast is more destructive than a tyrant.' Erasmus acknowledged the human frailty of princes in that they may be 'good or bad, stupid or wise, sane or clouded in mind.' Consequently it was essential to attempt to eliminate, or at least moderate, potential calamity by providing the prince with a worthy education. The teacher should impress upon the prince that by behaving wisely, he could help the many and educate Christians that 'supreme rule means administration of the state, and not dominion.'¹⁹¹ This train of thought is found in *The Education of a Christian Prince* (1516) which provided a more definitive articulation of his political thought within a pedagogical framework based more upon classical learning than biblical humanism. Erasmus contended that history had shown that the prince's conduct was mirrored in the morals of his people.¹⁹² Consequently, he draws on Ambrosiaster and warned the Christian prince that although he would read that he possessed the likeness of God he should not let himself be corrupted and 'swell with pride.'¹⁹³

Erasmus made it very clear that without goodness, power was tyranny and without wisdom, there was no domain, only chaos.¹⁹⁴ The prince, he insisted, should endeavour to emulate God's three prime qualities: 'the highest power, the greatest wisdom, [and] the greatest goodness.' Only those that governed for the profit of the people and not for themselves

¹⁹⁰ *CWE* 42, pp.74-5.

¹⁹¹ *CWE* 31, pp.231-3. He further added: 'It may bear the name of supreme rule, but he must remember that he is ruling over free men, and over Christians, that is, people who are twice free.' Erasmus, '*born king or a fool*,' p.233.

¹⁹² Desiderius Erasmus. *The Education of a Christian Prince*, trans. Lester K. Born (New York: Columbia University Press, 1936), p.157.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, p.158. This refers to Psalm 82:6 and for its importance see Ryan M. Reeves. "'Ye gods': Political Obedience from Tyndale to Cromwell, c. 1528-1540,' *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, 105:1 (Jan., 2014), pp.230-56.

¹⁹⁴ Erasmus, *Education of Christian Prince*, p.158.

deserved the title of 'prince.' God had provided an exemplar for good rule in Scripture, specifically Deuteronomy 17, and therefore the prince should study the Gospels, fear the Lord, respect his subjects, and adhere to the law.¹⁹⁵ This 'perfect pattern' of government afforded men free will and ensured that God would not rule over the enslaved. Likewise Paul had provided subjects with clear instruction with regard to obedience to their superiors and this subjection included deference even to pagan rulers because 'at the time there were no Christian princes.' He then simply re-asserted the argument found in his *Annotations on Romans*: unless their commands were contrary to Scripture the Christian should endure 'worthless magistrates' for the sake of order and not unnecessarily provoke the prince's anger. For Erasmus a tyrannical prince was shown flattery not honour, and therefore he received 'slavish compliance' rather than true obedience. A tyrant had no real splendour, only arrogance; he possessed no power, only force. These positive values, he insisted, could only be enjoyed by Christian princes.¹⁹⁶

In order to maintain this 'perfect pattern' of government, the magistrates would be expected to emulate their benevolent and godly prince. Erasmus insisted that the prince must demand a standard of dignity from his magistrates that was equal to that exhibited by himself and he should oversee that they performed their duties honourably. The magistrates should not be selected upon a basis of wealth, age or family 'but rather on that of wisdom and integrity.' In fact, all the citizens and magistrates had an ordered place and if they by performed their proscribed duties the city (*civitas*) would function in a wonderful harmony.¹⁹⁷ However, this harmony appeared to necessitate a separation of the two powers. In *Praise of Folly* (1509) Erasmus showed that he was not afraid to criticise prosperous popes, cardinals and bishops that 'zealously adopted' the 'practises of princes.' The bishops had forgotten that their title meant 'overseer' which indicated work, care, and concern. The position of Supreme Pontiff was now so corrupted by the pursuit of wealth and power that it no longer reflected the simplicity, poverty and life of Christ.¹⁹⁸ The solution to all this ignominy, Erasmus believed, was the wise and good prince who should right the wrongs of a debased Church.¹⁹⁹ These instructive texts represented a specific discourse upon statecraft which was imbedded in humanism, in respect of the recovery of classical ideas, but crucially worked in complete synthesis with biblical exegesis. Erasmus had laid the foundation for the later, and more fundamental, critique of Romans 13.

¹⁹⁵ Erasmus, *Education of Christian Prince*, pp.160-1; p.167.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.178-9; p.180.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.235-36.

¹⁹⁸ Desiderius Erasmus, *Praise of Folly*, trans. by Betty Radice (London: Penguin Books, 1993), pp.107-10.

¹⁹⁹ Erasmus. *Education of Christian Prince*, pp.156-7.

Martin Luther

Much like Erasmus, Martin Luther was not in the strictest of senses a political thinker. This does not mean Luther did not think about political matters, only that he approached such questions in a moral, and practical way. Luther did not possess any innate desire to indulge in earthly matters or start a revolution. Instead it was the corrupt nature of mankind following the Fall that necessitated his and all Christian's involvement in the world of politics. Temporal government was a divinely established and Luther believed that 'its purpose and functions derive[d] their meaning from God's overall plan.'²⁰⁰ Nevertheless, his Wittenberg *Lectures on Romans* (1515) corresponded more clearly with the Augustinian exegetical tradition rather than showing signs of his later revolutionary teaching.²⁰¹ Luther also demonstrated a degree of humanist aspiration, showing continuity with the method, but the classical tradition rooted in pagan texts was rejected as he sought greater revelation in how God moved in the world. But what the *Lectures on Romans* demonstrate is that Luther clearly believed Romans 13 addressed both temporal and spiritual power.

Consequently, Luther maintained that God had provided two orders and they performed a designated role. The Church provided 'guidance and peace to the inner man' and the temporal supplied 'guidance to the outer man in his concerns.'²⁰² This identified not only a duality of man (*Gemellus*) pertained of the body and spirit, but also recognised that a Christian was engaged in a constant internal conflict which ensured that fundamentally they remained a sinner. This comprehension forced Luther, like Origen, to speculate upon the reason Paul had stipulated that 'every soul' rather than 'every man' should be subject to the higher powers. He concluded that Paul's distinction demonstrated that the soul existed 'between the body and the spirit' to purposefully ensure sincere submission to the higher powers, and reveal to the Christian 'that a believer is exalted once and for all above all things and yet is subject to all things.'²⁰³ Romans 13 is identified with both servitude and liberty. It was through love that Christians made themselves servants of all and this servitude provides the greatest liberty 'because it needs nothing and takes nothing but is giving and outgoing.'²⁰⁴

Luther's *Lectures on Romans* contained an orthodox understanding of both Christian obedience and the relationship between temporal and spiritual powers. However, like Erasmus he too identified corruption within the Church. The lectures contained barbed remarks about

²⁰⁰ W.D.J. Cargill Thompson, *The Political Thought of Martin Luther*, ed. by Philip Broadhead (Brighton: The Harvester Press Limited, 1984), p.5.

²⁰¹ Wilhelm Pauck, 'General Introduction', in *Luther: Lectures on Romans*, trans. and ed. by Wilhelm Pauck (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1961) pp.xiii-lxvi (p. xxiv-xxv).

²⁰² Martin Luther, 'Lectures on Romans', in *Martin Luther, Lectures on Romans*, p.358, fn.1.

²⁰³ Luther, 'Romans,' p.359.

²⁰⁴ Luther is drawing on Galatians 5:13.

the love 'spiritual rulers' had for temporal things to the detriment of their governance over the spiritual.²⁰⁵ Luther's position on these matters would intensify following the papal denunciation of the *Ninety-Five Theses* (1517) and his appearance before Cajetan at Augsburg in 1518.²⁰⁶ Now in open dispute Luther questioned the historical veracity of the papal title of 'universal bishop.' Moreover, he argued, by way of Romans 13:1, 'we are subjected to the Roman see as long as it pleases God, who alone, and not the Roman pontiff, changes and establishes authority.'²⁰⁷ In placing the prerequisite condition for legitimate authority directly in Romans 13, Luther did not deny the pope possessed any earthly authority, and nor did he call for the abolition of the office. He did abate its power and declare it equivalent with temporal authority.²⁰⁸ As Martin Brecht explains: 'The power of the keys is not the power to rule; it is exercised in repentance and absolution, and consists of promises and comfort, not in the strengthening of papal power.'²⁰⁹

Luther's anti-papal position would continue to crystallise. He argued that the power to rule extended to all, the pious and impious, and he attacked the primary pillar of support for the pope's supremacy found in Matthew 16:18-19. He professed that many of the ancient Fathers had recognised in these verses that Christ had never bestowed anything to Peter alone. In fact Christ had never confirmed any divine hierarchy but rather provided the Apostles with equal power.²¹⁰ He had, however, confirmed temporal government through which He wished to work and in this way, Luther argued, 'all rules are His and are true, divine rules.'²¹¹ In his address *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation* (1520), Luther introduced his understanding of the priesthood of all believers. He then applied this understanding to buttress the belief that princes had a duty, if not the right, to summon the proper instrument of reform the General Council.²¹² Luther's message was clear: 'the Christian temporal authority ought to exercise its office without hindrance, regardless of whether it is pope, bishop, or priest whom it affects.' Therefore, Luther denounced any division between the clergy and the laity as 'pure invention' and even though its work was physical the temporal power was part of the functioning Church.²¹³

²⁰⁵ Luther, 'Romans,' pp.359-60.

²⁰⁶ See Brecht, *Martin Luther, His Road to Reformation 1483-1521*, trans. by James L. Schaaf (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), pp.246-65. Lyndal Roper, *Martin Luther: renegade and prophet* (London: The Bodley Head, 2016), pp.111-24.

²⁰⁷ 'The Proceedings at Augsburg, 1518,' in *Luther's Works, Volume 31: Career of the Reformer: I*, ed. by Harold J. Grimm, general Editor Helmut T. Lehmann (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1957), pp.259-306 (pp.281-282). {Hereafter LW}.

²⁰⁸ Scott H. Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy: Stages in a Reformation Conflict* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981) p.68.

²⁰⁹ Brecht, *Luther to Reformation*, p.345.

²¹⁰ LW, 39, p.86.

²¹¹ LW, 20, p.172.

²¹² Cargill Thompson, *The Political Thought of Martin Luther*, p.138.

²¹³ LW, 44, p.131; p.127.

As a member of a more horizontal structure conceived by a priesthood of all believers the temporal authority must fulfil its divinely ordained duty, outlined in Romans 13, to wield the sword in order to deliver justice and punish the wicked. This coercive power extended over all members of this body and none, whether pope or clergy, were shielded from the power of the temporal sword ordained by God. Luther declared that the Roman Church had sought to hoodwink everyone into believing the pope was infallible and the 'fancied fable' that he alone was the sole interpreter of Scripture. Therefore, Luther called upon the Christian princes to execute their divine duty by tearing down this 'paper wall' and defend Christendom against 'the invention of Romanist presumption.'²¹⁴ The pope's spiritual estate, Luther contended, was a tyranny that had imposed itself against the will of both God and men. Consequently it had claimed a worldly authority it could never truly possess because the power of the sword was derived 'from God's gracious order to suppress the evil and protect the godly, Romans 13 [:4].'²¹⁵ While it is the duty of the temporal authority to inflict physical hurt upon the wicked; the hurt caused by the papal estate 'is like a wolf and murderer of the soul, and it is just as though the devil himself were ruling there.'²¹⁵ As such the tyranny and crimes of the pope and his adherents must be destroyed. This should not be achieved by the indiscriminate 'hands of men, or insurrection' but through the divine authority of the sword which should execute God's wrath and protect the innocent against the evil.²¹⁶

Luther further elucidated these ideas in his gloss on Deuteronomy 16:18 (1523). He argued that unless the temporal authorities possessed the sword 'all legislation, however sacred, is futile; for the sword is the force, the efficacy, and the very life of the law; it restrains those who are evil and protects those that are good.' The law not only provided a mandate for what is permitted, but the sword enforced and punished offenders, and through this coercion compelled the wicked to goodness.²¹⁷ In this way Luther followed Ambrose because he placed the temporal authority as the lowest of God's means of government due to the fact it was only a coercive power and could not make anyone pious.²¹⁸ The temporal rule had three means: (1) the sword which pertained to earthly matters such as law, custom and habit; (2) the word that

²¹⁴ LW, 44, pp.131-4.

²¹⁵ LW, 39, p.252.

²¹⁶ See LW 45, pp.61-3 and LW 21, p.37.

²¹⁷ LW, 9, p.161.

²¹⁸ LW, 20, p.172. Johannes Brenz claimed that the temporal government was ordained of God. But he maintained it was a worldly entity and while their civil laws and regulations do secure peace and unity for the good of the commonweal, they do not, 'make one neither pious nor just in the eyes of God.' See Johannes Brenz, 'Advice and Opinion of Johannes Brenz for Count Palatine of the Rhine, Elector Ludwig, Concerning the Purportedly Evangelical Twelve Articles Issued By The Peasants (1525, abridged)', in *Godly Magistrates and Church Order: Johannes Brenz and the Establishment of the Lutheran Territorial Church in Germany 1524-1559*, ed. and trans. by James M. Estes (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2001), pp.53-75

pertained to the spiritual estate and included things such as the Sacraments; (3) those things which 'angels use to move us and keep us from evil.' These means were reciprocal but importantly they had a designated hierarchical sphere of rule. The angels did not rule by the sword or Word 'though they might.' The spiritual did not rule by reason or sword 'though they could.' However, the temporal governed only by the sword.²¹⁹

Although this appeared to contradict his earlier position that diminished papal power, it was entirely consistent in how Luther perceived God's order. Firstly, the lowest mean served the Gospel by maintaining peace, the Gospel served the sword by demanding obedience to the temporal government; secondly, the angels served both the Gospel and sword by promoting them and 'moving the people towards them through reason,' and finally, the angels were provided with a peaceful environment in which the Word and sword could approach the people and therefore 'rule through their reason.'²²⁰ By consulting Romans 13 Luther was assured that the temporal power was the only law-making authority. The Church possessed no earthly jurisdiction and no sword. He was now dangerously close to walking the path cleared by Marsilius of Padua, Ockham and Wyclif by placing the temporal authority over the Church. Consequently, Luther delivered his *tour de force* on the subject of earthly power which was 'intended to be foremost a pastoral work to princes who were confused about the relation between their duties as princes and their lives as Christians.'²²¹ *Temporal Authority: To What Extent It Should Be Obeyed* (1523) emerged following his realisation that his earlier *Address to the Christian Nobility* had failed in its purpose. Nonetheless, in *Temporal Authority* we find a detailed formulation of an assumption that would be fundamental to all of Luther's future teaching: the premise of the Two Kingdoms.

The concept of the Two Kingdoms promoted a greater separation between God and man, but at the same time linked the two regiments closer together.²²² This premise became the touchstone for all political questions to be considered and related.²²³ This concept rejected Gelasian Two Sword theory outright and divided mankind into 'two classes': true believers that belonged to the Kingdom of God and all others that belonged to the kingdom of the world.²²⁴ The temporal kingdom was governed by law and the heavenly by the Gospel but both 'were

²¹⁹ LW, 20, p.172. This means that the highest form of rule can perform the duty of the lowest, however, the lowest cannot perform the office of the highest.

²²⁰ Ibid., p.172. By reference to Romans 13 Luther adds 'Without this fear and respect, however, the sword would have a very wretched rule.'

²²¹ Jarrett A. Carty, *Divine Kingdom, Holy Order: The Political Writings of Martin Luther* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2012), p.102.

²²² See David C. Steinmetz, *Luther in Context* (Bloomington. Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1986), pp.112-25.

²²³ Cargill Thompson, *The Political Thought of Martin Luther*, p.12.

²²⁴ LW, 45, p.88.

ultimately forms of God's authority and revelation.²²⁵ Following the words of Origen which placed the Christian under the law of the spirit alone, Luther declared that the people of God's Kingdom 'need no temporal law or sword.'²²⁶ This startling pronouncement needed further explanation. The Church did not need the force of coercion because it was a congregation built upon love and freedom. The righteous were compelled to conform with the demands of the law, whereas the unrighteous possessed no such compulsion and subsequently they needed the law 'to instruct, constrain, and compel them to good.' The law served a positive function in that it restrained the naturally sinful nature of man and through repentance they would enter God's kingdom and be guided through Christ to do good.²²⁷ This was a theological and moral approach to the political question concerning government and the nature of man.

Luther believed that irrespective of which form of government the people adopted, it would never be absent of God's presence. Consequently, it was God's purpose for the world to establish two governments upon the earth: the spiritual 'by which the Holy Spirit produces Christians and righteous people under Christ' and the temporal provided with the sword to help guard Christ's sheep against 'the savage wild beasts' by restraining the wicked. Both regiments were necessary because they fulfilled complimentary divine functions and suffered a degree of limitation. While the temporal extended over all and could not bring mankind to righteousness and inversely the spiritual extended over the minority of men it could not maintain the peace. As a result God had provided, in Romans 13:1-7 and I Peter 2:13-14, the sound basis for temporal law. Adherence to this law, he contended, was an act of love which deprives the Christian of nothing and only benefits the world.²²⁸ Furthermore, their submission fulfilled the command 'that you love one another' and failure to serve would therefore be unchristian and be contrary to love.²²⁹ The Christian was truly 'the servant of all.'²³⁰ Consequently, Luther saw no spiritual conflict in Christians holding temporal office, because possession of the sword, he argued, was a duty that was more befitting of the righteous.

This attachment between the Christian and the temporal office was demonstrated in Scripture. Luther noted that Exodus 22:9 had prescribed, the law should be presided over by judges or as he now referred to them: 'gods.' This was a deliberate conflation of this verse with

²²⁵ John Witte, Jr., *Law and Protestantism: The Legal Teachings of the Lutheran Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p.91.

²²⁶ LW, 45, p.89. The Scriptural basis for this assertion was I Timothy 1:9. He also stated this in his Lectures on I Peter (1522), and he alluded to the Fall of man by asserting that 'if there were no evil people, one would not need a government.' See LW, 30, p.74.

²²⁷ LW, 45, pp.89-90. Luther later adds to this by arguing that Christians had no requirement of the temporal sword because 'they labour not only for themselves but for their neighbour' and should therefore concern themselves 'about what is serviceable and of benefit to others.' Ibid., p.94.

²²⁸ Ibid., pp.91-2; p.85; p.94.

²²⁹ John 13:34.

²³⁰ LW, 45, p.94. He stated this previously in *The Freedom of a Christian* (1520), in LW, 31, pp. 343-77.

'You are gods' (Psalm 82:6) and was done to confirm that not only was the judicial authority furnished with divine sanction but to show the 'right of the sword' is not dispensed indiscriminately. The sword without law is 'tyranny and bestial violence' but joined together they create 'a beautiful and stable political order.'²³¹ Nevertheless, Luther demarcated the limit to temporal authority and insisted that it possessed no jurisdiction over the soul. Any foolish prince or bishop that presumed to rule in this way only led the souls of men to their destruction. Ultimately, the decrees of the prince and Church, or its Councils, should be measured against Scripture and the Christian's conscience. As this standard took nothing away from the authority of temporal government, it should be content to attend to its own affairs and permit men to believe whatever they are able or willing, and constrain no one by force.²³²

However, Luther did not provide all men with liberation from the earthly power or call for resistance. Rather he adhered to the most fundamental of all commands to obedience: obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29). The Christian must always 'sit at the side of God.' If they disobeyed a command that was contrary to Scripture and the prince punished them, then so be it. They should thank God and let the foolish prince rage because 'he will meet his judge.' Doing otherwise and failing to withstand the wicked ordinance of the prince would be denying God.²³³ Therefore, Luther found this conception of obedience entirely reconcilable with Paul's command which explicitly stated that those who resisted the power, resisted the ordinance of God (Romans 13:2). However, his response to the shocking violence during the German Peasants' War (1524-25) was problematic. Luther denounced the Twelve Articles of the Peasants in Swabia as having little to do with the Gospel and being only concerned with worldly matters. He warned the participants of the consequences of their actions by reminding them of Christ's words that 'all who take the sword will perish by the sword' (Matthew 26:52). He also specifically asked the rebels 'Do you think that Paul's judgment in Romans 13 [:2] will not strike you, "He who resists the authorities will incur judgment"?'²³⁴

However, Luther's rhetoric soon became much more provocative. *Against the Robbing and Murdering Hordes of Peasants* (1525) was vociferous in its condemnation of those who rose against their rulers and landlords and he described the participants as 'robbing and raging like mad dogs.' Moreover, his call for those with the opportunity to 'smite, slay, and stab, secretly or openly' the participants of the uprising was incendiary.²³⁵ Andrew Pettegree noted, 'Even Luther's closet associates expressed disquiet; others wrote to tell him that their congregations

²³¹ LW, 9, pp.161-2.

²³² LW, 45, p.105; p.108.

²³³ Ibid., pp.111-2.

²³⁴ LW, 46, p.35; p.25.

²³⁵ LW, 46, pp.49-50.

found it difficult to reconcile the savage tone of this tract with Christian love and mercy.²³⁶ However, Luther's assessment was largely supported by Johannes Brenz and Philip Melanchthon. Brenz stated the peasants had belittled the Gospel and confirmed Luther's earlier assertion that a truly Christian kingdom had no need for temporal authority or the sword because it consisted of 'righteousness and peace.'²³⁷ Consequently, both had admitted that God's Word could not govern the world alone and the sword of the temporal power was needed to provide and maintain order.²³⁸

Melanchthon, unlike Luther or Brenz, acknowledged that some demands of the peasants had been justified.²³⁹ Nevertheless, the rebellion was still sinful because Romans 13 demanded that subjects must endure the misconduct of rulers and in using force the peasants had violated a command of Scripture. This appraisal emphasised the indispensable duty of the prince to maintain the spiritual estate and his responsibility for the 'moral and religious training of his people.'²⁴⁰ However, Melanchthon afforded the temporal ruler a much more active role within the Church. He insisted that not only should rulers ensure that God's Word is preached correctly but they must also expel any canon of the Church that was contrary with Scripture. By doing so 'God will grant peace and prosperity to the rulers in their governing, as he did Hezekiah and the other pious kings who abolished abuses in the service of God.'²⁴¹

Luther again wrote against the marauding peasants and in doing so he provided an exposition of Romans 13. He reiterated that their crimes were committed under the false cloak of religion and added that they were subject to the sword because they had violated oaths of loyalty to their rulers. He contended Paul had warned that resistance to authority would bring God's judgment and in their rebellion they had 'forfeited body and soul, as faithless, perjured, lying, disobedient rascals and scoundrels do.' Consequently, God would smite them because all participants were outlaws 'before God and the emperor.'²⁴² This violation of God's commands threatened anarchy and chaos throughout the entire land. Therefore rebellion was unchristian and true believers were bound to obedience as Scripture teaches in Romans 13, I Peter 2:13, and Luke 20:25. It was the duty of all temporal powers to 'execute wrath' upon the rebellious

²³⁶ Andrew Pettegree, *Brand Luther* (New York: Penguin Press, 2015), p.243.

²³⁷ Brenz, *Advice and Opinion*, pp.54-5. The basis for this claim can be found in Romans 14:17.

²³⁸ See James Estes, *Christian Magistrate and State Church: The Reforming Career of Johannes Brenz* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), pp.36-42.

²³⁹ Robert Stupperich, *Melanchthon*, trans. by Robert H. Fischer (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1965), p.65.

²⁴⁰ James M. Estes, *Peace, Order and the Glory of God: Secular Authority and the Church in the Thought of Luther and Melanchthon 1518-1559* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), p.69.

²⁴¹ Philip Melanchthon, *Confutation of the Articles of the Peasants*, cited in Clyde Leonard Manschreck, *Melanchthon: The Quiet Reformer* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1975), p.127.

²⁴² LW 46, p.50.

because it was their ordained duty to punish the disobedient, murderous and marauding.²⁴³ If the ruler failed to implement the sword, Luther insisted, they would be guilty of neglecting God's command and this offence was equal to that of anyone who took the sword and committed murder.²⁴⁴

This recognition that failure to wield the sword was a grievous dereliction of the princely duty prescribed by God would inform Luther's exegesis of Romans 13. Luther composed his *Warning to His Dear German People* (1531) during a period of intense religious and political pressure. The Augsburg Confession (1530) had been refuted by the Catholic Church, and Emperor Charles V was now threatening to bring the German princes back into the Holy Roman Empire by use of force. However, the legal means to resist the emperor was not originally formulated by Luther but Philip of Hesse and this was later refined and ratified by the Chancellor of Electoral Saxony Gregory Brück and his leading jurists. This position was, perhaps, the first explicit identification that the Pauline premise that all power was ordained of God applied not only to princes, but also all territorial rulers who wield the *ius gladii* as a right of their duty.²⁴⁵ The key to this radical formulation of resistance was the legality of self-defence. It appeared to the Saxon jurists that constitutionally an Emperor's power was in no way absolute. They argued that before God all Christians were equal and all had the same duty to serve God to their uttermost ability.²⁴⁶

This verdict placed the burden of duty to resist manifest injustice upon all Christians. However, in March 1530 Luther had written to the Elector and insisted that Scripture did not provide support for resistance to worldly government. Moreover, the letter contended that even when a sovereign acted contrary to God's Word he remained sovereign and Christians are bound to obey him. If it was considered acceptable to always resist a sovereign when he acted unjustly the result, he argued, would be 'that no governmental authority or obedience would be left in the world, because every subject could use the excuse that his government was acting unjustly [and] against God.'²⁴⁷ However, now faced with the real threat of imperial force Luther shifted his position and concluded that not all resistance should be considered rebellion: specifically if it were a defensive act against princely aggression or the menace of 'murderous

²⁴³ Luther expressed something similar in his 1526 gloss on Ecclesiastes 8:4 'For the word of the king is supreme.' He asserts that subjects should trust their king and carry-out his commands even if it appears he has lapsed or was failing in his endeavours. Doing otherwise was, for Luther, a violation of Romans 13 and the subject would not escape punishment for their disobedience. *LW* 15, p.136.

²⁴⁴ *LW* 46, pp.52-3.

²⁴⁵ Skinner, *Foundations* II, pp.195-199.

²⁴⁶ Johannes Heckel, *Lex Charitatis: A Juristic Disquisition on Law in the Theology of Martin Luther*, trans. Gottfried G. Krodel (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010), p.137.

²⁴⁷ *LW* 49, pp. 275-6.

and bloodthirsty papists.²⁴⁸ This was a delineation of law that permitted resistance to an oppressive higher power without violating the commands of Romans 13. Consequently, both Luther and Melancthon reconciled any potential friction with the recognition that Scripture should not undermine civil law. Furthermore, fundamental to this formulation of self-defence was the eternal principle that Christians should not obey the ungodly commands of wicked rulers for conscience's sake and therefore resistance was legally founded upon both divine and civil law.²⁴⁹

Luther's *Warning* reflected this understanding of Christian duty. Nonetheless, he was not provoking war nor advocating insurrection or the toppling of government. Rather he contended that his wish was for peace and did not desire 'anyone to wage war or to offer resistance except those who are enjoined and authorised to do so (Romans 13).'²⁵⁰ If the Emperor did raise arms against them on the pope's behalf, they had a duty to respond because Charles would be acting not only 'in contravention of God and divine law but also in violation of imperial law, vow, duty, seal, and edicts.'²⁵¹ The argument was conceived in two parts: (1) the Emperor had no right in divine law to use coercive force against a prince for sake of his religion; (2) both emperor and princes were called to govern the Empire, and apart from some specific prerogatives of the emperor, he and the princes possess the same rank in law. Simply put, Charles' proposed war against the German princes would be unjust and the princes had every right, a duty, to take up arms and resist.²⁵² Nevertheless, the decision to withstand the Emperor should be made based upon the conscience of the prince because it was as much a political decision as it was a religious one. The divine law and the sanctity of the temporal office were explicitly connected and by defending one, both were defended.

Luther had made the explicit distinction between the office and the individual. Submission to the will of the emperor and the pope when they violated civil or divine law not only placed true believers at risk but also threatened the very foundations of divine and temporal law. This shift was entirely compliant with the notion of the priesthood of all believers and was firmly grounded in the precepts of Romans 13: all power was divinely ordained and the temporal authority as 'ministers of God' had a duty to protect their subjects from wickedness. What had been formulated was not a theory of resistance, but an acknowledgment of one of Paul's fundamental command: the ruler has an obligation to protect the good and be a terror to

²⁴⁸ LW 47, p.19.

²⁴⁹ Luther D. Peterson, 'Melancthon on Resisting the Emperor: The *Von der Notwehr Unterricht* of 1547', in *Regnum, Religio et Ratio: Essays Presented to Robert M. Kingdon*, ed. by Jerome Friedman (Kirkville: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1987), pp.133-144 and Robert von Friedenburg, *Self-Defence and Religious Strife in Early Modern Europe: England and Germany, 1530-1680* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), pp.62-4.

²⁵⁰ LW 47, p.34.

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p.30.

²⁵² Heckel, *Lex Charitatis*, pp.133-39.

evil. The practical reality of oppression had induced a composed, considered and practical response to a dilemma that pricked at the Christian conscience: obedience to impious rule. This was not a right to resist higher authority but rather the duty of the prince to obey God's command and wield the sword against upon those which do evil. Luther's revolutionary ideas would prove to be a wellspring for early modern protestant political thought.

Philip Melanchthon

In the period before 1530 the most obvious influence upon Philip Melanchthon's thought concerning temporal authority was Luther's doctrine of the priesthood of all believers and the Two Kingdoms. Nonetheless, Melanchthon was his own man and his ideas did not merely repeat those of Luther. In fact, James M. Estes has argued that Melanchthon had also absorbed the political writings of Erasmus, especially *The Education of a Christian Prince*, which obliged the Christian prince with implementing Church reform and establishing ecclesiastical order.²⁵³ In his interpretation of Romans 13 the Apostle receded into the background and the needs of the present were placed front and centre.²⁵⁴ Melanchthon had succeeded Luther in lecturing on Romans at Wittenberg University and his *Loci communes theologici* (1521) 'represented the culmination' of his study of the Pauline letter.²⁵⁵ He began his brief *locus* on magistrates by stating that 'for pedagogical reasons' he would follow the 'common division' and divide them into 'civil and ecclesiastical.' He assigned the civil magistrates the functions outlined by Romans 13, to institute civil law and administer justice, and he declared these authorities were pleasing to God. Provided they 'command what is in the public's best interest, they should be obeyed.'²⁵⁶ Melanchthon recognised, in an orthodox reading of Romans 13, that Paul's testimony demanded that obedience should be rendered to the magistrate not out of fear but of conscience.

Like Augustine and Luther, Melanchthon understood that obedience was an act of love that obligated the Christian to bear even oppressive rulers and comply with the instruction to

²⁵³ Estes, *Peace, Order and the Glory of God*, pp.53-61. This point is contended by Timothy J. Wengert who argues that 'Melanchthon's *Loci communes* represented a frontal assault on not only the medieval way of doing theology but also the Erasmian approach to Scripture, and it replaced them both with Wittenberg's own brand of what might be called evangelical humanism.' See Wengert, 'The Rhetorical Paul: Philip Melanchthon's Interpretation of the Pauline Epistles', in *A Companion to Paul in the Reformation*, ed. by R. Ward Holder (Leiden: Brill, 2009), pp.129-64 (p.136) and Wengert, *Human Freedom, Christian Righteousness: Philip Melanchthon's Exegetical Dispute with Erasmus of Rotterdam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

²⁵⁴ Timothy J. Wengert, 'Philip Melanchthon's 1522 Annotations on Romans and the Lutheran Origins of Rhetorical Criticism', in *Biblical Interpretation in the Era of the Reformation*, eds. by Richard L. Muller and John L. Thompson (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1996), pp.118-40 (p.137).

²⁵⁵ Manschreck, *Melanchthon: The Quiet Reformer*, p.82.

²⁵⁶ Philip Melanchthon, *Commonplaces: Loci Communes 1521*, trans. by Christian Preus (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2014), p.187. Melanchthon applied the caveat of Acts 5:29 which provided exception for any ordinances which directly command anything against Scripture.

turn the other cheek.²⁵⁷ A good ruler should establish human laws that were in accordance with both natural law, which is best suited to the formation of morals, and divine law because anything that opposes these laws was unjust.²⁵⁸ Therefore, rulers that demand obedience to ungodly commands should be disobeyed, so long as doing so did not cause 'scandal and a public disturbance.' This was necessary because observance of wicked instructions was damaging to both faith and love. The conscience, he insisted, cannot be bound by human law.²⁵⁹ Melanchthon had not rejected the premise that that civil magistrate was established by God and they must be obeyed, but rather he merely afforded them a coercive duty to 'punish and prevent injustices.' The magistrate was indeed a minister of God in that he was 'a wrathful avenger against him who does wrong.'²⁶⁰ However, in his *Scholia In Epistolam Pavli ad Colossenses* (1527-8) he presented a significantly more positive representation of the divine duty of the magistrate. According to Timothy J. Wengert, Melanchthon now 'championed the God-given character of civil government' and he was convinced that the commands of Romans 13 'provided consolation for beleaguered Christian rulers and direction for believing subjects.'²⁶¹

Nevertheless, Melanchthon's *Loci communes* prescribed a distinct sphere of responsibility for the temporal and spiritual magistrates. He declared that the spiritual magistrates, most specifically bishops, were not really magistrates at all because they possessed no authority to establish temporal law. The duty of the spiritual magistrate pertained no human tradition and it was specifically their duty to preach the Word of God. Consequently, if they taught anything contrary to Scripture the caveat of Acts 5:29 must be applied: Christians should obey God rather than men.²⁶² Melanchthon also criticised the priests that took advantage of inattentive princes and established godless and tyrannical laws for their own gain. He insisted that neither pope nor councils could alter or establish anything in religion. All articles of faith must be held against the *ius divinum*. Anything that failed this standard could not be considered a true article of faith.²⁶³ Likewise, any external decrees of bishops could not be considered either a divine mandate or binding by human law and anything they command that was 'outside of Scripture is tyranny, since they have no authority to command it.'²⁶⁴

In order to provide guidance to the spiritual magistrates Melanchthon drew up a set of visitation articles which contained not only a statement of the Lutheran faith, but also a detailed

²⁵⁷ Matthew 6:39.

²⁵⁸ Melanchthon, *Communes 1521*, p.66.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.187-8; p.191.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p.77.

²⁶¹ Wengert, *Human Freedom*, p.120.

²⁶² Melanchthon, *Communes 1521*, pp.187-8. Melanchthon claimed Pope Leo X had 'decreed contrary to divine right in issuing a bull condemning Luther, he should by no means be obeyed.'

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp.77-8.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.188-9. He repeats the need to bear these burdens for love in accordance to Matthew 5:39.

plan of study.²⁶⁵ The *Instructions for the Visitors of Parish Pastors in Electoral Saxony* (1528) demonstrated that Melanchthon was convinced there was a need to inculcate obedience to both God and rulers. The articles upheld Luther's earlier deliberation upon the Decalogue which declared that the commandment to honour thy father and mother taught the Christian how behave towards all 'those who are like God' and act in His place.²⁶⁶ Indeed, Luther identified the family 'as the foundational and first order of human life' and his *Large Catechism* (1530) explicitly stated that 'Out of the authority of parents all other authority is derived and developed.'²⁶⁷ As David M. Whitford has explained, 'The authority of parents flows directly from God. Thus, other authorities receive their sanction from God as well. Fathers, Burghermeisters, and princes are ordained by God for the maintenance of good and are thus due obedience (Rom. 13:1-7).'²⁶⁸ Likewise Melanchthon instructed pastors to inform parents of their responsibility to instil fear of God into children, and teach them His Word, which in turn would instruct them to honour preachers and obey the government.

Consequently, the *Instructions* followed the *Scholia* by presenting a positive representation of civil magistrate. He argued that Christians should show gratitude and sincere love towards the temporal authority because without it they could not live in security or enjoy justice.²⁶⁹ Therefore, the worldly power was not for Melanchthon an affliction foisted upon them by Romans 13, but a sacred gift that should be revered and celebrated.²⁷⁰ This understanding did not ignore the coercive role afforded the magistrate in Romans 13, but instead exalted it as a divine duty to be a revenger against evil and protect the good. While a government may descend into tyranny and abuse its 'special ordinance' the office itself remained God's creation and the congregation must not show any less obedience to a harsh government than they would a godly one because 'Christ is all and in all.' The Christian should not fear because wicked governors will not go unpunished. As God stated: 'Vengeance is mine, and recompense' (Deuteronomy 32:35). But the *Instructions* also contained a hint that the authority temporal government had over ecclesiastical affairs was limited. Melanchthon insisted that the office of the priesthood must be honoured because 'the ministry is a servant of God's Word.' Moreover,

²⁶⁵ Luther supplied the preface to the *Instructions* while also reviewing and elaborating on them. See Martin Brecht, *Martin Luther: Shaping and Defining the Reformation 1521-1532*, trans. by James L. Schaaf (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994), p.266.

²⁶⁶ LW 43, p.15.

²⁶⁷ Robert Kolb and Charles P. Arand, *The Genius of Luther's Theology: A Wittenberg Way of Thinking for the Contemporary Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008) p.60. Martin Luther, 'The Large Catechism', in *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, trans. and ed. by Theodore G. Tappert (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), pp.357-461 (p.384).

²⁶⁸ David M. Whitford, 'Luther's political encounters', in *The Cambridge Companion to Martin Luther*, ed. by Donald K. McKim (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp.179-91 (p.181).

²⁶⁹ LW 40, pp.281-3.

²⁷⁰ Steinmetz, 'Calvin and Melanchthon on Romans 13:1-7', p.77.

he noted Paul's pastoral letter to Timothy stated: 'Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching.'²⁷¹

The Augsburg Confession, written by Melanchthon after the mandated imperial diet in January in a period when Charles V appeared to seek religious unity following a period of unrest, was almost conciliatory. He stated that: 'The bishops might easily retain the obedience of men if they did not insist on the observance of regulations which cannot be kept without sin.'²⁷² While this seemed an almost reasonable request, it was simply unacceptable for the Roman Church as it would mean recognising the validity of reform on matters such as the Eucharist and clerical marriage. The Confession did confirm the Lutheran reading of Romans 13 that civil government was an ordinance of God but it also moved to condemn the Anabaptist claim that it was inappropriate for Christians to hold civil office.²⁷³ Article XVI declared that the Gospel did not overthrow the temporal authority but instead prescribed that civil government should be maintained and each member of society can without sin fulfil their calling.²⁷⁴ A firm distinction was made between 'two highest gifts of God on earth' (spiritual and temporal power) and neither were permitted to encroach upon the function of the other.²⁷⁵ While the temporal power could not protect the soul, the spiritual possessed no authority to depose kings, annul or make laws concerning worldly matters, establish anything antithetical to God's word, nor should it undermine obedience to the temporal government or attempt to 'coerce the churches according to their will.'²⁷⁶

Consequently, the Confession sought to present a definitive statement concerning the authority of the ecclesiastical power. In doing so the power of the keys was recognised only as a divine command for ministers to preach the Gospel, forgive sin and administer the Sacraments. Furthermore, bishops that taught things contrary to Scripture should not be obeyed and those who negligent in their duties were subject to the prince's justice for the prevention of discord.²⁷⁷ Curiously, the Confession omitted any direct statement on the papal authority but Melanchthon would address this issue in his *Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope* at the later 1537

²⁷¹ LW 40, p.281. I Timothy 5:17.

²⁷² 'The Augsburg Confession', in *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, trans. and ed. by Theodore G. Tappert (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), pp.1-96 (p.93). This work will cite from the translation of the German text.

²⁷³ 'The Augsburg Confession', p.37.

²⁷⁴ Ibid., pp.37-8. In the later Apology of the Augsburg Confession (1530) he added that the Gospel only improved the state and the commands of rulers should be obeyed 'as divine ordinances' not for fear of punishment but for conscience sake. See 'Apology of the Augsburg Confession', in *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, trans. and ed. by Theodore G. Tappert (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), pp.97-285 (p.223).

²⁷⁵ Ibid., p.81; p.83.

²⁷⁶ Ibid., p.83; p.94. See here I Peter 5:2.

²⁷⁷ Ibid., pp.81-2; p.85.

Schmalkaldic assembly.²⁷⁸ The treatise was described by Clyde Leonard Manschreck as ‘one of the sternest and ablest apologies for rejecting the papacy that has ever come out of Protestantism.’²⁷⁹ Indeed, Melanchthon firmly denied the papal supremacy and the claim that the pope possessed both swords by divine right was declared ‘false, impious, tyrannical, and injurious to the church.’²⁸⁰ While this was not an original conclusion in itself, what did prove to be noteworthy was his recourse to Psalm 2:10: ‘Now therefore, O kings, be wise: be warned, O rulers of the earth.’ This employment of Scripture not only affirmed the status of princes as ‘the chief members of the church’ but also prescribed to them the duties of maintaining the Church by advancing God’s glory, removing error and ensuring consciences are healed.²⁸¹

Melanchthon’s adoption of the doctrines of the Two Kingdoms and the priesthood of all believers signified his acceptance of non-resistance to temporal authority. Nevertheless, the threat of imperial oppression following the rejection of the Augsburg Confession and the recognition that Scripture must not undermine the civil law was formative because there was, as we have previously seen, now a clear distinction between the office and the individual.²⁸² Melanchthon’s 1540 revised and expanded version of his earlier 1532 *Commentary on Romans* demonstrated this shift in thought. The *Commentary* recognised the divine ordination of civil government but it specifically noted that it was instituted to be ‘in harmony with [H]is will, or that it may be approved by [H]im.’ Therefore, the Christian should take comfort in the fact that God was the protector of civil government and it was through Him that kingdoms were preserved, peace established and tyranny was punished.²⁸³ This did not alter the magistrate’s function to defend the pious and ensure that impious forms of worship were restricted by curtailing the activity of wayward priest.²⁸⁴ The magistrate was, as Romans 13 clearly stated, instituted ‘To you for good’ and Melanchthon seized upon these words as recognition that Paul had made a clear distinction between a good ruler and a tyrant. After all, he noted, ‘Sins are not ordained by God; rather they are the violation of his ordinance.’

²⁷⁸ Melanchthon’s *Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope* was adopted and subscribed to as an article of confession by notable theologians and ministers such as Urban Rhegius, George Spalatin, Nicholas Amsdorf, Martin Bucer, and Andrew Osiander before being presented to the German princes.

²⁷⁹ Manschreck, *Melanchthon: The Quiet Reformer*, p.251.

²⁸⁰ Philip Melanchthon, ‘*Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope*’, in *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, trans. and ed. by Theodore G. Tappert (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), pp.320-35 (p.320).

²⁸¹ Melanchthon, ‘*Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope*’, p.329.

²⁸² See Luther’s *Warning* above.

²⁸³ Philip Melanchthon, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. by Fred Kramer (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1992), p.218.

²⁸⁴ This is noted by Ralph Keen in ‘Defending the Pious: Melanchthon and the Reformation in Albertine Saxony, 1539’, *Church History*, 60:2 (Jun., 1991), (pp.180-95) p.182.

Thus, according to Melanchthon, Paul had advocated that so long as the ruler promulgated civil laws in accordance with the law of nature they should be obeyed. Moreover, the Christian was not bound by a Mosaic form of government but was 'permitted to use the laws of all nations which are in harmony with reason.'²⁸⁵ They were bound to obey the present civil law and form of government presiding over them because the body, unlike the spirit, was not free from the obligation to temporal authority. Consequently, the command to obey not only on account of wrath but also for the sake of conscience equally applied to the magistrate and in disobedience tyrants 'destroy the ordinance of God no less than do seditious persons.' Likewise, the Christian's conscience would be similarly 'defiled' if they disobeyed their magistrate or if they showed contempt towards the sure teaching of pastors and ministers as both were in the service of God. Nevertheless, Melanchthon returned to the matter hinted at in his earlier *Instructions*, the limitation of temporal power over ecclesiastical affairs. He denied greater reverence should be given to civil authority over the ministers of the Gospel because those who disobeyed the Word 'entrusted to the ecclesiastical power sin mortally.' Certainly, God committed to temporal rulers jurisdiction over civil laws and commanded them to be subject to them. But God also provided the spiritual ministers with His 'sure Word' and because this was the higher law greater reverence should be shown to the ministers of the Gospel.²⁸⁶

Huldrych Zwingli

Zurich reformer Huldrych Zwingli made his decisive break with the Roman Catholic Church in 1522. Peter Opitz has stated that while it is difficult to imagine Zwingli's final development into a reformer without the influence of Luther, he does, nevertheless, represent 'an independent form of reformation theology.'²⁸⁷ However, it was Erasmus that inspired Zwingli to not only develop an 'intense interest in Paul' but embrace humanism, especially the study of language and the classics, which resulted in his 'burning zeal to reform religion.'²⁸⁸ For Zwingli God alone was the origin of 'any decent laws and teaching on earth' because His providence alone managed the good and turned 'all that is evil into good.'²⁸⁹ The foundation of all good government is God because, according to Romans 13, He both ordained and instructed it. Much like Luther, Zwingli stated that Christians should pray for, and on behalf of, their rulers in order that they live

²⁸⁵ Melanchthon, *Romans*, pp.218-9.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p.220-2.

²⁸⁷ Peter Opitz, 'Ulrich Zwingli,' *Religion Compass*, 2:6 (Nov., 2008), (pp.949-60) p.949. The theological differences between Luther and Zwingli are too numerous to consider here. Instead a clear outline can be found in W.P. Stephens, *The Theology of Huldrych Zwingli* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), pp.235-50.

²⁸⁸ Bruce Gordon, *The Swiss Reformation* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), pp.49-50.

²⁸⁹ Huldrych Zwingli, 'Exposition of the Sixty-Seven Articles', in *The Huldrych Zwingli Writings, Volume One: The Defense of the Reformed Faith*, trans. by Edward J. Furcha (Allison Park, Pa.: Pickwick Publications, 1984), p.78.

peacefully in love and sincerity.²⁹⁰ Therefore, it is with little surprise that he contended that Christians were, without exception, required to obey the temporal power unless, of course, they demanded something contrary to the Word of God.²⁹¹

However, Zwingli arrived at a radical position concerning temporal rulers far sooner than those in Wittenberg. He insisted that rulers which defile the His Word 'may be deposed in the name of God.' The precedent for this was found in II Kings 21:1-12 where, Zwingli believed, God had punished the Jews for not opposing the wickedness of Manasseh the king of Judah. While Zwingli had articulated a clear statement that ungodly rulers should be deposed, he failed to provide any clear means to how this should be achieved. His words on the matter only extended to offering the Christian comfort in the fact that if tyrannical prince reacted violently against the move to depose him, they could take solace in the knowledge that they might perish 'acting in accordance to God's will.' However, if Christians failed to act against the wickedness of the magistrate, Zwingli firmly warned, they would, like their tyrannical prince, ultimately be punished by God.²⁹²

Nevertheless, Zwingli would be significantly less bold in his *Commentary on True and False Religion* (1525) in which he addressed Francis I with his full title of 'the Most Christian King of France' in the hope of winning him over to spiritual cause. The *Commentary* was circumspect enough not raise the issue of deposition but Zwingli did not stray into sycophantism concerning the temporal magistrate of which Paul 'had emphatically approved' in Romans 13:1-7. He insisted that Christians should not scorn authority, but rather endeavour to make their rulers as just and pious as possible by holding them to scrutiny. While he observed that the magistrate did not possess an 'unbridled licence of power,' he was mindful not to embolden any notion that casting off all authority would bring liberation. It was nothing but folly to assume any exemption from obedience because Paul clearly stated 'all men' (*omnes homines*) were subject to the higher powers and he repeated his earlier assertion that if the ruler was deficient the Christian should commit the matter to God.²⁹³

The *Commentary* turned to Romans 13 to deliver an unambiguous message that rulers must remain on the side of the righteousness and fulfil their function as a minister of God 'to thee for good' by not implementing the oppressive pronouncements of the pope. Moreover, he

²⁹⁰ Zwingli, 'Exposition', p.254. Both Luther and Zwingli were following the precept laid down by Optatus who stated Christians should follow Paul's words in I Timothy 2:1-2. See Chapter 1.

²⁹¹ Ibid., p.254. p.258; p.260; p.264. Any law that is not harmonious with the meaning of Matthew 7:12 was for Zwingli 'simply against God.' Matthew 7:12 reads 'In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets.'

²⁹² Ibid., p.254; p.279.

²⁹³ Huldrych Zwingli, *Commentary on True and False Religion*, eds. by Samuel Macauley Jackson and Clarence Nevin Heller (Durham, North Carolina: The Labyrinth Press, 1981), pp.308-9.

warned the temporal rulers that they should not let their pride swell upon hearing that they rule by divine providence. Instead, rulers must endeavour only to conduct themselves in a manner that befitted someone that was seated in God's place on earth.²⁹⁴ However, what Zwingli now professed was exceptional:

Therefore let those who rule to the ill of all see what right they have to boast in the name of Christ, seeing that they not only, like thieves and robbers plunder the goods of all, but, like plagues, also waste their bodies. But they are ministers of God all the same, just as Satan is a minister of God, who everywhere opposes, deceives, and destroys.²⁹⁵

In declaring that Satan was a minister of God Zwingli certainly went much further than his predecessors who had claimed that even an evil temporal ruler was a benefit to His Church. Zwingli acknowledged that God had provided Satan with a divine purpose. John Calvin would later be prepared accept Satan was 'the instrument of God's wrath' but at this point he appeared to stand alone on the matter.²⁹⁶ These were murky waters and unfortunately Zwingli did not elaborate any further on what was an emerging Anabaptist concern over predestination and the cause of evil.²⁹⁷

Nevertheless, Zwingli did tackle the Anabaptist 'mad theory' that Christians should not serve in temporal government. Much like Luther he contended that Christians were, in fact, the only ones truly capable of properly administering civil office. Without fear of God's reprisal, he contended, the magistrate would become a tyrant because he was above the fear of man. This fear of God ensured that rulers served Him and no kingdom 'will be happier than in which also true religion dwells.'²⁹⁸ He accused the Anabaptists of attempting to create disorder by seeking to eliminate all magisterial offices. Therefore, he insisted, the magistracy could only be abolished if all impiety is expunged from the entire world. The Anabaptists' denial of office of the Christian magistrate was, for Zwingli, so erroneous it caused them to be fundamentally wrong in their exegesis of one of the most central aspects of obedience Acts 5:29. This command did not exempt Christians from all obedience to civil power because demands not interfering with God's glory must be obeyed. For Zwingli the Anabaptists were engaging in *eisegesis* and reading the text as 'We must obey God rather than you [the magistrate].'²⁹⁹ Consequently, Zwingli knew his audience. He sought to persuade the reader against any moves towards bloody revolt, and not

²⁹⁴ Zwingli, *True and False Religion*, p.310.

²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.313.

²⁹⁶ John Calvin, *The Institutes of Christian Religion*, Volume I and II, trans. Ford Lewis Battles, ed. John T. McNeill (London: S.C.M. Press, 1960), p.311. [Hereafter *Institutes* 1559].

²⁹⁷ See for example John Denck, 'Whether God is the Cause of Evil,' in *Spiritual and Anabaptist Writers*, eds. George H. Williams and Angel M. Mergel (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1957), pp.88-111.

²⁹⁸ Zwingli, *True and False Religion*, pp.293-6.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.298-9.

to inspire or condone like he had had during the German Peasants War. Therefore what he advocated was a doctrine of passive obedience because Christians should endure tyranny as a test of their patience and faith.³⁰⁰

The Radicals and the Sword

By the time Michael Sattler had written The Schleitheim Confession (1527), which outlined the need for the Christian to separate as far as possible from the world, it was clear that the Anabaptists interpreted Romans 13 profoundly differently to Luther or Zwingli. Nevertheless, while the Confession did promote a God-willed order, it understood civil authority to be a divine institution responsible only for those who lived outside of Christ and needed the rule of the coercive sword.³⁰¹ Those that subscribed to the Confession did not deny that the temporal sword was divinely ordained only that it was ordained outside the perfection of Christ and Christians should find protection in the Gospel rather than the sword. However, the matter of the temporal sword certainly failed to achieve consensus among the Anabaptists and they wrestled with the ethical dilemma of coercion and non-resistance. The German Anabaptist Melchior Rink accepted the legitimacy and divine origin of worldly government and that sufferance under a tyrant was a punishment for sin. Rink's concern was to strictly confine temporal rulers to worldly affairs alone and exclude them from meddling in matters of faith.³⁰² However, the Swiss Brethren firmly rejected the possibility of Christian magistracy and sought to prove that Scripture had demonstrated that believers should not serve in government or wield the sword.³⁰³

But following the adoption of the Schleitheim Confession Balthasar Hubmaier, the pastor of the first Anabaptist city of Waldshut, realised that his teaching was now in variance with the Swiss Brethren, which held great influence over his church. Hubmaier's theology demonstrated a 'combination of radical and conservative tendencies' and he was consciously at odds with the Confession concerning temporal power. In his treatise *On the Sword* (1527) he expressed a sentiment not dissimilar to Zwingli in that he believed in the reality of Christian society and shared, what James Strayer has called, his 'realpolitical teaching on the Sword.'³⁰⁴ Additionally, he agreed with both Luther and Zwingli's reading of Acts 5:29 in that obedience was to be rendered to God before man but obedience to rulers was necessary unless they prescribed something that was contrary to Scripture. However, he also held that Christians could

³⁰⁰ Zwingli, *True and False Religion*, p.302.

³⁰¹ Leland Harder, 'Zwingli's Reaction to the Schleitheim Confession of Faith of the Anabaptists', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 11:4 (Winter, 1980), pp.51-66 (p.64).

³⁰² John S. Oyer, *Lutheran Reformers Against Anabaptists: Luther, Melancthon and Menius and the Anabaptists of Central Germany* (The Hague: Martinus Hijhoff, 1964), p.93.

³⁰³ Hans Jürgen-Goertz, *The Anabaptists*, trans. Trevor Johnson (London: Routledge, 1996), p.100.

³⁰⁴ James M. Stayer, *Anabaptists and the Sword* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2002 © 1976), p.105.

be civil magistrates; although rebellion was forbidden, there was legal means to resist in certain extreme circumstances.³⁰⁵ Consequently, although he accepted that Peter was commanded to sheath his sword, he did not admit that Christ had indicated that the Apostle did not possess it, only that he was reprimanded for drawing it.³⁰⁶

Hubmaier had revealed an adherence to a variant form of Two Sword theory. He contended that that the Old Testament kings, such as David or Hezekiah, had confirmed not the existence of two swords but rather the dual aspects of a single sword. But while it was, of course, evidently better for rulers to be pious than impious or pagan, all rulers had the sword 'hung at their side' for the purpose of justice. The 'external sword' should be used to protect the pious and provide a deterrent to the wicked, however, this sword became spiritual 'when used according to the will of God.'³⁰⁷ A true ruler would recognise themselves to be God's servant but, like Zwingli, Hubmaier understood 'government was Christian in its intention but only imperfectly Christian in its execution of these intentions.'³⁰⁸ Nevertheless, in a concluding passage founded upon the precepts of Romans 13 he argued that it was permissible to remove unfit magistrates, though not by means of rebellion. The deposition of tyrants must only be achieved through legal means otherwise the ruler must be tolerated and understood to be an instrument of God's wrath on account of their sin.³⁰⁹ Hubmaier's theology recognised that the temporal government was necessitated because of the Fall, but if man had remained pious and obedient to God there would have been no need for law or the sword.³¹⁰

The revolutionary Thomas Müntzer produced literary output that was scant by comparison to Luther, Melancthon, Zwingli or Calvin, but he did not fail to leave his mark on the early Reformation. Müntzer differed from his contemporaries in that he accorded temporal rulers an almost 'priestly kingship' in his attempt to persuade them to use their ordained power to reinstate the true faith. In one particular endeavour he followed Augustine's *eisegesis* by inverting Paul's words to inform Count Ernst von Mansfeld that: 'the key to the knowledge of God is this: to rule the people so that they learn to fear God alone Romans 13, for the beginning of true Christian wisdom is the fear of the Lord.'³¹¹ But his address to the very same Saxon princes that Luther had previously courted in 1520 was simply remarkable. The sermon utilised

³⁰⁵ Michael Driedger, 'Anabaptists and the Early Modern State: A Long-Term View,' in *A Companion to Anabaptism and Spiritualism, 1521-1700*, John D. Roth and James M. Stayer (Leiden: Brill, 2007), p.507-44 (p.514).

³⁰⁶ Balthasar Hubmaier, 'On the Sword', in *The Radical Reformation*, ed. and trans. by Michael G. Baylor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp.181-209 (p.185). Matthew 26:52 and John 18:11.

³⁰⁷ Hubmaier, 'On the Sword', p.196.

³⁰⁸ Stayer, *Anabaptists and the Sword*, p.143.

³⁰⁹ Hubmaier, 'On the Sword', p.206.

³¹⁰ Hubmaier was echoing Luther's lectures on I Peter. See above.

³¹¹ Thomas Müntzer, 'Müntzer to Count Ernst von Mansfeld. Allstedt 22 September 1523', in *The Collected Works of Thomas Müntzer*, ed. and trans. by Peter Matheson (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988), pp.66-7 (p.67).

a purely biblical approach to present 'a challenge to secular authority and Christian rulership.'³¹² The contrast between Luther's more constraining role afforded to princes and Müntzer's positive and decisive function is stark. While both sought to promote the true preaching of the Word, Müntzer actively sought to destroy the opponents of the Gospel.³¹³

Therefore, Müntzer informed the princes that they were afforded the sword not only for protection of the good (the elect) but also to 'eliminate the godless.' Therefore, as Stayer has observed, 'The Sword had a far grander task for him than for Luther or Zwingli.'³¹⁴ Nevertheless, Müntzer insisted that by not performing their duty the princes 'will be devils, not servants of God which Paul calls you in Romans 13.'³¹⁵ The right to wield the sword was dependent upon both its affirmative and correct use. The sword must not rust in its scabbard and if the prince refused to drive away those 'ruining the kingdom of Christ' the sword provided him by God could be rightly wrenched from his hands. As Müntzer warned the princes, by way of Matthew 7:19: 'Any tree which does not produce good fruit should be rooted out and thrown into the fire.'³¹⁶ Therefore, Müntzer had 'posited the elect, his elect of course, as the bearers of God's sovereignty.'³¹⁷ But possession of the sword did not afford princes sovereignty over the soul and the power to chastise the wicked was done on God's behalf. However, a tyrannical prince should be defended against because he obstructs the salvation of his subjects. As Scripture has revealed the duty of the ruler is 'give protection to the good' but a tyrant has abandoned this function and consequently this evildoer should not be permitted to live.³¹⁸

Müntzer had already uttered something similar to Frederick the Wise. He informed the Elector that while people should love rather than fear princes, because they held 'no terrors for the pious,' should these rulers become oppressive 'the sword will be taken from them and will be given to the people who burn with zeal so that the godless can be defeated.'³¹⁹ Romans 13 may have placed the sword of righteousness into the hands of the prince, but if they failed in their duty it would be taken from them. Such claims alarmed Luther who wrote to the Saxony princes to warn them of Müntzer's revolutionary spirit.³²⁰ Müntzer's riposte to Luther's letter, A

³¹² Keen, *Divine and Human Authority*, p.97.

³¹³ Tom Scott, *Thomas Müntzer: Theology and Revolution in the German Reformation* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1989), p.75.

³¹⁴ Stayer, *Anabaptists and the Sword*, p.75.

³¹⁵ Thomas Müntzer, 'Sermon to the Princes', in *The Collected Works of Thomas Müntzer*, ed. and trans. by Peter Matheson (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988), pp.230-52 (p.250; p.246).

³¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.248.

³¹⁷ Oye, *Lutheran Reformers Against Anabaptists*, p.21.

³¹⁸ Müntzer, 'Sermon to the Princes', p.248. Romans 13:4 and Exodus 22:18.

³¹⁹ Thomas Müntzer, 'Müntzer to Frederick the Wise. Allstedt, 4 October 1523', in *The Collected Works of Thomas Müntzer*, ed. and trans. by Peter Matheson (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988), pp.67-70 (p.69).

³²⁰ See Luther's *Letter to the Princes of Saxony Concerning the Rebellious Spirit* (1524).

Highly Provoked Defence (1524), was riddled with savage insults, but he attempted to answer the accusation he was preaching rebellion. He insisted:

I proclaimed before the princes that the entire community has the power of the sword, just as it also has the keys of remitting sin...[and] I said that the princes are not lords but servants of the sword. They should not simply do what pleases them...they should do what is right.³²¹

Müntzer was certain that he answered Luther's charge that he promoted rebellion by authoritatively demonstrating that Scripture had proclaimed that the sword should be employed to punish evildoers as a preventative measure against insurrection.³²² But what he had also confirmed was that although civil power was ultimately of God it was possessed by the people, albeit the elect, and the power of the sword can be taken from the hands of any ruler that they believed was not worthy of holding it.

John Calvin

Depending upon which of his recollections you read, the conversion of John Calvin to a reformed faith was either a gradual shift of allegiance or a sudden Road to Damascus moment. Regardless, the writings of both Erasmus and Luther provided early inspiration.³²³ Following the brutal response of the French Crown to the Affair of the Placards (1534) Calvin recognised his religious views placed him in danger and he left Paris first for Orléans and then Basel. It was in the city of Erasmus that the first edition of *Christianae Religionis Institutio* (1536) was printed and in his dedicatory epistle to the 'most glorious King' he pleaded with Francis I to put an end to the persecutions. The book itself served two purposes: an *apologia* for his faith and a guide to Scripture for Christians. It was instructive rather than devotional.³²⁴ Therefore, he acknowledged Luther's distinction of the Two Kingdoms but he expressed it as man existing 'under a twofold government.' The first resided 'in the soul or inner man' and the second pertained 'only to the establishment of civil justice and outward morality.' Consequently, it was nonsensical to suggest that perfection was found 'in a community of men' and thus the government of the Church must be under the force of temporal law. The coercive power prevented offenses against the religion, such as idolatry or blasphemy, from infiltrating and growing among the people and it also brought peace which permitted subjects to perform their respective duties within their

³²¹ Thomas Müntzer, 'A *Highly Provoked Defence*', in *The Radical Reformation*, ed. and trans. by Michael G. Baylor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp.74-94 (p.80).

³²² *Ibid.*, p.80.

³²³ See Bruce Gordon, *Calvin* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009), pp.33-7.

³²⁴ T.H.L. Parker, *John Calvin: A Biography* (Oxford: Lion, 2006, First edition 1975 Dent & Sons), pp.53-6.

community. As Calvin stated, civil government ensured 'that a public manifestation of religion may exist among Christians, and that harmony be maintained among men.'³²⁵

Calvin's *Institutes* firmly affirmed the divine ordination of the civil government and consequently, the office of the magistrate was afforded great dignity and title. The magistrate was, then, invested with God's authority as His vicegerent. This authority was also affirmed, by both Psalm 82:6 and John 10:35 which called them 'gods' and he insisted 'let no one think that their being so-called is of slight importance.'³²⁶ The *Institutes* naturally support these assertions with Romans 13:4 and the examples of the illustrious Old Testament kings, lordships and judges.³²⁷ Calvin asserted that power was witnessed in a variety of forms and Paul had shown that all authority was derived from God's providential wisdom. It was imperative that the magistrates performed their divine duty honourably and that they did not give way to their own 'private affection.' The magistrate was, after all, 'a minister of God for our good.'³²⁸ The subject should honour the magistrate and recognise his divine office by dutifully and sincerely obeying him. This honour should be rendered not out of fear of his wrath but because of conscience. For Calvin it was an error for a Christian to suppose that his conscience was liberated by their faith; he was still bound by obligation. Moreover, no man should deceive himself into thinking that resisting the magistrate did not constitute resisting God.

Nevertheless, Calvin would slowly and tentatively disentangle himself from unconditional submission to civil authority and in order to do so he made a number of distinctions. He began by affirming the Pauline premise that all power was of God, but he also acknowledged that unjust or incompetent magistrates may be providentially called as a means of punishment for sin.³²⁹ But he also contended that a magistrate's departure from their divine duty did not provide subjects with a just reason to abandon their own. Instead they should examine themselves and their ills because it was not, Calvin firmly stated, the place of subjects 'to remedy such evils.' For as Psalm 82:1 confirmed 'He is God who will stand in the assembly of the gods, and will judge in the midst of the gods.' However, there is a suggestion that Calvin did not wholeheartedly support the doctrine of non-resistance. He insisted that any ruler not performing his duty as a 'father' or 'shepherd' to his people, or one that had descended into tyranny, no longer retained any semblance of being God's minister. Calvin now sensationally suggested that it was possible to 'restrain the wilfulness of kings' because he recognised, like

³²⁵ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. Ford Lewis Battles (Grand Rapids: Wm. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Revised Edition 1989), pp.207-8. [Hereafter *Institutes* 1536].

³²⁶ *Ibid.*, p.209.

³²⁷ Calvin listed Kings David, Josiah, and Hezekiah; the lordships of Joseph and Daniel; and civil rulers Moses and Joshua.

³²⁸ Calvin, *Institutes* 1536, pp.209-17.

³²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.220-21.

Aquinas, that sometimes God raised up 'open avengers from among his servants' in order to punish wicked rulers or governments and deliver His people 'from miserable calamity.'³³⁰

The possibility of a divinely called avenger was appealing but identifying them was exceedingly problematic. The greatest example was Moses who had delivered the people of Israel from the tyranny of Pharaoh. This liberation of the Israelites, Calvin revealed, was not a violation of the divine majesty implanted in kingship but rather the suppression of the 'lesser power with the greater, just as it is lawful for kings to punish their subordinates.' Calvin recognised that within the structure of some ancient governments, such as the Spartans, Roman consuls or the Athenian senate, there was established in the lower magistrates, the ephors, tribunes and demarchs respectively, a mandate to limit kingly power. He suggested that 'perhaps' it was appropriate to consider it was the constitutional and religious duty of modern day magistrates to withstand 'the fierce licentiousness of kings.'³³¹ This appeal had been made before. Indeed, Zwingli had stated in his sermon *The Shepherd* (1523): 'As there were ephors with the Spartans and tribunes with the Romans, so there are in many German cities today chief guildmasters who oppose the head when too much power is used.'³³² Furthermore, Richard Roy Benert has shown that Melanchthon's *Commentary on Aristotle's Politics* (1530) had compared the German electors to an aristocratic body similar to the ephors of Sparta in that they had the right to restrain and reprove monarchical authority but also the power to depose the emperor of his *imperium*. While Melanchthon did demonstrate knowledge of an ephoral practice, it was Calvin, Benert argued, that 'initiated the adaption of this tradition to the needs of the Protestants.'³³³

Calvin's proposition that the magistracy had a constitutional duty to withstand tyrannical rulers was not the manifestation of a coherent theory of resistance and nor was it a vehement promotion of the right to resist. The reason for his hesitancy can only be speculated upon. Perhaps he acknowledged that some modern estates could not be directly equated with ephoral power. Maybe he recognised the power of his suggestion. Nevertheless, three things are certain: (1) this passage remained entirely unchanged in his final 1559 edition of the *Institutes*; (2) he provided, as the next chapter demonstrates, François Hotman and the authors of the *Vindiciae contra Tyrannos* with an acceptable framework to construct ideas of resistance; (3) Calvin's suggestions had a political legacy that lived well into the seventeenth century.

³³⁰ Calvin, *Institutes* 1536, p.224; pp.221.

³³¹ *Ibid*, p.225.

³³² Huldrych Zwingli, 'The Shepherd', in *Huldrych Zwingli Writings, Volume Two: In Search of True Religion: Reformation, Pastoral and Eucharistic Writings*, trans. by H. Wayne Pipkin (Eugene, Or.,: Pickwick, 1984), (p.102) pp.77-126.

³³³ Richard Roy Benert, 'Inferior Magistrates in Sixteenth-Century Political and Legal Thought' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Minnesota, 1967), pp.76-78.

However, Calvin elaborated further on the matter of civil government in his *Commentary on Romans* (1539/40). He insisted that Paul had specifically commanded that 'every soul' be subject to the 'higher powers' in order to ensure none are exempt from obedience to those ordained of God.³³⁴ What is significant here was that Calvin noticeably declared that 'dictatorships and unjust authorities' were not placed by God's hand, but, he added, 'the right of government is ordained by God for the well-being of mankind.' There was an obvious friction between these two statements. So Calvin more closely defined the magistrate as 'being useful for mankind' and this permitted the institution of tyrannical government as God's punishment for the sins of men. This punishment should not be 'properly' be considered divine ordinance but rather the 'means' in which God intentionally appoints magistrates 'for the preservation of legitimate order.' Calvin recognised that the 'usefulness' of rulers was a divinely appointed means to preserve the peace and protect the good and to restrain evildoers. As the author of civil government (*iuris politici*) God had provided mankind with a remedy by which they were protected from destruction, and it was necessary for it to be preserved.

Once again, Calvin had not articulated a coherent theory of resistance, in fact, he insisted that resistance to rulers was indistinguishable from resisting God's providence. Consequently, no one should fear the magistrate 'if we are good' but those which sought to shake off the yoke of the higher powers only revealed proof of their 'evil conscience.' Even if the magistrate departed from their natural duty, obedience must still be rendered. The emergence of a tyrannical ruler working as God's scourge to punish the sinful was simply a harm inflicted upon themselves and they should reflect upon the fact that they alone had turned an 'excellent blessing of God' into a curse. Even the most despotic of governments retained some 'semblance of just government' and therefore all tyranny, in some way, assisted in the protection of human society. But this was not an 'unbridled power' but one restricted for the purpose of the public good. Therefore, part of the function of the magistrate was to wield the sword that is instructed by 'divine kindness' to defend their subjects against the injuries inflicted by the wicked. This relationship was based upon reciprocal obligation: the magistrate having a responsibility to God and his subjects and the people obliged to render them both obedience. Significantly, Calvin's *Romans* commentary never strayed into a discussion of the thorny issue of 'ephoral' power. Instead he emphasised the requirement for obedience by insisting that no Christian that resists the ordinance of God will escape their own ruin.³³⁵

³³⁴ John Calvin, *The Epistles of Paul The Apostle to the Romans and to the Thessalonians*, eds. by David W. Torrance and Thomas F. Torrance, trans. by Ross Mackenzie (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1960), p.280.

³³⁵ Calvin, *Romans*, pp.281-2.

Conclusion

The sixteenth-century reformers were the inheritors of over a millennium of biblical exegesis concerning the relationship between the governing and the governed. The predominant source for illumination of their present dilemmas was, of course, Scripture but the opinions of eminent authorities from the past were also invaluable. Therefore, both Erasmus and Luther provided orthodox readings of Romans 13 that supported the judgment of their esteemed predecessors by revealing rulers were ministers of God provided to protect the good and punish the wicked. In return, subjects must respect the civil authority and any commands that did not offend Scripture should be obeyed. Erasmus adopted an almost Ambrosiastian position that afforded the prince a quasi-divine status. His didactic approach emphasised the centrality of a wise and benevolent prince that sought to emulate the magnificence of God by governing for the profit of his people rather than his own. This interpretation of Romans 13 proposed that the prince must be a glorious exemplar to all within his realm. However, the civil authorities must not, stressed both Erasmus and Zwingli, let their pride swell upon hearing that they ruled by divine providence. They were required to conduct themselves in a manner that befitted someone that was seated in God's place.

The phenomenon of humanism and the impulses of reform that sought to tackle the corruptions within the Church were keenly observed. Luther's lectures on Romans 13 contained a condemnation of the spiritual rulers' affection for temporal things, and Erasmus argued that it was the duty of the Christian prince to reform the Church. Additionally, Müntzer implored the temporal powers to utilise their divinely ordained authority and reinstate the true faith. It was apparent that the Church Fathers and medieval theologians and philosophers had not transmitted a single authoritative and irrefutable conclusion concerning spiritual and temporal government. Consequently, their exegesis was both refuted and augmented. The reformers turned to the source of indisputable truth, and Scripture provided what they believed to be God's blueprint for princely duty. Romans 13 revealed that God created a force to protect the Church from corrupt prelates that had exceeded their function. The temporal ruler was a minister of God and their duty was protective and preventative. This was a positive responsibility taken to the utmost limit by Müntzer who informed the princes that the temporal sword must be used not only to protect the good but also to destroy opponents of the Gospel.

Anti-papal sentiment crystallised following Rome's condemnation of the reformers' criticism against the spiritual abuses of the Church. The reformers employed an exegesis of Romans 13 in order to deliver an unambiguous message to the temporal authorities: they must remain on the side of the righteousness and fulfil their duty as God's minister 'to thee for good.' This obligation required the prince to not implement the oppressive doctrines of the pope. The doctrine of papal supremacy was denounced and the power of the keys recognised only as a

divine command for ministers to preach the Gospel, forgive sin and administer the Sacraments. Luther's exegesis of Romans 13 had significantly amplified the judicial status of the princely office. He insisted, like Marsilius of Padua, that Scripture had demonstrated that the law must be presided over by judges, or gods, and the temporal authority alone was divinely furnished with judicial authority by right of the coercive sword. The temporal authority was afforded no sacerdotal power, but its spiritual function to protect the good and be a terror for evildoers was explicitly outlined in Romans 13. Conversely, the Church possessed no earthly jurisdiction and no sword. Nevertheless, the princes were warned that indiscriminate use of the sword was tyranny, and Luther proposed that when it was united with the rule of law a beautiful and stable political order was created.

The reformers rejected Two Sword theory outright. Instead Luther conceived a premise of the Two Kingdoms that divided mankind into true believers who lived under the law of the spirit built upon love and freedom, and the unrighteous who dwelled under the temporal law that constrained and compelled them to virtue. In theory a truly Christian kingdom had no necessity for either the temporal authority or the sword, but because of mankind's corrupt nature the faithful also existed in the temporal world. As a result, the distinct spiritual and temporal governments fulfilled positive and complimentary functions: to ensure the Christian's virtuousness, and preserve order in the corrupted world. Luther, Melancthon and Zwingli were in agreement; God was recognised as the source of all good law and government upon the earth because, as Romans 13 confirmed, He had ordained and instructed it. Therefore, all must obey the temporal powers unless, of course, they commanded something contrary to Scripture. In Romans 13 God had provided the basis for temporal law and governance. Adherence to the civil law deprived the Christian of nothing and was, in fact, a fulfilment of Christ's command to love one another.

The worldly power was not an affliction foisted upon them by God, but a sacred gift that must be revered and celebrated. The Christian was obliged to demonstrate their gratitude and sincere love towards the temporal authority because without it they would not live in security or enjoy justice. This understanding of civil power did not brush aside the magistrate's coercive power, but rather exalted it as a divine duty to revenge sin and protect the righteous. Consequently, Zwingli and the Lutherans rejected the Anabaptist notion that it was inappropriate for Christians to serve in earthly government. The Schleithem Confession did not deny the divine origin of worldly power, but it explicitly confined the magistrates to the temporal world. In truth the Anabaptists were divided on the matter. Indeed, for Hubmaier a true ruler recognised themselves as a servant of God, and, like Zwingli, he also understood that civil government was Christian in intention but imperfectly Christian in its execution of its objectives. The Christian was not free from submission to worldly authority and they must not show any

less obedience to an oppressive magistrate than they must a godly one. As such the Christian can take comfort in the fact that God was the protector of civil government and it was through Him that kingdoms are preserved, peace established and tyranny was punished.

For Luther Scripture provided no liberation from the earthly power and as a consequence his teachings provided no grounds for resistance. Luther's steadfast belief in this precept can be witnessed in his ferocious denouncement of the rebellious peasants for their violation of Romans 13. What is significant was his warning to the princes. He insisted, in a manner not unlike Müntzer, that failure to implement the divinely bestowed sword was grievous neglect of divine office. However, Luther's strict reading of Romans 13 requires reconciliation with his apparent about-turn when confronted with Charles V's threat to forcefully bring the German princes back into the Holy Roman Empire. Unlike Müntzer and Hubmaier, who had already arrived at radical positions concerning impious rulers, the Lutheran jurists articulated a legal means to withstand an oppressive higher power. They conceived God had afforded the German princes, and territorial rulers alike, the right to wield the *ius gladii*. Moreover, they believed that constitutionally an emperor's power was not absolute, and as such Luther and Melancthon insisted that standing against imperial aggression or the menace of bloodthirsty papists was not rebellion but a legitimate act of self-defence. In this way the precepts of Romans 13 were not violated and the command that Christians must not obey the ungodly commands of wicked rulers were also upheld.

This right to stand against the oppression of a higher power was founded upon Scripture and supported by civil law. By raising arms on the pope's behalf, the emperor would be in violation of both divine and imperial law. This was owed to the fact that God had not bestowed Charles any right to use the coercive sword against a prince for the sake of religion and legally the emperor lacked any superior rank in law. Submission to the wicked commands of the emperor not only placed the souls of true believers at risk but it threatened the foundations of both divine and temporal law. Luther and the jurists had provided the German princes with a legal means to withstand an oppressive superior power that crucially maintained the precepts of both Romans 13 and Acts 5:29. The princes performed their duty to be God's ministers for good, but conversely the emperor was unrighteous in his use of the sword as force for evil. By withstanding the wicked commands of the pope and emperor the princes upheld the fundamental principle of obedience: obey God rather than men. What had been formulated was not an act of resistance but obedience. This was a preservation of both civil and divine law.

The principles of obedience are outlined in purely Pauline terms by Calvin who insisted upon the need for the faithful to obey their magistrates. He informed the reader, in explicitly Pauline terms, that no one should deceive themselves into thinking that resisting the magistrate did not constitute resisting God. There existed a mutual obligation between the ruler and the

ruled: the magistrate must protect the people and subjects must respect superior authority. Calvin never advocated unconditional obedience, and contended that rulers lapsed in their duty to protect his people, or if descended into tyranny, they ceased to be God's minister. But what makes his contribution to the matter of obedience to civil authority so significant is that he suggested that 'perhaps' it was appropriate to consider modern that day magistrates had a constitutional and religious duty to withstand the wickedness of kings. However, despite this potentially explosive suggestion Calvin did not offer, either in the *Institutes* or his 1540 commentary on Romans 13, any a coherent theory of resistance. Rather he continued to insist that resistance to rulers was indistinguishable from resisting God's providence. The emergence of a tyrannical ruler, he argued, reflected the wickedness of the people, and the evil magistrate was God's scourge for their sin. Consequently, even despotic magistrates retained a 'semblance of just government' and it should be left to God alone to provide the means to punish tyrants and deliver the righteous from misery.

Calvin conceived that the means God had provided to punish tyrants was not a private citizen but the ephoral powers or lower magistrates. This argument accorded with Zwingli who had contended that although Christians must not scorn authority, they must for the sake of piety and justice hold them to scrutiny. Therefore, Calvin placed the conduct of rulers against a strict definition of the duty of magistrates that demanded their actions must be convenient for mankind. This definition permitted the institution of tyrannical government to be conceived as God's vengeance upon sin, but also recognised the lesser magistrate as a divine instrument ordained to restrain a superior civil power. Calvin vehemently affirmed the Pauline precept that civil government was provided by God, and rulers must be obeyed because they are invested with authority as His vicegerent. However, his suggestion that magistrates possessed a civil and religious duty to restrain wicked kings would prove to be at least as influential, if not more, than all his demands for obedience. Calvin was certainly not the first to consider ephoral power as a possible remedy to licentious rulers, but he was the first to adapt it specifically to the needs of the evangelical faith.

The continental Reformation provided an exegesis of Romans 13 that informed new understandings of the structures of power, and the obligations of the rulers and the ruled. As Rome resisted the impulses of reform both Erasmus and Luther appealed to the temporal rulers to use their divinely ordained power to renew the Church. Fundamental to this elevation of princely power was Romans 13 and the reformers placed great stress on the divine origin of worldly authority. The Christian prince, as God's minister, was a force for good and it was his religious duty to protect the good and ensure wickedness was expelled from the realm. The subject had a reciprocal duty of obedience and resistance was forbidden under pain of damnation. In their exegesis of Romans 13 the reformers did not challenge the divine origin of

temporal authority but they did question the right of a tyrant to rule. In doing so both Luther and Calvin arrived at interpretations of Romans 13 that compelled lesser authorities to withstand the tyranny of superior powers. The reformers had not formulated theories of resistance but reinforced the fundamental principle of obedience to God. By refusing to obey the wicked commands of the tyrant the lesser magistrate both performed their duty to protect the good and adhered to the command to obey God rather than man.

Chapter 3: The Obedience of Christian Men (1521-1536)

Introduction

Even as Luther's polemic was growing increasingly vociferous, England remained more concerned with the memory of Wyclif and Lollard heresy than the noises coming from Wittenberg.¹ There appeared to be little of serious concern to a realm strong in the Catholic faith but Henry's ministers were nonetheless attentive to Luther's criticism of the Roman Church. In a symbolic display of loyalty Cardinal Wolsey enthusiastically confirmed England's unity with the Pope and Emperor by ceremonially burning Luther's heretical books at St. Paul's on 12 May 1521.² On the same day the realm's orthodoxy was further demonstrated by the bishop of Rochester, John Fisher, who preached a two hour sermon in support of the pope's *magisterium* over the Church *jure divino*. He strongly affirmed the rule of faith—Scripture and Tradition—in which the Church was entrusted by Christ and the Apostles with oral teaching not found in Scripture.³ The King rallied to reassert traditional sacramental doctrine and defend the Church with a fierce repudiation of Luther and Pope Leo X rewarded his devotion with the title of '*Defensor Fidei*' (*Defender of the Faith*). Henry's famous *Assertio Septem Sacramentorum* (1521) was a work of serious piety rather than erudite theology. But its significance and force was amplified by royal gravitas and would bring Henry 'acclaim and set him apart from his fellow kings, past and present.'⁴

Henry detested Luther's impudent declaration that the pope was a tyrant and papal supremacy was ignorant folly.⁵ The *Assertio* posed two germane questions: 'If *Luther* is of Opinion, that People ought not to obey; why does he say they must obey? If he thinks they ought

¹ Richard Rex, *Henry VIII and the English Reformation* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1993), p.133-6.

² David Daniell, *William Tyndale: A Biography* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1994), p.192. Carl S. Meyer, 'Henry VIII Burns Luther's Books, 12 May 1521', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 9:2 (Oct. 1958), (pp.173-87).

³ John Fisher, 'Sermon made agayn the pernicious doctryn of Martin Luuther within the octaues of the ascension by the assignement of...the Lord Thomas Cardinall of York', in *The English Works of John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester (Born, 1449; Died, June 22, 1535)*, Part I, ed. by John E. B. Mayor (London: N. Trübner & Co. for the Early English Text Society, 1876), pp.311-48 (p.312; p.332). In 1526 Fisher again denounce Luther's heresy. See *A sermon had at Paulis...concernynge certayne heretickes, whiche tha[n] were abiured for holdynge the heresies of Martyn Luther* (London: Thomas Berthelet, 1526?). STC 10892, sig. E4r.

⁴ J. J. Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII* (London: Methuen, Reprinted 1990), p.113. William A. Clebsch's assessment of the tract is far more damning as he declares the book to be 'amateurish' and having 'small theological merit.' See Clebsch, *England's Earliest Protestants 1520-1535* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1964), pp.19-20.

⁵ Henry VIII, *Assertio Septem Sacramentorum or Defence of the Seven Sacraments*, re-edited by Louis O'Donovan (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1908), pp.204-6. Henry somewhat ironically affirmed indulgences, condemned schism and argued for the permanence of marriage.

to obey, why is not he himself obedient?’⁶ Henry shrewdly denounced Luther with his own favourite scriptural ammunition, Romans 13. He enquired: why had Paul commanded ‘Let every Creature be subject to the higher powers’ and why does Scripture state that ‘The Law is good’?⁷ Undoubtedly Henry saw malevolence and believed Luther sought the veneration of scoundrels in order to destroy Christ’s Church and erect another.⁸ Luther’s words were subversive because he professed a doctrine which suggested that Christians had no need for temporal law or sword. For Henry, Luther threatened the stability of nations with pernicious teaching that robbed both prince and prelate of all their power and authority.⁹ Nevertheless, Henry’s campaign to cut out the malignancy of Luther’s message would ultimately prove futile.¹⁰ But it is ironic that the theological currents emanating from Wittenberg stimulated a vision of divine kingship that was most expedient to Henry in his pursuit for an annulment from the royal marriage. This conception of a king that ruled immediately of God was founded upon an exegesis of Romans 13 and this reading provided the foundation for the most significant political and religious doctrine established in early modern England: the Royal Supremacy.

A ‘pernycious doctryne’: Luther’s Legacy

As the ambassador to Emperor Charles V, Cuthbert Tunstal had been in attendance at the Diet of Worms to witness first-hand the potentially subversive power of vernacular Scripture. Therefore, it is quite possible that Tunstal, now bishop of London, could perceive William Tyndale’s venture to produce an English New Testament as a challenge to Catholic orthodoxy and the institution of the Church. David Daniell has speculated that it was perhaps the publication of Erasmus’ *Novum instrumentum* (1516) in the original Greek alongside the Latin that led to Tyndale conducting his private studies.¹¹ Nevertheless, the potential threat of Tyndale’s work was two-fold. He proposed to translate the Bible out of the original Greek, not the authorised Latin Vulgate. And any vernacular Bible threatened unity because plurality is introduced.¹² With his endeavour thwarted by Tunstal, Tyndale turned to Wittenberg for

⁶ Henry VIII, *Assertio*, p.316.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.312-4. The first question was a conflation of the Romans 13:1 and I Peter 2:13 from the Vulgate. Which reads ‘*subiecti estote omni humanae creaturae*. See appendix for the Rheims translation. The second question is an appeal to I Timothy 1:8.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.316-8.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p.312.

¹⁰ See Richard Rex, ‘The English Campaign against Luther in the 1520s: The Alexander Prize Essay’, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5:39 (1989), pp.85-106 and Clebsch, *England’s Earliest Protestants*, pp.11-41.

¹¹ David Daniell, *The Bible in English: Its History and Influence* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2003), p.141.

¹² Nevertheless, despite the seriousness of Tyndale’s 1523 request Tunstal ‘showed no eagerness to embark upon prosecutions for heresy.’ See Charles Sturge, *Cuthbert Tunstal: Churchman, Scholar, Statesman, Administrator* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1938), p.131. Also Daniell, *Tyndale: A Biography*, pp.83-7.

inspiration but it was in Cologne that he produced a prologue to the New Testament and a fragment of Matthew's Gospel. These few pages are, for Carl R. Trueman, 'quite enough to reveal the profound influence which contact with Luther had had on Tyndale.'¹³ Tyndale's ambition was finally realised in 1526 and copies of his translated New Testament were smuggled into England. Nevertheless, the Lutheran disposition and Henry's refusal to accept an English translation of the Bible ensured many would meet the pyre.

Luther's influence is clearly perceptible in Tyndale's *Prologue to the Epistle of the Romans* (1526). The prologue contended that while the temporal sword should be revered, worldly law did not make 'a man good before God, nether iustifie hym in the herte.'¹⁴ Tyndale promoted exactly what Henry had feared: the coercive power of the sword was extraneous to those living in accordance with Christ's teachings because the law of the Spirit would govern the Christian's heart and guide them towards God's will. The sword did not teach Christians duty because it was ordained for the protection of the good and the punishment of evil.¹⁵ However, it was in *The Obedience of a Christian Man* (1528) that Tyndale produced his most powerful exposition of Romans 13. The book is an archetypally Lutheran articulation of passive obedience and an attempt to produce a definitive statement on Christian obedience following persistent allegations that advocates of reform were the architects of violence and rebellion.¹⁶ The primary target for Tyndale's scorn was Fisher and he objected to his accusation that Luther was a

¹³ For the Cologne fragment see William Tyndale. [*New Testament*], (Cologne: H. Fuchs?, 1525), STC 2823. Carl R. Trueman, *Luther's Legacy: Salvation and English Reformers, 1525-1556* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), p.12. Luther's influence on the Cologne Prologue is analysed in detail by Daniell, *Tyndale: A Biography*, pp.119-33.

¹⁴ William Tyndale, *A compendious introduccion, prologe or preface vn to the pistle off Paul to the Romayns* (Worms: P. Schoeffer, 1526). STC 24438, sig. B8r. W.D.J. Cargill Thompson believes Luther's influence to be 'incontrovertible.' This is disputed by L.J. Trinterud and Ralph Werrell who insist Tyndale both agreed and disagreed with Luther when spelling out his theology. However, Michael S. Whiting has recently successfully unpicked Werrell's argument. See Cargill Thompson, 'The Two Regiments: The Continental Setting of William Tyndale's Political Thought', in *Reform and Reformation: England and the Continent, c1500-c1750* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1979), pp.17-33 (p.21); Trinterud, 'A Reappraisal of William Tyndale's Debt to Martin Luther,' *Church History*, 31:1 (Mar., 1962), pp.24-45; Werrell, 'Tyndale's Disagreement with Luther in the Prologue to the Epistle to the Romans', *Reformation & Renaissance Review*, 7:1 (April, 2005), pp.57-68 and Whiting, *Luther in English: The Influence of His Theology of Law on Early English Evangelicals (1525-35)* (Eugene: Pickwick, 2010).

¹⁵ Tyndale, *A compendious introduccion*, sig. B8v. This short exposition is recited almost word for word as his introduction to the Epistle found in his revised 1534 New Testament. See William Tyndale. *The Newe Testament dilygently corrected and compared with the Greke by Willyam Tindale, and fynessed in the yere of our Lorde God A.M.D. & xxxiiij. in the moneth of Nouember* (Anwerp [sic]: By Marten Emperowr, M.D.xxxiiij [1534]), STC 2826, sig. D8v.

¹⁶ Examples of this criticism are Fisher's earlier sermon and Thomas More placing the blame for Emperor Charles V's Sack of Rome in 1527 at the German's door. See Thomas More, 'A Dialogue Concerning Heresies,' *The Complete Works of St. Thomas More*, Volume VI, Part I, eds. by Thomas M.C. Lawler, German Marc'hadour and Richard Marius (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1981), pp.368-72. [Hereafter *CWTM*]. Luther would restate his position of non-resistance in his commentary on Psalm 82 where he wrote: 'it is not His will to allow the rabble to raise their fist against the rulers or to seize the sword, as if to punish and judge the rulers.' See *LW* 13, p.45.

tempest using 'pernycyous doctryne' to stir people into murdering Christians. Moreover, he emphatically rejected Fisher's teaching of the papal supremacy with the contention that the Apostles preached of Christ not Peter.¹⁷

Tyndale was now firmly of the opinion that the pope and his 'false apostles' had clothed the people in ignorance and indoctrinated them into believing their spurious traditions which had not only 'put Christ out of his room' but displaced kings and emperors. By falsely seizing earthly power the pope had, insisted Tyndale, snatched the sword from the hands of kings and supplanted God's Law by releasing both himself and his apostles from the rightful judgment of the 'higher power.'¹⁸ Consequently kings had become 'but shadows', and those that docilely followed the usurped authority of the pope were rewarded with titles such as Most Christian King or Defender of the Faith.¹⁹ Therefore, Tyndale argued, it was not the teachings of Luther but the 'bloody doctrine' of the pope that incited rebellion because it taught disobedience to parents, masters, kings and emperors, and demanded that his traditions and whims were defended 'with fire, water and sword.'²⁰ *The Obedience of a Christian Man* was a rally-call to Henry and his magistrates to renounce the pope's shameful irreligious usurpation and restore the King's lost authority affirmed by Romans 13. All of this would have been exactly what Henry wanted to hear.

Nevertheless, Tyndale still needed to counter accusations of sedition. In order to do so, he joined Luther and Melanchthon in petitioning the commandment: 'Honour thy father and mother.'²¹ From this fundamental duty of obedience all human relationships are formed: children to parents, wives to husbands, servants to masters and subjects to kings, princes and rulers. It was the pope's refusal to adhere to this duty that alienated him from Christ's teachings because by claiming exemption from obedience to temporal power, he undeniably defied and denied a clear ordinance of God. Tyndale again followed Luther, turning to Exodus 22 and Psalm 82 in order to contend that God had provided regions with rulers to judge upon 'all causes.' Furthermore, these judges are 'gods' because 'they are in God's room and execute the commandments of God.' He re-emphasised this by asserting 'The king is in the room of God and his law is God's law.' Therefore, kings reigned of God and none upon the earth can judge over them. Tyndale warned: 'He that judgeth the king judgeth God and he that layeth hands on the king layeth hands on God, and he that resisteth the king resisteth God and damneth God's law

¹⁷ Tyndale, *Obedience*, p.78.

¹⁸ Ibid., p.73. Fisher, 'Sermon made agayn the pernicious doctryn of Martin Luuther', pp.311-48.

¹⁹ Tyndale, *Obedience*, pp.47-8.

²⁰ Ibid., p.29.

²¹ See Luther's *Personal Prayer Book* (1522) and Melanchthon's *Instructions for the Visitors of Parish Pastors in Electoral Saxony* (1528) discussed in Chapter 2. Richard Rex makes this very point in 'The Crisis of Obedience: God's Word and Henry's Reformation', *The Historical Journal*, 9:4 (Dec., 1996), pp. 863-94.

and ordinance.²² Ordination to spiritual office provided no liberation from the terror of the temporal sword as 'all souls must obey' the emperor or king. Whether they be priest, monk, friar, bishop or pope, their sin must be brought before the 'higher power' who would dispense his judgment and exercise the 'wrath and vengeance of God' afforded him in Romans 13:4.²³

Consequently, the rightful possession of the sword was fundamental to Tyndale's denial of papal supremacy and the doctrine of obedience. He not only rejected the Two Sword theory outright, but adapted Luther's doctrine of the Two Kingdoms.²⁴ Romans 13:4 provided the blueprint for princely duty because it proclaimed that the possessor of the sword must defend their subjects from evildoers. The king did not execute his own vengeance but instead his use of the sword was an expression of God's love. This duty exemplified God's benevolent hierarchy: fathers raising children in the nurture and teachings of God, husbands loving their wives in reverence and according to the Gospel, masters nurturing their servants into loving obedience, and rulers following the example of Christ by giving themselves to the prosperity of their realm while remembering that the people were not theirs but God's.²⁵ This divine structure demonstrated the aspiration of true Christians: duty, love and obedience. Therefore, in Tyndale's recall of Scripture and in his exploration of Christian obedience, the reciprocal duty of prince and subject was firmly embedded in Paul's commands.

Tyndale, like Luther, recognised that the temporal ruler was a vehicle of both God's justice and wrath, and this was made necessary because of mankind's corrupt nature. In this way, Tyndale contended, even rulers that betrayed the nature of their office must be considered providential agents of God's anger. Consequently, subjects should receive the tyrant in humble submission because avenging their suffering will bring further misery upon themselves.²⁶ According to Richard Y. Duerden, Tyndale's understanding of princely power was a reflection of Luther's doctrine of justification by faith. Duerden argued that the king is both an object of God's wrath and an avenger used to test the faith of the people, Tyndale's was also 'an analogical God' (Psalm 82:6 and John 10:34) because the king himself followed this model. Thus Duerden states: 'In both trying and delivering, punishing and enriching, accordingly as the people receive his law and/or God's, the king in his function reiterated the law-and-promise division within the doctrine of justification.'²⁷ Put simply, this required that God commanded man to obey both

²² Tyndale, *Obedience*, pp35-7; p.39.

²³ *Ibid.*, p.40.

²⁴ See Cargill Thompson, 'The Two Regiments', pp.22-3.

²⁵ Tyndale, *Obedience*, pp.59-63.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.55-7.

²⁷ Richard Y. Duerden, 'Justice and Justification: King and God in Tyndale's *The Obedience of a Christian Man*', in *William Tyndale and the Law*, eds. John A.R. Dick and Anne Richardson (Kirksville. Mo.: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1994), pp.69-80 (p.76).

divine and temporal law and it was the duty of the prince to be an arbiter over these laws. However, the temporal kingdom was governed by law and expressed by the sword of coercion, the spiritual by the Gospel which promised love. Tyndale never conflated these concurrent spheres and instead upheld the doctrine of the Two Kingdoms by carefully ensuring the two were distinguished. The Christian was required to submit to both as forms of God's revelation and authority.²⁸

The growing influence of Luther in England can also be observed by lawyer Simon Fish's *The summe of the holye scripture* (1529), a translation of *Summa der godliker scrifturen*, attributed to the Lower Rhine evangelical preacher Henricus Bomelius. The text considered Romans 13 at some length within the context of civil justice and resolved that the judicial sword must only be brandished by the 'higher powers' and not private persons seeking to enact their own retribution for personal injury.²⁹ The function of the spiritual realm, by way of the Holy Spirit, was to work cooperatively with the 'higher powers' to restrain evil and preserve the good: a task necessitated by the greater numbers of the wicked upon the earth. Consequently, as Romans 13:4 affirms, the prince and his sword 'are not to be feared to theym that be good but vnto theym that be evill.' This understanding is in tune with both Luther and Tyndale's assertion that the temporal sword was extraneous to those who lived in accordance with the Gospel and coercive power was only necessary because 'the worlde is all gyven to synne and starcely can they abide good christen[s].'³⁰

Bomelius stressed the cooperative nature and function of the spiritual and temporal realms. The communion of these 'two regimentes' was sustained by their contingency and required the Christian not only to be subject to the earthly power but also to be a willing servant living under its justice and peace. This way the faithful honour Christ and abide by Paul's instruction to seek not their own profit but that of the many so they may be saved.³¹ Bomelius again followed Luther in understanding that the Gospel makes Christians 'servauntes to all the worlde' and this charity brings liberty because they 'haue nede of nothing beyng suffised of theyr lorde, and king lesu Christ and of hys governaunce yn them.'³² Therefore, for Luther, Tyndale and Bomelius obedience to the commands of the temporal power was both a moral and a religious duty. Nonetheless, while Tyndale affirmed that non-resistance was central to his understanding of Christian obedience, he was equally clear that ungodly commands had no

²⁸ John Witte, Jr., *Law and Protestantism: The Legal Teachings of the Lutheran Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p.91.

²⁹ Henricus Bomelius, *The summe of the holye scripture* (Antwerp: S.n., 1529), STC 3036, sigs. N7r-N8r.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, sigs. O2v-O3r.

³¹ *Ibid.*, sigs. O4v-O6r. I Corinthians 10:33.

³² Bomelius, *The summe of the holye scripture*, sigs. O6r. Luther asserted this almost word for word in his Wittenberg Lectures on Romans. See Chapter 2.

binding force because the will of the prince could never surpass the will of God. This was true obedience.

Controversy, Heresy and More

Shortly after Tyndale produced his *tour de force*, the subject of obedience was considered by Simon Fish in his 'rabble-rousing piece of anti-clericalism' *A supplicacyon for the beggers* (ca.1529).³³ The satire depicted the clergy as 'sturdy idell holy theves' extracting wealth from the kingdom, and appropriated both Luther's accusations of church corruption and the sentiment of Tyndale's *Obedience*, albeit in a dramatically condensed form.³⁴ Fish promoted his anti-clerical sentiment by using the thirteenth-century quarrel between King John and Innocent III over the pope's forced election of Stephen Langton to the see of Canterbury.³⁵ John's eventual excommunication was revealed as a grand papal usurpation of the English king's ancient rights by an ambitious pope who had not only punished a righteous prince but snatched away the people's obedience from their natural lord and king. Fish had found fertile ground from which to draw contemporary parallels and directly challenge the clergy over their obedience to the 'hyghe power.' The clergy were portrayed as a subversive mischief that had 'crept into the kingdom with the intention of eventually taking it over...setting their own clerical state within a state.'³⁶

Fish charged the clergy with wilfully fomenting discontent and sedition. He greatly emphasised the argument that the clergy had fallen from due obedience by observing that even Christ had paid tribute unto Caesar and taught that the 'highe powers shuld be always obeid.' *A supplicacyon* was a purposeful petition delivered to Henry VIII to urge him to reinstate a single authoritative law, restore the true Gospel, cast aside the pope and punish England's disobedient and parasitical clerics before the realm met its ruin both spiritually and financially. Only then, Fish contended, would Henry, as the genuine higher power, receive true obedience from his subjects and regain the sword, power, crown and dignity that had been usurped by the spiritual realm.³⁷ According to Peter Marshall, Fish's appeal signalled 'the growing confidence and boldness of the reformers.'³⁸ But the anti-clerical sentiments promoted by Fish and Tyndale

³³ Steven W. Hass, 'Simon Fish, William Tyndale, and Sir Thomas More's 'Lutheran Conspiracy'', In *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 23:2 (April, 1972), p. 125. (pp. 125-36)

³⁴ Simon Fish, *A supplicacyon for the beggers* (Antwerp?: J. Grapheus?, 1529?), STC 10883, sig. 3r.

³⁵ Tyndale also asked his reader to 'Read the story of King John.' See Tyndale, *Obedience*, p.105.

³⁶ Rainer Pineas, *Thomas More and Tudor Polemics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1968), p.154.

³⁷ Fish, *A supplicacyon*, sigs. 6r-6v.

³⁸ Peter Marshall, *Heretics and Believers: A History of the English Reformation* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2017), p.157.

should be viewed for what they were: partisan attacks upon the morality, power and wealth of the clergy by propagandists seeking to advance their own reformist cause.³⁹

The attack upon the clergy by Fish and Tyndale did not escape the eye of Thomas More who responded with robust allegations of his own. He countered Fish's contentions by claiming that the lawyer wished to enflame the King against the Church and urge the people to descend into disobedience and rebellion.⁴⁰ The infiltration of heretical books was, for More, not coincidental, but part of a wider strategy to infect the realm with Luther's heresy.⁴¹ More was no neophyte, being well versed in theological controversy, and therefore he entered 'the world of William Tyndale...as a trained and experienced assassin.'⁴² The *Dialogue Concerning Heresies* (1529) was a fictional conversation between More and a 'Messenger' sympathetic to evangelical reform, and was intended to be 'a real conversation between clashing accounts of Christianity.'⁴³ Consequently, More affirmed that both Peter and Paul commanded obedience to 'superyours & rulers' in all things not forbidden by God.⁴⁴ Tyndale's anti-clericalism was dangerous because it permitted princes and subjects to disobey the pronouncements of the Church, resulting in 'open force and violence.'⁴⁵ Therefore, Henry must perform his duty to protect his subjects from Luther's seduction and guard the realm from heresy as if it were an invading infidel.⁴⁶ More's *Dialogue* made a fundamental connection: heresy was not only treason against God and the Church but a crime against the King.⁴⁷

Therefore, for More, Tyndale had not written his book 'with a pure conscience' derived from Scripture, as he claimed, but instead he had delivered a 'holy boke of dysobedyence.' Consequently, More made a considerable effort to demolish Tyndale's translation of the New Testament. He contended that the work was so corrupted following Tyndale's counsel with Luther that it ceased to be the immaculate doctrine of Christ, but rather a book occupied with their own 'deuylyshe heresyess.'⁴⁸ Nevertheless, Tyndale was again drawn on the subject of obedience when he wrote against the king's proposed divorce. Despite its firm opposition to the

³⁹ Christopher Haigh, 'Anticlericalism and the English Reformation', in *The English Reformation Revised*, ed. by Christopher Haigh (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp.56-74 (p.59).

⁴⁰ *CWTM* 7, pp.126-8.

⁴¹ Pineas, *More and Tudor Polemics*, pp.163-164. See also Steven W. Haas, 'Simon Fish, William Tyndale, and Sir Thomas More's 'Lutheran Conspiracy,' *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 23:2 (April 1972), pp.125-36.

⁴² Daniell, *Tyndale: A Biography*, p.262.

⁴³ Eamon Duffy, "'The comen knowen multyude of crysten men": *A Dialogue Concerning Heresies* and the defence of Christendom', in *The Cambridge Companion to Thomas More*, ed. George M. Logan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp.191-215 (p. 192).

⁴⁴ *CWTM* 6:I, pp.106-7.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p.369

⁴⁶ *CWTM* 6:I, p.414.

⁴⁷ John Guy, *Thomas More* (London: Arnold, 2000), p.121.

⁴⁸ *CWTM* 6:I, p.285.

Henry's annulment *The Practice of Prelates* (1530) stressed the need for reverence to worldly rulers by conflating Matthew 22:21 and Romans 13:

Christ taught that they should give Caesar that which pertained unto Caesar, and God that which belonged to God: even that they should give Caesar their lawful bodily service, and God the heart; and that they should love God's law, and repent of their evil, and come and receive mercy, and let the wrath of God be taken from off them. And the apostles taught that all souls should obey the higher powers, or temporal rulers.⁴⁹

This was further supplemented by Christ instructing the disciples that princes exercised dominion over them. While officers of the spiritual kingdom were installed to fight for the people armed with the Word of God, they, as servants, possessed no temporal power or jurisdiction (Matthew 20:25-28).⁵⁰

Tyndale reinforced the doctrine of non-resistance by insisting that even if a ruler endorsed the tyranny of the pope and persecuted his subjects for their faith, this cruelty must only be met with 'softness and patience.' Obedience must be rendered unless the commands of the prince conflict with the Word of God (Acts 5:29).⁵¹ There was no room for active resistance in Tyndale's theology, and therefore it is incorrect to suggest his words could inspire armed rebellion.⁵² In confronting More's *Dialogue* he specifically considered the nature of the Church and his reply was constructed upon Lutheran foundations. He contended that Christians should obey rulers wilfully and 'lokech on the benefytes which god showeth the worlde thorow them and therefore doth it gladly.'⁵³ Tyndale immediately equated the act of obedience with the command 'love thy neighbour' and the performance of sincere love, he believed, would draw even evil men to God's side.⁵⁴ More attempted to answer Tyndale's charge that the pope behaved like a temporal tyrant by refusing to permit the clergy to adhere to the precepts of Romans 13. He emphatically denied that the pope demanded the clergy to obey only him because this was contrary to canon law which 'commaundeth euery of them to obay theyr higher powers, and to kepe and obserue the lawes of the princes and countreys that they lyue in.'⁵⁵

⁴⁹ William Tyndale, '*The Practice of Prelates*', in *Expositions and Notes on Sundry Portions of The Holy Scriptures, together with The Practice of Prelates*, ed. by Henry Walter for the Parker Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1849), pp.237-344 (p.241).

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p.247.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p.245.

⁵² As Daniel Eppley does in *Defending Royal Supremacy and Discerning God's Will in Tudor England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp.26-7.

⁵³ William Tyndale, *Answer unto Sir Thomas Mores dialoge* [Antwerp: S. Cock, 1531], STC 24437, sig. A2r.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, sig. A2r.

⁵⁵ *CWTM* 8:11, p.594.

Tyndale had, in his answer to More, delivered a fierce condemnation of the traditional structure and authority of the Catholic Church. As Jamey Hecht has observed, Tyndale sought to overthrow 'the dominance of the established church by claiming its hegemony is a merely historical feat, an oppressive system of obedience constructed in bad faith and designed to manipulate and exploit.'⁵⁶ Therefore, More perceived the root of Tyndale's grievance was his conception of a horizontal structure of the Church, akin to Luther's priesthood of all believers, which rejected clerical privilege over the laity. Accordingly, he sought to dispel Luther's structure by showing that holy consecrations of kings such as Saul were presided over by priests and without this divine hierarchy neither priests nor kings would be held in their due reverence.⁵⁷ Tyndale rejected these claims and accused the papacy of preventing the 'higher powers' from fulfilling their ordained duty to punish sin by violently compelling men to receive their Sacraments and evading scrutiny by concealing their doctrine in the Latin tongue.⁵⁸ By defying God's command to offer true reverence to the 'officers' that rule upon earth, the Christian not only dishonoured Him but also stumbled in their duty to love.⁵⁹

Consequently, Tyndale's primary weapon against More, and the corruption he perceived to be embedded within the Roman Church, was Scripture, because it provided direct access to the true Will of God. Tyndale denied that the Roman Church was the authoritative conveyor of *Dei Verbum* because he claimed the pope and his church considered themselves to be 'above the scripture.'⁶⁰ This rebuttal struck at the heart of the Catholic understanding of the 'living magisterium' and its rejection of the principle *sola scriptura*. More's only recourse was to continue to maintain that the orally transmitted teachings of Christ and the Apostles had equal authority with the written Word because 'the chyrche was byfore the gospel wryten.'⁶¹ Tyndale's accusation that the pope aspired to be above God's Word correlated with the Lutheran notion of an ambitious papal Antichrist seated upon Peter's chair in Rome. This abominable aspiration extended not only to primacy over the Church but to worldly power. Participation in worldly matters had acquired the pope and his Apostles great wealth and Tyndale directly equated this process to its corruption and fall from Christ.⁶² The pope's lust for power coupled with the artificial exaltation of the papal office had provoked schism throughout Christendom and resulted in the usurpation of the prince's divine power.

⁵⁶ Jamey Hecht, 'Limitations of Textuality in Thomas More's *Confutation of Tyndale's Answer*', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 36:4 (Winter, 1995), pp.823-8 (p.825).

⁵⁷ *CWTM* 8:II, pp.594-5.

⁵⁸ William Tyndale, *Answers unto Sir Thomas Mores dialoge* [Antwerp: S. Cock, 1531]. STC 24437, sig. C7v.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, sig. E2v. Tyndale once more reiterates this relationship between Romans 13 and the commandment of love thy neighbour. See sigs. N1r-N1v.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, sig. A4r.

⁶¹ *CWTM* 8:II, p.227; p.132.

⁶² Tyndale, '*The Practice of Prelates*', pp.255-7.

Tyndale was unreservedly appalled at what he believed to be a papal arrogation of temporal power. This usurpation was, he insisted, like a 'foul stinking ivy' which had wrapped itself around a mighty oak and created 'a seat and a nest for all unclean birds, and for blind owls, which hawk in the dark, and dare not come at the light.'⁶³ Tyndale was joined in his anti-clerical assault by Robert Barnes who fled to Wittenberg following his public penance and imprisonment for delivering 'an angry diatribe' against Cardinal Thomas Wolsey.⁶⁴ Barnes's *A supplicatyon... vnto the most excellent... henrye the eyght* (1531) attacked the English bishops for placing the king's subjects under their tyranny. He was very familiar with the King's hankering after an annulment of his marriage to Catherine of Aragon and what Barnes had produced must have been very welcome to Henry's ears. *A supplicatyon* accused the bishops of behaving as if 'they were kynges or God' because anyone that spoke against 'theyr cloked ypocrysye' was branded a traitor to their king and a heretic against the Holy Church.⁶⁵ Barnes dismissed any claim that bishops were above the temporal authority and he advocated Henry's royal prerogative by way of Romans 13 and I Peter 2. He insisted: 'Here (most noble prynce) no man is except from the subieccyon of youre most excellent power, neyther the bishops, nor yet no nother man.'⁶⁶

A supplication is almost sycophantic in its praise of Henry. However, much to the displeasure of Thomas More, the tract helped procure Barnes' safe return to England under the king's promise of safe conduct and the irritated More would later insist that the reformer should have been 'burned and hys bokes wyth hym'.⁶⁷ Nonetheless, Barnes advanced an alluring Lutheran vision of kingship that was further advanced by the petitioning of Titus 3:1 to conclude that submission to the 'higher powers' is a duty from which none were excluded.⁶⁸ Therefore, for Barnes and Tyndale, the rejection of the pope's primacy was not an attempt to discharge the Christian from all spiritual and temporal laws. Instead, Tyndale considered this a direct application of the principle of *sola scriptura* and the conviction that no Christian should violently bind his brother in any law not found in Scripture.⁶⁹ Moreover, Barnes sought to further undermine the claim for papal supremacy by observing that St. Paul did not disobey infidel rulers and nor did Christ defy the sentence of the unbeliever Pontius Pilate. Also Christ had actually

⁶³ Tyndale, 'The Practice of Prelates', p.270.

⁶⁴ Neelak S. Tjernagel, 'Preface: Biographical Note,' in *The Reformation Essays of Dr. Robert Barnes*, ed. by Neelak S. Tjernagel (Eugene, Or.: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2007), pp. 9-11.

⁶⁵ Robert Barnes, *A supplicatyon made by Robert Barnes doctoure in diuinitie, vnto the most excellent and redoubted prince kinge henrye the eyght* (Antwerp: S. Cock, 1531?). STC 1470, sigs. A2r-A2v.

⁶⁶ Barnes, *A supplication*, sig. A4v.

⁶⁷ CWTM 8:11, p.885.

⁶⁸ Barnes, *A supplication*, sig. A4v.

⁶⁹ Tyndale, *Answere unto Sir Thomas Mores dialogue*, sig. P4v.

denied the temporal sword to Peter and as the Apostle had never un-sheathed the sword, then neither could his successors draw upon it.⁷⁰

The influence of Luther on Barnes is demonstrated by his promotion of the Two Kingdoms doctrine. Barnes contended that it was the duty of Kings, and 'all other ministers vnder them', to order all within the commonwealth. Consequently, he left no room for notions of resistance. The sanctuary of exile was available to those living under tyranny but if this was not convenient then the only option was to suffer the oppression as charity.⁷¹ Thus, he warned those that violently resist not only forsake their prince but also deny Christ's verity.⁷² Barnes insisted that the children of God have always suffered persecution and in His final judgment they will achieve glory. For this reason he strongly reprimanded any bishop that sought the deposition of a tyrannical ruler without fear of conscience. He attested the Gospel confirms that a Christian should first take their torment to God and if the oppression persists they must suffer it patiently and leave the wicked ruler to the ultimate judgment and vengeance of God.⁷³ This doctrine of non-resistance was lifted from the pages of Luther and Tyndale. Consequently, the Henrician regime had failed in their attempt to prevent the pernicious doctrine coming out of Wittenberg from infecting England. However, the Lutheran exegesis of Romans 13 upon which Tyndale founded his teaching of Christian obedience would find fertile ground inside the royal demesne.

A Great Matter

The story of England's Reformation cannot be separated from the King's six-year pursuit of an annulment from his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, which would enable Henry to marry the great love of his middle age, Anne Boleyn. Robert Barnes and Hugh Latimer would show themselves to be enthusiastic supporters of the King's wish; not least because Anne had already demonstrated discernible sympathy with the evangelical cause. Luther and Tyndale, on the other hand, proved to be much less malleable. Luther was clear: 'on no account can he separate himself from the queen...whom he has truly married.'⁷⁴ Tyndale shared this sentiment and condemned the English priesthood for their self-seeking attempt to betroth Henry to the French King's sister.⁷⁵ Despite some strong disapproval the theological polemic produced by Luther and Tyndale, somewhat ironically, became a wellspring that not only assisted in Henry's fulfilment

⁷⁰ Barnes, *A supplication*, sigs. B1r-B1v. John 18:11 and Matthew 26:52.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, sig. D1r.

⁷² Robert Barnes, 'That mens constitutions, which are not grounded in Scripture, bynde not the conscience of a man vnder the payne of deadly sinne', in *Whole workes of W. Tyndall, Iohn Frith, and Doct. Barnes, three worthy martyrs, and principall teachers of this Church of England* (London: Iohn Daye, 1573), STC 24436, sig. Kk2v-Kk6v (Kk3v).

⁷³ *Ibid.*, sig. Kk3r.

⁷⁴ Martin Luther, 'to Robert Barnes, 5 September 1531', in Erwin Doernberg, *Henry VIII and Luther: An Account of their Personal Relations* (London: Barrie and Rockliff, 1962), pp.86-91.

⁷⁵ Tyndale, 'The Practice of Prelates', p.320.

of his heart's desire but also provided a theoretical basis for the most decisive political doctrine formulated in England during the sixteenth century: the Royal Supremacy.

In early modern England, and for that matter Europe, arguments about theology, morality, and the behaviour of Kings and clergy were not easily separated, and nor would the participants of these debates attempt to make such divisions. Henry purposely fuelled anti-clerical agitation in an effort to intimidate, discredit even, both the English clergy and the Roman Curia and force their acquiescence. The King needed authoritative support, and his agents' foraging of the Vatican Library had proven to be fruitless.⁷⁶ Henry's frustration claimed a high-profile victim in Cardinal Wolsey who increasingly became the scapegoat for the failure to obtain a papal blessing, resulting in him surrendering the great seal. The key to Wolsey's humiliation was *præmunire*; a charge which forced the capitulation of the clergy and their acceptance of Henry as 'their singular protector, only and supreme lord, and, as far as the law of Christ allows, even Supreme Head.'⁷⁷ But this attack on the clergy was not simply a violent spontaneous reaction. Instead this was an engineered move by Thomas Cromwell to use the charge of *præmunire* in order to place the clergy under the direct authority of the king and parliament. Therefore, far from being a revolutionary manoeuvre The Submission of the Clergy (1532) was entirely attuned with Romans 13 because it confirmed the premise that 'every soul' was under the jurisdiction of the King's Majesty.

This was not the first time Henry had suggested that his princely office held authority over his spiritual ministers. In 1515 the law reporter John Caryl noted Henry's retort to his belligerent clerics: 'By the ordinance and sufferance of God we are king of England, and the kings of England in times past have never had any superior but God alone.'⁷⁸ Henry had little confidence that the pope would give his blessing and it became clear that the annulment needed to be presided over in England away from foreign, as in papal, jurisdiction. But this could not be achieved merely upon the will of a king, the argument had to be legitimately made and won. Two anonymous tracts, produced in 1531, exemplify the emerging rhetoric employed to promote kingly pre-eminence. The first, *The question moved, whether these texts ensuenge perteyne especially to spiritual prelates or to temporal princes*, was formal in structure and formed part of a collection of documents delivered to Convocation by Lord Rochford in the hope

⁷⁶ See J. J. Scarisbrick, 'Henry VIII and the Vatican Library', *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance*, 24:1 (1962), pp.211-6.

⁷⁷ H.A.L. Fisher, *The History of England from the Accession of Henry VII. to the Death of Henry VIII. (1485-1547)* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., New Impression 1910), p.308. See also J. Scarisbrick, 'The Pardon of the Clergy, 1531', *Cambridge Historical Journal*, 12:1 (1956), pp.22-39 and J.A. Guy, 'Henry VIII and the Praemunire Manoeuvres of 1530-1531', *The English Historical Review*, 97:384 (Jul., 1982), pp.481-503.

⁷⁸ *Reports of cases by John Caryl, Part II 1501-1522*, ed. by J.H. Baker (London: Selden Society, 2000), p.691.

that the clergy would be convinced to support Henry's marital cause.⁷⁹ Here the author attempted to confront any inconvenient interpretation of John 20:21 and Acts 20:28 that could be used to provide the priesthood with sole authority to oversee the Church. In attempting to unpick this claim the tract took advantage of the axiomatic Lutheran doctrine of the Two Kingdoms.

This ordering of the Two Kingdoms was, in part, revealed by Romans 13. The worldly kingdom consisting of the 'exterior polleries of the cyvill life' was governed by either Christians or heathens that provided justice, preserve tranquillity and protect against 'vngodly wickedness.'⁸⁰ While the worldly kingdom was accepted as being transitory its ministers are nevertheless distinct from those of the spiritual realm. Consequently, the tract called upon Luke 22:25 to testify that the worldly rulers enjoyed lordship over spiritual officers.⁸¹ *The question moved* also employed the example of Josiah to demonstrate that princes should perform the imperative spiritual role of setting forth God's Word, suppressing idolatry and advancing His glory. The anti-clerical tone is evident as Philipians 2:21 and I Corinthians 4:20 were used to show not only that spiritual officers should only be sent by the Divine Spirit, but also warn against clerics pursuing their own 'private playsure.' The tract firmly warned England's clerics against overstepping the bounds of their office and resting their authority on pretended titles. The document unequivocally advocated kingly supremacy built upon biblical foundations which declared the Christian prince the highest authority under Christ and prelates recognised only as 'membres in the church of god.'⁸²

The second 1531 tract was an extended list of fifteen arguments, drawn from biblical sources, which promoted the emerging policy of princely supremacy. As Steven W. Haas has noted, the list bore a marked similarity to 'contemporary Protestant citations and arguments for a truly sovereign kingship.'⁸³ The tract opened by espousing pure obedience doctrine, conflating the precepts of Romans 13 and I Peter 2 in order to confirm the king was sent by God to promote good and destroy evil. What is startling is that the tract was a systematic Lutheran denunciation of the papal supremacy. The author contended that while Paul had consented to naming 'generally powers and magistrates', he never admitted to Peter's supremacy over them. Furthermore, none of the Apostles referred to Peter as 'vicar of Christ', nor did they

⁷⁹ Stanford E. Lehmborg, *The Reformation Parliament 1529-1536* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), p.114.

⁸⁰ *The question moved, whether these texts ensuruenge perteyne especially to spiritual prelates or to temporal princes* (1531?). P.R.O. SP 6/2 fols. 94r. (fols. 94r-96r)

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, fols. 94r-94v.

⁸² *Ibid.*, fols. 95r-96r.

⁸³ S. W. Haas, 'Martin Luther's 'Divine Right' Kingship and the Royal Supremacy: Two Tracts from the 1531 Parliament and Convocation of the Clergy', *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 31:3, (July 1980), pp.317-25 (p. 318).

acknowledge him to be 'their superior any manner of way, nor did at any time avouch or once mention this pretended title.' The document provided exemplars of rulership, such as David, Saul, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Hezekiah, which confirmed that subjects received them as their 'only supreme governors without any such distinction as we make of the lay and the clergy.'⁸⁴ These historical examples were a profitable illustration of the 'ambitious usurpation of the Romish jurisdiction' which had seized power to the obstruction of God's Word.⁸⁵

These documents aptly demonstrate the emerging strategy to build an authoritative theological, historical, and legal case to achieve Henry's ambition. The structure of the argument was powerful but it is not entirely clear whether the tracts were embryonic or a *précis* of a larger and more comprehensive collection of material being compiled for the king. Indeed, Cranmer and a team of royal scholars were already seeking legitimate precedent and theological arguments. They scoured archives, examined ancient chronicles and fables seeking the privilege the king desperately needed to realise his aspiration. Simultaneously, others including Reginald Pole were dispatched to universities in England and Europe in an effort to find sympathetic ears.⁸⁶ The fruit of this painstaking research was the *Collectanea satis copiosa*: a vast compilation of domestic and foreign historical materials supplemented with an array of biblical evidence which was designed not only to support Henry's case but could also be called upon to endorse a claim of imperial primacy over the English Church.⁸⁷ The exemplars of Old Testament Kings, such as Hezekiah and Jehoshaphat, were central in demonstrating supreme royal jurisdiction in matters of law but now they performed a decisive role confirming the prince's function of reforming the Church and encouraging the worship amongst their subjects.

The *Collectanea* purposefully gathered together biblical support for kingly supremacy over the Church. The divine source of princely authority was firmly underscored by the words '*Regia potestas ex Deo est*' (Royal power is of God) appearing prominently in the documents margin.⁸⁸ The compiler was careful to exhibit Old Testament evidence for divine kingship by asserting three aspects which were explicitly confirmed by the page header: *institutio, officium*

⁸⁴ 'A document of the year 1531 on the subject of the Pope's supremacy', in *Records of the Reformation: The Divorce 1527-1533*, Vol. II, collected and arranged by Nicholas Pocock (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1870), pp.100-3 (pp.100-1).

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 103.

⁸⁶ See Geoffrey de C. Parmiter, *The King's Great Matter: A Study of Anglo-Papal Relations, 1527-1534* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1967), pp.120-43, and Guy Bedouelle, 'The Consultations of the Universities and Scholars Concerning the "Great Matter" of King Henry VIII', in *The Bible in the Sixteenth Century*, ed. by David Steinmetz (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1990), pp.21-36.

⁸⁷ For a thorough study of the *Collectanea* see the invaluable Graham David Nicholson, 'The Nature and Function of Historical Argument in the Henrician Reformation' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Cambridge, 1977).

⁸⁸ Cotton MS Cleopatra E VI. Papers and Letters Relating to the Reformation, fols. 16-135 (fol.22r). I would like to acknowledge the useful suggestions of David Bagchi in my following analysis of the *Collectanea*.

and *potestas*.⁸⁹ Following this tripartite order, the *Collectanea* demonstrated: (1) the king's divine institution with Proverbs 8; (2) the divine function of royal office with II Samuel 5 and II Samuel 2, although the latter is somewhat ill-fitting; and (3) royal power is confirmed by II Samuel 9, I Samuel 8, the Wisdom of Solomon 6, and I Kings 10. When taken collectively these texts granted Henry *potestas jurisdictionis*. Moreover, royal power in ecclesiastical matters was corroborated by a number of additional texts placed under the sub-heading '*Regia potestas in personas et res ecclesiasticas*.' Consequently, I Maccabees 10, Exodus 32, II Chronicles 8 and 29 were inserted to furnish kings with power of lay investiture and, conveniently, the authority to judge over disputed matters was approved by way of II Chronicles 19.⁹⁰ This jurisdiction was supported by the testimony of Kings David, Jehoshaphat and Hezekiah, and judicial authority is further bolstered by Deuteronomy 16:18. Additionally, coercive power (*coercendi potestatem*) is firmly placed into the hands of the temporal power alone by Judges 17.⁹¹

The *Collectanea* also provided New Testament evidence of *institutio*, *officium* and *potestas*. The king's divine institution was confirmed by Christ's command in Matthew 22: 'Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's.' Subsequently I Peter 2:13-17 would establish both divine institution and function. This is achieved by the words '*regi quasi prae excellenti*' (the king as supreme), '*tamquam ab eo missis ad vindictam malefactorum, laudem vero bonorum*' (as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil-doers and for praise to them that do well) and '*regem honorificate*' (honour the king) all being accentuated in bold. This same method of emphasis was used for Romans 13:1-4, however, the sequence was deliberately altered and instead verses 3-4 are followed by 1-2. This manipulation permits Romans 13:3-4 to link neatly with the proceeding passage of I Peter 2 and stress the king's divine function as a minister of God. This time the compiler accentuates '*et habebis*' (and thou shalt) and also '*malum feceris*' (that doeth evil) to further concatenate the function of the king to punish evildoers and testify that those that do good will receive praise.

The manipulation of the opening four verses of Romans 13 also permitted the compiler to now emphasise royal power over the Church. Following the citation of Romans 13:3-4, the compiler inserted a similar, but significantly different, sub-heading to that previously seen: '*Regia potestas in personas ecclesiasticas*.' It is under these words that Romans 13:1-2 appears, in order not only to demonstrate royal power but also to eliminate any doubt that when Paul declares subjects must obey the higher powers, this command extended to the clergy. This is done by accentuating the word '*omnis*' to illustrate that 'every' soul must be subject to the king

⁸⁹ The header reads '*Regia institutio officium et potestas ex vetus testamentum*.'

⁹⁰ Cotton MS Cleopatra E VI, fols.22r-23v.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, fols.25r-25v.

and to stress the divine origin of kingly power emphasis is placed on the words '*a deo ordinatae sunt*' (are ordained of God). This is further underlined by John 19:11 and Christ's assertion to Pilate: 'You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above.'⁹² The *Collectanea* purposely equated divine and royal power and provided Henry with a solid biblical foundation for demanding universal jurisdiction over every soul (*omnis anima*) within his realm. The importance of these assembled texts cannot be overstated because they provided the biblical foundation for the most significant political doctrine of the English Reformation: the Royal Supremacy.

A Policy of Persuasion I

The biblical precedents enshrined in the *Collectanea* directly informed a number of politically charged tracts intended to inform and persuade. Henry was now firmly locked in a battle for hearts and minds. The regime wisely harnessed the power of the printing press to disseminate its propaganda in support of Henry's pursuit of an annulment. One particularly straightforward polemic was *A Glasse of the Truthe* (1532): 'a surface-skimming and popularised version of the official views on the Levitical law and the limitations of the pope's dispensing power.'⁹³ *A Glasse* warned the reader of the danger that awaited them if Henry failed to produce a male heir, and consequently the horror that would befall Englishmen if Mary took a foreign husband. Mary would, of course, be compelled, in accordance with God's Law, to accept her husband as 'her governor and head,' and this foreign King would 'direct this realm.'⁹⁴ The tract went to great pains to stress Henry's congruence with Scripture, and it forcefully argued that Pope Clement VII was pronouncing upon the marriage upon his own pleasure rather than by the Law of God. Therefore, *A Glasse* invoked Acts 5:29, 'we ought rather to obey God than men', to convince the reader that it was entirely legitimate to disobey the pope's decree because it was merely the verdict of a man and subsequently inferior to God's Law.⁹⁵

Rome was forcefully portrayed as a 'foreign' power unjustly meddling in English affairs. As a consequence the tract advised that 'if the impasse is not overcome in short order it is even possible that parliament should handle the matter.'⁹⁶ Therefore subjects were encouraged not to submit to the papal yoke but obey the Law of God which bound them in obedience to their

⁹² Cotton MS Cleopatra E VI, fols.26r-26v.

⁹³ G.R. Elton, *Policy and Police: The Enforcement of the Reformation in the age of Thomas Cromwell* (Cambridge: University Press, 1972), p.177. The date of publication is a matter of controversy. Steven W. Hass dates the tract to 1531, but Richard Rex is more persuasive and dates of the *Glasse* to September 1532. See Haas, 'Henry VIII's *Glasse of Truthe*', *History*, 64:212 (October, 1979), pp.353-62 and Rex, 'Redating Henry VIII's *A Glasse of the Truthe*', *The Library*, 4:1 (March 2003), pp.16-27.

⁹⁴ '*A Glasse of the Truthe*', in *Records of the Reformation: The Divorce 1527-1533*, Vol. II, collected and arranged by Nicholas Pocock (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1870), pp.385-421 (p.386).

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.411.

⁹⁶ Haas, 'Henry VIII's *Glasse of Truthe*', p. 354.

prince.⁹⁷ This was royal sentiment produced for the public domain with theological arguments placed against 'a background of patriotic fervour and king-worshipping.'⁹⁸ While this may appear to be a bold discussion concerning the magnitude of papal power, the tract never strayed into assertions that tainted the King with the innovations of reformist heresy and was circumspect enough not to directly challenge the pope's position as head of the Church. Regardless, Henry was walking an anti-clerical path. With the passing of the Supplication against the Ordinaries and the Submission of the Clergy, friction between the clergy and the Commons was now palpable. The archbishop of Canterbury William Warham resisted the moves against traditional Two Sword theory and his defence explicitly identified the problem of loyalty: 'a spiritual man which hath sworne obedience to the Pope, is more bounde to execute his commandement, namely in a spiritual cause...than to forbear it and deferr it for any temporal law made to the contrary.'⁹⁹ Despite fierce opposition the King won a hard fought extension to his jurisdiction and with it the clergy lost its independent legislative power.¹⁰⁰

The ideology furnishing Henry with the immense powers of the Royal Supremacy needed to be legitimised historically, theologically and legally. The king's printer, Thomas Berthelet, produced a translation of the anonymous *Disputatio inter Clericum et militem* following Cromwell's Europe-wide search for the tract which had its antecedence in the controversy between Pope Boniface VIII and Philip the Fair.¹⁰¹ Berthelet carefully selected and edited the tract in order to provide Henry with a propagandist text that would squarely suit contemporary concerns while not being tainted by reformist heresy. Nevertheless, the *Disputatio* provided 'a clear yet tempered call for divine-right kingship with a Pauline-Lutheran foundation in Romans 13: 1-7.'¹⁰² The *Disputatio* was attentive enough to reserve the pope spiritual supremacy even while simultaneously rebuking its claims to temporal jurisdiction.¹⁰³ The pope was recognised only as 'Christis vicar in godly kyngedome of soules' and the *Disputatio* provided a historical precedent.

However, even with the application of Romans 13 and Titus 3:1 which demanded all, without exception, to be subject to the higher authority the *Disputatio* did not outline a strict

⁹⁷ 'A Glasse of the Truthe', pp. 419; p.410.

⁹⁸ Elton, *Policy and Police*, p.178

⁹⁹ William Warham, 'Defence', in *The Dublin Review*, Vol. CXIV, January-April, 1894 (London: Burns and Oates Limited, 1894), pp.401-14 (p.406).

¹⁰⁰ See Michael Kelly, 'The Submission of the Clergy,' *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 15 (Dec., 1965), pp. 97-119.

¹⁰¹ Steven W. Haas states that the text was known to Thomas Cromwell who specifically sought out the work which suited Henry's emerging polemic. See Haas, 'The *Disputatio Inter Clericum et Militem*: was Berthelet's 1531 edition the first Henrician polemic of Thomas Cromwell?', *Moreana* 14:55 (1979), pp.65-72 (pp.65-6).

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p.67.

¹⁰³ Rex, 'The Crisis of Obedience', p. 875.

division of temporal and spiritual power. Rather it suggested that the prince possessed a duality of power within both temporal and spiritual spheres: in the former he possessed the authority to arbitrate over worldly disputes and in the latter a spiritual duty to protect Christians and promote God's Word. For Thomas J. Renna the *Disputatio* conceived an emergency power 'founded in metaphysical reality, for the demarcation between the two jurisdictions disappears when the prince acts as God to promote the general good of the realm.'¹⁰⁴ The privilege bestowed upon the clergy by the king, as the highest power in the realm, could be suspended or even rescinded if the 'business' of the commonwealth demanded it.¹⁰⁵ Therefore, the clergy must acknowledge royal power to be 'about your lawes, customes, priuileges, and liberties.' Any endeavours of the prince made for the profit of the commonwealth were to be patiently suffered. Kings were portrayed as active agents within the Church and priests dutifully acting upon their royal commands. Simply put: priests worshiped kings not *vice-versa*. Consequently Paul taught, in both Hebrews and Romans 13, that resistance to the higher power is forbidden by God and the clergy should obey their sovereign and 'humble your selfe to them.'¹⁰⁶ The edited *Disputatio* profited from the same idea of national sovereignty argued by Marsilius of Padua and the usefulness of the tract to Henry's cause was identified by Cromwell who funded William Marshall's English translation of *Defensor pacis* (1535).

Nonetheless, the furnishing of temporal power with supreme jurisdiction over all matters had already been conceived by the English common lawyer Christopher St. German. The anti-clericalism contained in St. German's *Doctor and Student* was given even greater emphasis upon its 1531 English translation and was implanted in English common law rather than canon law.¹⁰⁷ However, this should not suggest that the book was bereft of hermeneutic or biblical influence. Indeed, the arguments he produced were entirely in tune with the principles of Romans 13. He began with a discussion of eternal law, something which he stated is known to 'only blessyd soules that se god face to face.' Consequently eternal law was revealed to man in three ways (1) by natural reason (law of reason); (2) heavenly revelation (law of God); and (3) by the order of a temporal ruler that has power to bind the subjects to law (law of man).¹⁰⁸ Despite this, St. German appeared to bind the law of man to the law of God by arguing the former was *de facto* from God because He was ultimately the source of all power. This provided

¹⁰⁴ Thomas J. Renna, 'Kingship in the Disputatio Inter Clericum et Militem', *Speculum*, 48:4 (Oct., 1973), pp.675-93 (p. 681).

¹⁰⁵ *A dialogue betwene a knyght and a clerke concernynge the power spirital and temporall* (London: Thomas Berthelet, [1533?]), STC 12511a, sigs. C7v-C8r.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, sigs. C9r-C9v; B6r.

¹⁰⁷ Skinner, *Foundations II*, p.57.

¹⁰⁸ Christopher St. German, '*Doctor and Student*', eds. by T. F. T. Plucknett and J. L. Barton (London: Selden Society, 1974), pp.1-314 (p. 11). Alan Cromartie further arranges these three ways into six: 'the law of reason, the law of God, general customs, maxims, particular customs, and statutes.' See Cromartie, *The Constitutionalist Revolution*, p.47.

human law with a positive and rational origin because it was through God that kings reign and how the 'makers of lawes discern the trewth.'¹⁰⁹

St. German sensationally suggested that temporal and spiritual law were indivisible and the architects of temporal law should preside over both matters without interference. He soon concluded that 'the kynge in his parliament, as the hyghe soueraygne ouer the people...hath not onely charge on the bodies, but also on the soules of his suiectes.'¹¹⁰ This conception of sovereignty did not, as Glenn Burgess identifies, dispel canon law from the realm, but instead placed it 'under the over-arching control and direction of English common law.'¹¹¹ Instead, St. German advocated that all within the realm, including the clergy, should 'be ordered and ruled by one lawe as to temporall thynges.'¹¹² Furthermore, any controversy between the two laws should be settled in favour of the temporal, 'which was as much an instantiation of the divinely ordained principles of nature and equity as any law of the church.'¹¹³ In *A Treatise concernynge the diuision between the spiriualtie and temporalitie* (1532) St. German upheld the principles contained within the Submission of the Clergy and denied spiritual ministers their traditional right to legislate without kingly consent.¹¹⁴ The king-in-parliament possessed the power to punish the criminality of both temporal and spiritual persons.¹¹⁵ Both the *Disputatio* and St. German provided the government with a robust and welcome argument that supported the premise of princely supremacy.

With the passing of the Submission, Lord Chancellor Thomas More found himself on the wrong side of the royal argument. He resigned instantly and handed back the Great Seal. Nevertheless, More defended the clergy by arguing that the specific laws St. German condemned had long been observed by the temporal and spiritual realms throughout Europe. As John Guy notes 'canon law was the common law of Christendom.'¹¹⁶ Additionally, More insisted upon the Church's right to self-amendment and he argued that, even if 'a prouyncyall counsaile erre, there are in Cristes chyrche ordinary ways to reforme it.'¹¹⁷ Nevertheless, the passing of the Act in Restraint of Appeals (1533) formally deprived Rome of any legislative

¹⁰⁹ St. German, 'Doctor and Student', pp.11-3.

¹¹⁰ Christopher St. German, 'A Lytell Treastise Called the Newe Addicions', in *Doctor and Student*, eds. T. F. T. Plucknett and J. L. Barton (London: Selden Society, 1974), pp.315-40 (p. 327).

¹¹¹ Glenn Burgess, *British Political Thought, 1500-1660* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p.35.

¹¹² St. German, 'Doctor and Student', pp. 246-7.

¹¹³ Burgess, *British Political Thought*, p.35.

¹¹⁴ Franklin le van Baumer, *The Early Tudor Theory of Kingship* (New York: Russel & Russel, 1966), p.71.

¹¹⁵ Christopher St. German, *A treatise concernynge the diuision betwene the spiriualtie and temporalitie* (Londini: Thome Bertheleti, 1532?), STC 21587.5, sig. C8r; E2v.

¹¹⁶ John Guy, 'Thomas More and Christopher St. German: The Battle of the Books', in *Reassessing the Henrician Age: Humanism, Politics and Reform 1500-1550*, eds. by Alistair Fox and John Guy (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd, 1986), pp.95-120 (p. 105).

¹¹⁷ *CWTM* 9, p.100.

sovereignty over the English Church and placed power of ecclesiastical jurisdiction in the hands of the king. This ground-breaking statute was built upon the biblical precepts previously assembled by Fox and Cranmer in the *Collectanea* which ascribed to Henry a God-given spiritual authority and denied the pope *potestas jurisdictionis* over the English Church.¹¹⁸ Consequently, the English Reformation was not erected upon St. German's revolutionary articulation of sovereignty, the king-in-parliament, but rather the more conservative assertion of imperial sovereignty.

The Act declared that Henry's sovereignty was hindered only by God because it was superior to both parliament and the Church. Therefore, it paralleled the injunctions of Romans 13 in its explicit command for obedience to the:

one supreme head and king...unto whom...all sorts and degrees of people divided in terms and by names of spirituality and temporality, be bounden and owe to bear next to God a natural and humble obedience; he being also institute and furnished by the goodness and sufferance of Almighty God with plenary, whole and entire power, pre-eminence, authority, prerogative and jurisdiction to render and yield justice...in all causes, matters, debates and contentions.¹¹⁹

The English King possessed imperial sovereignty over all within his dominion and this conception of universal power reflected the twelfth/thirteenth-century Roman law maxim '*Rex in regno suo imperator est*'.¹²⁰ Indeed, the Act stated, 'this realm of England is an empire' and the royal *imperium* was to operate 'without restraint or provocation to any foreign princes or potentates of the world.'¹²¹ Parliament recognised no innovation, usurpation or apostasy, but rather the restoration of ancient *imperium* by a self-governing state free from any external authority other than God.

The Act was a political exegesis built upon a sound theological premise, and Parliament had canonised the full possession of jurisdiction over the *ecclesia Anglicana* into the possession of the king. This formulation was fully endorsed by St. German who sought to prove that Henry's

¹¹⁸ See Graham Nicholson. 'The Act of Appeals and the English Reformation', in *Law and Government under the Tudors*, eds. by C. Cross, D. Loades and J.J. Scarisbrick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp.19-30.

¹¹⁹ 'An Act that the appeals in such cases as have been used to be pursued to the see of Rome shall not be from henceforth had nor used but within this realm', in *The Tudor Constitution: documents and commentary*, ed. by G.R. Elton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960), pp.353-8 (p.353). [Hereafter 'Act in Restraint' and *TCD* respectively].

¹²⁰ Kenneth Pennington, *The Prince and the Law, 1299-1600: Sovereignty and Rights in the Western Legal Tradition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), pp.8-37 and Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1957), p.97.

¹²¹ 'Act in Restraint', p.353.

newly acquired title of Supreme Head of the Church of England was established in Scripture.¹²² St. German turned to Romans 13, I Peter 2 and Luke 22 to demonstrate princes have their authority immediately of God.¹²³ He concluded that Henry's supremacy ratified by Parliament accorded with God's Law and it was the prerogative of the prince to deliberate over all matters of spiritual and temporal controversy.¹²⁴ This judgment supported the now accepted notion that the king in parliament had *potestas jurisdictionis* over the church. The Act provided a welcome line of defence for the government against the rival claim of papal plenitude of power, and these arguments were now parallel to those expressed by Marsilius of Padua.¹²⁵ Consequently the King and the English Church were manoeuvred outside the papal claim of *potestas jurisdictionis* and the realm's administrative, financial and judicial supervision of the spiritual sphere was annexed to the imperial crown. Nevertheless, this still required a distinction between the King as *rex et sacerdos* and the *potestas ordinis* shared by the clergy. This was achieved because neither Henry nor the Act in Restraint of Appeals sought to provide the English crown with sacerdotal power and the spiritual role of the ordained priesthood was firmly preserved.¹²⁶

The government now engaged in a systematic effort to detach the implication of primacy and jurisdiction held within the titles of pope and Vicar of Christ (*Vicarius Christi*). The rhetoric concerning the jurisdiction of the papal office was now heading in a Wycliffian direction and subsequently the papacy was ascribed the reduced latitude of the Bishop of Rome and its jurisdiction was firmly confined to the 'see of Rome.' The degradation conformed to that already expressed by Thomas Starkey who had argued that the pope's jurisdiction extended only to the absolution of sin and he placed papal dignity upon an equal footing with the entire company of bishoprics.¹²⁷ Additionally, the credibility of the papal supremacy was further shaken by William Marshall's printing of an English translation of Lorenzo Valla's *De donatione Constantini* which had exposed the document claiming the imperial donation of temporal power to the papacy to

¹²² Christopher St. German, *A treatyse concerning the power of the clergye and the lawes of the realm* (London: Thomas Godfray 1535?), STC 21588, sigs. G1v-G2r, and Christopher St. German, *An answer to a letter* (London: Tho. Godfray 1535?), STC 21558.5, sig. A3r.

¹²³ St. German's English translation of Romans 13 varied from Tyndale's 1526 New Testament. St. German text reads: 'There is no power but of god. Forsoth all thinges that be, be ordeyned of god. And so he that resysteth power, resysteth the ordynaunce of god. And they that resyst get dampnacyon to them selfe. For princes be nat ordayned to the drede of a good worke, but of euyll. Wylt thou nat drede power? do well & thou shalte haue laude of it. He is the minister of god into goodnesse to the, and if thou do euyll, drede, for he bereth nat a swerde without cause.' See St. German. *A treatyse concerning the power of the clergye*, sigs. A2v-A3r.

¹²⁴ St. German, *A treatyse concerning the power of the clergye*, sig. G1v.

¹²⁵ See Harry S. Stout, 'Marsilius of Padua and the Henrician Reformation', *Church History*, 43:3 (Sept., 1974), pp.308-18 (pp.313-314), and Shelley Lockwood, 'Marsilius of Padua and the Case for the Royal Ecclesiastical Supremacy', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 1 (1991), pp.89-119. Elton also makes this claim in *England Under the Tudors* (London: Methuen, reprinted 1985), p.161.

¹²⁶ 'Act in Restraint', p. 356.

¹²⁷ Thomas Starkey, 'The Dialogue between Pole and Lupset', in *England in the reign of King Henry the Eighth: Part I. Starkey's Life and Letters* (London: N. Trübner & co., 1878), pp.1-215 (pp. 123-4).

be a forgery. Nevertheless, despite the denial of papal primacy the English Church, theoretically at least, could still be conceived of as a member of the Catholic Church by way of giving veneration to Christ. And the *ecclesia Anglicana* now recognised Rome as part of this sacred universal congregation and not *the* Catholic Church itself.¹²⁸

Henry's opponent was not Catholicism but papalism and the English Church identified theologically more directly with Rome than Wittenberg or Zurich. It would be wrong, then, to deny Henry's intrinsic Catholicism. His distaste for Luther lingered and this may explain the printing of Charles V's ordinances against the Wittenberg reformer's heresies in 1532. Lucy Wooding considers the translation of the Emperor's words a reinforcement of Henry's orthodoxy and it was employed as propaganda against the 'abusyons & errours of the sayd Martyn Luther, his imitatours & complayces and other dampnable sects.'¹²⁹ Additionally, the Act in Restraint of Appeals neither demanded nor implied that further reformation of the English Church was necessary. The doctrine of the Royal Supremacy was a strange brew because its premise was both revolutionary and deeply conservative. The princely supremacy was believed to be irrefutably hallowed by both tradition and biblical authority. The great irony about the battle for the Royal Supremacy was that it was won using spiritual weapons forged in the fires of Wittenberg and, apart from the significant step of removing the primacy of pope, this was a Church that operated upon premise of business as usual.

Defending the Royal Supremacy

On 23 May 1533 Henry realised his aspiration and his marriage to Catherine ended. However, as Richard Rex observes, Henry's annulment and prior marriage to Anne Boleyn were obtained 'not only in defiance of the papacy but in the face of significant opposition or at least dissent at home.'¹³⁰ Thomas Abell had already attempted to unpick the Levitical basis for the annulment and former ambassador to Emperor Charles V, Thomas Elyot, would attempt to counsel Henry away from tyranny by providing a mirror to his conduct.¹³¹ Nevertheless, by the time the *Articles devised by the holle consent of the Kynges moste honourable counsyle* were printed in 1533, the annulment had been secured and Henry excommunicated. The government could obviously hear the muttering of opposition voices and moved to dampen them before they grew any

¹²⁸ Jacqueline Rose, *Godly Kingship in Restoration England: The Politics of the Royal Supremacy, 1660-1688* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p.28.

¹²⁹ Lucy E.C. Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism in Reformation England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), pp.73-74. Charles V, *These ben the ordynau[n]ces, that the emperour hath caused to be red and declared in his presence* (London: Robert wyer, 1532?), STC 18447.5, sig. G1r.

¹³⁰ Richard Rex, *Henry VIII and the English Reformation* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1993), p.18.

¹³¹ Thomas Abell, *An answer, that by no maner of lawe, it maye be lawfull for the moste noble kinge of englande, kinge Henry the ayght to be diuorsed fro[m] the quenes grate, his lawful and very wyfe* (Luneberge [i.e. Antwerp]: [M. de Keyser], 1532), STC 61. Thomas Elyot, *Of the knowledg whiche maketh a wise man* (Londini: Thomae Bertheleti, 1533), STC 7668.

louder. Therefore the *Articles* were conspicuously more vehement in their declaration that the pope was 'the usurper of God's law' who had illegally detained the king's matter in Rome 'contrary to all right and conscience to the utter undoing of this realm.'¹³² The *Articles* may have declared 'One God and one king' but they stopped short of specifically promoting the doctrine of the Royal Supremacy. Nonetheless, two pamphlets composed by evangelical Thomas Swinnerton were vigorous in their anti-papalism and formed part of the propaganda campaign to support Henry's supremacy.¹³³

Swinnerton's *A litel treatise ageynste the mutterynge of some papists in corners* (1534), possibly produced under Thomas Cromwell's patronage, was a firm rebuttal of the papal supremacy drawing upon Scripture and the Church Fathers to insist that Christ gave the keys to the Church and not Peter alone. The pope was at best recognised as being a member of the Holy Church and at worst no Christian at all. While the tract outlined numerous papal abuses, spiritual and fiscal, which were claimed to have caused the realm's decline, the true purpose was to demand that true English subjects must support their 'louynge souerayne lorde and prince' in his just cause against such misery. Swinnerton then turned to Romans 13:1-2 for support, asserting: 'Loke howe straytely the apostoll byndethe vs to the obedience of our prince: for in the same chapitre he nameth none other powers, but onely of princis.' This justification of Henry's supremacy was drawn from Scripture but buttressed by an appeal to a sense of nationalism and loyalty to the sovereign king.¹³⁴

In *A mustre of scismatyke bysshopes of Rome* (1534), Swinnerton again reduced the jurisdiction of the 'babylonycall strumpet of Rome' by stating he 'hath no more authoritie than any other bysshop.' This confirmed that all bishops were subject to the temporal rulers and insisted that the aggrandisement of the bishop of Rome was a direct violation of Romans 13 as Paul instructed every soul to submit unto the higher powers. Furthermore, Swinnerton argued that the king's possession of the sword and supremacy was also witnessed in the Second Book of Paralipomenon by Jehoshaphat who revealed to his judges 'Ye do not exercyse the iudgement and lawe of man, but of god.'¹³⁵ The passing of the Act of Supremacy (1534) by Parliament not only gave legal expression to Henry's title of 'supreme head in earth of the Church of England

¹³² 'Articles devised by the holle consent of the Kynges moste honourable counsyle...', in *Records of the Reformation: The Divorce 1527-1533*, Vol. II, collected and arranged by Nicholas Pocock (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1870), pp.523-30 (p. 525).

¹³³ Tom Betteridge, *Literature and Politics in the English Reformation* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), p.22.

¹³⁴ Thomas Swinnerton, *A litel treatise ageynste the mutterynge of some papistis in corners* (Londini: Tho. Bertheleti, 1534), STC 23551.5, sigs. B4r; B8r-B8v; C1v.

¹³⁵ Thomas Swinnerton, *A mustre of scismatyke bysshopes of Rome otherwyse naming them selues popes, moche necessarye to be redde of al the kynges true subiectes* (London: Johan Byddell [otherwyse Salisbury], 1534), STC 23552, sig. D3r; D7r-D8r. II Chronicles 19:6.

called *Anglicana Ecclesia*' but it also extended the spiritual jurisdiction of the Crown to 'repress, redress, reform, order, correct, restrain and amend all such errors, heresies, abuses, offences, contempts and enormities, whatsoever they be.'¹³⁶ In this Kingly duty to expel heresy from the realm, the prelates, nobles, justices and lesser administrative powers were commanded to aid Henry or face the peril of his 'hyghe indignation and displeasure.'¹³⁷

The royal chaplain, Richard Sampson, also offered a strong endorsement of the religious policy in his *Oratio* (1534). The tract was written in erudite Latin and composed with the intention 'to induce calm and civil obedience in its readers, primarily, in this case, the clergy.'¹³⁸ Sampson finds Marsilius of Padua's *Defensor pacis* a useful ally in the erection of his theoretical premise which was intended to devastate the papal coercive jurisdiction assumed by the doctrine of *plenitudo potestatis*.¹³⁹ There was simply no denying the requirement for obedience to the king, because it was commanded in God's Word (*quia verbum Dei præcipit*) and Sampson underscored the king's supremacy by the assertion '*Verbum dei est, obedire regi, non episcopo Rho[mano]*'.¹⁴⁰ He enjoined Romans 13 and I Peter 2 with Christ's exhortation 'If you love me, keep my commandments' (John 14:15) to successfully make 'the leap between man's natural love of God and his obedience due the king.'¹⁴¹ It was by divine mandate that all, including the clergy, should obey the King and Sampson believed Henry was rightly to be called the '*Supremum Caput*' because he possessed his power directly from God.¹⁴²

The first substantive defence of the Royal Supremacy was provided by Edward Fox in *De vera differentia regiae potestatis et ecclesiasticae* (1534). However, as Graham Nicholson has identified, Fox had merely 'shuffled, sorted and pruned' his argument from the material contained within the *Collectanea* and presented it in more elegant Latin form.¹⁴³ *De vera differentia* limited the prerogative of the clergy to *potestas ordinis* and the ministration of the Word of God while reaffirming the proclamation, found within the Act in Restraint of Appeals, that the authority of General Council is greater than the bishop of Rome. The rock upon which the Church was built, contended Fox, was not the body of Peter but his faith and the Church

¹³⁶ 'An Act concerning the King's Highness to be Supreme Head of the Church of England and to have authority to reform and redress all errors, heresies and abuses in the same', in *TCD*, pp.364-5.

¹³⁷ Henry VIII, *A proclamation concerninge heresie* (London: Tho. Berthelet, 1535), STC 7785.

¹³⁸ Andrew A. Chibi, 'Richard Sampson, His "Oratio," and Henry VIII's Royal Supremacy,' *Journal of Church and State*, 39 (Summer 1997), pp.543-60 (p. 547).

¹³⁹ See Paul O'Grady, *Henry VIII and the Conforming Catholics* (Collegeville. Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1990), pp.50-4.

¹⁴⁰ Richard Sampson, *Richardi Sams. Oratio* (Londini: Tho. Bertheleti, 1535?), STC 21681, sig. C5r.

¹⁴¹ Chibi, 'Richard Sampson', p. 550.

¹⁴² Sampson, *Oratio*, sigs. A4v-B1r.

¹⁴³ Nicholson, 'The Act of Appeals and the English Reformation', p.26.

constituted a 'multitude of faithful people.'¹⁴⁴ Furthermore, the *potestas jurisdictionis* of kings upon the earth was confirmed by Christ's provision in Deuteronomy 17:15, 'you may indeed set over you a king whom the LORD your God will choose.'¹⁴⁵ This was further demonstrated by I Kings 2:27 in which Solomon deposed the priest Abiathar and from this precedent Fox concluded 'the power of punishing did onely pertayne to kinges and princes and not to the preestes.'¹⁴⁶

Fox determinedly mined Old Testament passages, and the examples of Kings, to demonstrate that while priests expound the Law of God, it was kings and rulers who were the judges of it. He insisted that the bearer of the sword possessed the 'power in Judgementes' and those that withstand this divinely ordained power violated God's command. Therefore, as Romans 13 confirmed all must be obedient to the 'regall and ciuell power' and no man whether Peter, Paul, bishop, priest or pope is exempt unless they are willing to suffer damnation.¹⁴⁷ It was made abundantly clear that coercive and judicial power were strictly the preserve of the temporal prince. Nevertheless, in drawing the distinction between divinely ordained power and tyrants permitted to rule by God, Fox upheld the doctrine of non-resistance by confirming oppressive rule should be considered 'as a greate benefitte' because it represented God's vengeance upon sin.¹⁴⁸

The defence of the Royal Supremacy was given dynamic expression by Miles Coverdale's translation of the Bible produced under the patronage of Cromwell. The frontispiece, designed by Hans Holbein the Younger, was a bold portrayal of divine kingship with Henry depicted in possession of both the 'Book' and the temporal sword. This is further embellished through the presence of David and confirmed by Paul who also carries the sword. This had a dual meaning: the Apostle's martyrdom and 'the sword of the Spirit' (Ephesians 6:17). The papal supremacy is denied by the presence of Christ at Pentecost, who stands before the Apostles, all of whom are in possession of the keys. The iconography was amplified by Coverdale's Epistle to the king which contained a vociferous cry for obedience to Henry. It presented the striking narrative of a heinous usurping bishop of Rome who had not only defrauded Christian kings of their due obedience but also had shown himself to be a traitor to God.¹⁴⁹ Moreover, Coverdale insisted, the 'Balaam of Rome' loathed the prospect of vernacular Scripture because it would reveal his great deceit and permit kings to reclaim the rightful obedience afforded them by God. Coverdale contended that Scripture abundantly reveals that the authority and power afforded to kings by

¹⁴⁴ Edward Fox, *The true dyffere[n]s between ye regall power and the ecclesiasticall power translated out of latyn by Henry lord Stafforde* (London: Wylliam Copla[n]d, 1548), STC 11220, sigs. B5r; C1r-C3r.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, sigs. I3r. Deuteronomy 17:15.

¹⁴⁶ Fox, *The true dyffere[n]s* sigs. I4r-I5r.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, sig. K4v.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, sigs. B3v-B4r.

¹⁴⁹ Miles Coverdale, 'An Epistle vnto the Kynges hyghnesse', in *Biblia the Byble, that is, the holy Scrypture of the Olde and New Testament, faithfully translated in to Englyshe* (Southwark?, J. Nycolson, 1535), STC 2063.3. sigs. +2r-+4r (+2v).

God was preeminent to all others upon the earth and all clergymen (whether they called themselves popes or cardinals or other such titles) were commanded under the pain of damnation to obey the temporal sword.

Coverdale now drew an explicit line of connection between God and the prince. He stated that temporal rulers 'present the persone of God' and because of the excellency of their divine office Scripture called them gods. Therefore the preeminent power of the king, under God, was the head of the Church and its entire congregation.¹⁵⁰ He identified numerous biblical examples which he believed to exemplify the supremacy of the temporal power even over spiritual men. For example: Solomon claiming the power to depose priests, Christ's showing obedience by paying tribute with the miracle that placed a 'piece of money' into the mouth of a fish caught by Peter which 'to stablysshe the obedience due vnto prynces', and the journey of Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem at the behest of the temporal ruler. These precedents compelled Coverdale to ask: 'wolde not oure Sauoure be borne in the same obedience?' These illustrations, buttressed with Romans 13 and I Peter 2, bind all Christians in obedience to the divine regiment of kings and in turn they owe due obedience to God. The innumerable injuries caused to God by the meddling pope had extricated men from their service to God by suppressing His Law. For Coverdale, Henry was a new Josiah sent by God to restore England to a prosperous health by cleansing the realm of idolatry and evil customs.¹⁵¹

The determination shown by Swinnerton, Fox and Coverdale demonstrated that the battle for hearts and minds was far from over. A persistent thorn in the king's side was the bishop of Rochester, John Fisher. He had previously opposed the royal annulment, but his refusal to subscribe to the Oath to the Succession and denial of Henry's title of Supreme Head of the Church of England saw him deprived and subsequently executed under the new Treasons Act (1534).¹⁵² The Act proclaimed any, whether by voice or pen, who 'maliciously' claim the king to be a 'heretic, schismatic, tyrant, infidel or usurper' or opposed the policy of Royal Supremacy would be forced to 'suffer such pains of death and other penalties as is limited and accustomed in cases of high treason.'¹⁵³ No longer was it heretical to deny the primacy of the pope but instead it was traitorous to deny the supremacy of the sovereign king of England. Fisher's execution provoked outrage in Rome and Pope Paul III wrote an incendiary letter to King Francis I informing him that Henry had been deprived of his crown for the injuries he inflicted upon the

¹⁵⁰ Coverdale, 'An Epistle', sig. +2v. As we have seen the biblical basis for this is Psalm 82:6 and John 10:34.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, sigs. +3r--+3v.

¹⁵² Richard Rex, 'Fisher, John [St John Fisher] (c.1469–1535)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [<http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.wam.leeds.ac.uk/view/article/9498>, accessed 6 Jan 2017]. [Hereafter *ODNB*].

¹⁵³ 'An Act whereby divers offences be made high treason', in *TCD*, pp. 62-4.

Holy Roman Church. The pope implored the French King to come to the service of the Church and 'when you are requested of us, enforce justice against the said Henry.'¹⁵⁴

The papal letter served two audacious purposes. Firstly, it lavished praise on the Most Christian King in an attempt to thwart any possible alliance between France and the heretical King of England, and secondly it hoped to stir both Francis and Henry's subjects into hostile action. A copy of the letter was sent to England and Gardiner was entrusted to respond to what he described as the pope's 'womanlike scolding.' His apologia, *Si sedes illa*, insisted that Fisher was justly 'condemnyd by the law' for the treasonous act of being contrary to both 'the vicar of god' (the prince) and the Catholic religion which required obedience.¹⁵⁵ Indeed, Starkey concurred and insisted that the 'execution of Fisher, and subsequently Thomas More, was testimony of a 'blynd superstition' that had caused them to willingly contravene the Pauline precept of obedience to their king.¹⁵⁶ The King was, for Gardiner, simply fulfilling his duty afforded by Romans 13:4 and bearing 'the swerde to the vengeance of euyl men, and to the commendation of good men.'¹⁵⁷

However, Gardiner's *De vera obedientia* (1536) provided a much more rigorous defence of his King. The argument contained in the oration on true obedience categorically rejected any notion 'that God ordayned the bishop of Rome to be the chief, as touching any absolute wor[ldly] power.'¹⁵⁸ Like the apologies of Fox and Sampson, Gardiner's tract was produced for a learned readership at home and abroad. Nevertheless, *De vera obedientia* had resonances that far outlived its author, as he forcefully claimed that any princely acquiescence to the false claims of Rome must be considered neglect of his divine duty 'to gouern the people.'¹⁵⁹ Moreover, the king encompassed headship over both temporal and spiritual realms within his dominion, and none were exempt from obedience to even a tyrannical prince because the people are provided by God with the ruler they deserve. Gardiner conceived a Church that consisted of both prince and people growing together as a singular body. It was the function of the prince to preside over both realms and to ensure all were designated their appropriate office.¹⁶⁰ Furthermore, this headship was demonstrated by the prince's continued defence of the Church against heresy and if the Bishops of Rome were truly to be obeyed as Christ's Vicar on earth then they 'wolde not

¹⁵⁴ Pope Paul III, 'The pope's brief to Francis I', in *Obedience in Church and State: Three Political Tracts by Stephen Gardiner*, ed. by P. Janelle (New York: Greenwood Press Publishers, 1968), pp.12-9 (pp. 17-9). (Hereafter *OCS*).

¹⁵⁵ Stephen Gardiner, '*Si sedes illa*', in *OCS*, pp.22-65 (p.23; p.31).

¹⁵⁶ Thomas Starkey, *An exhortation to the people, instructyng them to Unitie and Obedience* (Londini: Thomae Bertheleti Regii, 1536), STC 23236, sigs. G2r-G2v.

¹⁵⁷ Gardiner, '*Si sedes illa*', p. 61.

¹⁵⁸ Stephen Gardiner, '*The Oration of True Obedience*', in *OCS*, pp.67-171 (p. 155).

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 107.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p.93; p.117; p.115.

have practised straunge artes, and carnall fetches, rather than stronge testimonie of Goddes truthe.¹⁶¹ Rather it was the king who embodied the 'ymage of God vpon earthe' and Christ had commanded that tribute must be paid unto His minister and possessor of the sword (Romans 13:7 and Matthew 22:21).¹⁶²

The power of Henry's conservative revolution is clearly demonstrated by the fact that a theological traditionalist, like Gardiner, found nothing heretical or disquieting about the doctrine of the Royal Supremacy. As Glenn Burgess has noted 'Faith itself required obedience, because obedience was an acknowledgement of God's will, which was in turn the core of faith in God.'¹⁶³ Consequently, the words of Paul in Romans 13 were, for Gardiner, the true pronouncements of God (*eloquia dei*) which embodied His everlasting truth and will.¹⁶⁴ Therefore, he subsequently augmented Romans 13 with numerous biblical proof-texts, Titus 3, I Peter 2 and Proverbs 8:15-16, all selected to deliver a clear warning that subjects must obey their king and any that resist will suffer damnation. What was paramount for Gardiner, Fox and Sampson's conception of the Royal Supremacy was the reconciliation of a distinct *ecclesia Anglicana* within the wider brethren of the Catholic Church as opposed to a hierarchy which was singular and papal. In other words, a Church which was Catholic not papist from which the pope could be jettisoned but the spirit and authority of Christ's Church must be preserved.¹⁶⁵ However, this did not mean that the king's power was absolute because his commands must always be measured against obedience to the highest of all kings and ultimately Christians must 'obey God rather than men' (Acts 5:29). As Gardiner clearly recognised; it was not possible to serve both king and God if the former commands something antithetical to the later.¹⁶⁶ As such, Glyn Redworth noted, Gardiner had not 'lost sight of a higher duty of God, despite his eagerness to placate a king and salve his own conscience.'¹⁶⁷ Conclusively all, including kings, are subject to God's Law.

Conclusion

Despite Henry VIII's trenchant stand against heresy, the English Reformation was built upon the political and theological foundations laid by Luther at Wittenberg. Romans 13 was central to Luther's premise of princely ecclesiastical and temporal authority, and reformers fiercely

¹⁶¹ Gardiner, 'The Oration of True Obedience', pp.119-23.

¹⁶² Ibid., p.99.

¹⁶³ Burgess, *British Political Thought*, p.38.

¹⁶⁴ Gardiner, 'Oration of True Obedience', p 83.

¹⁶⁵ Rex Pogson, 'God's law and man's: Stephen Gardiner and the problem of loyalty', in *Law and Government under the Tudors*, eds. by C. Cross, D. Loades and J.J. Scarisbrick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp.67-89 (pp.72-3).

¹⁶⁶ Gardiner, 'Oration of True Obedience', p.89.

¹⁶⁷ Glyn Redworth, *In Defence of the Church Catholic: The Life of Stephen Gardiner* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990), p.67.

contested the established view that the Bible undeniably supported papalism. Tyndale followed Luther's anti-papal path which condemned Rome's spurious traditions and called upon princes to reclaim their temporal power that had been usurped by the pope's irreligious custody of the sword. Tyndale had delivered an alluring exegesis of Scripture: it was through God alone that kings reigned, and the prince could not be judged by anyone upon the Earth. Henry's law was God's law. As a consequence, princes were endowed with a quasi-divine status, and obedience to the commands of the prince was both a moral and a religious duty. This interpretation of Romans 13 and Psalm 82 affirmed the place of the prince 'in God's room' and provided Henry, who was already embroiled in a bitter dispute with Rome, with powerful theological premise to undermine papal claims of jurisdiction over the English Church.

The rightful possession of the sword was fundamental to the denial of the papal supremacy and Romans 13 demonstrated the aspiration of true Christians: duty, love and obedience. The prince was bestowed a divine duty to defend his subjects from evildoers, and his execution of vengeance was an expression of God's love, and in return the people owed him obedience. The spiritual ministers must aid their prince in his divine duty but the clergy should not seek to govern him. As the true higher power Henry was urged to reinstate a single authoritative law, restore the true Gospel, banish the pope and punish England's disobedient clerics before the realm fell into spiritual and financial ruin. The image of mischievous Roman clerics sowing discontent and sedition provided a convenient para-narrative to Henry's pursuit of an annulment from Catherine of Aragon. The anti-clerical attacks by Tyndale and Fish were defended against by Thomas More who accused them of seeking to enflame Henry against the Church, and stir the people into rebellion. The seductive force of anti-clericalism, More contended, enticed princes and subjects into disobeying the Church, and he urged Henry to execute his divine duty and protect the realm from heresy.

The continued frustration of the King's pursuit of an annulment by Rome demonstrated to Henry and his advisors was that it necessary for the annulment to be presided over in England and away from the external jurisdiction of the pope. What followed was an intensification of anti-papal rhetoric, but the regime was fully aware that the King's Great Matter could not be achieved without theological, historical and legal support. The *Collectanea satis copiosa* contained a vast array of historical and biblical evidence that supported the case for an annulment and disclosed that Henry was in possession of imperial primacy over the English Church. Passages from the Old and New Testaments were carefully assembled to demonstrate the Henry's *institutio*, *officium* and *potestas* over both the spiritual and earthly realms. Crucial to this elevation of royal power was the manipulation of the opening four verses of Romans 13 in order to stress the divine ordination of kings, emphasise their jurisdiction over the Church, and demand obedience from every soul to the royal power. What emerged from the *Collectanea*

was the single most important political doctrine of the English Reformation: the Royal Supremacy.

The biblical precedents contained in the *Collectanea* directly informed the royal propaganda that was produced for the public sphere in an attempt to win the battle for hearts and minds. Rome was convincingly portrayed as a foreign power that unjustly meddled in English affairs. Subjects were strongly encouraged not to submit to the papal yoke but instead obey the commands of Scripture which bound them in obedience to their divinely ordained prince. Romans 13 was continuously invoked to demonstrate the divine institution of the prince, and combined with the historical testimonies of illustrious biblical kings to provide authoritative evidence of *potestas jurisdictionis*. This persuasive biblical argument for kingly jurisdiction over temporal and spiritual was furnished with legal support by St. German. He argued that civil and divine law were indivisible because God was the ultimate source of all power. The concept of a king-in-parliament accorded with the precepts of Romans 13 not only for its recognition of the divine origin of authority, but also because it bound all subjects under the authority of the highest power: the civil power.

With the passing of the Act in Restraint of Appeals the pope was formally deprived of any legislative sovereignty over the English Church, and the power of ecclesiastical jurisdiction was placed into royal hands. The Act was firmly built upon the Pauline precepts that ascribed Henry a divinely appointed spiritual and imperial authority that was hindered only by God. Parliament recognised Henry's supremacy to be a restoration of England's ancient *imperium* that liberated the realm from any external human authority. The Act was not conceived to be a heretical innovation because it was founded upon a sound political premise and theological exegesis. Both Henry and the English Church had been manoeuvred outside of Rome's claim of *potestas jurisdictionis*, and financial and judicial administration over the ecclesiastical estate was annexed to the imperial crown. Accordingly, the government sought to detach any implication of primacy and jurisdiction held within the titles of pope and *Vicarius Christi*. As a result the pope was firmly ascribed the reduced status of the Bishop of Rome and his jurisdiction firmly confined to the 'see of Rome.'

The Great Matter had been resolved to Henry's satisfaction and in doing so the Royal Supremacy was enshrined in English law. However, the mutterings of dissent were still audible, and the regime moved to silence them before they grew louder. The numerous anti-papal treatises that were produced in an attempt to settle the matter drew heavily upon Scripture in order to rebuff any notion that Christ had bestowed upon Peter alone the keys to the Church. The fiscal and spiritual abuses of the Church were outlined and subjects urged to support Henry in his just cause against these perpetrators of misery. The precepts of Romans 13 were tirelessly invoked in order to demand subjects to obey only their prince over the foreign pope. The

aggrandisement of the bishop of Rome was condemned as direct violation of Romans 13. With the passing of Act of Supremacy, Henry took legal possession of the title Supreme Head of the Church, and Parliament affirmed his spiritual and legal duty to repress, reform, amend and expel all errors, heresies and abuses from within the Church. These princely functions coalesced with the precepts of Romans 13 which reveal rulers to be a minister of God for their good and a terror to evildoers by their execution of God's wrath.

What made the Henrician Reformation so distinct was that its message was simultaneously revolutionary and conservative. This is demonstrated by the fact that neither a Lutheran leaning Fox nor a theologically conservative Gardiner found anything disquieting about the Royal Supremacy. Fox provided the first substantive defence of the Royal Supremacy by essentially repackaging the arguments assembled in the *Collectanea* which confined the duty of clergy to *potestas ordinis* and the ministration of the Gospel. The bearer of the sword possessed the 'power in Judgements' and Romans 13 confirmed none were exempt from obedience to the regal and civil power under pain of damnation. The religious policies of the King were endorsed by Sampson dismissed papal claims to *plenitudo potestatis*, and attested that it was entirely correct for Henry to be called Supreme Head because his power came directly from God. Moreover, Gardiner insisted that any acquiescence to the falsehoods of Rome by the prince must be considered to be a neglect of his divine duty to govern his people. A king, he insisted, embodied the image of God upon the earth. Therefore, the commands contained in Romans 13 embodied God's everlasting truth and will.

The rejection of papal supremacy was not a rejection of the Catholic faith. Instead, Henry and his ministers had recognised a distinct *ecclesia Anglicana* that belonged within the wider brethren of the Catholic Church. What is unmistakable is that Romans 13 was ubiquitous throughout the formulation and defence of the doctrine of the Royal Supremacy because it drew an explicit line directly between God and the prince. The message was unmistakable: Scripture revealed that the authority afforded to kings by God was preeminent to all other powers upon the earth. As a result the English Reformation was defined by a Lutheran formulation of non-resistance and Romans 13 was not ambiguous in its demand for obedience to the ministers of God for both fear of wrath and conscience sake. This reading of Romans 13 excluded no one from submission to the prince. However, it was always understood that the commands of the prince should be measured against the definitive pronouncement of all obedience: obey God rather than men. As a consequence, neither Henry nor his clergy ever lost sight of their higher duty to God. The prince and all his subjects must adhere to the Law of God. The English Church had rejected the pope not Christ.

Chapter 4: Reaction, Reform and Retreat? (1536-1547)

Introduction

Henry's reformation did not bring unity to the realm. Opposition to his religious policies materialised in both physical and theoretical form. The rhetoric employed by the regime against dissent continued to focus on submission and loyalty: obey the king not the foreign bishop of Rome. With the passing of The Submission of the Clergy the Lord Chancellor, Thomas More, resigned immediately and his refusal to acquiesce to the King's demands saw him mount the scaffold in July 1535. More refused to accept an indictment grounded upon an act of Parliament that was repugnant to God's Law: he insisted that neither king nor the commons could rewrite the Laws of God.¹ The dissent of Fisher and More are examples, albeit high profile examples, of individual and isolated reactions to the King's religious measures. But as Jack Scarisbrick has noted, only a small minority were enthusiastically behind Henry's reformation.² The anti-clerical sentiment demonstrated by Fish, Barnes and St. German was not matched in the parish and the dissolution of the monasteries led some to fear what may come next. Public discontent was, then, 'frequently voiced and publically expressed in many parts of the country.'³ For both conservatives and reformers Henry was, as Ryrie noted, 'alternatively their supporter and their opponent.'⁴

The religious policies that Henry pursued in the autumn of 1536 provoked the greatest crisis of his reign, the Pilgrimage of Grace, the biggest uprising any Tudor monarch faced. The motivations for the rebellions are complex and the concerns of the participants varied but while they can be described as popular risings, they did exhibit opposition to Henry's reformation.⁵ Another high profile opponent was the King's cousin, Reginald Pole, who ferociously denounced Henry and claimed the idea of his supremacy had been planted in the King's mind by Satan himself.⁶ Pole delivered to Henry a very personal message of condemnation. Consequently, the government again felt the need to utilise the power of propaganda and Romans 13 was a divine instrument utilised to hammer down any murmur or dissent. The voices of discontent failed to compel Henry into rowing back his policies and would only further entrench them.⁷ But this was no evangelical revolution. The King remained hostile to Rome but he hated Lutheranism and as

¹ William Roper, *Life of Sir Thomas More, Knight* (London: Burns and Oates, 1905), p.91.

² J.J. Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII* (London: Methuen, Reprinted 1990), p.338.

³ Michael A.R. Graves, *Henry VIII: A Study in Kingship* (London: Longman, 2003), p.45.

⁴ Ryrie, *The Gospel and Henry VIII*, p.58.

⁵ G. W. Bernard, *The King's Reformation: Henry VIII and the Remaking of the English Church* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005), pp.293-404.

⁶ Reginald Pole, *Defence of the Unity of the Church*, trans. by Joseph G. Dwyer (Westminster, MD: The Newman Press, 1965), p.283.

⁷ Richard Rex, *Henry VIII* (Stroud: Amberley Publishing, 2009), p.99.

a consequence his Church remained conservative in matters of doctrine. Nevertheless, Henry was not an immovable force and those close to him knew he was capable of demonstrating a degree of pragmatic flexibility in his faith and a level of political expediency. In the process of negotiating the King's Reformation, the conservatives and evangelicals would turn to Romans 13 in an attempt shape the English Church that was not explicitly defined by the doctrine of the Royal Supremacy.

The Conservative Reaction

The religious context of the Pilgrimage of Grace is found in Cromwell's *Injunctions* of 1536. The suppression of the monasteries and Church visitations created anxiety over the impact of reform in the parish, and there was a genuine fear of both spiritual and material impoverishment. The earlier Ten Articles (1536) had recognised with 'greate regrete...suche dyuersitie in opinions' within the realm and their implementation was intended to provide an authoritative and clear statement of belief.⁸ Instead the Articles reflected the spiritual divisions embodied within the Henrician Church because they contained an almost equal measure of Lutheranism and conservatism. While the Articles could be perceived as more of a victory for the reformers than the conservatives, this should not be seen as Henry's wholehearted acceptance of an evangelical programme.⁹ This was a discreet manoeuvring of the King towards Lutheran reform, by men such as Cromwell, because the Articles were in no way the Augsburg Confession decorated with a Tudor rose. The reality was that England's Church was moving away from medieval orthodoxy, but nobody in the realm, the king included, knew exactly where this journey would end. Despite these apprehensions and the resulting insurgency, Henry remained firmly committed to his revolutionary policies.

The task of answering the northern rebels was primarily entrusted to Cromwell's publicist Richard Morison who produced two propagandist tracts which served to complement Henry's own denunciations of the uprising. Morison's *A Lamentation* (1536) hurriedly moved to condemn the rebels and declared that 'none so wicked, none so vnnaturall...as they whyche trayterously make of one nation two, of them that euen now were frendes, sodaynly to be enemies.'¹⁰ Luc Nicod has noted that Morison was 'an unqualified and almost enthusiastic supporter of the use of military force against the rebels, precisely because they [had] breached

⁸ *Articles devised by the Kynges Highnes Maiestie to stablyshe christen [sic] quietnes and vnitie amonge vs, and to avoyde contentious opinio[n]s which articles be also approued by the consent and determination of the hole [sic] clergie of this realme* (Londini: Thomae Bertheleti, 1536), STC 10033.6, sig. A3r.

⁹ John Schofield, *Philip Melanchthon and the English Reformation* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), pp.68-82.

¹⁰ Richard Morison, *A lamentation in whiche is shewed what ruyne and destruction cometh of seditious rebellion* (Londini: Thomae Bertheleti, 1536), STC 18113.3, sig. A2r.

the peace of God.¹¹ But in other ways Morison sounded much like Tyndale, in that rebellion was undoubtedly a religious matter because obedience was ‘the badge of a trewe christen man.’ Insurrection was, then, nothing short of sinful.¹² He called upon true Christians to be obedient servants of their king and ‘resiste and pacifie’ these rebellious sowers of sedition that betray God’s Word. For Ryan Reeves it is entirely reasonable to view Morison’s call for obedience ‘as a step further than Tyndale...if only in the fact that Morison offers an overwhelmingly positive appraisal of Henry’s faithfulness to scripture.’¹³ Nevertheless, the doctrine of non-resistance was being advanced in between the extensive rhetorical questions. Morison rejected any notion that anyone was permitted to lay ‘violent handes’ upon the King, but he recognised that obedience was contingent upon the monarch ruling in accordance to the Law of God. The message was clear: obedience to the legitimate laws of the King constituted obedience to God.¹⁴

In fact this very point was made by Henry himself. The King pointedly reminded the participants of the rebellion that by acting contrary to the Law of God and man they were in effect seeking to rule over their prince.¹⁵ This position was not dissimilar to that promoted by Calvin who contended that the commands of Romans 13 were perfectly clear and none should deceive themselves into thinking that resisting the magistrate was not resisting God. However, Calvin disentangled himself from unconditional submission to civil authority with strict qualification. He declared that any ruler that ceased to perform his duty as ‘father’ or ‘shepherd’ to his people and descended into wickedness no longer retained any semblance of being God’s minister.¹⁶ Nevertheless, Morison had very deliberately framed matters that concerned a king’s right to rule and the subject’s obligation to obedience directly in a religious context. The philosophical question the rebels must ask themselves was: ‘Whan euey man wyll rule, who shall obeye?’ Moreover, he contended that all laws constituted by the worldly authority that were for the benefit and safeguard of the commonwealth *de facto* emanated from God, and any realms not governed by the rule of law were, in effect, like the forests occupied by wild beasts and ‘not places habitable for men.’¹⁷

By challenging the authority of God’s chosen lieutenant, the rebels did not merely question Henry’s right to rule but also divine wisdom. For Morison the citizen must content

¹¹ Luc Paul Maurice Nicod, ‘The Political Thought of Richard Morison: A Study in the Use of Ancient and Medieval Sources in Renaissance England’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of London, 1998), p.179.

¹² Morison, *A lamentation*, sigs. A2v-A3r.

¹³ Ryan M. Reeves, *English Evangelicals and Tudor Obedience, c. 1527-1570* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), p.58.

¹⁴ Morison, *A lamentation*, sigs. C3r.

¹⁵ See Henry VIII, *Answere to the petitions of the traytours and rebelles in Lyncolneshyre* [(Londini: Thomae Bertheleti], 1536), STC 13077.5, and *Answere made by the kynges hyghnes to the petitions of the rebelles in Yorkeshire* (Londini: Thomae Bertheleti, 1536). STC 13077.

¹⁶ Calvin, *Institutes* 1536, pp.220-1.

¹⁷ Richard Morison, *A remedy for sedition* (Londini: Thomae Bertheleti, 1536), STC 18113.7, sig. A2r.

themselves with the knowledge that kingly dignity was provided by the providence of God.¹⁸ Hugh Latimer, now bishop of Worcester, preaching at the time of the rebellions, also endorsed the doctrine of non-resistance. Latimer noted that while tyrants, such as Nero or the bishop of Rome, had persecuted and killed Christians, the only recourse the faithful had against oppression was the armour provided them by God: Scripture.¹⁹ He placed the blame for the rebellion squarely at the door of the bishops who had failed to deliver the true message contained within of the Gospel. Instead of preaching 'obedience, humility and quietness' the bishops had delivered to the ignorant people a message of rebellion and insurrection.²⁰ The King's supremacy, he asserted, was not 'new learning' as these cankerous bishops had contended, but an old truth 'over-rusted with the pope's rust.' Only by teaching the Gospel of peace and clothing themselves in the 'true armour of God' would the King's true ministers 'quench the violence of the flaming darts of the most wicked.'²¹ The propaganda served its purpose and none of the Lincolnshire congregation would be ignorant of the fact rebellion against the King was rebellion against God.

The break with Rome, and the shocking executions of Fisher and More provoked the scorn of Reginald Pole. It is difficult to pinpoint exactly Pole's opinion concerning Henry's ambitions before he left England for Italy in 1532, however, the King appeared to be keen to garner Pole's support for his annulment and religious policies.²² Consequently copies of Sampson's *Oratio* and Gardiner's *De vera obedientia* were dispatched but Pole was unconvinced and concluded, in a letter to Gasparo Contarini, that both men had sought to 'attack the authority they swore to uphold.' Pole further expressed his concern for his fellow Englishmen by stating: 'What miserable people to have such shepherds!'²³ Nevertheless, while Pole lay the fault of England's woeful condition at the door of Henry, he bluntly declared Gardiner a traitor.²⁴ Henry's endeavour had spectacularly failed and Pole was compelled to write a lengthy and abusive response. The reply, known as *De unitate*, was a 'vigorous debunking of the justifications for the royal supremacy, and wholehearted affirmation of the identity of the true Church as the

¹⁸ Morison, *A remedy for sedition*, sig. A2v.

¹⁹ This was an explicit reference to Ephesians 6:13.

²⁰ Hugh Latimer, 'A sermon made by M. Hugh Latimer, at the time of the insurrection in the North...taken out of the sixth chapter of the Epistle of St. Paul to the Ephesians', in *Sermons on the Card and Other Discourses by Hugh Latimer, sometime Bishop of Worcester, Martyr, 1555* (London, Paris, New York & Melbourne: Cassell & Company Limited, 1883), pp.51-65 (p. 61).]

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 62-4.

²² G. W. Bernard claims the Pole had warned Henry of the possible consequences of pursuing his religious policies. However, Thomas F. Mayer suggests he had not rejected them. See Bernard, *The King's Reformation*, pp.213-24 and Mayer, *Reginald Pole: Prince & Prophet* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp.54-61.

²³ *The Correspondence of Reginald Pole. Volume 1. A Calendar, 1518-1546: Beginnings to Legate of Viterbo*, ed. by Thomas F. Mayer (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), p.88.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p.88-90.

body in communion with the Pope.²⁵ The significance of this act should not be understated because this was a wilful display of defiance composed with the intent that it would be delivered into the hands of the King. In writing the tract, Pole understood it was his duty to correct his wayward prince and restore Henry and the nation back into the loving arms of Christendom.²⁶

Reading *De unitate*, it is unmistakable that Pole considered Henry's supremacy to be a ghastly innovation. He accused the king of 'imposing laws upon the Church and forcing unwilling ministers in the Church to obey.'²⁷ Consequently, Pole deliberately chose to fight his opponents on the battlefield occupied by the Henrician propagandists. In order to convince Henry, and Sampson, of their great errors it was necessary to confront head-on what Pole considered to be erroneous interpretations of Old Testament history and two of the great pillars upon which the Royal Supremacy was erected: Romans 13 and I Peter 2:13-17. Nonetheless, the denial of Henry's supremacy was not a denial of the Pauline tenet that rulers were ministers of God. This was apparent in Pole's distinction between the function and power of those holding Apostolic office and those possessing temporal authority. The priests were ministers of God's Gospel through whom the Holy Spirit worked, and they performed an active role in temporal affairs by providing urgent counsel to the civil power. Moreover, their sacerdotal function made priests more sublime and divine than kings. Simply put, 'the king can never perfectly fulfil his function without the assistance of the priest.'²⁸ Pole understood that the worldly office was born of mankind's need for guidance and that God had implanted in all men a need to live together in accordance with nature.

To demolish the foundations of Henry's supremacy, Pole was provoked into a radical exegesis of Romans 13. When considering temporal power he suggested that 'one man or group of men should be delegated with the highest authority and power to repel all violence and injury and to care for the needs of this universal society.'²⁹ While this confirmed the need for 'higher authority' was imbued in mankind by God long before Christ descended from heaven, it also suggested that those holding civil office were appointed by popular will. This had been mooted before. The French theologian Jacques Almain had suggested that princes, such as Jeroboam, did not receive their power 'immediately of God' but by the consent of the people and as the 'dominion of princes is ministerial' they could be deposed. This concept of *dominium* was not a denial of the divine ordination of princes or magistrates because he accepted that God may

²⁵ Marshall, *Heretics and Believers*, p.236.

²⁶ Thomas F. Mayer, 'A Diet for Henry VIII: The Failure of Reginald Pole's 1537 Legation', *Journal of British Studies*, 26:3 (Jul., 1987), pp.205-31 (p. 305).

²⁷ Pole, *Defence of the Unity*, p.11.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p.56.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p.29.

intervene directly by installing rulers just as he had with Saul and David.³⁰ Almain's general proposition was, then, that the 'needs of human life...can only be met by the establishment and maintenance of "civil dominion"', and the interests of any individual, whether ruler or citizen, was far outweighed by the needs of the body politic.³¹

Furthermore, Thomas Starkey, Pole's former secretary, had also contemplated such matters, suggesting that not only was the origin of princely power of human ordinance but also the people were at liberty to appoint and amend for themselves their form of governance. In his fictional *Dialogue between Pole and Lupset* (ca.1530-1532) Starkey argued:

The gudnes of God, out of the wych spryngyth al thing that ys gud, hathe made man, of al creaturys in erth, most perfayt, gyuyng vnto hym a sparkjl of his owne dyuynyte,— that ys to say, right reson,—wherby he schold gouerne hymselfe in cyuyle lyfe *and* gud pollycy, accordyng to hys excellent nature *and* dygnyte.³²

Starkey had, then, accepted Marsilius of Padua's argument that civil law must never be interpreted by the Church.³³ According to Thomas Mayer the *Dialogue* was initially intended 'as a manifesto to persuade his patron [Pole] to assume the place in English public life expected of him.'³⁴ Therefore Pole would have been well aware of Starkey's predilection for a mixed constitution which he believed not only guarded against an inadequate prince by providing necessary support, but also defended the realm from tyranny.³⁵ The rule of a tyrant meant the commonwealth was without good order and polity and as such the realm was no longer ruled by God's providence or his ordinance. But, just as it was within the power of the people to elect a prince, it was also within their power to depose a tyrant that was in disagreement with 'the doctrine of Chryst *and* gud relygyon.'³⁶

Nevertheless, in Pole's defence of church unity he never once challenged the Pauline precept that God was the ultimate origin of all power. In fact, he insisted that the office of kingship was born of the Jews growing 'weary of their judges' and believing protection from their enemies and the administration of civil affairs was better served by a single supreme authority. Therefore, kings were not established by God's will but by His consent. The coming of

³⁰ Jacques Almain, 'A book concerning the authority of the Church', in *Conciliarism and papalism*, eds. by J.H. Burns and Thomas M. Izbicki (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp.132-200 (pp.135-38).

³¹ See J.H. Burns, 'Jacques Almain on Dominion: A Neglected Text', in *Politics, Ideology and Law in Early Modern Europe: Essays in Honor of J.H.M. Salmon*, ed. by Adrianna E. Bakos (Rochester, N.Y.: University of Rochester Press, 1994), pp.149-58 (pp.153-158).

³² Thomas Starkey, *The Dialogue between Pole and Lupset*, p. 165.

³³ Stout, 'Marsilius of Padua and the Henrician Reformation', p.311.

³⁴ Thomas F. Mayer, *Thomas Starkey and the Commonweal: Humanist politics and religion in the reign of Henry VIII* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p.89.

³⁵ Starkey, *Dialogue between Pole and Lupset*, p.102.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p.167-8.

Christ, Pole argued, had not diminished the lawful authority of kings but rather 'destroyed all unjust powers.'³⁷ He had no difficulty, then, in agreeing with Sampson's exegesis of Romans 13 that declared that Scripture commanded that the prince must be obeyed unless his instruction was contrary to God's.³⁸ The two fundamental principles of kingship, protection and governance, corresponded directly with the duties outlined in Romans 13:3-4: to be a minister for good and to wield the sword against evil. The civil office was conditional upon fulfilment of these duties, and Pole argued that any king that pursued his own happiness rather than that of his people had descended into tyranny and would 'lose the very title of king.'³⁹

However, Pole took particular exception to Sampson's solicitation of I Peter 2:17. He contended that Sampson had deliberately interpreted Peter's command to 'Honour the king' in a false manner in order to impose upon Christians unconditional obedience to temporal authority. Pole contended that Scripture had proven that obedience to rulers had 'just and proper limitations' and these boundaries were breached when kings command anything that exceeded their legitimate authority, as Henry had done with the Royal Supremacy. As Pole firmly stated: 'The limits of a king's power are definite, not infinite.' Pole clearly believed that the English people were not being asked to 'Honour the king' but rather being commanded to honour the king as Supreme Head of the Church and Vicar of God, and this was nothing short of artifice. It was one thing to recognise Romans 13 confirmed that royal authority 'depends upon God' and quite another to deduce that it granted the prince supremacy over the Church. Pole was certain that the Apostles had not bestowed upon kings supreme authority, because while Peter did command Christians to 'Honour the King' he likewise commanded 'Honour all men.' It was wrong, then, to appropriate Peter's words to support the supremacy of princes, because they would lead to another erroneous conclusion 'that all men are Vicars of Christ, [and] that all men hold the office of supreme head of the Church.' Pole was of the opinion that Sampson was simply confusing the title Head of State with Head of the Church.⁴⁰

Therefore, Sampson's coupling of I Peter 2:17 and Romans 13 was, for Pole, a delusional exegesis of Scripture which lacked any understanding of the contextual reality in which the commands were written. The Apostles had admonished Christians to obey the emperor, the holder of the temporal sword, and not offer him any resistance 'in matters pertaining to his imperial authority.' But Pole believed the extent of Sampson's fallacy was truly revealed when his argument was followed to its natural end: Nero would be recognised as the head of the

³⁷ Pole, *Defence of the Unity*, p.51; p.30.

³⁸ Sampson's text reads '*Quicquid ergo mandat Princeps, id facias oportet, quia sic praecipit Deus, modo nihil mandat contra Deum.*' Sampson, *Oratio*, sig. A4r.

³⁹ Pole, *Defence of the Unity*, pp.54-5.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.22-3; p.33; p.39.

Church. Sampson's conclusion, he contended, would be laughable if the implications were not so deadly serious.⁴¹ Moreover, the elevation of the prince only demonstrated Henry's 'arrogance and covetousness' for the highest office. If Henry maintained this ungodly policy, Pole warned, Henry would never resemble God, only Satan.⁴² Pole had delivered an unwavering defence of the orthodox Catholic faith that insisted that the King's supremacy was antithetical to the true faith. He had also employed the very same biblical proof texts used to erect the princely supremacy in order to demolish it. However, in doing so, he hoped not to incite rebellion but rather he yearned to convince the King to repent for his sin, and entice him back to the bosom of the Roman Catholic Church. *De unitate* was the work of a man acting like an Old Testament prophet not a seditious rebel.⁴³ Therefore, Pole was deeply concerned for the soul of his King who, in his endeavour, had not rejected the pope, but Christ.⁴⁴

Reform and Retreat?

In the aftermath of the Pilgrimage of Grace the government began to discuss the inadequacy of the Ten Articles. The outcome, after months of negotiation and theological debate, was *The Institution of a Christian Man* (1537), known as the *Bishops' Book*.⁴⁵ This was another attempt to provide a comprehensive statement of doctrine, but instead it merely reflected the disunity of the episcopate and therefore it failed to meet the complete approval of either side of the religious divide. Neither side, it appears, had been browbeaten into accepting a wholly evangelical or conservative formulary. However, the *Bishops' Book* is explicit in its rejection of the pre-eminence of the Church of Rome and spoke of a catholic and universal church in which members that shared the tenets of the Christian faith and professed to live in accordance with the true interpretation of Scripture were 'equal in power and dignity.'⁴⁶ Significantly, the book also confirmed that Christ and the Apostles had ordained two 'holy orders' within the Church: the civil power identified as *potestas gladii* (the power of the sword) and the spiritual ministers which possessed 'special power, authority, and commission' to preach and teach God's Word and administer His Sacraments.

Unsurprisingly, the *Bishops' Book* claimed that the power Christ had conferred upon the spiritual ministers was confined to the mystical body of the Church. This authority permitted the

⁴¹ Pole, *Defence of the Unity*, pp.24-5.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p.66.

⁴³ Dermot Fenlon, *Heresy and Obedience in Tridentine Italy: Cardinal Pole and the Counter Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), p.39 and Mayer, *Reginald Pole*, pp.19-20.

⁴⁴ Pole, *Defence of the Unity*, p.88.

⁴⁵ Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer: A Life* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996), p.185.

⁴⁶ 'The Institution of a Christian Man', in *Formularies of Faith put forth by authority during the reign of Henry VIII*, (ed.) Charles Lloyd (Oxford: University Press, 1856), pp.21-211 (pp. 54-5).

clergy to perform a sacerdotal function as '*donum et gratia*, a gift of grace; and in some places it is called, *claves, sive potestas clavium*...the power of the keys.'⁴⁷ As such the spiritual office was divided into two parts the *potestas ordinis* and *potestas jurisdictionis*. The controversy lay in the latter, and the matter was resolved by comprehending that jurisdiction consisted of 'three special points': (1) power to rebuke sin and punish sinners, although not corporally; (2) authority to approve and admit the nominees to their order, although the power to nominate the high office of the bishop belonged solely to the King; (3) the power to 'make and ordain certain rules or canons' concerning matters such as feast days and the order of sacramental ceremonies. In matters which were considered *adiaphora* the clergy could determine 'certain positive rules and ordinances' by mediation of the people and their prince. Therefore, a spiritual minister's *potestas jurisdictionis* was always inferior to the supreme power of the Christian king. The *Bishops' Book* declared, in the language of Romans 13, the king alone possessed the authority as God's minister to tend to religion by approving canon, enacting his own laws for the benefit of the Church and punishing subjects corporally.⁴⁸

However, the *Bishops' Book* declared that in discharging his divine duties the prince may, by consent of parliament, delegate 'unto priests and bishops' some of his temporal authority. But this was never granted *in perpetuum* and could be revoked whenever the prince felt it expedient. The papal supremacy was denied outright because no member of the spiritual order could wield the coercive sword or possess any authority to constitute civil laws. The principles of the Royal Supremacy were confirmed by way of I Peter 2 and Romans 13 which commanded all Christians, including the clergy, to be subject to 'the princes and potentates of the world' even if they were infidels.⁴⁹ The usual caveat was applied: so long as the civil power did not command anything contrary to God's Word. Nonetheless, while the Christian prince was not endowed with sacerdotal power, he was comprehensively granted the right to reform the Church and guard against heresy as part of his duty to conserve its health and ensure its ministers executed their offices righteously.⁵⁰ Despite the conciliation between evangelicals and conservatives, the *Bishops' Book* offered Henry an uncompromised statement of support for the Royal Supremacy.

The second Injunctions to the Clergy (1538) were issued by Cromwell as Henry's vicegerent, and designed to give practical expression to the doctrinal changes contained within the *Bishops' Book*. Not only did the injunctions attack idolatry and superstition, they also warned

⁴⁷ '*The Institution of a Christian Man*', pp.101-2.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.107-13.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 113-9.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p.121.

ministers that those failing to observe the institutions risked deprivation.⁵¹ Additionally, any clergy who continued to uphold the 'pretended' power of the Bishop of Rome must be reported to the authorities.⁵² The bishop of Lincoln, John Longland, while certainly no evangelical, remained on message. In his sermon before Henry at Greenwich in 1538, he insisted that Christ alone was the 'hyghest bushoppe, the bushop of bushoppes' and the pope should 'be abashed, ashamed & to abhorre his owne pryde' for seeking to appropriate the title of the Lord.⁵³ Longland's sermon was a demonstration of a man attempting to remain as orthodox as the Henry's religious policies permitted. However, *The sum of the Actes & decrees made by diuerse bishops of rome* (1538) was a strident attack on popery and declared that ceremonies observed by the Church of Rome were of human innovation and the pope was guilty of instituting laws only to establish his own authority.⁵⁴ The regime had recognised the need to hammer the doctrine of the Royal Supremacy home because the message was either not getting through or, more likely, failing to convince.

The anonymous *A treatise prouynge by the kynges lawes, that the byshops of Rome, had neuer ryght to any supremitie within this realme* (1538), produced by the King's printer Thomas Berthelet, adopted a now familiar historical approach in order to persuade those subjects that still wavering over the matter of the Royal Supremacy. The treatise cited examples from Scripture and English law and custom to support the essential premise 'that kynge be moste high and immediate powers in erth vnder god.' The tract invoked Psalm 2:10 and Ecclesiastes 5 to confirm that kings are 'judges of the earth' and that their supreme authority extended over both the people and the clergy. Moreover, Romans 13:4 supported the doctrine of Royal Supremacy with the confirmation that Paul had revealed Kings to 'be reuengers into wrahte to hym that doth euyll.' The papal supremacy was, obviously, flatly denied, and the treatise declared that any claim for exemption from earthly judgment directly contravened Scripture which had affirmed all temporal power and judgment belonged to kings directly under God. Papal intrusion into English affairs was likewise rejected; along with Rome's power of excommunication because 'no foreyne power maye take place in this realme.'⁵⁵ The treatise sought firmly to advertise that the King alone had the power to create and execute law within the realm and all subjects,

⁵¹ Thomas Cromwell, 'The Second Royal Injunctions of Henry VIII. 1538', in *Visitation Articles and Injunctions, Volume II, 1536-1558*, eds. by W.H. Frere and W.P.M. Kennedy (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1910), pp.34-43 (pp.35-43).

⁵² *Ibid.*, p.39.

⁵³ John Longland, *A sermone made before the kynge his maiestye at grenewiche, vpon good frydaye* (London: Thomas Petyt, 1538), STC 16796, sig. B2r.

⁵⁴ *The sum of the Actes & decrees made by diuerse bishops of rome* ([London]: Thomas Gybson, 1538), STC 21307a.5, sig. A1v.

⁵⁵ *A treatise prouynge by the kynges lawes, that the byshops of Rome, had neuer ryght to any supremitie within this realme* (Londini: Tho. Berthelet, 1538), STC 24248, sigs. A2r-A5r.

including the clergy, are bound to obey. In this way every violation of temporal law was sin and, as Gardiner later contended, contempt for human law offended the commandment of God.⁵⁶

Moreover, Simon Fish felt compelled to produce a second unreservedly anti-clerical tract that again accused the spiritual order of all manner of treachery against the crown and the people. Fish charged the 'holy Theives' with extracting wealth from the people and seeking exemption from obedience to princely authority while simultaneously demanding obedience in return. The reprehensible intent of the popish clergy was to pluck away the obedience of the people from their natural lord and cause them to fall into rebellion. Therefore, Fish urged Henry, in words which closely resembled Romans 13, to muster all the power of his sword, crown and dignity, and punish these 'Ravenous Wolves' for attempting to purloin the temporal sword and migrate the obedience of the people to themselves.⁵⁷ It was fast becoming apparent that the King needed to be the beacon for reform. Accordingly, John Bale's *King Johan*, at least in part, sought to demonstrate just how vital Henry was to the process of evangelical reformation.⁵⁸ While the drama professed to concern the quarrel between King John and Pope Innocent III, the contemporary parallel of Henry's recent papal struggles 'would have been clear for all to see.'⁵⁹

Bale's *Kynge Johan* stands shoulder-to-shoulder with Fish's earlier anti-papal satire *A supplicacyon* in accusing the Bishop of Rome of usurping kingly power. The influence of Romans 13 upon the work is discernible from John's opening dialogue in the first act:

To declare the powres and their force to enlarge
The scriptur of God doth flow in most abowndaunce;
And of sophyteres the cauteles to dyscharge
Bothe Peter and Pawle makyth plenteosse utterauns;
How that all pepell shuld shew there trew alegyauns
To ther lawfull kyng Christ Jesu dothe consent,
Whych to the hygh powres was evere obedyent.⁶⁰

Bale's explicit intention, asserted Greg Walker, was 'to establish the divine nature of kingship and the universal nature of royal jurisdiction in the minds of the audience.'⁶¹ The divine origin

⁵⁶ *A treatise prouynge by the kynges lawes*, sig. B3r. Stephen Gardiner, 'Gardiner's answer to Bucer', in *OCS*, p. 175.

⁵⁷ Simon Fish, *The very beggars petition against popery* (London: s.n., 1680), Wing F983, pp.2-3.

⁵⁸ See Tyndale's *Obedience* and *The Practice of Prelates*. Also Rainer Pineas, 'William Tyndale's Influence on John Bale's Polemical Use of History', *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, 53 (1962), pp.79-96.

⁵⁹ Murray Roston, *Sixteenth-Century English Literature* (London: Macmillan Press, 1982), p.69.

⁶⁰ John Bale, 'Kynge Johan', in *The Complete Plays of John Bale*, Volume 1, ed. Peter Happé (Cambridge: Brewer, 1985), p.30.

⁶¹ Greg Walker, *Plays of Persuasion: Drama and Politics at the Court of Henry VIII* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p.181.

of royal power is repeatedly restated and Bale returned to Romans 13 to affirm that Henry had been given the sword to correct evildoing. Bale projected upon John an image of evangelical Kingship which appealed to the primacy of Scripture above that of the pope. John's authority to reform the Church was revealed by Paul because 'He baryth not the sword without cawse, sayth he.' Bale contended that it was John's attempts at reform that had led to the priests wrongfully naming him a tyrant. In response John declared, again in the language of Romans 13, that the priests had become so wicked that they refuse to obey his divinely ordained power and he reminded the spiritual ministers that those that resist his authority also 'agenst God maketh resystence.'⁶²

Kynge Johan presented pure obedience doctrine in the vein of Luther and Tyndale. John was a device that not only flattered Henry's heroic stand against papal tyranny but also urged him to accomplish further Reformation. As Philip Schwyzer observed, 'John himself is a shadow of Henry VIII, the embodiment of Imperial Majesty who will fulfil John's historical mission.'⁶³ However, schism between England and Rome was not unique.⁶⁴ For, as one contemporary observer, Thomas Brown claimed, King John 'was the begynner of the puttyng down of the Bisshop of Rome, and therof we myght be all gladd.'⁶⁵ Bale's polemical drama reflected the regime's own approach during 1532-34. The Act in Restraint of Appeals had turned to 'authentic histories' and the *Collectanea* cited Geoffrey of Monmouth's proclamation that 'one of British race be born that shall obtain the empire of Rome' in order to help confirm Henry's imperial mandate.⁶⁶ The English reformers certainly recognised that in matters of temporal law the principle of *sola scriptura* was not adequate. The biblical accounts of kings needed the support of non-scriptural history. Bale had engaged in reconstruction and King John was presented as 'a thorough zealot in the protestant mould, a figuration of the writer's own opinions and passion.'⁶⁷ Nevertheless, Bale's critical judgment contained within *Kynge Johan* would not have gone

⁶² Bale, '*Kynge Johan*', p.63; p.68; p.66.

⁶³ Philip Schwyzer, 'Paranoid History; John Bale's *King Johan*', in *The Oxford Handbook of Tudor Drama*, eds. by Thomas Betteridge and Greg Walker (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp.499-513 (p.508).

⁶⁴ See Anne J. Duggan, 'Henry II, the English Church and the Papacy, 1154-1176', in *Henry II: New Interpretations*, eds. Christopher Harper-Bill and Nicholas Vincent (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2007), pp.154-83.

⁶⁵ Thomas Cranmer, 'An Inclosure in Archbishop Cranmer's Letter of 11 Jan. [1539.]', in *Miscellaneous Writings and Letters of Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, Martyr, 1556*, ed. by John Edmund Cox for the Parker Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1846), p.388.

⁶⁶ See 'Act in Restraint.' pp. 353-8 and Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Histories of the Kings of Britain* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1920), p.175.

⁶⁷ Walker, *Plays of Persuasion*, p. 182.

unnoticed. While John was presented as having the willingness to amend the realm he ultimately failed because he did not possess the ability to succeed.⁶⁸

The issuing of the *Bishops' Book* and Cranmer's unpublished Thirteen Articles (1538) demonstrate that Lutheran exegesis continued to permeate the work of English theologians. The influence of both the Wittenberg Articles and the Augsburg Confession upon Cranmer's work is manifest, but his article concerning civil affairs was considerably fuller, reflecting the urgent nature of England's religious landscape. Cranmer was of the firm opinion that people could not exist without obedience to the just government that God had ordained in the shape of kings, princes and governors. The duty of these divinely instructed authorities was made abundantly clear: to ensure subjects not only lived in accordance to the Law of God but also 'other laws suitable for the state, to order and rule the same people with lawful power.'⁶⁹ Additionally, princes must oversee that all, including priests, performed their duties correctly and, paralleling Romans 13, 'the good are encouraged to act well, and the wicked are restrained from evil-doing.'⁷⁰ Moreover, even the attempt to conceal Tyndale's hand in the annotations of the Cranmer licenced 'Thomas Matthew's Bible' (1537) could not cloak the obvious propagation of the evangelical message. The preliminary sections praised Henry's 'heavenly polycye' of suppressing superstition and urged him to maintain the perfect doctrine of Christ by following the magnificent examples of Moses, Hezekiah and Josiah.⁷¹

Therefore, as the summer of 1538 approached it would have appeared to the evangelicals that further reform was not entirely off the table. Indeed, discussions were ongoing between Henry's emissaries and the League of Schmalkalden.⁷² But then, quite suddenly, Henry applied the brakes and the negotiations with the Germans stalled. When the League pressed Henry on his views on the doctrinal abuses of Rome, the King turned to the bishop of Durham, Cuthbert Tunstal, for theological counsel, providing the conservatives with a crucial opportunity. After weeks of consultation, the orthodox position on matters such as private mass, clerical marriage and auricular confession prevailed.⁷³ Consequently Henry rejected the Lutheran doctrine on abuses and what emerged was an ascendant conservative faction. The Act of Six

⁶⁸ See Peter Womack, 'Imagining Communities: Theatre and the English Nation in the Sixteenth Century', in *Culture and History 1350-1600: Essays on English Communities, Identities and Writing*, ed. by David Aers (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992), pp.91-145 (pp.117-8).

⁶⁹ 'The Thirteen Articles with Three Additional Article, 1538', in *Documents of the English Reformation*, ed. by Gerald Bray (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co., 1994), pp.184-221 (p.203).

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.204-5.

⁷¹ *The Byble which is all the holy Scripture...translated into Englysh by Thomas Matthew* (Antwerp: Matthew Crom for Richard Grafton and Edward Whitchurch, London, 1537), STC 2066, sigs.*5v-*6v.

⁷² See Rory McEntegart, *Henry VIII, The League of Schmalkalden, and the English Reformation* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2002), pp.108-14.

⁷³ John Schofield, 'The Lost Reformation: Why Lutheranism Failed in England during the Reigns of Henry VIII and Edward VI' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, 2003), pp.67-102.

Articles that followed was more conservative, and the reformers attributed this to the influence of Tunstal, the Bishop of London John Stokesley, and Stephen Gardiner who had now returned to England following a three year absence serving as Ambassador to France.⁷⁴ This conservative victory demonstrated that the only policy that was utterly resolved was Henry's supremacy in both temporal and spiritual matters. Consequently, Henry's Church suffered from incoherence. The King's conservatism was too reformist to be Catholic and too Catholic to be evangelical. Henry's religious reform was not a search for an innovative *via media* but rather a quest for practical answers to royal dilemmas. Henry was strong willed but not an immovable tyrant, and his counsellors were well aware of this fact.

The Six Articles were, then, an attempt to provide some religious coherence to the idiosyncrasy of England's religious landscape following the break with Rome. They declared the intention to achieve a 'perfect resolution...[and] make a perfect concord and unity generally amongst all his [Henry's] loving and obedient subjects.'⁷⁵ However, some have considered the passing of the Six Articles as a reaction to internal and external pressure. J.J. Scarisbrick suggests that the display of orthodoxy was a 'panic-measure...to disarm enemies at home and abroad.'⁷⁶ Both Susan Brigden and David Loades understood the Articles as Henry's specific reaction to a murmuring populace and his attempt to alleviate conservative anxiety in order to shore-up opposition to the pope.⁷⁷ In reality it was probably all of these things. The Henrician government was fearful of internal and external pressure. While the Pilgrimage of Grace had been suppressed, more disquiet was felt in the form of the 'Exeter Conspiracy', which allegedly sought to overthrow Henry VIII and place Henry Courtenay, marquess of Exeter upon the throne, led to Reginald Pole's mother and brothers, Sir Geoffrey and Henry, Lord Mantagu, being implicated and the latter being executed for high treason in January 1539.⁷⁸ Nevertheless, in Wittenberg the passing of the Six Articles was met with shock and they conceived it to be a betrayal of confidence. According to Neelak Serawlook Tjernagel, 'Luther cried out against the king who had stripped the pope of his name and property in England but was [still] perpetuating the pope's doctrine.'⁷⁹

⁷⁴ Redworth, *In Defence of the Church Catholic*, p. 89.

⁷⁵ 'An Act abolishing diversity in opinions', in *TCD*, pp.399-401.

⁷⁶ Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII*, p.365.

⁷⁷ Susan Brigden, *London and the Reformation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), pp.299-308. David Loades, *Politics and the Nation 1450-1660: Obedience, Resistance and Public Order* 4th edn (London: Fontana Press, 1992), p.208.

⁷⁸ M. H. Dodds and R. Dodds believe the 'Exeter Conspiracy' was a manufactured event. Dodds and Dodds, *The Pilgrimage of Grace 1536-7 and the Exeter Conspiracy 1538*. Vol. II (Cambridge: University Press, 1915), Chapters XXII and XIII. Tracey A. Sowerby agrees in *Renaissance and Reform in Tudor England: The Careers of Sir Richard Morison c. 1513-1556* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p.91.

⁷⁹ Neelak Serawlook Tjernagel, *Henry VIII and the Lutherans: A Study in Anglo-Lutheran Relations from 1521 to 1547* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1965), p.199.

The external tensions were fanned further in December 1538 when Pope Paul III finally promulgated the bull of excommunication that not only deposed Henry but also absolved his subjects from obedience. The issuing of the bull both heightened the possibility of the hostile forces of Charles and King Francis I forming an alliance to enforce the excommunication, and increased the possibility of internal protest. Henry moved to suppress any dissenting voices, whether political or theological, by preventing the printing of unauthorised English texts and prohibiting the importation of any books translated or annotated anonymously. He justified his act of censorship by arguing that because God had committed the Church to him 'immediately vnder Christ' it was his duty to ensure its tranquillity and freedom from wicked error, opinion and dissention.⁸⁰ Henry was clearly in no mood to be judged, especially by a man he felt wished both himself and his realm hurt and destruction. After all he had fought long and hard to abrogate from his kingdom 'all olde popishe traditions...whiche eyther dyd helpe his [the pope's] tyrannye, or increase his pride.'⁸¹

The regime reacted to the pressure by sponsoring a campaign intended to challenge adverse opinion and the task of penning the official counter-propaganda fell to the trusted hand of Richard Morison. But the employment of Morison again demonstrated the regime's lack of coherence. The tract he produced, *An invective ayenste...treason* (1539), was littered with evangelical strains, such as justification by faith, that was not did not appear in official Henrician polemic.⁸² Nevertheless, *An invective* determinedly called for obedience to the King and it unambiguously cast Pole as the shameless 'archetraytour' at the heart of the poisonous treachery aimed at the King.⁸³ Morison was not alone in chiding Pole. In a letter written by Tunstal and Stokesley, Pole was accused of being seduced by the pope's 'fayre woordes and vayne promyses' and of departing from his duty to his natural prince 'for a vayne glory of a redde hat.'⁸⁴ Morison delivered the official directive that disobedience, and worse still rebellion, were displeasing to God and He would not permit a loving king who was divinely ordained to suffer violation at the hands of traitors. God would rightly punish them for their ingratitude.⁸⁵ Nevertheless, the strongest message delivered by Morison was his portrayal of Henry as a latter-

⁸⁰ Henry VIII, *The kynges most royall maiestie being enfourmed* (London: Tho. Berthelet, 1538), STC 7790.

⁸¹ Henry VIII, *An epistle of the moste myghty [and] redouted Prince Henry the .viii...to all Christen princes, and to all those that trewly and syncerely professe Christes religion* (Londini: Thomae Bertheleti, 1538), STC 13081.3, sig. A7r-A7v.

⁸² Cissie Rafferty Bonini, 'Lutheran Influences in the Early English Reformation: Richard Morison Re-examined', *Archiv fur Reformationsgeschichte*, 64, (1973), pp.206-24 (p.214-5).

⁸³ Richard Morison, *An invective ayenste...treason* (Londini: Thomae Bertheleti, 1539), STC 18111, sigs. C7v-C8r.

⁸⁴ Cuthbert Tunstal and John Stokesley, *A letter written* (London: Reginald Woulfe, 1560), STC 24321, sig. A2v.

⁸⁵ Morison, *An invective*, sigs. E2r-E4v.

day King David who was God's chosen lieutenant and provided to deliver England from papal bondage.⁸⁶

Another Morison tract, *An Exhortation to stir all Englishmen to the Defence of their Country* (1539), also promoted patriotic sentiment. The need for loyalty was again stressed and he asserted that true servants are obedient to their rulers because otherwise the commonwealth will 'runne al heedlonge to vtter destruction.'⁸⁷ This was an obligation to defend the nation that was also strongly expressed by Irishman Edward Walshe who would fight in the king's successful Boulogne campaign during the 1540s. In fact, Walshe was almost Catonian in his understanding of loyalty to the state. The relationship between a country and its native citizens was described as akin to that of a father and his child. He applied the precepts of Romans 13 to assert that any traitors which broke their natural obligation to their country dishonoured both the high institution of the King and the providence of God that placed all men under them.⁸⁸ Nonetheless, the disaster of disobedience was traced by Morison directly back to the disobedience and rebellion of Adam and his trespass was likened to treason against God. Therefore, he argued, in the language of Romans 13, that God had ordained a political order and commanded all, on pain of damnation, to honour their rulers and magistrates because they provided the great benefits of justice, liberty, comfort and the preservation of society.

Morison demonstrated this divinely appointed order by drawing attention to the illustrious Old Testament Kings Josiah and Hezekiah. And he contended that provided the ruler led his subjects to God's revealed Word they could be assured that the He will always assist them.⁸⁹ Tracey A. Sowerby argues that Morison drew a parallel between these specific biblical godly kings and Henry for a distinct purpose: to encourage further reform and cleanse the realm of idolatry. If Henry failed to follow these glorious footsteps he risked losing God's favour. And given the very real threat of war, this 'would mean invasion and conquest by a foreign, ungodly power.'⁹⁰ Morison was joined in the task of producing official propaganda by Richard Taverner who had already displayed his evangelical colours when he translated the Augsburg Confession in 1536.⁹¹ In *The second booke of the Garden of wysedome* (1539) Taverner turned to Romans 13 to demand fear, tribute and obedience to the King for conscience's sake. This was to be

⁸⁶ Morison, *An invective*, sigs. D2r-D2v. John N. King, 'Henry VIII as David: The King's Image and Reformation Politics', in *Rethinking the Henrician Era: Essays on Early Tudor Texts and Contexts*, ed. by Peter C. Herman (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1994), pp. 78-92.

⁸⁷ Richard Morison, *An exhortation to styrre all Englyshe men to the defence of theyr countreye* (Londini: Thome Bertheleti, 1539), STC 18110.5, sig. B2r.

⁸⁸ Edward Walshe, *The office and duety in fightyng for our countrey* (London: Johannes Herford, 1545), STC 25000, sigs. B1v-B2v.

⁸⁹ Morison, *An invective*, sigs. C4v-C6r; B1r; B2r; C1r.

⁹⁰ Sowerby, *Renaissance and Reform*, pp. 105-6.

⁹¹ See *The confesyon of the fayth of the Germaynes* (London: Robert Redman, 1536), STC 908.

rendered because, in an allusion to Psalm 82:6, Henry represented 'the parson euen of god him self' as He had adorned kings 'wyth the honorable title of his own name callynge them Goddes.'⁹²

Even Tunstal joined the call for obedience. He contended that those who refused to observe God's command to obey their governors must believe themselves to be above them. He added that the obstinate men would rather have their princes prostrate than 'adore them by godly honour vpon the erthe, & to kysse their fete, as yf they were god.'⁹³ Tunstal would, no doubt, be in agreement with Gardiner's assertion that 'disobedience is the greatest and most infamous crime.'⁹⁴ Therefore, Tunstal specifically utilised the commands of I Peter 2:13 and Romans 13 to demonstrate that those filled with pride and disobedience were in direct violation of Scripture which demanded subjection to God's appointed minister. Tunstal's sermon firmly upheld the King's supremacy and clearly distinguished between the power of the prince and that of the clergy. He made especial note of Christ's words to Pilate, 'My kingdom is not from this world' (John 18:36), which proved that those seeking to make the spiritual kingdom a worldly one had fallen into error. However, he comforted his flock by alluding to Proverbs 20:2, stating that God had provided England with a virtuous king, as hardy as a lion, that would not suffer his subjects being to be devoured by such traitorous 'wylde beastes.' For Tunstal, God was indeed on Henry and England's side.⁹⁵

Henry may have applied the brakes on reform, but the *Injunctions* of 1538 contained a significant victory for the evangelicals. The King had relented in his opposition to vernacular Scripture and the *Injunctions* prescribed that 'one boke of the hole bible...in english' was placed in every church.⁹⁶ The Great Bible (1539), a Miles Coverdale revision of the earlier 'Matthew's Bible', was produced upon the instruction and financial support of Cromwell. However, some of the more provocative elements were removed, such as the Luther-Tyndale prologue to Romans and the evangelical annotations. This approach was noticeably irenic and not inconsistent with Henry's reactionary approach. Nevertheless, the frontispiece left no one oblivious to the fact that the Church of England was no longer under papal authority.⁹⁷ The central image is of a glorified Davidic Henry, who after receiving the Word of God (*verbum Dei*) directly from Him, in turn, entrusts it to the ecclesiastical and political orders represented by Cranmer and Cromwell.

⁹² Richard Taverner, *The second booke of the Garden of wysedome* (London: R. Bankes, 1539), STC 23712.5, sig. B6r.

⁹³ Cuthbert Tunstal, *Sermon made upon Palm Sunday* (Londini: Thomae Bertheleti, 1539), STC 24322a, sig. B6v.

⁹⁴ Gardiner, 'Gardiner's answer to Bucer', pp. 181.

⁹⁵ Tunstal, *Sermon made upon Palm Sunday*, sigs. C1r-C2r; C7r; E1r-E2r.

⁹⁶ Thomas Cromwell, 'Cromwell's Injunctions to the Clergy', in *Life and Letters of Thomas Cromwell, Vol. II: Letters from 1536, Notes, Index*, ed. by Roger Merriman (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1902), pp.151-5 (p. 152).

⁹⁷ Tatiana C. String, 'Henry VIII's Illuminated 'Great Bible'', in *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 59 (1996), pp. 315-24.

The image left no room for ambiguity: the king had supplanted the pope as the 'temporal intermediary between heaven and earth.'⁹⁸ As Alec Ryrie explains '[a] key consequence of this was a theology in which law, whether divine or royal, was of the highest importance.'⁹⁹ Henry was fulfilling his dual role appointed to him by God. He was the embodiment of the temporal prince and Head of the Church united in one divine anointed being and each reinforced by the other.

The Bible was to be the greatest authority in both the spiritual and temporal realms. Consequently, the king, as God's ordained minister, was placed at the summit of this godly hierarchy. This was perfectly demonstrated in the Great Bible by Psalm 82:6 with a manicule specifically pointing to the words 'ye are Goddes.'¹⁰⁰ Henry sought to control the demand for vernacular Scripture and promote interests his interests in union to ensure obedience. The printing of an English Bible, the King hoped, would 'spread knowledge of the moral law, especially the law of obedience to princes, and the divine sanction for the moral and political order.'¹⁰¹ In April 1540, the Great Bible was re-issued with a prologue by Cranmer which championed the need for reading Scripture as a bulwark against sin and 'ignorance of the same is the greater ruine and destruction of them that will not knowe it.' For Cranmer Scripture provided Henry with the indispensable wisdom needed to govern and subjects with knowledge of their obligation to love, obey and dread their prince.¹⁰² Cranmer's preface and the frontispiece certainly impressed upon those immersing themselves in the vernacular Scripture that Henry had blessed them with an immeasurable gift. The Great Bible may have been a success for Cromwell, but by early 1540 he would have been well aware that he was swimming against a conservative tide.

Advancing the True Religion

With the arrest of Cromwell in June 1540 upon charges of treason and heresy, it appeared Henry had once again turned on a sixpence. Whether the royal ear had been filled with 'half-truths and lies', the King's increased anxiety following the Franco-Habsburg agreement, or simply Henry's unhappiness over the marriage to Anne of Cleves, what is certain is that Cromwell's enemies,

⁹⁸ King, 'Henry VIII as David', p. 80.

⁹⁹ Alec Ryrie, 'Divine Kingship and Royal Theology in Henry VIII's Reformation', *Reformation*, 7 (2002), pp.49-77 (p. 65).

¹⁰⁰ *The Byble in Englyshe...translated after the veryte of the Hebrue and Greke textes* (Paris: Prynted by [Francis Regnault, and in London by] Rychard Grafton [and] Edward Whitchurch, 1539 [April]), STC 2068, sig. BB8v.

¹⁰¹ Richard Rex, *Henry VIII and the English Reformation* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1993), p. 105.

¹⁰² Thomas Cranmer, 'A prologue or preface made by the moost reuerende father in God, Thomas Cranmer Archbyshop of Canturbury Metropolytan and Prymate of Englande', in *The Byble in Englyshe that is to saye the conte[n]t of al the holy scripture, both of ye olde, and newe testame[n]t, with a prologe therinto, made by the reuerende father in God, Thomas archbysshop of Cantorbury* (London: Edward whytchurche, 1540), STC 2070, sigs. +1r-+4v (+2r).

men like Gardiner, and the third duke of Norfolk, Thomas Howard, took the opportunity to seize the initiative.¹⁰³ Nevertheless, Henry was again reacting to the pressure of the moment. A month after his arrest, Cromwell, along with other prominent evangelicals Robert Barnes, William Jerome and Thomas Garnett, was executed, and hundreds more were rounded up for suspected heresy under the Act of Six Articles. Henry's flirtation with the German alliance was now over. But while the conservatives now held the majority in convocation, the evangelicals were down but they were not out. The King had applied the brakes but this was not a reversal of the fundamental tenet of the Henrician Reformation: the supremacy of the King over both the spiritual and temporal realms.

Over the next few years the evangelicals had to content themselves with minor victories. Cranmer ensured three of the six newly instituted preachers at Canterbury, John Scory, Lancelot Ridley and Michael Drum, were sympathetic to the evangelical cause. Ridley's commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians (1540) saw him take a Tyndalian swipe at the papal supremacy by asserting that Christ placed kings and princes in their worldly kingdoms and men of 'euery state and degree' had a duty to obey this superior power. Princes were heads under Christ and the Bishop of Rome's attempt to exempt prelates from obedience to kings violated God's Law found in Romans 13, I Peter 2 and Hebrews 13.¹⁰⁴ While Ridley recognised the existence of two swords, these were defined very differently to the traditional Gelasian understanding of authority. Instead he argued that the shield of faith defended the Christian's head and body from the temptations and assaults of the Devil, but the sword of the spirit (the Word of God) would wound and kill their adversary. Consequently, the temporal sword, as defined by Paul in Romans 13:4, was indispensable in correcting and punishing malefactors.¹⁰⁵

Certainly, the promotion of the prince as a godly vehicle to ensure tranquillity within the realm ruffled few feathers. But evangelical preachers such as Ridley and Scory were impugned by conservatives because of their sympathy for the new learning.¹⁰⁶ Additionally, the evangelicals suffered further setbacks, with Cromwell's Bible being savagely attacked by Gardiner for its intrinsic evangelicalism and many parishes were slow to place the English Bible in their churches, owing either to cost or fears that direct access to Scripture might stimulate heresy.¹⁰⁷ Cranmer fended off Gardiner's attack on the Great Bible by persuading Henry to place

¹⁰³ The matter is still far from settled. See G.R. Elton, 'Thomas Cromwell's Decline and Fall', *The Cambridge Historical Journal*, 10:2 (1951), pp.150-85 and Bernard, *King's Reformation*, pp.542-69.

¹⁰⁴ Lancelot Ridley, *Commentary in Englyshe upon Sayncte Paules Epystle to the Ephesyans* (London: Robert Redman, 1540), STC 21038, sigs. C5r-C5v.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, sig. P6r-P8r.

¹⁰⁶ MacCulloch, *Cranmer: A Life*, pp.284-6.

¹⁰⁷ Christopher Haigh, *English Reformations: Religion, Politics and Society under the Tudors* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), p.156-7.

the task of revising the translation in the hands of the universities which essentially kicked the process into the long grass.¹⁰⁸ Cranmer continued to push for further religious reform but for a King still sceptical of Luther's heresy, the high-tide of evangelicalism under Henry had now been reached. The King now, quite remarkably, even contemplated a reconciliation with Rome. Gardiner, along with evangelical Henry Knyvet, were dispatched to the 1541 Imperial Diet of Regensburg (Ratisbon) to make overtures to Charles V. In fact, Gardiner later recounted that the king 'was determined to have given over the supremacy again to the pope.' He asserted Henry had commissioned him to petition the Emperor to be mediator 'betwene the Popes holines and the king, to bryng the king to the obedience of the Sea of Rome.'¹⁰⁹

However, Gardiner's recollection of Henry's instruction to make noises of reconciliation to Charles V must be placed in context. The King's moves were done at a time when the Emperor had resolved to promote religious reunion within his empire 'with all his might and by his personal presence.'¹¹⁰ Gardiner's claims have caused Glyn Redworth to argue that Henry had 'made the unique concession that his Supremacy over the Church was negotiable.'¹¹¹ However, Henry's overtures were only a worst-case scenario contingency plan in the unlikely event that the Lutheran and Catholic theologians reached agreement. Henry was very aware that the healing of the schism within the German lands would leave him exposed to the might of the Holy Roman Empire and consequently his utterances towards reconciliation were made only to prevent him from being left isolated. In the end nothing came of the discussions and Henry was spared the humiliation of having to repent for the vitriol expended against the usurper in Rome. Nevertheless, this event does suggest that for the first and only time the Royal Supremacy was not immutable. The conservatives now poured their energy into the revision of the *Bishop's Book* in a further attempt to remove any lingering vestiges of Lutheran thought. Once more, Henry sought religious concord and embarked upon achieving unity by replacing the conciliatory Ten Articles with something more comprehensive.

What Convocation produced was an official statement of faith. This declaration was deemed necessary because 'darkenese and ignoraunce' were again threatening to draw people 'from the truth by hypocrisy and superstition.'¹¹² Despite Cranmer's best efforts, *A necessary*

¹⁰⁸ MacCulloch, *Cranmer: A Life*, pp.289-91.

¹⁰⁹ John Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Momuments Online* (1563 edition) (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011), p.1087. Available from: <http://www.johnfoxe.org> [Accessed 13/2/18]. [Hereafter *Foxe, TAMO*]. Foxe's account is supported by John Elder, *Copy of a letter sent into Scotlande* (London: John Waylande, 1555), STC 7552.

¹¹⁰ Hubert Jedin, *A History of the Council of Trent, Vol. I: The Struggle for the Council* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons LTD, 1963), p.377

¹¹¹ Redworth, *In Defence of the Church Catholic*, pp.130-1.

¹¹² *A necessary doctrine and erudition for any Christen man set furthe by the kynges maiestye of Englande &c.* (London: Thomas Berthelet, 1543), STC 5168.7, sig. A2r.

doctrine and erudition for any Christen man (1543) known informally as the King's Book, was a statement of conservative belief and it met with Henry's full approval.¹¹³ The book recognised Christ to be 'the onely head' of the Church but upheld Henry's supremacy in the same manner Gardiner had previously by locating the *ecclesia Anglicana* within the wider community of the Catholic Church. Consequently it claimed, in a Wycliffian manner, that national Churches were governed by their distinct hierarchical structure and maintained the right not to recognise a single supreme governor over the entirety of the Church.¹¹⁴ The true Catholicity of the English Church was confirmed because it taught the faith and religion of Christ 'according to the scripture and the apostolike doctrine.' The King's Book declared it was the duty of all Christians to honour the order of their native Church. Furthermore, God had commanded obedience to the Christian Kings and governors that provided the Church with tranquillity by ensuring that spiritual ministers are appointed to teach Christ's true doctrine.¹¹⁵ The King's Book was a rowing back against doctrines like justification by faith, but it did not deliver a knock-out blow to the evangelicals. The reformers still had hope in Henry.

The Act for the Advancement of True Religion (1543) reinforced the conservative resurgence. While Tyndale's 'craftye false and untrue' translation of Scripture was again condemned, it was the curtailing of access to vernacular Bibles and the prohibition of them containing annotations or preambles that was most disturbing to the evangelicals.¹¹⁶ Consequently, the Act, as Alec Ryrie has noted, 'dramatically reduced the legal space within which the authors and publishers of religious books could operate, laying down ferocious penalties for offenders.'¹¹⁷ The restrictions caused the literary output of the evangelicals to virtually grind to a halt. The new policy placed evangelicals under threat of arrest, examination and even execution. Some like Thomas Becon fell afoul of these restrictions. He was imprisoned and forced into a humiliating recantation after which, according to Charles Wriothesley, he 'cutt in peeces...11 bookes which he had made and caused to be printed, wherin was certeine

¹¹³ For this conflict see Stephen Gardiner, 'To Cranmer [shortly after 12 June, 1547]' and 'To Cranmer [shortly after 1 July, 1547]' in *The Letters of Stephen Gardiner*, ed. James Arthur Muller (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1970), pp. 299-316 and pp. 316-368. MacCulloch, *Cranmer: A Life*, p.309.

¹¹⁴ *A necessary doctrine and erudition for any Christen man*, sigs. F2r-F2v.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, sigs. F4v.

¹¹⁶ 'An Acte for thadvancement of true Religion and thabbolishment of the contrarie', in *The Statutes of the Realm, printed by command of his majesty King George the Third* (London: Dawsons of Pall Mall, preprinted 1965), pp.894-7 (pp.894-5).

¹¹⁷ Alec Ryrie, 'The Strange Death of Lutheran England', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 53:1 (Jan., 2002), pp.64-92 (p.86).

heresy.¹¹⁸ Becon's godly labour had produced an abundance of works during 1541-43 and Romans 13 provided him with fertile ground.

In *A newe pathway vnto praier* (1542) Becon strongly urged the King to further reform the Church. This reform was necessary not only bring glory to God and cause the realm to flourish in both 'spirituall & corporall goodes' but also ensure England had no equal throughout Christendom.¹¹⁹ He declared that their enemies scorned Scripture and dishonoured their divinely ordained King and magistrates rather than praising God for purging the realm of papal captivity and delivering liberty. The Romish tyranny had permitted blindness to infect the realm and caused subjects to believe it was their duty to obey the pope's 'sensuall lustes & beastlyke pleasures' rather than adhere to the teaching of Romans 13 and I Peter 2 which commanded obedience to their own most Christian king.¹²⁰ *The new polleceye of warre* (1542) was more contemplative in calling for the realm to repent its sins or risk damnation and urged the civil government to not only provide prelates who will oversee the essential teaching of the true Word of God but to procure peace by seeking 'not only to be feared but also to be loued.' He contended that rulers should be 'mercifull gydes' to their subjects and conduct themselves in a way 'that they may be the very image of GOD.' Becon promoted the doctrine of non-resistance by insisting that subjects must repay the mercy of their rulers with obedience and 'without ony ether prevy dissimulacion or open resistance.'¹²¹

However, in *A pleasaunt newe nosegaye* (1542) Becon was more assertive in promoting Henry's authority. As Alec Ryrie has noted, he argued 'for the authority of princes in terms of which Cromwell would have been proud.'¹²² Consequently, the third of Becon's 'godly and swete floures' was entitled "Faythfull Obedience" and he naturally entwined Romans 13 with the Book of Wisdom and I Peter 2 to advocate the supremacy of 'christien magistrates and hyghe powers.' This authority was proven to be of divine origin by the appointment of Moses to be 'ruler, gyde, captaine and gouernour' for the advantage and comfort of the 'publique weale' of the Israelites. Subsequently, the magistrate was divinely constituted to not only provide Moses with wise

¹¹⁸ Charles Wriothesley, *A Chronicle of England dring the reigns of the Tudors from A. D. 1485 to 1559*, Vol. I. ed. by William Douglas Hamilton (Westminster: J. B. Nichols and Sons for the Camden Society, 1875), pp.142-3.

¹¹⁹ Thomas Becon, *A newe pathway vnto praier ful of much godly frute and christe[n] knowledge, lately made by Theodore Basille* (London: Iohn Mayler for Iohn Gough, 1542), STC 1734, sig. R5r.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, sigs. R2v-R3r.

¹²¹ Thomas Becon, *The new polleceye of warre wherin is declared not only how [ye] mooste cruell tyraunt the great Turke may be ouer come, but also all other enemies of the Christen publique weale, lately deuised by Theodore Basille* (London: Iohn Maylerre for Iohn Gough, 1542), STC 1735, sigs. K6v-7r.

¹²² Ryrie, *The Gospel and Henry VIII*, p.66.

counsel but to unburden lesser 'rulers' by judging over smaller matters.¹²³ This theocratic model of government, with Moses as the divinely appointed king was, for Becon, the ideal and 'serves as a typological norm for Tudor kingship.'¹²⁴ This construction of kingship bore a strong Tyndalian influence as it was built upon Old Testament foundations, and the structure was braced by key texts from New Testament. Instead of embracing Gardiner's declaration that Henry should represent 'the ymage of God vpon earthe', Becon followed the route outlined by Luther and Tyndale in applying Psalm 82:6 to his conception of temporal power.¹²⁵ Therefore, Becon did not deviate from Tyndale's conviction by asking: 'Dothe not god here playnly saye that the magistrates are gods, that is, such as beare the offices of GOD, as to mayntayne peace, iustice, and good order, to punysh synne, & to defende the innocentes.'¹²⁶

Nevertheless, the arrival of Christ, Becon contended, had not abrogated the exalted position of the temporal power. Christ had not come into the world, he insisted, to reign as a temporal prince and wield to sword of judgment. Instead, he asserted, Christ came to be judged and to be slain, not to slay, and his spiritual weapon was the Gospel not the material sword of the magistrate. As such Christ taught the Apostles only that the office of the magistrate must be honoured. Even during a time when evangelicals were being significantly marginalised by a conservative resurgence, Becon professed only pure obedience doctrine. Therefore, any that refused to acknowledge God's ordinance should admit their shame and submit to 'all head officers as to the ministers of god, euen from the greatest to the least.'¹²⁷ The Apostle had very specifically commanded 'every soul' to be subject to the higher powers and Becon asserted:

Here is none excepted, no not that Romyshe Porke, which chalengeth so great authorite ouer all parsons in the worlde, that he is not ashamed to suffer kinges & Emperours to kysse and lycke hys pockye feete.¹²⁸

In their disobedience to the higher powers the spiritual ministers were guilty of both a derogation of their exalted authority and a dereliction of duty and their compliance would be enforced by the coercive sword.

In a climate of conservative resurgence Becon needed to reinforce his message of obedience in Scripture and he turned to the Book of Proverbs. Consequently, he conflated the two wisdom texts: 'The king ought to be feared like as the roaring of a lion. Whoso provoketh

¹²³ Thomas Becon, *A pleasaunt newe nosegaye full of many godly and swete floures, lately gathered by Theodore Basille* (London: Iohn Maylerre for Iohn Gough, 1542), STC 1742, sigs. G4v-G7v. Exodus 18: 13-27.

¹²⁴ Reeves, *English Evangelicals*, p.81.

¹²⁵ Gardiner, 'The Oration of True Obedience', p.97. LW 9, pp.161-2. William Tyndale, *Obedience*, p. 37.

¹²⁶ Becon, *A pleasaunt newe nosegay*, sig, H1r.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, sig. H4r.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, sig. I3v.

him unto anger offendeth against his own soul' and 'My son, fear thou the Lord and the king.'¹²⁹ These texts married fear of God to fear of the king and adherence subsequently lead to 'faithful obedience.'¹³⁰ The very sum of Christianity was, for Becon, the duty of obedience to God, king and their Christian brothers.¹³¹ This powerful understanding of the very nature of faith should not be diminished because, as Reeves contended, 'It would be difficult to find bolder language in early modern political thinking.'¹³² This theme was considered again by Becon in *Dauids harpe ful of moost delectable armony* (1542). He attested that all kings must vow unto God to maintain virtue, dispel vice, and ensure that both he and his subjects preserve these commandments 'euen from the hiest to the lowest.' Therefore, in the language of Romans 13, he contended that a 'true kynge' had vowed before God to punish with the sword any transgressors of His commandments. This sacral promise had cast no soul under threat of eternal damnation 'but rather healpeth forwarde vnto the enheritaunce of lyfe eternal.'¹³³

Becon bound the divine duty of the king to protect his subjects and promote God's glory with an obligation to ensure the health of the Church by furthering reform. This would be achieved by promoting the Word, providing justice for all within the commonweal and not allowing innocent blood to be shed. In return the subjects must love all men and honour their superiors with faithfulness, humility, submission, and true obedience.¹³⁴ Once again Becon remained true to Tyndale's obedience rhetoric by refusing to permit subjects to disobey even the most ungodly tyrant because they ruled as God's punishment for their sin. Therefore, resistance or deposition of a ruler would simply be fighting against both God's Word and Will and it was for Him alone to punish the wicked authorities. Becon was no radical, and his was a moderate stance against the conservative tide. The key to winning the spiritual war against popery, he believed, was the restoration of Scripture. Therefore, he was jubilant that 'The moost sacred Byble is freely permytted to be red of euery man in the Englysh tonge.'¹³⁵ Nevertheless, evangelicals, like Becon, were forced reconcile the fact, as Reeves has stated, 'that Henry had rejected their version of an English reformed church.'¹³⁶

However, Henry's change of course did not prevent English reformers from attacking Stephen Gardiner and other conservatives who had prevented reform. William Turner clearly

¹²⁹ Proverbs 20:2 and 24:21.

¹³⁰ Becon, *A pleasaunt newe nosegay*, sig, l7v-8r.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, sig. A3r.

¹³² Reeves, *English Evangelicals*, p.80.

¹³³ Becon, Thomas, *Dauids harpe ful of moost delectable armony, newly strynged and set in tune by Theadore Basille*, (London: Joh[a]n Mayler for Joh[a]n Gough, 1542), STC 1717, sig .G8v.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, sig. G7r. These sentiments are repeated almost exactly by Becon in *A Devout and Godly Prayer, for all Degrees and Estates...* which was appended to the 1543 printing of *The Policy of War* under the title *The true defe[n]ce of peace* (London: Iohn Mayler, 1543), STC 1776, sigs. L2r-L6v.

¹³⁵ Becon, *A newe pathway vnto praier*, sig, R5r.

¹³⁶ Reeves, *English Evangelicals*, p.66.

saw the conservative recovery as a Romish restoration because 'whosoeuer holdeth still the popes doctrine, holdeth still the pope.' Turner's criticism was composed following the fall of Cromwell, an event he considered to epitomise the reality that evangelicals now faced because they were forced to walk an impossible tightrope between denouncing popish error and accusations of treason.¹³⁷ This unenviable task continued to prove to be an unforgiving one for subjects of all religious persuasions throughout the Tudor period. Nevertheless, Turner believed that Henry had sincerely attempted to expel the pope from the realm, but was equally sure that 'the agents whom he had trusted to do this – the bishops – had traitorously concealed and defended the Romish fox instead.'¹³⁸ This was a clear denunciation of Gardiner's influence, and he attempted to arouse dissent by insisting that no city or town was free from opposition towards the maintenance of popish teaching.¹³⁹ Thus Turner did not consider his objection against Henry's proscribed Six Articles a violation of temporal law or the Gospel because the ceremonies and doctrine he was objecting to were established by the bishop of Rome.¹⁴⁰

Nevertheless, despite his praise of Henry's objectives and royal authority, there remained a suggestion of radicalism in Turner. He certainly accepted Henry's right to preside over political matters as 'supreme governor', but he more than hinted that a King had no authority to create laws within the Church: God's Law was found in Scripture alone.¹⁴¹ Nevertheless, he was sure that Gardiner had deviously transposed the ceremonies of the pope into the political laws of the King.¹⁴² The evangelicals needed a hate-figure and because they could not blame Henry for the religious retreat, Gardiner necessarily become the poster boy for wicked papistry.¹⁴³ Therefore, the thrust of Turner's attack was simply that bishops like Gardiner had betrayed the King's expressed wish to eradicate popish doctrine and ceremonies from the realm. He was joined in this concern by John Bale who more than supposed that the Antichrist was again at large within the realm. Bale specifically targeted Gardiner, whom he waspishly assailed for covering 'olde broken hooles with patches of olde papystrye, sowynge them to gyther with newe subtiltees and wyles.'¹⁴⁴ He too insisted that it was the divine duty of the king to ensure the 'secrets of god' were truly preached and that his decrees benefitted the

¹³⁷ William Turner, *The huntyng & fyndyng out of the Romishe fox* (Basyl [i.e. Bonn: L. Mylius], 1543), STC 24353, sig. B5v; A5v.

¹³⁸ Ryrie, *The Gospel and Henry VIII*, p.106.

¹³⁹ William Turner, *The rescuyng of the romishe fox* (Winchester [i.e. Bonn]: Hanse hit prik [i.e. Laurenz von der Meulen, 1545), STC 24355, Sig. A8r.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, sigs. B1r-B1v.

¹⁴¹ Karl Gunther and Ethan H. Shagan, 'Protestant Radicalism and Political Thought in the Reign of Henry VIII', *Past and Present*, 194 (Feb., 2007), pp.35-74 (pp.54-6).

¹⁴² Turner, *The rescuyng of the romishe fox*, sig. B2r.

¹⁴³ See Michael Riordan and Alec Ryrie, 'Stephen Gardiner and the Making of a Protestant Villain', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 34:4 (Winter, 2003), pp.1039-63.

¹⁴⁴ John Bale, *Yet a course at the Romyshe foxe* (Zurik [i.e. Antwerp]: By Olyuer Iacobson [i.e. A. Goinus], 1543), STC 1309, sig. N2v.

commonwealth by conforming to Scripture. Any princely ordinance that failed to honour Him, asserted Bale, should be met with the injunction to obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29).¹⁴⁵

The dilemma of Christian obedience was further highlighted in Bale's account of the convicted Lollard heretic and rebel Sir John Oldcastle, who had been executed for his crimes in 1417. While King John lacked true evangelical credentials and needed refashioning, Oldcastle too required touching up with Bale's revisionist brush on account of his treasonous rebellion against his divinely appointed king. Thus Bale began by introducing Oldcastle somewhat benignly as 'a vessel of God's election...that virtuous knight...the good lord Cobham.'¹⁴⁶ The problem of Oldcastle's rebelliousness needed to be surmounted by artistic licence and Bale depicted the knight declaring his loyalty and obedience to King Henry V. Furthermore, Oldcastle's attestation petitioned Romans 13 because he recognised Henry as a Christian King and therefore a minister of God who bears the sword for the punishment of evildoers and the protection of the virtuous. Bale then enshrined Oldcastle's evangelical credentials with a blatantly Lutheran anti-papal dialogue that announced the pope to be Antichrist and 'the open adversary of God.'¹⁴⁷

Bale had composed a dialogue that intentionally grounded Oldcastle's heresy in the contemporary concerns of the English reformers. Indeed, as Leslie P. Fairfield has noted, Oldcastle's dialogue does not appear in any of the original sources that Bale used to produce this tract.¹⁴⁸ Therefore, Bale had embedded into the knight testimony in a tripartite demarcation of the Church: (1) the priesthood should confine themselves to preaching the pure Gospel, sacerdotal duties and godly counsel; (2) the knighthood must perform the duties outlined by Romans 13 and bear the sword by protecting the people from tyranny, ensure the purity of the Gospel, and defend God's Law; (3) it was the duty of the commonality to live in 'true obedience to the aforesaid ministers of God, their kings, civil governors, and priests.'¹⁴⁹ Thus, Bale's reconstruction presented Oldcastle as being assured in his proto-evangelicalism with his declaration that 'Never will I in conscience obey any of you all, till I see you with Peter follow Christ in conversation.'¹⁵⁰ The example of Oldcastle was intended to provide contemporary readers with a historical saintly precursor of their struggles to reform the Church and a martyr who met his death never deviating from true obedience to God. Therefore, Bale grasped the

¹⁴⁵ Bale, *Yet a course at the Romyshe foxe*, sigs, H3v-H4r; K8v-L1r.

¹⁴⁶ John Bale, 'Chronicle of the Examination and Death of Lord Cobham', in *Select Works of John Bale D.D.*, ed. by Henry Christmas for the Parker Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1849), pp.1-59 (p.6).

¹⁴⁷ Bale, 'Lord Cobham', pp.17-8.

¹⁴⁸ Leslie P. Fairfield, *John Bale: Mythmaker for the English Reformation* (West Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 1976), p. 212, fn.16.

¹⁴⁹ Bale, 'Lord Cobham', p.21.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p.38.

opportunity to transform Oldcastle from a treasonous heretic rebelling against his King into a patriotic martyr who had been condemned to death by a Church headed by the papal Antichrist.

Certainly Henry's rowing back on reform, Becon's arrest, Turner's scowling at the villainous Gardiner and Bale's promotion of martyrdom all give the impression of a dire state of affairs for the evangelicals. But, as Peter Marshall has stated, the picture was not quite as bleak for those that were prepared to adopt a pragmatic approach and work within Henry's structure. The new Queen Catherine Parr and Prince Edward's tutors, Richard Cox, John Cheke and Roger Ascham, all had evident evangelical leanings that would not have escaped Henry's attention.¹⁵¹ Cranmer continued to nudge the King towards small concessions and the French campaign led to renewed relations with the League of Schmalkalden in 1544. But things were far from stable or predictable. In what would be his last appearance before parliament in December 1545, Henry delivered an oration which suggested a degree of irenicism. He began in a humble tone and lavished praise upon the members before him. He declared his love for his subjects and exclaimed that no prince upon the earth had enjoyed a greater love in return.¹⁵² And yet, Henry said, he was deeply concerned with the lack of religious harmony and he believed his realm was suffering widespread dissension.¹⁵³ Thus, Henry used his final speech to make 'an appeal for fraternal love and unity to a people stricken with religious discord.'¹⁵⁴ Nevertheless, Henry's tone became brittle when he focused his gaze upon his spiritual lords and he noted that they 'preach one against the other, teach, one contrary to another, inveigh one against another, without charity or direction.'¹⁵⁵

It was the King's opinion that the spiritual realm had become a cacophony in which none preached with true sincerity the Word of God. In fact their disunity tested the patience of the King who accused his clergy of providing darkness to his subjects as opposed to the light they so needed. The king exhorted his spiritual ministers that they must advance the Word of God by their true preaching and sincere example in order that the enormities of division may be corrected. Otherwise, he would fail meet his obligations, which were outlined in Romans 13, as God's 'vicar' and 'high minister' and become 'an unprofitable servant, and an untrue officer.'¹⁵⁶ However, the temporality did not escape the king's scorn either. He claimed they too were equally accountable for sowing the seeds of strife. It was their duty raise their concerns over

¹⁵¹ Marshall, *Heretics and Believers*, p.291.

¹⁵² Henry VIII, 'Speech in Parliament, towards the latter end of his Reign', in *Dodd's Church History of England From the Commencement of the Sixteenth Century to the Revolution in 1688*, Vol. I, (London: Charles Dolman, 1839), pp.451-4 (p.452).

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, p.452.

¹⁵⁴ Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII*, p.470.

¹⁵⁵ Henry VIII, 'Speech in Parliament', p.453.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p.453.

perceived 'perverse doctrine...to whom is committed, by God, the authority to reform and order such causes and behaviours.' it was not, Henry firmly stated, for them to judge for themselves through 'your own fantastical opinions, and vain expositions.' While it was permitted for the temporal lords to read Scripture in their own tongue, they must nevertheless understand this licence only extended to informing their own conscience and the instruction of their children and family. It was not their place, the King asserted, to enter into disputation and attempt to humiliate the spiritual ministers.¹⁵⁷ To the last, Henry imposed his will. Although his religious and political policies engendered a Church that suffered from a degree of doctrinal flux, his reign had inadvertently provided the foundations for a protestant England.

Conclusion

The Royal Supremacy ensured England's separation from Rome but Henry's rejection of key evangelical tenets stood him with the conservatives. The impact of the King's Reformation created anxiety in the parish, and the Ten Articles betrayed the diversity of opinion that lingered within the Church. As a result Henry suffered a conservative reaction against his religious policies, and official propaganda turned to Romans 13 in order to put down dissent and demand obedience in accordance with God's will. The Pilgrimage of Grace was resolutely framed by the royal propagandists as a religious matter, and insurrection was confirmed as a direct contravention of God's command for obedience to the higher powers. Moreover, all legitimate laws that were constituted for the benefit and safeguard of the commonwealth are *de facto* from God. By challenging the authority of God's chosen lieutenant, the rebels had not merely questioned Henry's right to rule, but also divine wisdom. However, the rebels were not entirely to blame for their ignorance in taking up the sword. The bishops were scorned for their devotion to the old truths of the pope and their failure to teach obedience and quietness. Obedience was, after all, the badge of a true Christian.

The intemperate attack on the Royal Supremacy by Reginald Pole was delivered at a time of heightened sensitivity and signalled an irreparable rift between Henry and his former servant. This was a significant act of defiance, and Pole sought to expose errors and provoke Henry's return to the bosom of the true Church. Pole's denial of Henry's supremacy was not a denial of the Pauline tenet that it was founded upon: that rulers were ministers of God. On the contrary, *De unitate* made an explicit distinction between the function and power of the apostolic office and those which held temporal authority. Pole emphasised the more sublime function of the priest by means of their sacerdotal power, and the fact that the Holy Spirit worked through the ministers of the Gospel. This special function provided them an active role in the counsel of civil authority. Furthermore, in a radical reading of Romans 13, he suggested,

¹⁵⁷ Henry VIII, 'Speech in Parliament', pp.453-4.

much like Starkey, that although the need for 'higher authority' had been imbued in mankind by God, the occupier of the civil office was appointed by popular will. This exegesis signified that kingship was not established by God's will but by His consent.

Pole's understanding of the origin of civil power was a direct repudiation of the Royal Supremacy, and delivered to Henry a clear warning that princely power was in no way absolute. Although the coming of Christ had not diminished the legitimate authority of kings, it had, Pole argued, destroyed all unjust power. The precepts of Romans 13 outlined two fundamental duties of worldly kings, to protect and govern, and possession of the highest civil office was conditional upon fulfilment of these obligations. Any king that pursued his own happiness rather than that of his people was a tyrant, and he no longer possessed the title of king. In enforcing the Royal Supremacy Henry had exceeded the 'just and proper limitations' of kingly power. The English people had been commanded to obey the Supreme Head of the Church based upon the artifice that concealed a ghastly innovation. For Pole Romans 13 confirmed that royal authority depended upon God, but it was nothing short of *eisegesis* to believe it granted the prince supremacy over the Church. Pole had delivered a warning to Henry that was as subtle as throwing a brick through his window.

The doctrinal disunity, and uncertainty and anxiety laid bare by the Ten Articles and the Pilgrimage of Grace necessitated a definitive response. The *Bishops' Book* sought to provide a comprehensive statement of doctrine, but ultimately it failed to heal the divisions already present within the episcopate. The *Bishops' Book* confirmed the existence of two holy orders within the Church. The civil power was defined as the *potestas gladii* which exclusively possessed the authority to approve canon, enact its own laws, reform the Church, and physically punish subjects. The duties of the spiritual ministers were confined to the mystical body of the Church such as the administration of the Sacraments and the authority to preach and teach Scripture. Despite the uneasy compromise between the evangelicals and conservatives, the *Bishops' Book* offered uncompromised support for the Royal Supremacy. Consequently, the pre-eminence of the Church of Rome was explicitly rejected, and instead the formulation promoted the notion of catholic and universal church united by faith by equal in dignity.

The regime recognised the need to inculcate the legitimacy of the Royal Supremacy because the doctrine had failed to convince the majority of the people. As a result, a number of strident attacks were published in order to persuade Henry's subjects that the ceremonies and laws instituted by the Church of Rome were of human innovation. The right of kings to create and execute law with their own realms was vigorously advertised, and the reader reminded that all, including the clergy, are bound to obey. It was unequivocally proclaimed that every violation of temporal law was a sin and contempt for human law offended God. The clergy, once again, came under attack. Fish unreservedly accused the spiritual order of all manner of treachery

against the crown and the people. The reformers employed the terminology of Romans 13 to urge Henry to marshal the power of his sword, crown and dignity, in order to punish the nefarious clergy that had sought to seize the temporal sword for themselves. It rapidly became evident to the evangelicals that the King needed to be the beacon for further reform.

The centrality of the prince to evangelical reform can be witnessed in the imagination of John Bale. What is presented in *Kinge Johan* was not only a revisionist history created by using an evangelical cast, but also a vision of divine kingship. Bale delivered a message of obedience that chimed beautifully with the regimes own demands for subjection. The formula he used had previously been employed in the *Collectanea* and Act in Restraint of Appeals: a mix of 'authentic' histories' from Scripture and the annals of England. The precepts of Romans 13 are deeply embedded in order to establish in the minds of the audience the divine origin and universal nature of the king's jurisdiction. The foremost battle-cry of the reformers, *sola scriptura*, is projected upon the image of King John, and Bale incessantly champions royal prerogative in an effort to persuade Henry into adopting a more evangelical position. *Kinge Johan* was a device that not only praised Henry's valiant stand against papal tyranny but also a means by which to urge him to undertake further reformation of the Church.

Instead of pursuing an evangelical direction, the King embarked on a more conservative path of reform. Henry's Church suffered from incoherence, but this conservative reform was, at least, consistent with the Royal Supremacy. The incoherence can be observed by the fact that although The Act of Six Articles were a more conservative formulation, the means in which they were transmitted, such as The Great Bible, are instruments of evangelical reform. Many of the provocative elements were removed from the English Bible, but the frontispiece made it clear that the Church of England was no longer under the subjection of papal authority. The meaning behind the portrayal of Henry as David was unambiguous: the king was appointed by God to be both the temporal ruler and the Head of the Church, and each divine function reinforced the other. Henry was seated at the summit of the godly hierarchy upon the earth. Nevertheless, Henry's conservatism was too reformist to be Catholic and too Catholic to be evangelical. As a result the King's excommunication heightened the possibility of both an alliance between hostile continental forces being formed, and internal protest against Henry's religious policies.

Henry's religious policy was not a search for a *via media* between evangelicalism and conservatism but rather a quest for practical answers to royal dilemmas. Consequently, the regime reacted to the increased external pressure in a familiar way; an official counter-propaganda campaign to that determinedly called for obedience to the King and stressed the sinfulness of rebellion. The employment of Morison to deliver the message of non-resistance demonstrated the regime's lack of coherence, because he littered his tracts with evangelical tenets. The campaign reinforced the image of a Davidic Henry and contended that the King had

been divinely chosen to deliver his people from the papal yoke. In language that echoed Romans 13, subjects were informed that God had instituted worldly rulers to provide justice and liberty for the preservation of society, and He had commanded all to obey them under pain of damnation. The campaign was supported by both evangelicals and conservatives, and they turned to Romans 13 to demand obedience. Thus subjects were reminded that Henry represented the divine and he was adorned with the title of God's own name. Disobedience was likened to treason against God.

Despite Henry's conservative reform the evangelicals did some achieve minor victories. The conservative attacks on the Great Bible were largely deflected by Cranmer, and the matter was kicked into the long grass. There were also notable evangelicals newly instituted to Canterbury, and negotiations with the Lutherans had stalled but they were not yet concluded. The noises of reconciliation Gardiner had been instructed to make towards Charles V were really just the manoeuvres of a king that did not want to be exposed to military threats from continental Europe. Nevertheless, despite Cranmer's best efforts, the catholicity of the English Church was confirmed with the King's Book, and Act for the Advancement of True Religion dramatically diminished the space for evangelicals like Thomas Becon to promulgate their belief. The evangelicals were undeterred and insisted that Henry must perform his duty and wield his sword against the foxes that perpetuated the tyranny of Rome.

Becon repeatedly called upon the precepts of Romans 13 in an attempt to prune away popery, and promote the Royal Supremacy. The topic of obedience to the divinely appointed prince was a prominent theme in Becon's writings, and the doctrine of non-resistance was faithfully maintained. He insisted that a true king must vow unto God to maintain virtue, and punish the transgressors of God's law with the coercive sword. Just like the reformers that preceded him, Becon bound the divine duty of the prince to protect his subjects and promote God's glory directly with obligation ensuing the health of the Church by furthering reform. The reduced space in which the evangelicals could safely operate and the arrest of Becon did not prevent Turner or Bale from attacking bishops like Gardiner for what they believed to be a betrayal of the King's expressed wish to expel all popery. All of this was evidence that the Antichrist was still at large in England. However, Henry was not oblivious to the strife within the realm and he recognised that if these bitter divisions were not healed he would have failed in his duty as God's 'vicar' and 'high minister.'

This was a divided Church of Henry's own making and despite the doctrinal divisions, Englishmen sought to loyally serve their king and salve any wounds to their conscience created by the Royal Supremacy or the King's refusal to cut away the troublesome vines of popery. Although the numerous attempts to produce a definitive statement of faith ended in failure, the formularies had confirmed the Royal Supremacy and the right of the King to tend to the faith.

Henry's Reformation created a Church that was defined by a biblical model of kingship. Central to both the conservative revolution and the aspirations of the reformers was Romans 13, which confirmed the obligations of subjects and God's anointed. The religious and political policies of Henry engendered a Church that ensured the Church of England would suffer from a degree of doctrinal flux. Nonetheless, the Royal Supremacy was never under negotiation, and conservatives and evangelicals respected the precepts of Romans 13 that demanded obedience to the commands of the king under pain of damnation.

Chapter 5: Romans 13 during the Reign of the New Josiah

Introduction

Those that attended Edward's coronation ceremony on February 20 1547 would not leave Westminster Abbey unaware that England was about to experience radical change. The new king was crowned the 'rightfull and undoubted enheritour by the lawes of God and man', and it was his duty to keep the Church and his people in 'holy peace and concorde.' Edward professed that any new laws promulgated during his reign will both honour God and benefit the commonwealth. The Privy Council decided the liturgy was to be abridged; not only due to the king's 'tendre age' but also the ceremony was now deemed too popish to be lawful.¹ Consequently, Cranmer outlined the evident duty of the new king to 'forsake the devil and all his works.' However, it was in his declaration that the oath taken by Edward and his predecessors contained no obligation to the Roman See that we witness a discernible shift away from England's Catholic past.² This was a king like no other because he was the first to be crowned with the full splendour of the Royal Supremacy. The supreme power of the king was made abundantly clear by Cranmer. He insisted that although Archbishops customarily crowned England's Kings, they did not possess any right to impose any conditions upon their prince and 'it was not in their power to receive or reject them.' The ceremony was a confirmation of the King's duty to God; the bishop's role, he insisted, was ceremonial because it contained no 'direct force or necessity' and his participation did not increase the dignity already bestowed upon Edward by God.

Edward was no accidental King, he was God's elected and born to rule. Nevertheless, the king's bishops could, as messengers of Christ, 'faithfully declare what God requires at the hands of kings and rulers; that is, religion and virtue.'³ Cranmer defined the clergy's spiritual function as servitude; being advisory and instructive rather than the peremptory role demanded by the papacy. The language applied in his exaltation of the young king was pure Romans 13 exegesis. Edward was 'God's vice-gerent and Christ's vicar' within his dominions and none held greater divinely appointed ecclesiastical authority. He was the true successor of Josiah that will see 'God truly worshipped, and idolatry destroyed, the tyranny of the bishops of Rome banished from your subjects, and images removed.' Consequently, this 'second Josiah' would ensure the Church was reformed, virtue rewarded, sin revenged, violence repressed and justice executed.

¹ *Acts of the Privy Council of England Volume II, 1547-1550*, ed. by John Roche Dasent (London: H.M.S.O., 1890), pp.30-1.

² Thomas Cranmer, 'Speech at the Coronation of Edward VI. Feb. 20, 1547', in *Miscellaneous Writings and Letters of Thomas Cranmer*, pp.126-7 (p.126).

³ *Ibid.*, p.126.

This appropriation of Josiah by Cranmer proved to be an effective prescriptive biblical precedent for the evangelicals to call upon throughout Edward's reign. This was an extraordinary king whose heart and soul was so filled with love for the Lord that he reformed the Church and performed his sacred obligations to punish the wicked, reward the virtuous, rule justly, relieve the poor, and maintain peace.⁴ This paragon of godly reforming kingship was underpinned by the supreme power granted kings by Paul in Romans 13 which in turn buttressed the doctrine of the Royal Supremacy. Cranmer had outlined the almost limitless power of the crowns *imperium* because Edward was not accountable to bishops, or indeed any man upon the earth: he answered to God alone.

Edward's reign still suffers from a lack of scholarly attention. Much of the older historiography far too quickly dismissed the young king as a puppet who merely expressed the views of the domineering advisors that ruled in Edward's name.⁵ Therefore, much scholarly effort has been directed towards the politics and policy of government and counsel which have cast men, particularly Edward Seymour, as pragmatists or incompetent autocrats.⁶ Of much more relevance to this study is the work of John N. King, Christopher Bradshaw, and Diarmaid MacCulloch who seek to place Edward in a text-centric evangelically governed realm. They all place great emphasis upon Edward's godly image by noting that that examples of Old Testament kings, particularly Josiah, provided a model of an illustrious godly prince upon which evangelicals could hang their pursuit of the true pure faith. Importantly MacCulloch sought to place the Edwardian Reformation securely in its international context by recognising the decisive role played by continental reformers.⁷ Jennifer Loach has argued that although Somerset then Northumberland guided religious policy, the true driving force behind the evangelical reform

⁴ Cranmer, 'Speech at the Coronation', p.127. Cranmer noted Josiah's exceptional qualities in II Kings 23:25.

⁵ A.F. Pollard, *England under Protector Somerset* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1900), G.R. Elton, *England under the Tudors* (London: Methuen, 1955), Dale Hoak, 'Rehabilitating the Duke of Northumberland: Politics and Political Control, 1549-53', in *The Mid-Tudor Polity c.1540-1560*, eds. Jennifer Loach and Robert Titler (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1980), pp.29-51, W.K. Jordan, *Edward VI: The Young King: The Protectorship of the Duke of Somerset* and *Edward VI: The Threshold of Power: The Domiance of the Duke of Northumberland* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1968 and 1970).

⁶ M.L. Bush, *The Government Policy of Protector Somerset* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1975). D.E. Hoak, *The King's Council in the Reign of Edward VI* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976).

⁷ John N. King, *English Reformation Literature: The Tudor Origins of the Protestant Tradition* (Princeton, N.J.; Guildford: Princeton University Press, 1982), specifically pp.161-206. Christopher Bradshaw, 'David or Josiah? Old Testament Kings as Exemplars in Edwardian Religious Polemic', in *Protestant History and Identity in Sixteenth Century Europe, Vol. 2, The Later Reformation*, ed. Bruce Gordon (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1996), pp.77-90. Diarmaid MacCulloch. *Tudor Church Militant: Edward VI and the Protestant Reformation* (London: Allen Lane, 1999).

was Thomas Cranmer.⁸ Nevertheless, none of these studies recognise in any way the formative role Romans 13 played in discussions of divine kingship and the duty of obedience.

The nature of kingship as held by a royal minority, and the practical reality of government was considered by Stephen Alford. He keenly placed the maturing Edward central to events and his emerging power and responsibility is well recognised.⁹ Catharine Davies provided a detailed account of the printed intellectual debates and she questioned whether the contributions of reformers, such as Martin Bucer and Peter Martyr Vermigli, constituted a 'continental phase' in England's Reformation.¹⁰ Both of these studies of the reign of Edward tackle elements that are relevant to this study, such as kingship, rebellion, internationalism, Scripture and reform, but what is missing is a detailed discussion on the conscience and moral duty of king and subjects. In Davies' discussion concerning the Two Swords, the duty of the magistrate, and the limitation to obedience, the centrality of Paul's commands are barely recognised.¹¹ Alford noted the ubiquitous nature of Romans 13:1-7 but his deliberation of the text is too expeditious.¹² Even Barrett Beer and Andy Wood's significant work on the rebellions of 1549 choose to ignore the important role Paul's commands played in the Edwardian government's policy of persuasion.¹³ Consequently, this chapter will address this noticeable gap in the historiography and reveal the vital role Romans 13 had in establishing an evangelical kingdom, promoting reform and enforcing obedience. The prism of Romans 13 will provide a unique perspective on the reign of the young King.

Establishing the Kingdom of Josiah

The realm was to be governed during Edward's minority by council, primarily Lord Protector Edward Seymour, but the King's youth was a problem. Both Latimer and Bale attempted to tackle head-on the warning concerning a child king contained in Ecclesiastes 10:16.¹⁴ Latimer argued, echoing the *Glasse of the Truthe*, that England would be far more vulnerable if either of Edward's sisters sat upon the throne and exposed the realm to stranger kings who would 'plant

⁸ Jennifer Loach, *Edward VI* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999).

⁹ Stephen Alford, *Kingship and Politics in the Reign of Edward VI* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

¹⁰ Catharine Davies, *A religion of the word: The defence of the Reformation in the reign of Edward VI* (Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 2002).

¹¹ Davies, *A religion of the word*, pp.152-62.

¹² Alford, *Kingship*, p.39.

¹³ Barrett L. Beer, *Rebellion and Riot: Popular Rebellion in England during the Reign of Edward VI*, Revised edn (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 2005), Andy Wood, *The 1549 Rebellions and the Making of Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

¹⁴ According to Allan G. Chester only two months earlier John Story had been committed to the tower for daring to quote this verse before the Commons. Chester, *Hugh Latimer: Apostle to the English* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1954), p.179.

again all abomination and popery.¹⁵ Bale was more vigorous in his defence of Edward's right to rule and stated any that tried to impede his governance blasphemed God's name: 'For ther is no power (S. Paule saythe) but it is of God. And who so euer abusethe the power, abusethe the ordinaunce of God to hys dampnacion, Rom. xiii.'¹⁶ Bale simply reframed Ecclesiastes 10:16 and related the warning to wantonness and poor judgment rather than youthfulness. This was supported with both strong biblical examples of godly kingship, Josiah and David, and native ones such as Edward III, Henry III and Henry VI. Bale also defended the King's Counsel against accusations of tyranny and being purveyors of false religion by referring directly to Romans 13. There was no power, he reminded the reader, but of God and true and faithful subjects must respect the 'hygh office.'¹⁷ Nevertheless, by December 1547 much of the prohibitive legislation, including heresy laws and the restriction on printing and study of vernacular Bibles, was swiftly swept away. But some religious conservatives, notably Gardiner and John Story, continued to discuss the validity of the reforms promulgated in Edward's name and they remained deeply concerned about religious innovation.¹⁸

The evangelicals at the heart of the regime sought to present an authoritative narrative of a young prince destined to complete the godly reformation initiated by his father. However, it must be recognised that not all shared this outlook. Indeed, Gardiner proposed the preservation of the Royal Supremacy he had so vocally advocated in *De vera obedientia*. Henry's reluctance to pursue the evangelical reform Cromwell and Cranmer had strongly promoted during the late 1530s was evidence enough for Gardiner that the King had intentionally handed to Edward a doctrinally conservative Royal Supremacy. He took issue with Cranmer's suggestion that Henry had been 'seduced' from the true Gospel. Rather, Gardiner insisted, Henry was 'by God's trewth induced into the right way.'¹⁹ Therefore, he contended, this was not an *ecclesia Anglicana* that Henry had readied in preparation to embrace an evangelical Reformation. Gardiner was deeply concerned that Edward was being manipulated, or even excluded, by his council and in their haste to enact new legislation Henry's wishes were being pushed aside.²⁰ Latimer leaped to the defence of a king full of 'godly wit and understanding' and his 'excellent

¹⁵ Hugh Latimer, 'The First Sermon Preached before King Edward, March 8, 1549', in *Sermons by Hugh Latimer, sometime Bishop of Worchester, Martyr, 1555*, ed. by George Elwes Corrie for the Parker Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1844), pp.85-103 (p.91).

¹⁶ John Bale, *An expostulation or complaynte agaynste the blasphemyes of a franticke papyst of Hamshyre. Co[m]piled by Iohan Bale* (London: S. Mierdman for Ihon Daye, 1552?), STC 1294, sig. B1v.

¹⁷ Bale, *An expostulation*, sigs. A6v-B4r. For more on problems of the king's minority see Alford, *Kingship*, pp.49-50, pp.59-64 and Davies, *A religion of the word*, pp.198-200.

¹⁸ See James Arthur Muller, *Stephen Gardiner and the Tudor Reaction* (London: S.P.C.K, 1926), pp.175-6, pp.196-7, Chester, *Hugh Latimer: Apostle*, pp.209-18.

¹⁹ Stephen Gardiner, 'To Cranmer, Winchester, [shortly after 12 June, 1547]', in *The Letters of Stephen Gardiner*, ed. by James Arthur Muller (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1970), pp.299-316 (pp.300-1)

²⁰ Bale again denied the suggestion in *An expostulation*, sig. B1r.

and well learned' noble counsel.²¹ The precious godliness of the King was, for Latimer and the regime, the greatest fulcrum and defence of Edward's kingship.²²

Gardiner's contumacy was a continuous source of agitation for the evangelicals. His St. Peter's Day sermon (1548) preached before Edward was, Peter Marshall contended, 'a masterly exercise in crossing the line while seeming to obediently to toe it.'²³ Instead of preaching upon what Somerset had prescribed, Gardiner only offered little more than qualified support for reform and uttered only general words regarding obedience. This was a very public rejection of the projection of Somerset's strong and stable leadership that was unimpaired by the King's minority. Gardiner shot across Somerset's bow with the revelation that he 'misliked certayne subiectes that would take vpon the[m] to rule lyke kynges, to the diminishyng of the kynges dignitee, and confusion of theyr own estate.'²⁴ The age of a king, he argued, provided no hindrance to their legitimacy to rule and it was both godly and wise for all princes to seek guidance. However, he added, 'I cannot by expresse scripture limit the kinges power by counsaile.'²⁵ While Gardiner addressed Edward as being 'next and immediatly vnder God here on erth the supream heade'; what was considered pernicious by the government was his suggestion that the king's supremacy would not be diminished if he sought the advice of a wise, virtuous and learned bishop of Rome over religious matters. He advised Edward that it was better to consult the most qualified or most suited person rather than the most proximate or highest in dignity.²⁶

Clearly what little faith, if any, Gardiner had in Edward's emerging evangelical government was wavering. He pointedly yielded no authority to the Privy Council over himself or matters of religion.²⁷ Gardiner's remarks were at odds with the evangelical notion of the papal Antichrist, but they were entirely consonant with the concept of the Royal Supremacy which was grounded in Romans 13 and outlined in *De vera obedientia*. Indeed, he expressed his fealty to the principles of the Royal Supremacy by instructing his Winchester congregation, in words which exemplified Romans 13, that it was God's will that superiors were obeyed or otherwise they must willingly suffer the rulers punishment.²⁸ Nevertheless, the King's advisors judged that his St. Peter's Day sermon had stirred 'great tumult' and demonstrated Gardiner was 'an open

²¹ Hugh Latimer, 'The Second Sermon of master Hugh Latimer, which he Preached before the King's Majesty, within his Grace's Palace at Westminster, the fifteenth day of March, 1549', in *Sermons by Hugh Latimer, sometime Bishop of Worchester, Martyr, 1555*, pp.104-28 (p.118).

²² Alford, *Kingship*, p.50.

²³ Marshall, *Heretics and Believers*, p.322.

²⁴ Foxe, *TAMO* (1563), p.903.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p.814.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.827-30.

²⁷ Jordan, *Edward VI: The Young King*, p.213.

²⁸ Foxe, *TAMO* (1563), p.812.

great offender and a very seditious man.²⁹ Gardiner refused to recant, and insisted that the doctrine of obedience taught in the realm confessed that when kings command something contrary to God's Word 'the subject may not do as he is commaunded, but humblye, which is my case who could not with my consciēce do as I was required.'³⁰ This very public refusal to acquiesce was a determined act of contumacy which seriously undermined the authority of Somerset and struck at the heart of government.

The regime battled to win hearts and minds. This was, as Marshall stated, an 'intense campaign' to not only 'transform the character of Christian worship and belief' but to also 'radically reconstruct the outlook of the people as a whole.'³¹ One approach was to remind the nation of their illustrious Christian heritage. This approach had already been adopted by Bale under the reign of Henry VIII when he produced a hagiography of Lollard William Thorpe (*fl.* 1381–1407) and an account of convicted heretic Anne Askew's trial and condemnation. Thorpe's reputation needed rehabilitation because by preaching without kingly consent he was accused by the archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Arundel, of being in violation of Romans 13 which demanded obedience to rulers whether good and virtuous or tyrannical and vicious.³² But rather than denying Paul's commands, Thorpe turned to Hebrews 13:7 to declare that Christians are only bidden to obey virtuous kings and the work of tyrants 'ought to be hated and left.'³³ Additionally, he observed that Peter counselled that subjects should not obey 'any lord, or prince, or sovereign, in any thing that is not pleasing to God.'³⁴ This was a slippery argument but not a unique one. Melanchthon had previously suggested that while Romans 13 confirmed civil power was an ordinance of God, it must still govern according to divine will.³⁵

Both Bale and Melanchthon believed that Paul had made a clear distinction between a ruler and a tyrant. Furthermore, this argument also demonstrated the greater duty of obedience to God rather than men found in Acts 5:29. But for Thorpe, it was not only those which committed evil that would suffer eternal damnation but also those that consent. He contended that the decrees of the Church teach obedience shown by servants to lords, children to parents, wives to husbands or monks to abbots is rendered only in things that are worthy ('leful') and lawful.³⁶ The contention was clear: the evils of Rome were in no way worthy or lawful. Nevertheless, while the contumacy of Thorpe needed polish, the examinations of the *bona fide*

²⁹ *Acts of the Privy Council of England Volume II*, p.210.

³⁰ Foxe, *TAMO* (1563), p.820.

³¹ Peter Marshall, *Reformation England, 1480-1642*, 2nd edn (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2012), p.63.

³² John Bale, 'The Examination of Master William Thorpe', in *Select Works of John Bale*, pp.60-133 (p.85).

³³ The application of Hebrews 13:7 would become popular with the Elizabethan Catholics. See chapter 8.

³⁴ Bale, 'Examination of William Thorpe', p.87.

³⁵ Melanchthon, *Commentary on Romans*, p.218.

³⁶ Bale, 'Examination of William Thorpe', p.88.

evangelical Askew required far less revision. Consequently, we have 'a terse but vivid diary of her sufferings embedded in the rather more self-indulgent prose of John Bale.'³⁷ Bale pardoned Anne's disobedience with a passive obedience exegesis of I Peter 2 and Romans 13: 'ye should honour your king' and 'ye should with gentleness obey the temporal rulers.'³⁸ This permitted Bale to mount a broadside against the demand for obedience to bishops made by 'the Pope's Great dancing bear' whom, he claimed, had unashamedly boasted that the primacy of the bishop of Rome should be restored. Bale was, of course, referring to Gardiner whom he believed to be a spiritual hypocrite and detestable apostate that must be rebuked.³⁹

Bale was constructing a martyrdom upon the fortitude of a Christian that was utterly sure in her evangelical faith. Despite her frail state, Anne was portrayed as rejoicing in the fact that her weakness would be overcome with Christ's assistance. Anne was physically overpowered by tyrants but because she was filled with Christ's spirit, her oppressors could not muster the power to diminish a single hair upon her head.⁴⁰ Despite Anne's mistreatment, she humbly respected and submitted to the authority of the civil power 'as no ill-doer, but as Christ's true servant.'⁴¹ Her words betrayed no thoughts of resistance towards her judges. She complied with the precepts of Romans 13 and followed also the path advocated by Zwingli and Latimer by committing such matters to God. Anne did not covet death but sought to prove her innocence through the authenticity of her faith. In her utter compliance with the Pauline precepts of non-resistance to the 'higher powers', Bale presented both Henrician and Edwardian readers with an almost perfect English evangelical martyr. But Bale also sought to provide the realm itself with equally exemplary credentials in his attempt to liberate English history from papal history. The *Actes of English votaryes* (1546 and extended in 1551) represented, for Leslie P. Fairfield, an attempt to 'shape the myth' of heroic, yet futile, effort to stem the tide of 'Romish spiritual corruption and political subversion.'⁴² Indeed, Bale's refashioning of history undertook to present how a realm once in harmony with the perfect Christian Church was contaminated and engulfed by Antichrist's tyranny and false doctrine.⁴³

The arch-villain of Bale's chronicle was Archbishop Anselm who was cast as a devious traitor so filled with the spirit of the Antichrist that he openly defied Paul's doctrine of

³⁷ MacCulloch, *Cranmer: A Life*, p.352.

³⁸ John Bale, 'The Examinations of Anne Askew: The First Examination', in *Select Works of John Bale*, pp.136-84 (p.183).

³⁹ Bale, 'Askew: The First Examination', pp.182-4.

⁴⁰ John Bale, 'The Examinations of Anne Askew: The Latter Examination', in *Select Works of John Bale*, pp.186-248 (p. 209) and 'Askew: The First Examination', p.144.

⁴¹ Bale, 'Askew: The First Examination', p.216.

⁴² Leslie P. Fairfield, *John Bale: Mythmaker for the English Reformation* (West Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 1976), p.94.

⁴³ John Bale, *Actes or unchast examples of the Englysh votaryes*, Part I (London: S. Mierdman, [anno. 1550] i.e. 1551), STC 1273.5, sigs. B6r-C7v.

obedience.⁴⁴ The Archbishop's treachery was exposed by Bale who insisted that Anselm had persuaded Urban II to not only defraud William II (William Rufus) of his power of investiture but also to summon the Christian Kings to defend Jerusalem in the First Crusade. The crusade was all part of a larger deception intended to establish the reign of the Antichrist and usurp kingly authority while the heroic kings were occupied with winning back the Holy City.⁴⁵ Bale's history provided an example of a treacherous Romish cleric that violated the precepts of Romans 13 whilst also affording England a glorious connection with Christ's perfect Church. It demonstrated that despite overwhelming tyranny England had defended the true faith and resisted the oppression of 'builders of Babylon' far longer than its Christian neighbours in Europe. This re-fashioned history served its purpose beautifully by providing a mirror in which readers could see themselves as the glorious heirs of England's pious battle against the Antichrist.

The Edwardian government also sought to win hearts and minds was through the power of pulpit. In early modern England preaching was a vital instrument used to affect the theological and political landscape and the implementation of the *Book of Homilies* (1547) reflected the "Cromwellian" desire to use the pulpit as an agent of religious change.⁴⁶ Indeed, one of the most important developments of the 1530s had been 'the transformation of the sermon into a political exercise.'⁴⁷ The homilies were thematic and demonstrated Cranmer's desire to sweep away traditional sermons which concerned the saints, with subject matter that focused upon biblical teaching.⁴⁸ The Injunctions of 1547 revealed that the government had identified a desperate need to project a clear evangelical message because the people remained in 'ignorance and blindness.'⁴⁹ This was a situation that was only exacerbated by the lack of evangelical preachers and the homilies were intended to help remedy this shortage and provide support for the inexperienced ministers standing in Edwardian pulpits.

Cranmer sought to address this perilous deficiency with the production of official homilies. *An Exhortation concernyng Good Ordre and Obedience to Rulers and Magistrates* very

⁴⁴ Bale, *Actes of the Englysh votaryes*, Part II, sigs. l1v-l2r.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, sigs. Sig. l3v.

⁴⁶ Ronald B. Bond, 'Introduction: A Two-Edged Sword: The History of the Tudor Homilies', in *Certain Sermons or Homilies (1547) and A Homily against Disobedience and Wilful Rebellion (1570): A Critical Edition*, ed. Ronald B. Bond (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), pp.3-25 (p.3).

⁴⁷ Susan Wabuda, *Preaching during the English Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p.89

⁴⁸ Susan Wabuda, 'Bishops and the Provision of Homilies, 1520 to 1547', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 25:3 (Autumn, 1994), pp.551-66 (p.552). Cranmer was not unopposed in this endeavour. Bonner put up some initial resistance but Gardiner protested the loudest. See Ronald B. Bond, 'Cranmer and the Controversy Surrounding the Publication of Certain Sermons or Homilies (1547)', *Renaissance and Reformation*, 12:1 (1976), pp.28-35 and Redworth, *In Defence of the Church Catholic*, pp.165-7 and pp.258-60.

⁴⁹ 'The Royal Injunctions of Edward VI. 1547', in *Visitation Articles and Injunctions, Volume II, 1536-1558*, eds. by W.H. Frere and W.P.M. Kennedy (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1910), pp.114-30 (p.129).

clearly promoted a divinely appointed hierarchy in which governors are placed under kings and princes 'in good and necessary order.'⁵⁰ The unquestionable legitimacy of Edward and his government was affirmed by the Wisdom of Solomon 6:1-3 that revealed the preeminent majesty of the King was a providential gift bestowed upon the people by God's 'great mercy to the comforte of our misery.' Consequently, the Royal Supremacy was upheld by the sermon confirming that the power and strength of Edward and his 'higher officers' is committed unto them 'immediatly of God' and not from Rome. The congregation left the church assured that both king and magistrates were divinely imputed with 'knowledge and wisdom' and that they exercised God's judgment by punishing the wicked and upholding godly laws.⁵¹ The homily was explicit: subjects must not engage in any form of murmuring, rebellion or resistance against their divinely ordained and appointed king.⁵² The command to obey 'Gods leifetenautes' was established in Scripture and the sermon turned to Chrysostom's reading of Romans 13 to demonstrate that none are excluded from this duty because by resisting the higher powers they also resist 'Gods wisdom, God's order, power, and authority.'

Therefore, the homily explicitly confirmed that all ordained power, even tyrannical, must be obeyed not only for fear but also for conscience's sake. The homily employed the magnificent examples of Christ and the Apostles to illustrate that despite the many injuries inflicted upon them by 'wicked men in authority' they must live in obedience. They should eschew all sedition or rebellion by following the precepts of I Peter 2:23 and commit their suffering unto Him 'that iudgeth righteously.'⁵³ The homily's application of Acts 5:29 was not, as Davies has suggested, potentially dangerous because the essential requirement of obedience to God always surpassed obedience to wickedness. Moreover, Davies position confused the active resistance, the refusal to do evil, with active resistance, the violently opposing evil.⁵⁴ What was being incessantly inculcated into the mind of England's congregation was a Lutheran doctrine of non-resistance. This was made all the more necessary because Edward's government aimed to indoctrinate a nation that, on the whole, did not share their evangelical outlook. While the doctrine of Royal Supremacy had remained unchanged; Gardiner's contumacy was a clear demonstration that the religious policy established by Henry VIII was markedly different to that now being sold by the evangelicals. Stephen Alford has observed, attentive subjects would be aware of 'the powers and responsibilities of their governors—and the contribution they

⁵⁰ *Certain sermons, or homilies appoynted by the Kynges Maiestie, to be declared and redde, by all persones, vicars, or curates, evey So[n]day in their churches, where thei [sic] haue cure* (London: by Rychard Grafton, 1547), STC 13638.5, Sig. N1r.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, sigs. N2r-N2v

⁵² *Ibid.*, ig. O2r.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, N3r-N3v

⁵⁴ Davies, *A religion of the word*, pp.159-60.

themselves were expected to make in the great corporate endeavour of returning England to the true religion.⁵⁵ The belief that the threat of popery lurked in almost every corner was a destabilising force.

The Edwardian government clearly needed authoritative theological support in its battle against popery, and in 1548 the evangelical regime looked for guidance from beyond its own borders. Prominent evangelicals such as Peter Martyr Vermigli, Bernardino Ochino, Jan Laski and Martin Bucer were eagerly embraced and England's ecclesiastical identity began to strongly gravitate towards its continental brethren. This theological bridge had, of course, already been crossed by churchmen such as John Hooper. The future bishop of Gloucester encountered the teaching of Zwingli in the late 1530s and he had developed a close relationship with Heinrich Bullinger during his stay in Zurich.⁵⁶ While in Switzerland he wrote vehemently against papal supremacy and insisted it was anathema for any bishop to presume the title of Christ's Vicar or attempt to constitute laws not found in Scripture.⁵⁷ For Hooper Rome's tyranny was a pestilence to body and soul. Furthermore, the pope's abominable claim to infallibility and to be the prince of all princes upon the earth will bring God's wrath.⁵⁸ Hooper's criticism perfectly foreshadowed the sentiment contained in the *Reformatio legum ecclesiasticarum* (1552) produced by a commission which included: Cranmer, Vermigli, Nicholas Ridley and Bartholomew Traheron amongst others.⁵⁹ Such contention was nothing new. The *Reformatio* had acquaintance with the aborted Henrician canons of 1535 because it rejected the claim that the pope was infallible and above the law as 'insanity.'⁶⁰

Another godly divine, Edmund Allen, had also been influenced by the reformist teaching that had emerged from the continent. Allen had studied in Germany during the reign of Henry VIII and had been a member of the team commissioned by Queen Katherine Parr to translate Erasmus' *Paraphrases*.⁶¹ Therefore, the influence of German theology upon Allen's *A catechisme* (1548) is apparent and he followed Luther, Melancthon and Tyndale in identifying a direct link between the Commandment to 'Honour thy father and mother' with obedience to civil power. Allen insisted that subjects must submit themselves to parents, teachers, magistrates and rulers

⁵⁵ Alford, *Kingship*, pp.32-3.

⁵⁶ Bruce Gordon, *The Swiss Reformation* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), p.301.

⁵⁷ John Hooper, *A declaration of Christe and of his offyce complyd, by Johan Hoper, anno 1547* (Zurich: Augustyne Fries, 1547), STC 13745, sig. B4r; B5v-B6r.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, sig. B6v

⁵⁹ For a fuller background on this see Gerald Bray's introduction to *Tudor Church Reform: The Henrician Canons of 1535 and the Reformatio legum ecclesiasticarum*, ed. by Gerald Bray (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2000), pp.xv-clx and James C. Spalding, 'The Reformation Legum Ecclesiasticarum of 1552 and the Furthering of Discipline in England', *Church History*, 39:2 (June 1970), pp.162-71.

⁶⁰ '*Reformatio legum ecclesiasticarum*', pp.145-743 (p.209).

⁶¹ Felicity Heal, 'Allen, Edmund (1510s–1559)', in *ODNB*, [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/wam.leeds.ac.uk/view/article/372>, accessed 8 March 2017].

but also spiritual ministers who provide guidance through preaching and their admonishing of evil-doing brings 'welth & profite of our soules.'⁶² Nevertheless, he limited obedience to the temporal power to matters concerning the 'transitory worlde' and the caveat of Acts 5:29 permitted disobedience to all commands which are 'expresly against gods woorde.'⁶³ This did not absolve the 'high powers & magistrates' from spiritual duty but rather prescribed it along the lines set out by Paul in Romans 13. The duty of earthly powers had a beneficial purpose because it was to revenge sin and iniquity for the glory of God and the quietness of their commonwealth.⁶⁴ Allen unsurprisingly articulated a doctrine of passive resistance in which all rebellion was a grievous sin and he counselled that Christians should refer their concerns to God's judgment.⁶⁵

The theological insights of the continental reformers proved to be a wellspring and the schoolmaster Richard Argentine translated a number of texts by Luther, Zwingli and Ochino for publication. Argentine demonstrated his support for Edward and Somerset in an earnest dedication prepeded to a collection of Ochino's sermons. He insisted that not only were Kings immediately under God but also that princes and governors were imbued with a 'large portion of the same,' and it was for this reason that Scripture called them gods (Psalm 82:6).⁶⁶ Another of Ochino's works, *A tragoedie or dialogue of the unjste usurped primacie of the Bishop of Rome* (1549), was translated by John Ponet and printed by Belgian Walter Lynne who later translated works by Luther and Bullinger.⁶⁷ *A tragoedie or dialogue* utilised the same method of persuasion used by Bale in attempting to reconstruct Christian history, in particular the battle between Christ and the Antichrist. Opportunely, Ochino wrote the tract at a time when Edward was writing upon the very same subject and the King expressed a similar sentiment by writing that 'the Pope is that wicked one, very Son of the Devil, an Anti-Christ, and an abominable Tyrant.'⁶⁸ Unsurprisingly, Ochino's tract found great favour with the King and John Dudley because it

⁶² Edmund Allen, *A catechisme* (London: Edwarde Whitchurche, 1548), STC 359, sigs. D5v-D6r.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, sigs. D6v-D7r

⁶⁴ Allen, *A catechisme*, sigs. D8v-E1r.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, sigs. D7v-D8r.

⁶⁶ Richard Argentine, 'Vnto The right Honourable LORDE Edward, Duke of Somerset mooste deare vncle vnto the Kinges Maiesté', in Bernardino Ochino. *Sermons of the ryght famous a[n]d excellent clerke Master Bernardine Ochine* (Ippeswyche: Anthony Scoloker, 1548), STC 18765, sigs. A2r-A2v.

⁶⁷ For an overview of Ochino's time in England see Anne M. Overell, *Italian Reform and English Reformations, c.1535-c.1586* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), pp.41-60.

⁶⁸ Edward VI, 'A L'encontre de la Primaute du Pape', in *The Literary Remains of Edward VI, Volume I*, ed. John Gough Nichols (London: J. B. Nichols and Sons, 1857), pp.181-205. For an English translation see Edward VI, *The Pope's supremacy confuted. By King Edward the VI. Translated out of his French original* (London: J.D. for Jonathan Robinson, 1682). Wing P2940, citation at p.95. MacCulloch suggested that Cranmer encouraged the Italian to compose *A tragoedie or dialogue*, in light of his knowledge of Edward's project against papal supremacy. MacCulloch, *Tudor Church Militant*, p.27.

depicted Edward as a providential godly ruler assisting in the defeat of the diabolical enemy.⁶⁹ This was, as Anne M. Overell stated, 'a perfect theme for an exile seeking acceptance.'⁷⁰

Another Lynne published tract, Joachim of Fiore's *The beginning and endynge of all popery* (1547), complimented Ochino's work by relaying the rise and fall of papal power. Lynne's publication of the historical anti-papal tract was in all effect state sponsored because he was granted exclusivity of production under a seven year licence. Both Ochino and Joachim's work were attractive to the evangelical government because, Alford insisted, they were works of 'historical explanation and exploration...[and] key to understanding the Reformation of the kingdom. Knowledge was critical.'⁷¹ Lynne's introduction sang loudly from the evangelical hymn sheet: the pope, as Antichrist, had cloaked his wickedness in Scripture and his deception fooled princes and rulers into believing it was their duty to erect his 'gorgeous' princely palace in Rome.⁷² Lynne's introduction perfectly prepared the ground for Joachim's anti-papal history which deciphered a series of woodcuts to reveal Satan's role in the illegitimate extension of papal power. Joachim attempted to demolish the pillar of papal supremacy (Matthew 16:18) with an appeal to Augustine, and he accused the pope of falsely claiming the Church was not built upon Christ but himself.⁷³

Consequently, Joachim revealed the papal office had no divine providence, and his text and application of image conspired to demonstrate the papal encroachment upon to the temporal realm. The image of God rebuking a kneeling pope for his riches, whilst the papal ear was filled by a Roman cleric, represented by a sinful fox, that feared the true doctrine and example of Peter and Paul will be followed, left no room for ambiguity.⁷⁴ The consanguinity of Satan and pope was explicit. The father (Satan) was presented the keys, sword and rod by his papal son, and simultaneously the sword of the spirit proceeded out of the pope's mouth fatally puncturing the Lamb of God.⁷⁵ For Alford this relationship was 'absolutely conspiratorial: the papacy has helped to extend the power of the Devil, which in turn has meant that the pope can exercise full spiritual and temporal authority.'⁷⁶ Joachim demonstrated that, with diabolical support and the accommodation of pliant clergy, the pope had trampled all rulers and governors underfoot and seized the temporal sword from 'the highe powers hauinge landes and people,

⁶⁹ Diarmaid MacCulloch confirms the king's fascination with the book. MacCulloch, *Tudor Church Militant*, pp.52-53.

⁷⁰ Overell, *Italian Reform* pp.49-50.

⁷¹ Alford, *Kingship*, p.103.

⁷² Walter Lynne, *The beginning and endynge of all popery, or popishe kyngedome* (London: by Iohn Herforde, 1548?), STC 17115, sigs. A2r-A2v.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, sig. B3v.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, sigs. D2v-D3r.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, sig. E2v.

⁷⁶ Alford, *Kingship*, p.105.

for the wealth of the good, and punishment of the euill.⁷⁷ Ochino's providence narrative to the papal usurpation of princely power was founded upon Lucifer's desire to eradicate the Church with a complicit Boniface III duping an ignorant Emperor Phocas into granting him supremacy.⁷⁸ Ochino ensured that this shift of temporal power was sanctioned by the emperor alone, albeit done under the shroud of treachery, and nowhere was papal supremacy shown to be ordained of God.

Ochino contended that the Pauline command stating obedience must be rendered to princes and magistrates 'ordeyned of hym' had been circumvented by the pope's devilish attempt to 'amplify hys cruell tyrannye.'⁷⁹ Not only were the pope's exterior powers granted erroneously by man, which theoretically could be recovered, but the emperor did not possess the authority to grant the Church of Rome universal spiritual motherhood because Christ alone was the true head of the Church.⁸⁰ The papal claim to primacy built upon succession from Peter was declared a fiction founded upon texts located in 'some olde rotten library' and concocted to ensure that 'the common people will strayght beleue that Peter was at Rome.'⁸¹ Furthermore, the Gelasian theory of the Two Swords was also disputed, with Ochino interpreting Luke 22:38 as recognition of their existence and necessity rather than Christ granting of them to His disciples.⁸² Thus, Lynne and Ochino attempted to expose what they believed to be a false claim of papal primacy over the universal Church of Christ. Any justification for papal primacy based upon a gift of Christ was fiction and any pope making this claim not only proved his imperfection but simultaneously denied the doctrine of infallibility. Consequently, any admission of papal imperfection or fallibility was, by concession, an acceptance that the Church itself was imperfect and in need of reform in order to free itself from the Roman Antichrist. The evangelical establishment had begun to sweep away the miscellany of Henry VIII's Church, and were now earnestly building a godly temple.

A Duty to Reform

The evangelicals understood there was an urgency to convince the people to support a godly government that was seeking to further the Reformation beyond what Henry VIII had prescribed. There was an imperative need to counter religious conservatives like Richard Smith who under Henry VIII had produced a number of tracts defending the Catholic Mass and

⁷⁷ Lynne, *Beginning and endynge of all popery*, sigs. E4v-F1r.

⁷⁸ Bernardino Ochino, *Tragoedie or dialoge of the vunjste usurped primacie of the Bishop of Rome, and of all the iust abolishyng of the same* (London: [N. Hill] for Gwalter Lynne, 1549), STC 18770, sigs. A3r-E2r.

⁷⁹ Ochino, *Tragoedie or dialoge*, sig. Bb2r.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, sigs. E2v-E4r.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, sigs. G4v-H1r.

⁸² *Ibid.*, sig. M4v.

upholding the communication between Scripture and tradition.⁸³ The regime burned Smith's books, forced him to publically recant, and affirm that within the realm only Edward and parliament had the authority to create both temporal and ecclesiastical law.⁸⁴ Others, such as Gardiner, were wrestling with the government over the dividing line between obedience to the sovereign and obedience to God. Yet, this transition towards to what Christopher Haigh describes as an 'Edwardian second Reformation' was not an inevitable march towards Protestantism as it was 'preceded by spasmodic fits, uncertain starts, and threats of reversal.'⁸⁵ The reform initiated by the old King was perceived by the Edwardian regime to be far from adequate, and they employed the force of propaganda to promptly 'destroy one Church and build another.'⁸⁶ The call for reform became an almost incessant chant.

Walter Lynne joined this call for further reformation and he urged Edward to continue his father's 'godlye worke.' He conceived that subjects still needed to know of the abuses performed by the Bishop of Rome in his lust for a dignity not bestowed upon him by Christ.⁸⁷ With the publication of Joachim's anti-papal tract Lynne sought to enlighten the young king with the veracity of ancient evidence and inspire him to act upon it. He informed Edward, in the language of Romans 13, that the sword was committed unto him for the honour of God and the wealth of his subjects, and by using it accordingly his kingdom would endure forever.⁸⁸ This was a coercive duty that was demanded because, as Hooper argued, the first application of civil law was provided by God to preserve the commonwealth. The law, he noted, had been given to the unjust.⁸⁹ Consequently, the *topos* of prince, sword and book, brilliantly demonstrated by Holbein's frontispiece to the Coverdale Bible (1535), was likewise utilised by the Edwardian government. Cranmer's *Catechismvs* (1548), printed by Lynne, contained an image of Edward holding the temporal sword while conferring the Bible upon his bishops. Edward, like his father, was a king that should to be feared like a roaring lion.⁹⁰

Henry Stafford also joined the chorus demanding further reform. He rejoiced in the fact that Henry had continued the godly work of David and Solomon, and abolished the superstition

⁸³ J. Andreas Löwe, 'Smyth, Richard (1499/1500–1563)', in *ODNB*, [<http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.wam.leeds.ac.uk/view/article/25885>, accessed 4 Nov 2015].

⁸⁴ Richard Smith, *A godly and faythfull retractation made and published at Paules crosse in London* (Londini: [Reynolde Wolfe], 1547), STC 22822, sigs. B1v-B2r.

⁸⁵ Haigh, *The English Reformations*, p.169.

⁸⁶ MacCulloch, *Tudor Church Militant*, p.56.

⁸⁷ Lynne, *Beginning and endynge of all popery*, sigs. A2v-A3r.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, sig. A3v.

⁸⁹ John Hooper, *A declaration of the ten holy co[m]maundementes of allmygthye God wroten Exo. 20. Deu. 5. Collectyd out of the scripture canonicall* (Zurich: Augustin Fries, 1548, i.e. 1549?), STC 13746, sig. C4r. Hooper was glossing I Timothy 1:9.

⁹⁰ Thomas Cranmer, *Catechismvs* (London: Nycolas Hyll for Gwalter Lynne, 1548). STC 5993, sig. A1v. Proverbs 20:2.

of the Antichrist. By upholding the memory of his father and promoting the Word of God, Edward would drive out the religious hypocrisy that was preventing the realm from flourishing.⁹¹ Ochino agreed and insisted this liberation will deliver England from the 'mischieuous robber' and papal tyranny.⁹² By advancing the true religion, Ochino contended, Edward would provide a 'wonderfull example moste worthy to be folowed of all other, the reste of the princes of Christendome.'⁹³ Edward was God's heroic paladin sent to liberate the world from Lucifer's wicked scheme by eradicating the false papal claim to supremacy. It was the providential duty of the new Josiah to further the Reformation and re-build the true Temple of Christ. Therefore, for reformers such as Edward Allen the accession of Edward both blunted the teeth and muzzled the mouths of the Pharisees.⁹⁴ This 'Pharisaical' threat was also identified by the anonymous *A Caveat for the Christians against the Archpapist* (1548), which warned that the supremacy of the king, and the evangelicals themselves, remained vulnerable from the traitor to God's Word, the arch-papist Stephen Gardiner.⁹⁵ *A Caveat* mirrored Ochino's demotic language and warned the reader of both the threat of the pope and Gardiner 'the gloriouse Hipocrite the subtile Sophester.' As Davies has argued, in the struggle against popery there existed a 'fundamental dichotomy between the 'true' and 'false' religion [which] grew out of the persistent need to distance the reform from popery and yet to be able to shrug off the charge of schism.'⁹⁶

Despite the government's concerted effort to affirm the legitimacy of Edward's supreme royal power, hearts and minds still needed to be convinced to adopt the regime's evangelical outlook. The statutes of the realm sought to define the doctrine of the Church of England, but it was obvious that they did not reflect the beliefs of the majority of Edward's subjects.⁹⁷ It was fundamental, Alford noted, to promote 'the notion of a reforming king, a second Josiah...on earth next under God, but a king counselled, profoundly conscious of his duty of care to God and to His subjects.'⁹⁸ Another proponent of further reform was Robert Crowley, described by John N. King as an Erastian who 'envisaged a theocratic monarchy...[and] he looked to the boy king, Edward VI, to complete the Henrician religious reforms.'⁹⁹ Crowley's 'masterpiece', *Philargyrie of Greate Britayne* (1551), explicitly depicts a fur-clad evangelical aristocrat (the giant

⁹¹ Henry, Lord Stafford, 'Dedication', in Edward Fox, *The true dyffere[n]s betwen ye regall power and the ecclesiasticall power translated out of latyn by Henry lord Stafforde* (London: Wylllyam Copla[n]d, 1548), STC 11220, sigs. A2r-A3r (A2r-A2v).

⁹² Ochino, *Tragoedie or dialoge*, sig. X4v.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, sig. Y1r.

⁹⁴ Argentine, 'Vnto The right Honourable', sig. A3V.

⁹⁵ This warning is emphasised by John 3:19 and Matthew 16:6 appearing on the front cover.

⁹⁶ Davies, *A religion of the word*, p.21.

⁹⁷ See Beer, *Rebellion and Riot*, pp.14-8.

⁹⁸ Alford, *Kingship*, p.100.

⁹⁹ John N. King, 'Robert Crowley: A Tudor Gospelling Poet', *The Yearbook of English Studies*, 8: American Literature Special Number (1978), pp.220-37 (p.223).

Philargyrie) using a Bible to rake silver coins into a large sack.¹⁰⁰ His contention was misgovernment, that England's 'new' aristocracy were hypocrites because the cupidinous Romish clergy dislodged by the Henrician reforms had simply been replaced by their own avarice and exploitation of the poor. Crowley believed the remedy to these ills was Edward, the providential agent of God. The King should advance the Reformation and save the people from the tyranny of his minister Philargyrie by taking up his rightful sword.¹⁰¹

For Crowley, and all good evangelicals, the model for able godly government was found in the Bible. Therefore, in order to further reform the Church Edward needed the sword of coercion provided to him by an indisputable authority: the Word of God. While Romans 13 outlined the crucial role temporal rulers must play to maintain order within their commonwealth, the reformers firmly believed that as God's ministers earthly authorities also possessed a spiritual duty. Indeed, Bullinger claimed that the divine law had been placed into the hands of the King and was imperative that he was not ignorant of God's will 'touching matters ecclesiastical and political, by which law he had to govern the whole estate of all his realm.'¹⁰² Bullinger contended that although the offices of the magistrate and clergy were distinct, their spheres were enjoined in one body. The prince must hear the spiritual minister but the ecclesiastical estate never had the right to disobey their temporal governor in matters of the law: although both were subject to God. Therefore in his dedicatory epistle to Edward VI, contained in the Fourth Decade, Bullinger encouraged the king to 'proceed to reform the churches in thy kingdom' according to the Word of God and imitate the godly examples of Josiah and David.¹⁰³ Bullinger illustrated that Edward's possession of *cura religionis* was afforded him by God and Scripture had revealed his duty to initiate further reform of the Church.

The need for reform was identified by Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge University, Martin Bucer, who warned Edward's evangelical regime that the Antichrist was yet to be vanquished.¹⁰⁴ Bucer had already outlined the ideal of a dutiful reforming king in *A Brief Summary of Christian Doctrine* (1548). Consequently, he confirmed the divine and sacred nature of civil power and added that the holder of this authority 'should above all promote the rightful

¹⁰⁰ John N. King declares the tract to be 'Crowley's masterpiece.' King, *English Reformation Literature*, p.346.

¹⁰¹ Robert Crowley, *Philargyrie of Greate Britayne* (London: Robert Crowley, 1551), STC 6089.5, sigs. D7r-D8v.

¹⁰² Heinrich Bullinger, 'The Second Decade of Sermons', in *The Decades of Henry Bullinger, Minister of the Church of Zurich, The First and Second Decades*, ed. by Thomas Harding, trans. by H.I. for the Parker Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1849), pp.193-435 (p.329). [Hereafter *DHB*].

¹⁰³ Heinrich Bullinger, 'To the Most Renowned Prince Edward the Sixth', in *The Decades of Henry Bullinger, Minister of the Church of Zurich, The Fourth Decade*, ed. by Thomas Harding, trans. by H.I. for the Parker Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1851), pp.115-22 (pp.119-21).

¹⁰⁴ Martin Bucer, 'De Regno Christi', in *Melanchthon and Bucer*, ed. by Milhelm Pauck (London: SCM Press LTD, 1969), pp.174-394 (p.174).

worship of God and the living of godly and honourable lives.¹⁰⁵ To support his notion Bucer petitioned Chrysostom's homily on Romans 13 to declare that all men, including apostles and prophets, must subject themselves to the bearer of the sword provided by God. This obedience was required 'both for conscience's sake and for God's sake' and subjects must live in accordance with civil law and fulfil their duty.¹⁰⁶ The duty of the prince to establish, and complete, the reformation of Christ's Church was brought to the young king's attention by Bucer in his last substantial work *De Regno Christi* (1551), a work 'that served, in part, to create a Protestant version of the Holy Roman Emperor.'¹⁰⁷ Bucer impressed upon Edward that Paul words had revealed that sovereign power was entrusted unto him by God and he must energetically pursue the reform of the Kingdom of Christ because any neglect of this divine duty endangered the salvation of all within the realm.¹⁰⁸ *De Regno Christi* drew heavily upon his vast experience in order to address critical questions concerning the English Church. These important insights were presented to Edward as a gift and the influence of *De Regno Christi* lived on during Elizabeth's reign.¹⁰⁹

The fact that Bucer forged close relationships with both Edmund Grindal and Matthew Parker, who soon rose to the highest spiritual offices, only served to demonstrate his extended influence over the English Church. The influx of reformers such as Bucer and Vermigli acted as couriers of the Gospel and proved to be essential to the progress of the English Reformation. Indeed, Brian Cummings has observed that Edwardian England 'found itself briefly at the centre of a European theological tradition.'¹¹⁰ Bucer's *De Regno Christi* was a product of this theological vitality and the book provided a contemplation upon the relationship between the spiritual world of God and the temporal kingdom of man. Therefore, Bucer's purpose was to consider what was required for the formation of a truly Christian commonwealth. Accordingly, the book paid particular attention to the appropriate relationship between the Church and prince and in doing so 'it constituted one of the most extensive works of political theology that came out of the first generation of Protestant reformers.'¹¹¹ In doing so Bucer defined the kingdom of man

¹⁰⁵ Martin Bucer, 'A Brief Summary of Christian Doctrine', in *Common Places of Martin Bucer*, trans. and ed. D. F. Wright (Abingdon, Eng.: The Sutton Courtenay Press, 1972), pp.76-94 (p.92).

¹⁰⁶ Bucer, 'Brief Summary of Christian Doctrine', p.92. John Chrysostom, "Homily XXIII," pp.392-393. Also see Chapter 1.

¹⁰⁷ Thomas James Dandeleit, *The Renaissance of Empire in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), p.252.

¹⁰⁸ Bucer, 'De Regno Christi', p.266.

¹⁰⁹ See Patrick Collinson, 'The Reformer and the Archbishop: Martin Bucer and an English Bucerian', *The Journal of Religious History*, 6:4 (Dec., 1971), pp.305-30 and *idem*, *Archbishop Grindal, 1519-1583: The Struggle for a Reformed Church* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1979), pp.55-6.

¹¹⁰ Brian Cummings, *The Literary Culture of the Reformation: Grammar and Grace* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p.240.

¹¹¹ Thomas Dandeleit, 'Creating a Protestant Constantine: Martin Bucer's *De Regno Christi* and the Foundations of English Imperial Political Theology', in *Politics and Reformations: Communities, Policies,*

as an 'administration of a people or state' in which one person excelled all others in wisdom, and strove to ensure the well-being of all citizens by leading them 'toward a responsible and happy way of life.'¹¹² The two kingdoms, being of God and man, shared a similarity in that they were overseen by a single supreme administrative power, but the earthly power, unlike God, required the counsel of individuals that possessed outstanding 'prudence and wisdom.'¹¹³

Therefore, in Bucer's understanding of the relationship between Church and prince, the spiritual and temporal ministers must remain obedient instruments of the superior power and endeavour to foster well-being. It was a crucial duty of the earthly power, as a divinely ordained authority, to protect its subjects by enlarging the faith of all citizens for salvation's sake. Central to this was love, and he reminded his reader to love God and 'thy neighbor as thyself' before making a particular stress on the commandment to obey and honour your father and mother as a means for insisting upon submission to higher authority.¹¹⁴ The illustrious example of divine kingship was David who occupied 'the place of honor on Bucer's list of role models—*veri reges*—who could inspire young Edward to the accomplishment of his divinely mandated mission.'¹¹⁵ Nevertheless, kingly authority did not possess the power to purge men of their impiety and nor could it imbue them with righteousness. Bucer contended, it was the prince's duty as God's minister to suppress evil by felling 'useless trees', and zealously cultivate the land with good laws which prepared their subjects to receive God's Word.¹¹⁶

In this way Bucer firmly believed that 'good laws', whether spiritual or civil, should be measured against the standard of biblical law. As N. Scott Amos has observed, Bucer believed that 'Scripture as divine law is the fundamental foundation for every Christian *res publica*, whether it be that of a German city like Strasbourg, or a sovereign state like England.'¹¹⁷ Thus, Bucer insisted that princes should follow the example of the 'holy patriarchs praised in Holy Scriptures' and the 'pious emperors' who have 'preferred in their laws to follow the divine arrangement rather than human judgment.'¹¹⁸ Consequently, the temporal powers performed a spiritual function, revealed in Romans 13, because 'having received with the power of the

Nations, and Empires, Essays in Honor of Thomas A. Brady, Jr. eds. Christopher Ocker, Michaw Printy, Peter Starenko, and Peter Wallace (Leiden: Brill, 2007), pp.539-50.

¹¹² Bucer, 'De Regno Christi', p.177.

¹¹³ Ibid., p.179.

¹¹⁴ Bucer, 'De Regno Christi', pp.358-60.

¹¹⁵ R. Gerald Hobbs, 'Bucer's use of King David as Mirror of the Christian Prince', *Reformation & Renaissance Review*, 5:1 (June 2003), pp.102-28 (p.104). The image of Davidic kingship had already proven a fertile one. See Nevada Levi DeLapp, *The Reformed David(s) and the Question of Resistance to Tyranny: Reading the Bible in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014).

¹¹⁶ Bucer, 'De Regno Christi', p.180.

¹¹⁷ N. Scott Amos, 'The Use of Canon and Civil Law and their Relationship to Biblical Law in *De Regno Christi*', in *Martin Bucer und das Recht*, eds. by Christoph Strohm and Henning P. Jürgens (Genève: Librairie Droz S.A., 2002), pp.147-165 (p.151).

¹¹⁸ Bucer, 'De Regno Christi', p.319.

sword the power over the *lives* of its subjects...it is responsible for the best *living*.¹¹⁹ The temporal ruler, Bucer reminded the reader, did not bear the sword in vain and consequently God's ministers, like all within the commonwealth, must not abuse, reject or neglect their duty to others.¹²⁰ Moreover, if people truly accepted 'the Kingdom of his Son', God would provide them a dutiful king. The preeminent of all Christian monarchs was, in Bucer's opinion, Constantine and by making a direct connection between this glorious age of Christianity and Edward's reign he 'sets the Church of England and the English monarchy along an imperial path.'¹²¹

Bucer had drawn a direct parallel between the exalted Constantine and the godly Emperor Edward VI. This connection coalesced harmoniously with the image of imperial England previously defined in the Act in Restraint of Appeals.¹²² This imperial iconography was purposely utilised and buttressed with celestial images and didactic Scripture.¹²³ Nonetheless, by accepting that God would deliver a faithful king that protected the weak and suppressed impiety, Bucer had inversely admitted that He may, given the circumstance, tolerate a tyrannical government to rule over His people. In fact, citizens of the Kingdom of Christ usually lived under the oppression of tyrants, and he reassured the faithful that God would feed, gather and protect His flock amidst the wolves.¹²⁴ Therefore, Christians living under tyrannical rule should commit the matter to God in continuous prayer and ask Him to provide a true king to rule over their commonwealth. They must not be 'disturbed' if God permitted a tyrannical government to rule over them because they were, according to Peter, 'a royal priesthood, a holy nation, the special people of God.'¹²⁵ Consequently, Bucer argued, the Christian had an obligation towards the earthly kingdom because Christ commanded them to obey not only good princes 'but also very iniquitous lords and terrible tyrants to whom public power has been given (I Peter 2:13-17).' This understanding of obedience was, Bucer claimed, in agreement with Chrysostom's judgment that when Paul stated that 'every soul' must be subject to their higher powers, this precept applied not only to the laity but also to a priest, monk, prophet or Apostle.¹²⁶

¹¹⁹ Wilhelm Pauck. *The Heritage of the Reformation: Revised and Enlarged Version* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1961), p.78.

¹²⁰ Bucer, '*De Regno Christi*' p.189.

¹²¹ Dandeleit, 'Creating a Protestant Constantine', p.544.

¹²² 'Act in Restraint', p.353. Bale also made this comparison: 'our great Constantyne...a prynce of power by hys lyuely wurde. Roma .xiii.' See John Bale. *An expostulation or complaynte agaynste the blasphemyes of a franticke papyst of Hamshyre* (London: Ihon Daye, 1552?), STC 1294, sig. A6v.

¹²³ Alford, *Kingship*, p.53.

¹²⁴ Bucer, '*De Regno Christi*', pp.188-89. Bucer referred here to Isaiah 40:11.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p.191. Bucer referred here to I Peter 2:9-10.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.186. See Chrysostom, 'Homily XXIII', pp.392-3 and Bucer's in *A Brief Summary of Christian Doctrine* (1548) above.

While the ministers of the Kingdom of Christ were subjected to the earthly kingdom, Bucer like Hooper insisted that the exhortations of these ministers must still be heard. Those ministers that discharge their function dutifully should be shown deference by the earthly powers because they conveyed Christ's voice and His mysteries and the 'mysteries of eternal life.' Princes must, then, adorn and nourish the Church with ardent zeal.¹²⁷ Bucer attempted to construct a practical model of government that advanced the true faith but importantly it was one built within the existing framework of the English monarchy. He was not advocating imperial absolutism but rather he provided a fundamental statement upon obedience. This was a conception of a *regnum Christi* within the *respublica Christiana* constructed upon Scripture: a commonwealth ordered and guided both spiritually and politically by the authority of God's Word. This theocratic commonwealth required the labour of earthly rulers in its erection but once constructed this godly society could legitimately demand adherence from all, noticeably prince and magistrates. As Marshall noted, 'Bucer's vision was of a secular and ecclesiastical authority working seamlessly to build the Kingdom of Christ.'¹²⁸ It was for Edward, implored Bucer, to use his 'royal strength and power' to re-establish 'the blessed Kingdom of the Son of God' and by eliminating wickedness Christ would be restored to his rightful place in the hearts of Englishmen.¹²⁹ The evangelicals were assured in their belief that Edward had been sent by God's providence to restore the Kingdom of Christ.

'subjectes so disobedient': The Rebellions of 1549

Thomas Lever preached upon Romans 13 in the Shrouds at Paul's Cross in February 1550, as directed by the Book of Common Prayer, and he reflected upon the rebellions which had caused such disorder the previous summer. Lever's conclusion was that undutiful rebellion was never the answer to societal ills. His mood can be ascertained by his turn to Matthew 12:25 and he identified a realm pulled apart by diversity in opinion over religion and seditious ambition.¹³⁰ Lever provided the example of King Rehoboam's turn to evil counsel, and his failure to redress the grievances of his people, to demonstrate that those who rebelled by setting up Jeroboam were brought into far greater misery because of their sedition.¹³¹ The story of Rehoboam was an exemplar for both rulers and subjects. Kings that suppressed their subjects brought disquiet and destruction, but subjects that turned to insurrection to ease their affliction will be punished by God.¹³² The only recourse for those afflicted by oppression was to suffer silently and commit

¹²⁷ Bucer, *'De Regno Christi'*, p.188.

¹²⁸ Marshall, *Heretics and Believers*, p.345.

¹²⁹ Bucer, *'De Regno Christi'*, p.392; p.384.

¹³⁰ Thomas Lever, *Fruitfull sermon made in Poules churche at London in the Dhroudes, the seconde daye of February* (London: Iohn Daie, 1550), STC 15543, sig. A5r.

¹³¹ I Kings 12.

¹³² Lever, *Fruitfull sermon*, Sigs. C3v-C4r.

the matter to God who would listen, relieve and deliver them from their yoke.¹³³ In actuality the duty of rulers and officers, Lever noted, was to be shepherds that feed their flock; as opposed to thieves that rob them.¹³⁴ Lever exclaimed that all should acknowledge their own faults and by redressing their own behaviour God would provide rulers who will reward virtue rather than punish vice. He would be moved by their repentance and preserve rulers sent for their comfort. This was a call for patience because England had been blessed with a king that possessed godliness, virtue and grace. Providing their sins should not cause God to deem their realm unworthy, King Edward will amend the misery of the people and comfort them.

The sentiment of Lever was shared by Hugh Latimer. Indeed, Latimer's earlier *Sermon of the Plough* (1549) had invoked the popular allegorical path of William Langland's prophetic poem *Piers Plowman* and declared that 'preaching of the gospel is one of God's plough-works, and the preacher is one of God's ploughmen.'¹³⁵ Latimer had resolved that instead of following the example of the Apostles and devoting themselves to preaching and teaching, the idle plough of the prelates had placed the realm's health at risk of diabolic labour.¹³⁶ The function of prelate and ploughman was analogous because both were honourable and required constant diligence: a life of 'labouring, and not lording.'¹³⁷ Latimer had observed a dereliction of duty and the perilous consequence of the spiritual ploughmen's lack of assiduity was that Satan had become the most diligent preacher in the realm. Satan was never away from his cure, ever at his plough, never idle and not hampered by lording.¹³⁸ Latimer demanded a clear distinction between the office of lord and prelate in order to combat the determined plough-work of Satan. Men should concern themselves with their function: priests should preach and the noblemen should administer temporal affairs.¹³⁹

But for Hooper this distinction did not absolve magistrates from the reproach of spiritual ministers. In fact, he stressed to an attentive Edward that princes should not be offended by intervention because they must to rule in accordance with the law and 'give credence' unto, and be directed by, His Holy Word.¹⁴⁰ This was a confirmation of the existence of Two Swords: the

¹³³ This is the same position both Luther and Zwingli had previously taken. See Chapter 2.

¹³⁴ Lever, *Fruitfull sermon*, Sig. C5v.

¹³⁵ Hugh Latimer, 'Sermon of the Plough', in *Sermons on the Card and Other Discourses by Hugh Latimer, sometime Bishop of Worcester, Martyr, 1555* (London, Paris, New York & Melbourne: Cassell & Company Limited, 1883), pp.114-53 (p. 116). See John N. King, "'Robert Crowley's Editions of "Piers plowman:" A Tudor Apocalypse', *Modern Philology*, 73:4 Part 1 (May, 1976), pp. 342-52.

¹³⁶ Latimer had raised this issue before convocation a decade earlier. Latimer, 'Sermons before the Convocation of the Clergy, 1536', in *Sermons by Hugh Latimer, sometime Bishop of Worcester, Martyr, 1555*, pp.33-58.

¹³⁷ Latimer, 'Sermon of the Plough', p.126.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p.137.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p.136. Latimer's biblical crux for this assertion was I Thessalonians 4:11.

¹⁴⁰ Latimer, 'The First Sermon', p.85. MacCulloch has stated 'the ambassador of the Holy Roman Empire...noted the king's enthusiasm for taking notes on sermons, and he added that Edward was

temporal placed into the hands of princes and all are subject by risk of punishment for offence; and the spiritual provided to the clergy and unto whom even rulers should be obedient provided they speak from Christ's book. But this understanding of the Two Swords did not afford them equal power. Hooper stated the temporal sword can correct any violator of God's Word, including spiritual ministers, but the preacher can only 'correct and reprove' the king with the spiritual sword. The preacher should be at liberty to teach and amend the prince without fear but if the prince refused admonition the spiritual minister's only recourse would be to commit the matter to God and pray for them.'¹⁴¹ Lever contended that the consequence of all subjects undertaking their appropriate calling would be that England will be transformed into 'a flourishing christian commonweal.'¹⁴²

It was essential for the temporal and spiritual wealth of England that all men perform their duty to God. Therefore, Hooper insisted, that it was the duty of the faithful to sincerely obey the higher powers to the extent Scripture prescribed and to aid them in sustaining, preserving and defending the commonwealth from their enemies. Nevertheless, the commands of magistrates should accord with Scripture and in any matter that pricked the Christian's conscience, God must be heard (Acts 5:29). Hooper, like Luther, Tyndale and Allen, directly related Romans 13 with the commandment 'Honour thy father', which he asserted 'requireth obedience to all superiour poures.'¹⁴³ By adhering to this command the Christian discovered the ways and means to live in peace and unity within the temporal world.¹⁴⁴ This divine blueprint for earthly life appointed and instituted both the *imperium* and *dominium* which delineated one man's duty from that of another. The loving and reciprocal relationship between parent and child was the ideal model for subject and king: the junior must show obedience and the senior should be a guardian that provided tutorship and protection. The coupling of Romans 13 with 'Honour thy father and thy mother' made the need for obedience and honour clearly perceptible and both demanded external and internal observation. By observing one command, you naturally observed the other.

However, the higher powers should not glory in their divinely ordained authority. Instead, Hooper demanded that they must fulfil the duties outlined in Psalm 101, which foreshadowed Romans 13, and uphold justice and punish vice. The prince must rule in accordance to law, but never be above it; be a minister of the law, but never be master over

particularly insistent on inviting the most extreme preachers to court.' MacCulloch, *Tudor Church Militant*, p.23.

¹⁴¹ Latimer, 'The First Sermon', pp.85-6.

¹⁴² Latimer, 'Sermon of the Plough', p.137.

¹⁴³ Hooper, *Ten holy commaundementes*, sigs. D1r-D1v.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, sig. l7r.

it.¹⁴⁵ Indeed, Lever argued that while the poor men had become disobedient, the rich had failed in their duty to govern and both had provoked God's vengeance and needed to repent.¹⁴⁶ Lever understood it was his duty to speak against abuse throughout all levels society and considered it better to risk the displeasure of man by speaking the truth than it was say nothing and provoke God's indignation.¹⁴⁷ For Lever there was no separation of the duty of the man, be it lord or laity, from that of the Christian and none within the commonwealth may neglect their prescribed function. As John N. King noted, Lever had suggested 'that prosperous individuals have an obligation to share their wealth through charitable acts.'¹⁴⁸ Make no mistake, what was being outlined was not an egalitarian utopia. Even if the rebels had legitimate grounds to complain and in their plight enjoyed a degree of sympathy in Lever's words; their rising was an affront to both God and their King. As the 1547 homily concerning good order had declared, it was not permitted to engage in murmuring or rebellion against their sovereign king appointed by God's goodness.¹⁴⁹

Lever walked a thorny path between recognising all power was of God, even when debased or inadequate, and believing that although God did not create evil, He still provided the people with the lordship that their sin deserved.¹⁵⁰ Consequently, none will escape God's censure for their failings. Calvin informed Somerset that the rebellions were not merely malice and sedition promoted by Satan against the Word of God, but a chastisement by God for their own faults and perhaps vengeance for their ingratitude.¹⁵¹ Therefore, Lever's example of Rehoboam and Jeroboam was particularly germane because the previous summer the king's government had faced dissonance: questions over policy, the problematic issue of a young king served by a protector and a pressure on numerous international fronts. This was a crisis over legitimacy in religion and popular politics.¹⁵² Many of these challenges had already been placed before Somerset in series of pointed letters by the regime's very own Cassandra Sir William Paget. The pressures of the broken marriage covenant with Scotland, the lack of treaty with the French, the growing displeasure of the Emperor at England's religious reform, were all outlined

¹⁴⁵ Hooper, *Ten holy commaundementes*, K6r-K7v.

¹⁴⁶ Lever, *Fruitfull sermon*, sigs. A8r-A8v.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, sig. B6v.

¹⁴⁸ John N. King, 'Paul's Cross and the Implementation of Protestant Reforms under Edward VI', in *Paul's Cross and the Culture of Persuasion in England, 1520-1640*, ed. Torrance Kirby (Leiden: Brill, 2013), pp.141-59 (p.157).

¹⁴⁹ *Certain sermons, or homilies appoynted by the Kynges Maiestie*, sig. O2r

¹⁵⁰ Lever, *Fruitfull sermon*, sig. C2v-C3r.

¹⁵¹ John Calvin, *Epistle both of Godly consolacion and also of aduertisement* (London: W. Baldwin, 1550), STC 4407, sigs. B3r-B4v.

¹⁵² Wood, *The 1549 Rebellions*, pp.21-22.

by the realm's dire financial state.¹⁵³ Paget's prophecy was stark: 'I see at hand the coming which I have now feared of good time, the destruction of that goodly yong child, my sovereign Lord, the subversion of the noble realm of England, and the ruine of your Grace.'¹⁵⁴

Latimer had also already warned Edward of England's predicament. In April 1549 he preached before the king and stated: 'Men will be masters; they will be masters and no disciples...The people regard no discipline; they be without all order...Surely in popery they had a reverence; but now we have none at all.'¹⁵⁵ Given the shock at the sheer scale and speed of the Edwardian reforms, it is of little wonder that evangelicalism had failed to take root. Indeed, as Hooper reported to Bullinger, such a great quantity of the realm adhered 'to the popish faction' that God and the authority of magistrates was diminished so enormously 'that I am greatly afraid of a rebellion and civil discord.'¹⁵⁶ Therefore, Paget implored Somerset to have the courage to act like a king and exercise the power provided him because of Edward's tender age. He stated the realm was held together by 'religion and laws', and the realm was now suffering a deficiency of both: 'The foot taketh upon him the part of the head, and [the] commons is become a king.'¹⁵⁷

Hooper and Paget were not alone in providing a diagnosis of England's afflictions. Ochino's unpublished work, *Dialogus Regis et Populi* (1549), identified both economic and religious motivations; the first involved ideas of social justice, and the second concerned conscience. Philip McNair noted that despite the 'unexceptionably Erastian' tone, Ochino's political opinions 'do not advance beyond' those of John Cheke's *The Hurt of Sedition*.¹⁵⁸ Cheke had suggested the ungodly rage of the Norfolk rebels expressed towards gentlemen was born out of envy, charging the agitators of hating them 'for their riches, or for their rule.' Again the rebels were accused of ignorance and naïvely believing that their acts were in some way authorised by Scripture. Cheke was at great pains to show the rebels that those whom they bitterly opposed were not the ones who had fallen from their faith and failed in their duty to

¹⁵³ William Paget, 'to Somerset 17 April, 1549', in *The Letters of William, Lord Paget of Beaudesert, 1547-64: Camden Miscellany, XXV*, eds. Barrett L. Beer and Sybil M. Jack (London: Royal Historical Society, 1974), pp.29-33.

¹⁵⁴ William Paget, 'to the Lord Protector, upon the breaking out of the rebellion in the west, July 7, 1549', in *Ecclesiastical Memorials, relating chiefly to Religion and the Reformation of it*, Vol. II, Part II, ed. by John Strype. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1822), pp.429-37 (pp.429-30).

¹⁵⁵ Hugh Latimer, 'The Seventh Sermon of M. Latimer Preached Before King Edward, April Nineteenth, [1549]', in *Sermons by Hugh Latimer, sometime Bishop of Worchester, Martyr, 1555*, pp.216-38 (p.230).

¹⁵⁶ John Hooper, 'to Henry Bullinger, Dated at London, June 25, [1549]', in *Original Letters Relative to the English Reformation, written during the reigns of King Henry VIII., King Edward VI., and Queen Mary: chiefly from the archives of Zurich*, Vol. 1, trans. and ed. by Hastings Robinson for the Parker Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1846), pp.65-7 (p.66). [Hereafter *OL I*].

¹⁵⁷ Paget 'to the Lord Protector', p.431.

¹⁵⁸ Philip McNair, 'Ochino on Sedition: An Italian Dialogue of the Sixteenth Century', *Italian Studies*, 15 (1960), pp.36-49 (pp.44-5).

obey their king but themselves.¹⁵⁹ For their flaunting of God's ordinances, he warned, they will be punished accordingly. Cheke's rhetoric remained true to that of Tyndale; the magistrates were provided with the sword of correction by God and consequently their vengeance was His vengeance.¹⁶⁰

Thomas Cranmer also recognised the misery that had engulfed the realm. In a sermon delivered at St. Paul's Cross at the height of the rebellions his assessment was bleak: England was in distress and faced 'utter ruin and subversion.' Cranmer contended that the rebellions had left the country and its people 'so troubled, so vexed, so tossed, and deformed.'¹⁶¹ However, this appraisal was not Cranmer's own but rather a line-by-line translation of an autograph sermon composed by Peter Martyr Vermigli.¹⁶² Vermigli's contribution is significant because it again demonstrated the important role continental reformers played in defining the Edwardian Church. Furthermore, the sermon supported Paget and Latimer's earlier bleak assessment of the nation's health. Consequently, Cranmer's oration stated that England's subjects faced God's eternal punishment unless they sought amendment and the only comfort from this 'common sorrow' was to dissipate the 'great thick dark clouds [...with] the light of God's word.' The primary cause for uprisings, Cranmer asserted, was that the regime's leniency and God's ordained ministers' lax application of the sword had caused the realm to suffer the disruption of profuse vice.

The Bible was not bereft of didactic narratives that cautioned rulers against leniency towards vice. Indeed, Cranmer's sermon drew particular attention to the high priest and judge Eli indulgence of his sons which brought ruin, David's need to suppress Ammon, Absalom and Adonias, and the almost complete destruction of the tribe of Benjamin for sheltering savage criminals.¹⁶³ The message was not ambiguous. Cranmer had charged the government of failing to execute their divine mandate conferred upon them by Romans 13, to maintain order and punish the wicked. Therefore, all had offended God, 'both high and low', and they deserved the plague that now engulfed them. The governors had stumbled but their failure did not absolve the commonality of their disobedience to God's command to obey the higher powers.

¹⁵⁹ John Cheke, *The hurt of sedicion howe greueous it is to a commune welth* (London: Iohn Daye, 1549), STC 5109, sig. A6v-A7r.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, sig. A4r.

¹⁶¹ Thomas Cranmer, 'A Sermon concerning the tyme of Rebellion', in *The Works of Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, Martyr, 1556*, Vol. II, ed. by John Edmund Cox for the Parker Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1846), pp.190-202 (p.190). A translation of Peter Martyr Vermigli's Latin text is found in W.J. Torrance Kirby, *The Zurich Connection and Tudor Political Theology* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), pp. 149-80.

¹⁶² See Torrance Kirby, "'Synne and Seditioun': Peter Martyr Vermigli's "Sermon concernynge the tyme of rebellion" in the Parker Library', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 39:2 (Summer 2008), pp.419-40.

¹⁶³ Cranmer, 'Sermon concerning Rebellion', pp.190-1. I Samuel 1-4, II Samuel 13-18, I Kings 1 and Judges 19-21 respectively.

Consequently, all must search their conscience, confess their sins and amend themselves in the knowledge that their offences had caused both private and public calamity. The rebels, insisted Cranmer, had been so overcome by greed that their blindness had turned into a poisonous rage that threatened to overthrow all government. The sedition of the rebellion was made clear: 'To take the sword, is to draw the sword without the authority of the prince.' It was expressly forbidden by Scripture to engage in 'private revenging' or correction and subjects must be obedient because it was by God's design that kings and governors reign.¹⁶⁴

The motivations for the rebellions were primarily socio-economic. However, the participants of the uprisings had made a fundamental connection between social reform and evangelical religious reform.¹⁶⁵ Cranmer rejected any suggestion that poverty was a legitimate reason for disorder. He noted that both Christ and St. Peter lived in stark poverty and yet still paid their tribute to Caesar 'without murmuring or grudging.'¹⁶⁶ Railing against the wealthy and decrying the faults of others served no purpose if they could not see their own wrongdoings. The rebels had become so covetous that they sought to defraud their king and magistrates of their authority by attempting to seize the sword bestowed upon them by God.¹⁶⁷ According to the contemporary chronicler Charles Wriothesley, the Archbishop admonished the rebels for acting against 'Godes commandment and the true obedience to our most Christen king Edwarde the sixt.'¹⁶⁸ Indeed, Cranmer's notes on the sermon contended that the sword being swung by the rebels did not come from God but the devil.¹⁶⁹ For Cranmer the rebellion was a grand usurpation of the power of the king, God's vicar and chief minister on earth. Nevertheless, both Lever and Cranmer publically insisted that the greatest blame for the uprisings was with the magistrates themselves who had failed to execute their divine duties conferred upon them by God in Romans 13. This was a dereliction of duty *en masse*. Lever denounced almost everyone: the rich for exploiting the commonality, the commons for civil disobedience, the Church for hypocrisy and the government of corruption. Romans 13, Lever argued, did not exclude the higher powers from culpability.

¹⁶⁴ Cranmer, 'Sermon concerning Rebellion', pp.192-3. Calvin stated that sometimes God 'raises up open avengers from among his servants, and arms them with his command to punish wicked government and deliver his people, oppressed in unjust ways, from miserable calamity.' Calvin, *Institutes* 1536, p.224.

¹⁶⁵ Anthony Fletcher and Diarmaid MacCulloch eds., *Tudor Rebellions*, 4th edn (London: Longman, 1997), p.80.

¹⁶⁶ Peter Martyr Vermigli, 'A sermon concernynge the tyme of rebellion', in W.J. Torrance Kirby, *The Zurich Connection*, pp.149-90 (p. 161).

¹⁶⁷ Cranmer, 'Sermon concerning Rebellion', p.197.

¹⁶⁸ Charles Wriothesley, *A Chronicle of England during the reigns of the Tudors, from A.D. 1485 to 1559*. Vol. II ed. William Douglas Hamilton (London: J.B. Nichols and Sons, 1877), p.17.

¹⁶⁹ Thomas Cranmer, 'The Archbishop's notes for a Homily against Rebellion', in *The Works of Thomas Cranmer*, Vol. II, pp.188-9 (p.189).

Robert Crowley also noted that England was plagued by societal ills. Crowley's poetic sketch, *The voyce of the laste trumpet* (1549), touched upon the common theme that each person should accept their appropriate vocation. He contended that any 'disruption of social degree is the disruption of God's plan.'¹⁷⁰ As Andy Wood observed, 'Once again, the poor are enjoined to resist rebellion; to put their faith in ultimate salvation; and to accept the authority even of oppressive governors.'¹⁷¹ Consequently, Lever joined Latimer in declaring that if their prince commanded anything contrary to God's Word, they must pray for him and ask that he attained revelation from the Gospel. In a direct reference to Romans 13, Crowley wrote:

Take not his swerd out of hys hand,
But lay thy necke downe vnder it:
Yea, though thou mightiest his force withstande;
For so to do for the is fit.
Thy master Christ hath taught the wel
When he woulde no resistance make:
Neither against the powers rebell,
When men were sent him for to take.¹⁷²

Christians should remain true to their faith and be comforted in the fact that even a prince only possesses the power to maim or kill the flesh: he could not do any ill to their soul. Crowley warned, that God judged those that take up the sword against their king, and they should remember who appointed those which rule over men. An evil prince, Crowley insisted, was ordained as a result of their sin and was sent by God to punish them for their trespasses. Just as the rebellions of 1549 had testified, those who rose against their prince would be destroyed.¹⁷³

Lever, Cranmer and Crowley were firmly aligned with the official Edwardian policy to stress the sinfulness of rebellion and inculcate obedience. Nonetheless, the regime did not only seek to ensure obedience by coercion or indoctrination because, as Alford revealed, Edwardian authors 'also engaged the rebels in a limited political dialogue.'¹⁷⁴ This was a dialogue influenced

¹⁷⁰ Christopher Warley, 'Reforming the Reformers: Robert Crowley and Nicholas Udall', in *The Oxford Handbook of Tudor Literature, 1485-1603*, eds. by Mike Pincombe and Cathy Shrank (Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.273-90 (p.282). Latimer soon asserted the very same in 'A Sermon Preached by M. Hugh Latimer, at Stamford, November 9, Anno 1550', in *Sermons by Hugh Latimer, sometime Bishop of Worchester, Martyr, 1555*, pp.282-308 (p.299).

¹⁷¹ Wood, *The 1549 Rebellions*, p.33.

¹⁷² Robert Crowley, *The voyce of the laste trumpet blowen bi the seue[n]th angel* (London: R. Grafton, 1549), STC 6094, sig. A8r.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, sigs. A8v-B1r.

¹⁷⁴ Alford, *Kingship*, p.60.

by regional patterns because the rebels were not purely motivated by religious sympathies.¹⁷⁵ Therefore, the Edwardian Reformation was theological, political and economic: 'a Reformation of strange bedfellows and nitty-gritty practicalities, negotiated and finessed rather than won.'¹⁷⁶ Nevertheless, *A Cope of a letter contayning certayne newes, & the articles or requestes of the Deuonshyre & Cornyshe rebelles* (1549), illustrated with the royal blazon, was quick to condemn the participants for displaying 'the rotes of treason, the buddes of rebellion, and the fructe of fylthye poperye.'¹⁷⁷ In their rashness the rebels had offended their sovereign king, despised his name and authority, and permitted 'the deuyll to encrease hys swarme.'¹⁷⁸ Another response, *A message sent by the kings Majesty, to certain of his people, assembled in Devonshire* (1549), did not pull its punches in declaring the rebels had become 'enemies to your awn natiue country.' These traitors, the king warned his subjects, will destroy 'your selves, your wives, children, lands, houses, and all other commodities.' The rebels had been seduced into forgetting God, neglecting their prince and delighting in sedition, disorder and war.¹⁷⁹

A message firmly reminded the people that Edward ruled by God's providence. The prince alone was to ensure the law was administered, disorder suppressed and the realm protected against foreign adversaries such as the Scots, the French, and the Bishop of Rome. The tract also strongly defended the legality of Cranmer's Book of Common Prayer (1549), so bitterly opposed by the rebels in Devon and Cornwall, and insisted that it was brought 'by the free consent of our whole Parliament.' The rebels had been led under a false pretence. They were deceived by the 'false opinion' of traitors and papists who, in actual fact, sought their destruction.¹⁸⁰ Consequently, the Edwardian regime considered that those that rejected the Prayer Book naturally rejected the authority of the king, and this act of rebellion was a direct violation of Romans 13. Therefore, conformity was not a discretionary matter. The subsequent warning contained no ambiguity. It was the duty of subjects to obey and learn from those 'whiche haue auctoritie to teache you, which haue power to rule you, & [we] wil execute our iustice, if we bee prouoked.'¹⁸¹ The rebels were accused of illegally abrogating a parliamentary act which had outlawed the old faith, dismantling the 'suretie' of civil law and in doing so openly

¹⁷⁵ See MacCulloch, *Cranmer: A Life*, pp.429-39 and Ethan Shagan, 'Protector Somerset and the 1549 Rebellions: New Sources and New Perspectives', *The English Historical Review*, 114:455 (Feb., 1999), pp. 34-63.

¹⁷⁶ Ethan Shagan, *Popular Politics and the English Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p.303.

¹⁷⁷ *A Cope of a letter contayning certayne newes, & the articles or requestes of the Deuonshyre & Cornyshe rebelles* (S.l.: J. Day and W. Seres, 1549), STC 15109.3, sigs. A2v-A3r.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, sigs. A2v-AiiiR; A6r.

¹⁷⁹ Edward VI, *A message sent by the kynges Maiestie, to certain of his people, assembled in Devonshire* (London: Richard Grafton, 1549), STC 7506, sigs. A2v-A3r.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, sigs. A3v; A5r-A5v.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, sig. B1r.

defying the Word of God. As Alford noted 'The regime pointed out that it was not the role of subjects to dictate to those in authority and that rebellion was a fundamental challenge to the natural order of things.'¹⁸² Any rebels that refused to return to obedience, *A message* insisted, will witness the full extent of princely power and meet the sharp end of his sword.¹⁸³

Latimer later reflected upon the rebellions of 1549 and reasserted his view that God alone judged Kings and the subject must simply 'pray thou for thy king, and pay him his duty, and disobey him not.'¹⁸⁴ The authority of the magistrate was firmly grounded in Scripture and he judiciously adjoined Matthew 22:21 to Romans 13. These commands were to be held in perpetuity and Latimer stressed that their Caesar and magistrate, King Edward, must enjoy these privileges due to him as God's anointed.¹⁸⁵ Nevertheless, Latimer almost derisively added, 'Christ was not the emperor's treasurer' but rather His words had another purpose: to preach the duty of obedience to earthly authority. If the king was to ask for unreasonable tribute or make an unjust request, this placed his soul in peril and he would see God's reckoning. It was, Latimer insisted, 'no part of our duty' to reform the higher powers. The only exception to obedience was in matters which contravened God's Law (Acts 5:29), but this did not sanction armed rebellion and those that did so 'sin damnably.' Thus, Reeves is correct to assert that Latimer had 'outline[d] the basic difference between passive disobedience and active resistance.'¹⁸⁶ Latimer perfectly demonstrated the regime's anxiety over the threat of extant popery and their concern that God's true message was not getting through to the people. Therefore, Latimer accused the rebels of both insincerely expressing obedience and ignorance. If the rebels had been better acquainted with the Gospel they would never have preferred their own will over God's and nor would they have engaged in such a wicked enterprise.'¹⁸⁷

Once again, the evangelical regime received authoritative support from the continent. According to MacCulloch, Bullinger provided the Edwardian Reformation with 'tactful exhortation, encouragement and food for thought in the form of his writings.'¹⁸⁸ Walter Lynne's translation of Bullinger's *A treatise or Sermon...concernynge magistrates and obedience of subiectes* was produced in the context of the rebellions.¹⁸⁹ Lynne's dedicatory epistle to Edward

¹⁸² Alford, *Kingship*, p.60.

¹⁸³ Edward VI, *A message*, Sig. B8v.

¹⁸⁴ Latimer, 'A Sermon Preached at Stamford', p.300.

¹⁸⁵ Latimer, 'A Sermon Preached at Stamford', p.298.

¹⁸⁶ Reeves, *English Evangelicals*, p.111.

¹⁸⁷ Hugh Latimer, 'The Fourth Sermon upon the Lord's Prayer', in *Sermons by Hugh Latimer, sometime Bishop of Worcester, Martyr, 1555*, pp.368-88 (p.371).

¹⁸⁸ Diarmaid MacCulloch, 'Heinrich Bullinger and the English-speaking world', in *Heinrich Bullinger: life, thought, influence, Zurich, Aug. 25-29, 2004: International Congress Heinrich Bullinger (1504-1575)*, Volume II, eds. by Emidio Campi and Peter Opitz (Zürich: TVZ, 2007), pp.891-934 (p.916).

¹⁸⁹ An alternative translation of *A treatise or Sermon...concernynge magistrates and obedience of subiectes* is found in the ninth sermon of Bullinger's *Second Decade*. See *DHB I*, pp.370-93.

emphasised that the sermon which followed touched upon pertinent themes: the ordering of a commonwealth, the institution of magistrates, their use of the sword, and the obedience of subjects.¹⁹⁰ Bullinger's sermon opened with a recourse to Romans 13 and it confirmed that the magistrates sword provided by God had a dual purpose: to punish the trespassers and to repel or destroy enemies and seditious rebels.¹⁹¹ He contended that as men are not of one nature, the innocent required the 'sword of the magistrates' to protect them from wicked oppressors. After all, the 'magistrate beareth not a sworde for nought.'¹⁹² Bullinger's sermon wrestled with the apparent antagonism between Scripture teaching Christians to avoid violent conflict and the need to engage in conflict for just purposes.¹⁹³ Unsurprisingly, Bullinger deemed that moves against idolaters and the oppressors of the true religion were a just recourse to violence.¹⁹⁴ He accepted that Christ had instructed Peter to sheath his sword (Matthew 26:52 and John 18:11), and even stated 'he hath no sword' (Luke 22:36), but Bullinger also insisted that these words constrained the Apostles alone and not the magistrate whose duty it was to defend the people's liberty and the true faith.

Bullinger found further support for the higher powers' legitimate application of the coercive sword in Deuteronomy 13 and 17. He argued God had commanded the magistrate to wield the sword and defend the Church from 'any barbarus prince come vpon it with open warre, to sedewce it from trewe religion to erreure.'¹⁹⁵ The destruction of God's enemies was a legitimate recourse to arms and when placed in the context of the 1549 rebellions, Bullinger's sermon had an immediate resonance. By suppressing the rebels, Edward fulfilled his duty and followed the biblical exemplar set by, amongst others, Abraham, Moses and David.¹⁹⁶ Reciprocally, it was the duty of the subject to show true reverence and obedience to those men both Romans 13 and I Peter 2 call the 'messengers and mynisters of god.' Obedience to their magistrate was obedience to the true faith of God and any that resisted the divinely ordained higher power will receive His judgment.¹⁹⁷ But as Torrance Kirby has demonstrated, Bullinger's understanding of the magistrate's *cura religionis* did not mix the functions of spiritual and temporal ministers but provided a way of distinguishing between the two offices.¹⁹⁸ Indeed, Bullinger later stressed that while magistrates commanded no sacerdotal power, they should

¹⁹⁰ Walter Lynne, 'To the most excellent Prince Edward the vi', in Heinrich Bullinger, *A treatise or sermon...concernynge magistrates and obedience of subiectes* (London: by W. Powell?, 1549), STC 4079, sigs. A3r-A3v.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, sig. A4v.

¹⁹² Lynne, 'To the most excellent Prince Edward the vi', sigs. A5r-A6r.

¹⁹³ See for example Ecclesiastes 3, Matthew 5 and 7, and Luke 6.

¹⁹⁴ Lynne, 'To the most excellent Prince Edward the vi', sigs. A8v-B5r.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, sigs. B5r-B5v.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, sigs. B8v-C1r.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, sigs. D5r-D6v.

¹⁹⁸ Kirby, *The Zurich Connection*, p.33.

have 'care of religion' because it was their duty to both preserve and restore it to tranquillity with the Word of God.¹⁹⁹

Another of Bullinger's works, produced under the title *A most necessary & frutefull dialogue* (1551), was translated into English by Frenchman Jean Véron who had been ordained deacon by Nicholas Ridley. Véron's prologue was dedicated to Sir John Gates, a close associate of John Dudley, duke of Northumberland, and someone who occasionally investigated seditious tracts and civil disorder 'for evidence of rebellion.'²⁰⁰ Romans 13 adorned the title page and Véron made especial mention of the 1549 uprisings by lamenting the rebels' 'great blindness & ignoraunce.' Véron provided no distinction between the rebel groups and he identified the root cause of the uprisings to be a scarcity of true ministers preaching the Word of God.²⁰¹ Therefore, the commonality had been so 'wrapped in all kyndes of error' they did not know, or comprehend, that their rebellion against the high powers had placed their country and souls in grave peril. Véron sang beautifully from the regime's hymn sheet: a tyrannical ruler was 'a rod sent of god' sent to punish sin and instead of wailing at the faults of the higher powers, the rebels should redress their own.²⁰² As Bullinger's dialogue confirmed, an ungodly or tyrannical magistrate was nevertheless still a magistrate and his authority was not nullified by wrongdoing.²⁰³

Therefore, Véron promoted the established doctrine of passive obedience by insisting that subjects should bear any affliction caused by princely tyranny. He observed the example of the Israelites who had suffered great cruelty under Pharaoh and waited patiently for the 'helpyng hande of the Lorde' to deliver them from oppression without any recourse to murmuring, unlawful assembly or insurrection.²⁰⁴ Rebellion only brought jeopardy and Véron, like Lever, turned to Matthew 12:25 to demonstrate that a divided kingdom only delivered desolation. Strength and prosperity was found in unity. The rebels must repent and refrain from their unlawful scourge upon the nation or God will inevitably sentence them to eternal damnation.²⁰⁵ Cranmer encapsulated the regime's sentiment towards rebellion: 'how an absolute papist varieth from a heretic or traitor I know not; but that a papist is also both a heretic and a traitor withal.'²⁰⁶ But the constant exhortation for obedience and rehearsal of biblical examples of pious

¹⁹⁹ Heinrich Bullinger, 'The Second Decade of Sermons', in *DHB I*, (p.329).

²⁰⁰ Hoak, *The King's Council in the Reign of Edward VI*, p.195.

²⁰¹ Jean Véron, 'Preface', in Heinrich Bullinger, *A most necessary & frutefull dialogue, betwene [the] seditious libertin or rebel Anabaptist, & the true obedient christia[n]* (Worcester: Ihon Oswen, 1551), STC 4068. sig. A2r.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, sigs. A3r-A4r.

²⁰³ Bullinger, *A most necessary & frutefull dialogue*, sig. D8r.

²⁰⁴ Véron, 'Preface', sigs. A5r-A5v.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, sig. A6r; B1r.

²⁰⁶ Thomas Cranmer, 'Answer to the Fifteen Articles of the Rebels, Devon, Anno 1549', in *Miscellaneous Writings and Letters of Thomas Cranmer*, pp.163-187 (p.165).

kingship only papered over the very obvious cracks. In truth the regime was exposed for what it was: a mighty castle built upon sand. The commonality were restless, the evangelical message was not getting through, popery was ever present and the much needed guidance provided by Edward's ministers, civil and spiritual, was severely hampered by a serious dereliction of duty. In the end the most effective tools to put down the insurgents were provided by Romans 13: God commanded subjects to obey the higher powers, those that resist will receive damnation and it was the divinely ordained duty of rulers to wield the sword and punish trespassers.

Conclusion

What is discernible from the regime's almost incessant demand for obedience is that Edward's kingship was constructed upon unstable foundations. Edward was adorned with the full might and splendour of the Royal Supremacy, but his minority ensured that his godly kingship suffered from a critical inherent weakness. From the outset Cranmer appealed to the principles of Romans 13 in order to impress upon both the King and subjects their mutual obligation of servitude. It was the duty of Edward, as the successor of the great Josiah, to ensure true worship and virtue by banishing idolatry and papal tyranny. The King was Christ's Vicar and no one held greater temporal or ecclesiastical authority. Edward within his *imperium* answered only to God. The clergy had to faithfully declare what was required of God's elected prince, but they were dutifully bound to obey his proclamations. What was being outlined by the evangelicals at the heart of Edward's regime was a narrative of a young prince that had been divinely elected to complete the godly reformation initiated by his father. Therefore, all that impeded the will of the King and his government in their reformation of the Church blasphemed God's name. Time and again the evangelicals returned to the cogent precepts of Romans 13 in order to suppress any whispers of dissent.

The contumacy of Gardiner and the rebellions of 1549 provided clear evidence of the fact that just because a government incessantly commanded compliance of its subjects, it did not necessarily follow that the people would be convinced of that command's essential rightness. Consequently, the reign of Edward must not be viewed as an inevitable march towards Protestantism because there was another vision on offer. Indeed, Gardiner never doubted Edward's right to rule, but he did openly question the legitimacy of the proclamations made in the King's name. This was a principled objection by Gardiner and other conservative bishops to the evangelical vision of the Church outlined by Edward's counsel, and they fought to preserve the doctrinally conservative Church and Royal Supremacy established by Henry VIII. Gardiner had little hesitation in preaching obedience to the higher powers, but he insisted that the doctrine of obedience was limited to adherence to Scripture and consequently the subject must stand to their conscience. However, the government did not believe obedience was a discretionary matter, and disobedience to the commands of God's appointed was evidence of

sedition or, even worse, popery. Those that rejected the Prayer Book rejected kingly authority, and as such they engaged in rebellion and violated the commands of Romans 13.

It became apparent to Edward's government that the evangelical message had failed to convince or had simply not gotten through. In the battle for hearts and minds John Bale impressed upon his readers a vision of the nation's glorious Christian heritage in an effort to promote further reformation and demand obedience to the king's godly regime. The Injunctions of 1547 demonstrated the desperate need to project a clear evangelical message because the people were still consumed by ignorance, a fact only exacerbated by the lack of godly preachers. The production of the homilies were not only a concerted attempt to address this perilous deficiency, but also an opportunity to promote God's prescribed hierarchy in which governors were placed under kings and princes 'in good and necessary order.' The homily of obedience hammered home the precepts of Romans 13: those that resisted the higher power, whether it be pious or impious, also resisted God's wisdom, power, and authority. What was being inculcated into the mind of all subjects was a Lutheran doctrine of non-resistance. As a result, subjects were made aware of not only their own duty, but also that of their governors, and all were burdened with the responsibility to return England to the true faith.

Despite the revisionism of Bale and the monotonous regularity of the demands for obedience the regime acknowledged the need for authoritative theological support. The English Church, unlike any other time, gravitated towards its continental brethren, but as the influence of reformers like Vermigli, Bucer, Ochino, and Bullinger demonstrate this was not a church that could be described as Calvinist. This relationship was aided by the fact that these reformers articulated a theology that strongly defended magisterial authority, and this reinforced the doctrine of Royal Supremacy. The authority of rulers was divine but their duties should be balanced by the counsel of godly clergy in matters of doctrine, and the affirmative outline of the virtuous prince prescribed by Scripture. Bucer recognised that kingly authority performed a spiritual task: the king possessed the power of the sword and was responsible for both the lives and morality of his subjects. The king should cultivate a godly realm in which subjects would receive God's Word, and this required the suppression of evil. The duty outlined in Romans 13 required rulers to punish those that transgressed both civil law, and the Law of God. Therefore, Bucer believed that Romans 13 had provided the means in which Edward could perform his duty by restoring the Kingdom of Christ and ensuring that his commonwealth was guided spiritually and politically by the Word of God.

The Reformation was not an imposition but a collaboration, albeit not an entirely equal one, between king, clergy, and subjects. The process of reformation required consent. Therefore, all had a duty to each other and this can no better be witnessed than in the words of Romans 13. It was the duty of Christian princes and officers to fully liberate the realm from the

papal tyranny, and advance the true religion. The clergy were to vigorously devote themselves to preaching and teaching the Gospel. In turn, it was the duty of the people to obey their superiors, and lead a virtuous life. Therefore, by the taking up of arms the rebels of 1549 were considered by the government and the clergy to be in direct breach of their prescribed duty. The message delivered to the rebels was unequivocal: Edward and his ministers possessed the authority to teach, rule, and execute justice upon all that provoked them. The disobedient would witness the full extent of princely power and meet the sharp end of the temporal sword. As Latimer asserted: God alone judged kings, and it was the duty of the subject to pray for God's anointed and obey him. The central message transmitted was of obedience. Romans 13 confirmed that the regime had been ordained of divine providence and any resistance was an affront to God's will. This did not deny that a Christian must act upon their conscience and ensure they serve God before man, but, unless rulers commanded anything that directly contravened Scripture their obedience was divinely mandated. Therefore, active resistance was a damnable sin, and the only recourse for a Christian was passive disobedience.

In delivering their shrill official denunciations of the rebels the government turned to Romans 13 in an attempt to inculcate obedience. But others, such as Cranmer and Lever engaged in a more nuanced approach following the trauma of 1549. All continued to maintain that the rebels had sinfully violated a command of God and certainly none of their words ever condoned the actions of any who challenged the authority of their prince. However, they also accepted that the rebels were not entirely to blame for their abrogation of civil and divine law. They conceived that the cause of the uprisings was not the result of a rabble-raising minority that sought to throw off the shackles of their duty of obedience. Instead, their exegesis of Romans 13 revealed that the temporal and spiritual ministers had stumbled in their duty as 'a minister of God to thee for good', and consequently they were also culpable for the disorder that had engulfed the realm. The temporal authority had failed to wield their divinely bestowed sword and restrain profuse vice and corruption. Latimer tellingly observed that the spiritual ministers had allowed their plough to be idle and as a consequence this permitted Satan to be the most diligent ploughman in England.

The failure of the higher powers ordained of God to execute their duties caused the realm of England to be greatly troubled and discomforted. The people were wrapped in all kinds of error, and their ignorance had caused them to not comprehend that rebellion against their superiors placed their souls and the realm in grave peril. Moreover, Crowley pointed his finger at everyone: the wealthy had exploited the poor, the clergy was guilty of hypocrisy, the government accused of corruption, and the poor charged with civil disobedience. This was a dereliction of duty *en masse*, and all were in violation of the precepts of Romans 13. The diagnosis of the realm's afflictions provided by Hooper, Paget, and Ochino was confirmed by

Cranmer who insisted that the rebellion had caused such distress that England now faced utter ruin and subversion. The most effective non-violent means to suppress the insurgents was provided by Paul in Romans 13. Therefore, the preachers bellowed out to their congregations that it was the duty of all subjects, by the command by God, to obey the higher powers, and it was the obligation of Edward as God's vice-gerent to punish the trespassers of God's Law with the sword.

The rebels had, like Gardiner, attempted to rock the evangelical regime's foundations. The government had cultivated an image of a reforming new Josiah that was returning the realm to the purity of the Christian Church by destroying the remnants of wicked popery. This model of evangelical kingship suffered from a critical weakness: Edward's himself. The fragility of Edward's regime ensured that they persistently and consistently demanded obedience to God's anointed, and as such the precepts of Romans 13 were never far from evangelical lips. However, incessantly restating the case for godly reformation, and repeatedly demanding obedience did not necessarily convince people to believe or acquiesce. The necessity for dynamic support from renowned continental theologians demonstrated that the regime's evangelical message had not deeply penetrated the commonwealth. Therefore, upon Edward's death England was left a theologically divided nation. Nevertheless, the model for evangelical kingship had been comprehensibly formed: a reforming ruler divinely sent to wield the sword in order to protect both God's Temple and his subjects from popish idolatry. Central to establishing this image of a reforming king and a godly kingdom in England was Romans 13.

Chapter 6: Obey God Rather than Men

Introduction

The political historiography relating to Mary I has been dominated by three key texts published in the final two years of her short reign: John Ponet's *Shorte Treatise of Politike Power* (1556), Christopher Goodman's *How Superior Powers Ought to be Obeyed*, and John Knox's *The first blast of the trumpet against the monstrous regiment of women* (both 1558). The importance of these texts is undeniable but their volatility skews the focus from the wider panorama. The Edwardian clergy had tirelessly taught that those that resisted the ordinances of the higher powers would receive damnation and that obedience to 'the powers that be' was obedience to God. However, the centrality of Romans 13 in matters of conscience has been overlooked by an expanding list of works that have sought to re-evaluate the reign of Mary I.¹ The significant contributions by "revisionist" historians concerned themselves with rehabilitation following decades of Mary's reign being dismissed as a dismal failure, rather than exploring the reception of Paul's command for obedience.² While some authors have investigated the theology and spirituality of the Marian Church, their interests tended to focus on matters of tradition and liturgy.³ In the last decade, there has been a flurry of noteworthy contributions bringing attention to culture, iconography, coronation, persecution, and kingship. Nevertheless, all of these publications omit any detailed discussion about the prickly matter of obedience and none engage with Romans 13.⁴

The most apologetic account of Mary's reign, Eamon Duffy's *Fires of Faith* (2009), failed to even recognise the importance of Romans 13 in the Marian polemical and apologetic writings that contested the Reformation.⁵ Moreover, matters of theological and political controversy did not preoccupy John Edwards in his substantial geopolitical biography, *Mary I: England's Catholic*

¹ This list is expansive and it is not possible to conduct an in-depth historiography of Mary's reign. Therefore, focus will be made upon works that reflect this range of study.

² David Loades, *The Reign of Mary Tudor: Politics, government and religion in England 1553-58* (London: Benn, 1979). J.J. Scarisbrick, *The Reformation and the English People* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984). Haigh, *English Reformations*. Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400-1580* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992).

³ For example William Wizeman, SJ., *The Theology and Spirituality of Mary Tudor's Church* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), Eamon Duffy and David Loades, eds. *The Church of Mary Tudor* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006),

⁴ Alice Hunt and Anna Whitelock, eds., *Tudor Queenship: The Reigns of Mary and Elizabeth* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), Susan Doran and Thomas S. Freeman, eds., *Mary Tudor: Old and New Perspectives* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), Sarah Duncan and Valerie Schutte, eds., *The Birth of a Queen: Essays on the Quincentenary of Mary I* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).

⁵ Eamon Duffy, *Fires of Faith: Catholic England under Mary Tudor* (New Haven and London: Yale University press, 2009), pp.57-78.

Queen (2011). Instead Edwards noted the centrality of religion in shaping Mary's character and he successfully argued that she identified strongly with Christian humanism.⁶ When the historiography did undertake any discussion about obedience, it was generally dominated by the 'resistance theories' of Ponet, Goodman, and Knox.⁷

This focus on the later polemical wrings has failed to reveal the sustained policy of obedience to a monarch that evangelicals believed had perilously placed England under the yoke of the Antichrist. Instead of being viewed as either one of two extremes, a regime that comprised of religious exceptional 'sterility' or a Church 'at one with the larger Counter-Reformation', it is best to recognise that the unique identity of the Marian Church existed 'within an English Catholic tradition with a reformed doctrinal and devotional approach.'⁸ Mary believed her ascension to be of divine providence and the majority of her evangelical subjects concurred. Romans 13 ensured that Mary's sovereignty was largely unchallenged, but her restoration of Catholicism created uncertainty over the role of royal authority within the Church. Moreover, the Queen's choice of consort proved divisive and her regime's methods of persuasion resulted in a crystallisation of resistance. The fundamental concern of Englishmen was obedience to God and this eventually compelled a radical exegesis of Romans 13 that shaped England's political and religious landscape throughout the early modern period.

Non-resistance I

The ascension of Mary was achieved, insisted Cardinal Pole, by divine providence. In November 1554 he declared before both Queen and King in Parliament that God had provided the realm Catholic governors that the members of parliament had a duty 'to loue, obey and serue.'⁹ Indeed, the poet George Marshall was convinced that Mary was not only 'Gods chosen vessell' but a champion of Scripture, and Scripture explicitly commanded them to serve the Lord and obey their King.¹⁰ He compared Mary's victory to Judith's over Holofernes, but instead of smiting her enemies with sword or knife the Queen had triumphed because of God's intervention after

⁶ John Edwards, *Mary I: England's Catholic Queen* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2011).

⁷ An exception to this is Andrew Pettegree's study on nicodemism that argued the evangelicals which remained in England during Mary's reign believed this demonstrated their commitment to the reformed faith. See Pettegree, *Marian Protestantism: Six Studies* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1996), pp.85-117.

⁸ This reflects the views of A.G. Dickens, *The English Reformation* (London: Batsford, 1964), p.384; Duffy, *Fires of Faith*, pp.188-207 and Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism*, pp.114-5 respectively.

⁹ John Elder, *Copy of a letter sent in to Scotlande* (London: John Waylande, 1555), STC 7552, sigs. D6r-D6v; E7r. The arrival of Pole was met with dismay by William Salkyns who stated the Cardinal had been received 'with great pomp and solemnity' by the Queen and 'Philip the Anglo-Spanish king' at St Paul's Cross. See William Salkyns 'to Henry Bullinger, Dated at Strasburgh, Dec. 29, 1554', in *OL I*, pp.346-48 (p.347).

¹⁰ George Marshall, *A compendious treatise in metre declaring the firste originall of sacrifice, and of the buylding of aultares and churches, and of the firste receauinge of the Christen fayth here in Englande* (Londini: Iohannis [sic] Cawodi, 1554), STC 17469, sig. C3v.

hearing her devout and humble prayer.¹¹ The realm was now ruled, celebrated Robert Wingfield, by a strong regnant-woman who had ascended to the throne by both divine and human law. However, unlike her dominated brother, Mary knew her own mind and was entirely capable of making her own decisions.¹² Therefore, insisted Schoolmaster John Proctor, the darkness that had obscured 'the bright sterre of Euangelike lighte' was to be dispelled by the godly wisdom and imperial power of England's first queen regnant.¹³ Proctor eulogistically portrayed Mary as a nurturing, heavenly virgin wife and mother who would bring her wayward children back to obedience and save them from Satan's clutches.¹⁴ Mary was, then, both monarch and handmaiden leading her people to salvation.

The regime recognised that after twenty years of schism the papal supremacy would be a hard doctrine to sell. Therefore, Mary initially took an irenic, even a politically realistic, approach to both her opponents and religion. She was well aware that her restoration of Catholicism could not be achieved without controversy or agitation.¹⁵ Out of constitutional necessity, Mary employed the mechanisms of the Royal Supremacy and parliament as her sword, to repeal the laws made against papal authority and reinstate the powers Henry VIII had extinguished, all while reinforcing her right to rule and to be obeyed.¹⁶ More intrinsically a campaign of preaching, apologetic and catechism was orchestrated with the intention to persuade any remaining dissenting minority, instil obedience and create unity under Mary's guidance.¹⁷ Indeed, James Cancellar, employed at the Chapel Royal, made an explicit demand for subjects to respect ordained authority and the words '*Qui resistit potestati dei ordinationi resistit*' (Romans 13:2) were emblazed across the cover of *The pathe of obedience* (1556). Cancellar warned of the futility of defiance and rebellion, because Paul was not ambiguous on the matter: the disobedient will be punished.¹⁸ Moreover, Romans 13 revealed that subjects must not resist God's command for fear of punishment alone, but because obedience was a true act of love.

¹¹ George Marshall, *A compendious treatise*, sigs. A5r-A5v. Judith 13:1-10.

¹² Robert Wingfield, '*Vita Mariae Angliae Reginae*', in *The Vita Mariae Angliae Reginae* of Robert Wingfield of Brantham, ed. by Diarmaid MacCulloch, *The Camden Miscellany*, 28 (1984), pp.181-301 (p.252).

¹³ John Proctor, 'Dedication and Preface', in St. Vincent of Lérins, *The waie home to Christ and truth leadinge from Antichrist and errour* (London: Robert Caly, 1554), STC 24754, sigs. A2r- A3r.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, sigs C6v-D1r.

¹⁵ See Edwards, *Mary I*, pp.87-122.

¹⁶ 'An Act repealing all statutes ... made against the see apostolic of Rome since the 20th year of King Henry VIII', in *TCD*, pp.368-72.

¹⁷ See specifically Edmund Bonner's *A profitable and necessary doctrine* (1555) which was produced not only as a defence of the Catholic faith but also an tool to provide the laity with simple explanations of belief.

¹⁸ James Cancellar, *The pathe of obedience, compiled by Iames Cancellar, one of the Quenes Maiesties moste honourable chapel* (Londo[n]: Iohn Wailande, 1556), STC 4565, sig. C5v. Proverbs 8:15-16.

Nevertheless, Cancellor still felt the need to stress the legitimacy of the Marian regime. God had, he reassured the reader, selected magistrates who excelled in knowledge and virtue.¹⁹ This assertion was naturally buttressed with Romans 13 and I Peter 2:17, but he also invoked Christ's declaration before Pilate: 'You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above.'²⁰ These words were, for Cancellor, divine recognition of the Pauline precept that there is no power but of God, and consequently Mary, Philip and their magistrates must be shown due obedience. Pole also explicitly recognised the Apostles' declaration '*non est potestas nisi a deo*', however, he was careful to preserve the Pauline precept within the orthodox Catholic understanding that God had established two distinct powers. But, at the same time, he did deviate from Bernard of Clairvaux's conventional exegesis that the temporal sword is bestowed upon rulers by the successors of St. Peter. Rather he declared that Mary and Philip, as His ministers, possessed the power to preserve the good and punish transgressors 'Immediately from god, without any superioure in that behalf.'²¹ In doing so, he inextricably linked submission to Mary with submission to Rome, by emphasising the central tenet of Romans 13.

Although Pole recognised the great power of England's King and Queen, they were, nonetheless, only a temporal power. Pole informed Parliament that he represented, by way of having the authority of the keys committed to his hands by the pope, the superior power upon the earth. It was his commission, as papal legate, to grant the realm absolution for its heresy and schism and facilitate England's reconciliation with the Roman See. The people of England, as Romans 13 stated, had nothing fear if they followed the will of God. Therefore, Pole declared 'I cum not to destroy but to build, I cum to reconcyle, not to condemne, I cum not to compel, but to call againe.'²² This was a realm, declared Stephen Gardiner, waking from a twenty year sleep. Ever since the break with Rome England had been riddled with heresy, impoverished, decayed, and engulfed by insurrection. The realm, he contended, urgently needed salvation, and this was only found in the embrace of the Catholic Church.²³ Paul's command to be obedient to their higher powers had provided the roadmap back to Rome and Christ's true Church.

However, Pole understood he had no legal authority to demand papal obedience because the realm had not yet repealed the law and statutes that blocked official reconciliation with Rome. The humble contrition of 'the Lordes Spirituall and temporall and the Commons' for their schism and disobedience was likened to a repentant child returning to the bosom of its mother. England now sought absolution in 'perfecte obedience to the Sea Apostolike.'²⁴ The

¹⁹ Cancellor, *The pathe of obedience*, sigs. C5v-C7v.

²⁰ John 19:11

²¹ Elder, *Copy of a letter sent in to Scotlande*, sig. D8v.

²² *Ibid.*, sigs. E1r-E1v.

²³ Foxe, *TAMO* (1563), p.1086.

²⁴ Elder, *Copy of a letter sent in to Scotlande*, sigs. E3v-E4v.

government was embarking on a reticent but purposeful course that stressed this was a time for reconciliation not recrimination. England had awoken from its slumber and both Mary and Philip, as God's ministers, were guiding their subjects back to unity in Christ. John Standish lamented the misery England had endured since Henry VIII had taken it upon himself to sit in St. Peter's chair. What Standish's *The triall of the supremacy* (1556) provided was a straight forward defence of Church unity under papal obedience.²⁵ This was a unity that, he contended, sounded like harmonious music compared to cacophony of division and heresy which provided no audible delight to members of Christ's mystical body.²⁶

Standish's approach was persuasive rather than forceful. He approached the matter of the papal supremacy pragmatically, complying with the Queen's concerted policy to avoid high-papalism. But, while Lucy Wooding correctly noted that Standish viewed obedience to the papacy as a means to secure Church unity 'rather than as a sacred aim in itself', she does fail to emphasise is that obedience to the sovereign, outlined in Romans 13, was an irrefutable central tenet.²⁷ Marian writers and preachers upheld the power of the keys but they avoided the scholastic distinctions concerning the papal prerogative and tried not to stumble onto matters of controversy that concerned the exegesis of Romans 13. This can be witnessed in John Churchson's reluctance to emphasise the papal supremacy or fealty to Rome. He spoke instead of the 'vniuersall church' or a 'vniuershall congregation', and it was almost in passing that he observed that the succession of St. Peter as head of the Church is perpetual and unbroken.²⁸ Standish considered Christ's proclamation that his kingdom was not of this world (John 18:36) and concluded that these words had no bearing upon the earthly realm. Christ had come into the world to establish a new spiritual kingdom for the salvation of mankind and not to reign temporally or deprive kings of their due honour. The ordination of Peter as head of the Church was necessitated, he claimed, so temporal rulers would understand that 'if he wil be in this kingedome muste be subiecte to the head of the same.'²⁹

Standish insisted that the commands of Matthew 22:21, echoed in Romans 13:7, did not destroy temporal authority because Christ had insisted that tribute must be paid according to

²⁵ John Standish, *The triall of the supremacy wherein is set fourth ye unitie of christes church militant geuen to S. Peter and his successoures by Christe* (London: T. Marshe, 1556), STC 23211, sigs. A8v-B1r. William Wizeman, SJ., 'The Marian Counter-Reformation in Print', in *Catholic Renewal and Protestant Resistance in Marian England*, eds. by Elizabeth Evenden and Vivienne Westbrook (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), pp.143-64 (p. 156).

²⁶ Standish, *Triall of the supremacy*, sigs. T4v-T8v. His inspiration here was Origen's notion that schism only led to heresy and destruction but union brought peace and concord.

²⁷ Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism*, p.131.

²⁸ John Churchson, *A brefe treatyse declaryng what and where the churche is, that it is knowen, and whereby it is tryed and knowen. Made by Iohn Churchson* (London: Ihon Cawod, 1556), STC 5219, sigs. l4r-l4v.

²⁹ Standish, *Triall of the supremacy*, sigs. M1v-M2r.

lawful custom, humility and duty to avoid offence. However, he warned that the temporal powers must use their authority for the profit of all because ruling for their own purpose was tyranny and this wickedness could not be performed in God's name.³⁰ Standish did not make a sharp distinction between the two powers, but he did insist that clerics aided rather than impeded godly rulers in their worldly function. In fact, the temporal duties of the spiritual rulers were reinforced by Romans 13 because, he noted, Paul 'doeth not hereby bynde the shepherd to be vnder the shepe.'³¹ Standish never strayed from the conventional understanding of obedience. He asserted that both Paul and Peter agreed that any Christian, either laity or clergy, must still subject themselves to the laws and customs of that realm.³² The subject should concern themselves with their vocation and adhere to Romans 13 by obeying their spiritual and temporal rulers.³³

Certainly, this statement of obedience was one to which even evangelicals could subscribe. Furthermore, not all evangelicals met the ascension of Mary with fear and trepidation. The poet and clergyman Richard Beear was convinced that Mary had been 'set and stabysshed' by God, and therefore she was undoubtedly 'The lawful, iust, and rightuouse, Of England, head, and Queene.'³⁴ However, he demonstrated a degree of misplaced optimism by calling for the new queen to 'buyld vpon her brothers good fondacion...the house, and fortresse vp Of trew religion.'³⁵ The imprisoned John Bradford concurred that Mary ruled by divine will and he contended that it was God's intention to win Mary's heart 'with kindness unto his gospel' rather than the power of men and horses. He added that only the self-serving rise against their prince, and not those that truly propagated the teaching of the Gospel.³⁶ The victory against popery would not be achieved by means of insurrection because their violation of Romans 13 will cause God to fight against them for their hypocrisy. The only recourse was to commit the matters to God and they must wait for Him to deliver them from their suffering.

This policy of passive resistance also exemplified by the anonymous *A letter sent from a banished minister of Iesus Christ vnto the faithfull Christian flocke in England* (1554) which called upon subjects not to murmur against their higher powers. *A letter* claimed that as 'God's instruments', Mary and her government would ultimately accomplish His will: 'whether it be life,

³⁰ Standish, *Triall of the supremacy*, sigs. M3r-M5v.

³¹ *Ibid.*, sigs. M8v-N1r.

³² *Ibid.*, sigs. N1r-N2r.

³³ *Ibid.*, sig. T4v.

³⁴ Richard Beear, *A godly psalme of Marye Queene which brought vs comfort al, through God, whom wee of dewtye prayse, that giues her foes a fal* (London: by [J. Kingston for] Wylliam Griffith, 1553), STC 1655, sig. A4v.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, sig. A5r.

³⁶ John Bradford, *An exhortacion to the carienge of Chrystes crosse wyth a true and brefe confutacion of false and papisticall doctrine* (Wesel?: H. Singleton?, 1555?), STC 3480.5, pp.43-4.

or death, good or euil, least we perishe with the rebellious Israelites in the desert.'³⁷ Victory would not come from taking up the sword and subduing their enemy but instead from their sufferance.³⁸ Furthermore, the imprisoned George Marsh implored 'the professours of gods worde and true religion' to adhere to the 'chiefest' of all good works: obedience. He declared that whether the magistrates be good or evil they must be obeyed in accordance with Romans 13, unless, of course, they commanded something that was contrary to the true religion. In such cases, Marsh reminded the evangelical ministers, they must follow the commands of Acts 5:29 and obey God rather than men. God sometimes permitted the wicked to reign as a result of their own sinfulness and resistance will only purchase their own destruction. Therefore, all tumult, rebellion or resistance must be avoided and the only weapon at their disposal was 'the sword of the spirit': a combination of Scripture and prayer that should be embraced with humility and 'due submission.'³⁹

The evangelicals persevered in their commitment to the policy of political obedience, but they remained equally determined to challenge Mary's command that all subjects must return to Roman obedience. Bradford was a perfect illustration of this policy. His commentary on the commandment 'Honour thy father and mother' willingly declared his 'childly affection and duty' to the Queen.⁴⁰ However, his adherence to a policy of passive resistance in matters of the faith compelled him to argue that setting the pope 'in pre-eminence over the whole church' dislodged Christ from His rightful place.⁴¹ Mary had restored 'the works of darkness' but she must, nevertheless, be shown humble obedience as the superior power. This was provided she did not command anything beyond the bounds of her royal dignity or contrary to Scripture. Disobedience would, Bradford insisted, only bring upon them God's wrath and instead they must work 'to the commendation of the state of politic and civil magistrates.'⁴² Even awaiting death Bradford remained steadfast in the belief that the 'Romish god' must be refuted, they must 'never for anything resist, or rise against your magistrates' because such matters must be

³⁷ *A letter sent from a banished minister of Iesus Christ vnto the faithfull Christian flocke in England* (Roane [i.e. London?]: Michael Wodde [i.e. J. Day], 1554), STC 10016, sig., A5r.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, sig. A4v.

³⁹ George Marshe, 'To the professours of gods worde and true religion in the towne of Langhton', in Miles Coverdale, *Certain most godly, fruitful, and comfortable letters of such true saintes and holy martyrs of God* (London: By Iohn Day, 1564), STC 5886, pp.664-71 (p. 671).

⁴⁰ John Bradford, *Godlie meditations vpon the Lordes prayer, the beleefe, and ten commaundementes* (London: by Rouland Hall, 1562). STC 3484, sig. G7r.

⁴¹ John Bradford, 'To Lady Vane, on the papal supremacy', in *The Writings of John Bradford, M.A.*, Vol. II, ed. by Aubrey Townsend for the Parker Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1853), pp.142-7 (p.144-6).

⁴² Bradford, *Godlie meditations*, sig. G8r.

committed to God where vengeance belongs and in time they will be rewarded.⁴³ He warned Mary and her counsel that 'there is no innocence in words or deeds' and reminded them of their duty as God's ministers.⁴⁴ Therefore, any rulers that did not promote God's glory and the true knowledge were 'plain tyrants', not kings, and consequently they will perish.⁴⁵

Bradford's martyrdom exemplified the doctrine of passive resistance and he was clear in his belief that any other recourse was religious hypocrisy. However, other evangelicals adopted a different religious path and the former dean of Durham, Robert Horne, felt that unlicensed flight was his only recourse against what he believed was his inevitable prosecution for treason. Horne was only one of approximately eight hundred men, women and children that sought refuge within Reformed communities such as Calvin's Geneva or Bullinger's Zurich. The physical displacement of the exiles did not oblige their intellectual, spiritual or patriotic withdrawal because their writings ensured they maintained a very real presence in the land they had departed. This potential threat was identified by Cancellor and he argued that although God had restored quietness, the exiled evangelicals had shown themselves to be 'unnatural and disobedient subiectes.' There were numerous biblical examples, Adam to Jeroboam and Jonah, that served as a warning to 'proud and dysobedyente people...[and] pretended bishops' who had presumed to sit in God's seat.⁴⁶ Significantly, Horne never questioned Mary's right to rule. However, he did continue to refute the accusations against him by Gardiner and Tunstal and insist that he had 'offended no lawe of the Realme, but lived like an obedient subiecte.'⁴⁷

Despite their differing response to the restoration of Catholicism, the message Bradford and Horne had delivered was unequivocally the same: no matter how legitimate the ruler, they could not submit to the authorities of a false church. Nevertheless, John Harpsfield rejected the claims of the evangelicals and reminded the congregation at St. Paul's that obedience to the Roman See was both a religious and political duty because their reverence had been legitimately proclaimed by act of parliament. The reconciliation with Rome provided, he argued, the great benefit of unity rather than the misery of schism.⁴⁸ Harpsfield's sermon failed to convince and the evangelicals remained passively defiant. Marsh explicitly stated that it was the Christians'

⁴³ John Bradford, 'Farewell to the City of London', in *The Writings of John Bradford, M.A., Martyr, 1555*, Vol. I, ed. by Aubrey Townsend for the Parker Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1848), pp.434-40 (p.438).

⁴⁴ John Bradford, 'A letter sent with a supplication to Queen Mary, her council, and the whole parliament', in *The Writings of John Bradford*, Vol.I, pp.401-3 (p.401).

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.401-2.

⁴⁶ Cancellor, *The pathe of obedience*, sigs. B2r-B7r. Cancellor was referring to Latimer, Hooper, Cranmer, and Ridley whom, he insisted, were 'iustly burned' for heresy and their incitement of Church disunity.

⁴⁷ Robert Horne, 'Apologie', in John Calvin, *Certaine homilies of m. Ioan Calvine* (Rome [i.e. Wesel?]: by J. Lambrecht? for Hugh Singleton?), 1553), STC 4392, sigs. C2v; A3r-A3v.

⁴⁸ John Harpsfield, *A notable and lerned sermon or homilie, made vpon saint Andrewes daye last past 1556 in the Cathedral curche of S. Paule in London* (London: Robert Caly, 1556), STC 12795, sigs. B6r-B8r.

duty to honour the higher powers by praying for their profit and commodity whilst simultaneously only promoting unity, peace and concord.⁴⁹ Moreover, the incarcerated former archdeacon of Winchester, John Philpot, implored 'the Christian Congregation' to withstand idolatry and continue to serve the pure Word of God. Philpot's adherence to the doctrine of non-resistance was revealed by his conflation of Luke 20:25, I Peter 2:17, Romans 13 and also Acts 4:19 and 5:29. The message was clear; Christians must render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, obey the higher powers, whether good or evil, but they must not observe any commands that are contrary to the Word of God, even if this resulted in their death. They should follow the example of the Apostles and answer Mary's magistrates accordingly: 'Judge you whether it be more righteous that we should obey men rather than God.'⁵⁰

The doctrine of obedience did not equate to quietism. For example John Bale assailed Gardiner, Bonner and other Marian clerics appointed by the 'lawful' and 'virtuous' Edward VI, and he insisted the late King's ordinances had been grounded upon God's Word which cannot ever be in violation of English Law.⁵¹ He declared that Edward's godly instruction preserved both the law and the truth, whereas popish sermons, celebrations and vestments contained 'no truth at all.' Bale explicitly charged the Marian clergy with hypocrisy and contempt for the power of a lawful king. In doing so, he warned, 'ye haue procured to your selues dempnation. Ro. xiii.'⁵² The extensive visitation articles of 'the bloody biseshope (sic) of London' mandated that obedience must be shown to the king, queen and their officers. Moreover, Edmund Bonner's instructions reminded parents that it was their duty maintain good rule and instruct children 'in vertue & goodnesse, to the honor of God, & of this realme.' While this appeared to be a straightforward call for obedience to temporal authority, Bale recognised that Bonner demanded obedience to 'Papistrye' and accordingly clergymen were required to not only adhere to cruelty and idolatry but preach against Scripture. St. Peter had, Bale insisted, provided them with a 'perfit rule of obedience' in such circumstances: they must 'obey God than menne.'⁵³

Bale's venomous pen focused on what he believed to be Bonner's hypocrisy. The 1536 Hamburg edition of Gardiner's *De vera obedientia* included a preface by Bonner that not only dismissed the papal supremacy as a pretence but also compared the pope's reign of tyranny to

⁴⁹ Marshe, 'To the professors', pp.671-72.

⁵⁰ John Philpot, 'A Letter which he sent to the Christian congregation, exhorting them to refrain themselves from the idolatrous service of the papists', in *The Examinations and Writings of John Philpot, B.C.L. Archdeacon of Winchester*, ed. by Robert Eden (Cambridge: The University Press, 1842), pp.217-25 (p.223).

⁵¹ John Bale, *A declaration of Edmonde Bonners articles concerning the cleargye of Lo[n]don dyocese whereby that excerable [sic] Antychriste, is in his righte colours reueled* (London: Ihon Tysdall, 1561), STC 1289, sig. F8v.

⁵² *Ibid.*, sigs. G1r-G1v.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, sigs. H5v-H6r.

a ravening wolf in sheep's clothing. Furthermore, Bonner asserted that 'obedience is subject to truthe' and that 'mens tradicions' were, for the most part, repugnant to the truth of God's law.⁵⁴ Bale seized upon what he considered to be Bonner's insincerity by returning home to 'his hoyle mother...that mother of whoredome, that filthye bawde of Babyllon.' He reminded Bonner that the 'truths' to which he once professed were now deemed by his own articles to be 'contrary to the old order and custom of the catholyke church.' Consequently, in a typically discourteous manner, Bale denounced Bonner as a dog, a hypocrite, a flatterer, and a man of wicked conscience. He then contemptuously asked: 'Diddest thou not knowe, that he that resisteth the power, whiche is of Goddes ordinaunce, procureth to him selfe dampnacion?'⁵⁵ Bale declared that Bonner's once held obedience to the 'truth' had vanished and his casuistry was a symbol of popish deception.

Much like Bale, the former bishop of Rochester and Chichester John Scory, writing from exile in Emden, appeared to be equally distressed at the condition of an episcopate slain of worthy shepherds. Scory's lamentation was written when the Marian policy of burning heretics had begun in earnest, and he pertinently asked: 'Who is so blynde or so foolyshe, that doth not euidently beholde that sworde sprinkeled wyth the bloud of the godly, whyche ought only to be drawen out agaynst the wycked?' The persecution was, for Scory, an abuse of the sword provided to Mary by Romans 13 and the Antichrist, along with his co-conspirators the princes of earth, were waging a bloody war against Christ's Church.⁵⁶ However, Scory still refused to endorse any recourse to resistance and the only remedy to their oppression was to take up the sword of the spirit. Consequently, Scory's words read like a call to embrace glorious martyrdom. Another Emden exile, former registrar to Edward VI, John Old, also called upon the evangelicals remaining in England to 'faithfully' endure their persecution by patiently 'bearing of the crosse of fyre, galowes & sweorde euen vnto the deathe.'⁵⁷ The exiles identified the risk of nicodemism and published vigorously against the practice of outward conformity to the old faith while keeping faithful to the Gospel in spirit.⁵⁸ Despite the Catholic restoration Old remained

⁵⁴ Edmund Bonner, 'To the sincere, gentle herted and godly reader', in Samuel Roffey Maitland, *Essays on Subjects Connected with the Reformation in England* (London and New York; John Lane, 1899), pp.301-4 (p. 302).

⁵⁵ Bale, *A declaration of Edmonde Bonnners articles*, sigs. Q2v-Q5v.

⁵⁶ John Scory, *Epistle wrytten...unto all the faythfull that be in pryson in Englande, or in any other trouble for the defence of Goddes truthe* (Emden: E. van der Erve, Anno 1555), STC 21854, sigs. A2v-A3r.

⁵⁷ John Old, *The acquital or purgation of the moost catholyke Christen Prince, Edwarde the .VI. Kyng of Englande, Fraunce, and Irelande &c. and of the Church of Englande reformed and gouerned under hym, agaynst al suche as blasphemously and traitorously infame hym or the sayd Church, of heresie or sedicion* (Waterford: By E. van der Erve, 1555), STC 18797, sig. A3r.

⁵⁸ Andrew Pettegree, *Marian Protestantism: Six Studies* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1996), pp.85-117.

committed to the doctrine of the Royal Supremacy, and insisted that Edward's Church had been built upon apostolic foundations and not the customs or traditions of 'Satans synfull sinagoge.'⁵⁹

Old swiftly sought to divorce evangelicals from any attempt to characterise them as ambitious stubborn rebels. He strongly contended that they meticulously followed the teaching of the Apostles who had proclaimed the faithful must not only fear God and honour the King but also pay tribute to those it belonged (I Peter 1:17 and Romans 13:7).⁶⁰ However, Old refused to allow himself to be cornered by these apostolic commands and left himself some room for manoeuvre. His caveat for disobedience was that governments should establish 'good and iuste' laws, and the determination of which was, of course, reserved for the evangelicals themselves. As Scott C. Lucas has observed this 'self-granted authority' permitted evangelicals 'to continue to execrate England's magistrates as governors contemptuous of legal authority even as the authors themselves counselled defiance of the dictates of three Marian parliaments.'⁶¹ Nonetheless, Old had not called for the deposition of impious temporal rulers. Instead, he condemned treason and the furious spilling of a king's blood because 'we knowe that mercye and gentilnesse is more acceptable before God, than all other vertues.'⁶² When faced with persecution, he contended, the Christian must suffer for their faith and never resist.

An evangelical treatise, authored under the pen name of Gracious Menewe, further reinforced the doctrine of obedience by providing clarity concerning how far Christians should obey civil magistrates, and by extension, the Queen's laws. Menewe, like Scory, argued that the Marian regime was abusing the precepts of Romans 13 to justify its promulgation of laws that directly contravened the Word of God. Furthermore, the command for obedience had become so corrupted that the people had persuaded themselves that adherence to wicked commands would be excused at the Day of Judgment. Menewe testified that Romans 13, I Peter 2 and Matthew 22 revealed that it was the duty of the Christian to obey the civil magistrates in all matters under pain of damnation, but the higher powers were not to be obeyed without reservation because any commands that contravened the Law of God must be disobeyed. Moreover, it was equally the duty of the civil magistrates, who have received 'all autoryte and power' from God, not to command anything forbidden by Him who is the highest of all authority. Menewe insisted there were two types of law, those of God and man, but while both were to be obeyed, the divine law must always take precedent. Consequently, while Christians must not adhere to the wicked commands of the higher powers, they must also not 'make any

⁵⁹ Old, *The acquital or purgation*, sigs. A2v-A4r.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, sig. E6r.

⁶¹ Scott C. Lucas, 'Oppositional Authors and the Rhetoric of Law in the Reign of Mary I', in *Catholic Renewal and Protestant Resistance in Marian England*, eds. by Elizabeth Evenden and Vivienne Westbrook (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), pp.165-82 (p.177).

⁶² Old, *The acquital or purgation*, sig. E7v.

resystaunce.’ They should follow the examples of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and suffer the cruelties of torture, even death, rather than ‘be obeydent to theyr vngodly lawes, & wycked constitutions or statutes.’⁶³

Menewe went to great pains to explicitly make the distinction between disobedience to wicked commands and rebellion against legitimate authority, and this could only be achieved by navigating the choppy waters between Romans 13 and Acts 5:29. He quoted Bernard of Clairvaux who had argued that the wicked commands of rulers must not be obeyed because ‘it is altogether unreasonable to profess yourself obedient when you know that you are violating obedience due to the superior on account of the inferior.’⁶⁴ Menewe further supported this contention by appealing to Augustine who had stated that if the emperor erred and passed laws against God’s truth this would cause Christians ‘to be tested, and crowned if they refused to do what the emperors were commanding, because God was forbidding it.’⁶⁵ Subsequently, Menewe reached the same conclusion as John Bradford, that those who adhered to Acts 5:29 and disobeyed the wicked commands of the higher powers will procure for themselves ‘a greate rewarde.’ Those that uphold the evil commands of the powers that be, he insisted, ‘purchase vnto hymselfe a great punishment.’⁶⁶ Likewise Old, Scory, Marsh, and Philpot all saw no exception for transgressing the Word of God. Instead, contended Philpot, Christians should follow the example of Daniel and choose the lion’s den over adherence to the wicked commands of the higher power.⁶⁷ There was no escape from punishment for any perpetrator or accessory of wicked acts and it was ungodly to suggest otherwise. However, this potentially explosive doctrine must be taught correctly and diligently in order to protect against any possible sedition or incitement to insurrection against lawful rulers.

Menewe had, like so many others, confirmed the doctrine of non-resistance. It was far better, Menewe stated, ‘for a Christian to dye a thousande deathes, than once to drawe the swearde against his lawfull magistrate.’ God may providentially send wicked rulers because of their sin and the surest weapons a Christian could employ against ungodly magistrates was prayer and contrition. Any recourse to physical arms, Menewe insisted, will only procure for themselves ‘euerlastung damnatyon.’ Romans 13 clearly stated rulers were ordained of God and they must be obeyed in good conscience. It was, nevertheless, impossible to obey the ungodly commands and remain ‘within the boundes and limites of gods boke.’⁶⁸ It was imperative to

⁶³ Gracious Menewe, *A plaine subuersyon or turnyng vp syde down of all the argumentes, that the Pope catholykes can make for the maintenaunce of auricular confession* (Wesel?: Printed by H. Singleton?, 1555?). STC 17822, sigs. A2v-A3v.

⁶⁴ Bernard of Clairvaux, ‘Letter II (A.D. 1126): To the Monk Adam’, in *Some Letters of Saint Bernard Abbot of Clairvaux*, ed. Francis Aidan Gasquet (London: John Hiddgers, 1904), pp.3-27 (p.6).

⁶⁵ Augustine, ‘Letter 105: Augustine to the Donatists (409/410)’, in *APW*, pp.162-73 (p.166).

⁶⁶ Menewe, *Plaine subuersyon*, sigs. B8v-C1r.

⁶⁷ Philpot, ‘A Letter to the Christian congregation’, p.223.

⁶⁸ Menewe, *Plaine subuersyon*, sigs. C3v-C5r.

adhere, first and foremost, to the ordinance of God: the highest monarchy of all. The commands of Romans 13, I Peter 2 and Matthew 22 provided no impunity for Christians that adhered to the ungodly commands of the higher powers. Therefore, what the evangelicals were producing were not manifestos for resistance to earthly authority, but clear instructions to their brethren that they must, without exception, obey God rather than men.

The ‘mallitious and cruell assualtes of her enemies.’

On 11 April 1554 the leader of the only serious insurgency during the reign of Mary, Thomas Wyatt, went to the block. At his arraignment Wyatt showed customary penitence and confessed to his treason and crime against God ‘who hath suffered me to fal into this beastlye brutishnesse.’ His motivation for rising against the government was made clear: he believed the realm was in peril because of the proposed union of Mary and Philip of Spain. The marriage brought the country into ‘bondage and seruitude by alienes, and straegers.’⁶⁹ The story of Wyatt’s treason, John Proctor stated, should be heeded by all. Good men should forbear the temptation to rebel against Mary ‘whom by gods authoritie the sworde is not vaynly committed, leste thereby they procure to them selues damnation.’⁷⁰ The former Catholic exile John Christopherson expressed his concern over those suffering from the sickness of disobedience and insisted that they must be persuaded that their actions not only offended God but would lead their country to ruin.⁷¹ Making war against their prince, he asserted, was making war against God because the prince was appointed by Him.⁷² Christopherson declared the rebels were both deceitful and disloyal, on the one hand proclaiming love for their prince and country, and on the other causing strife and making war.⁷³

It is no surprise that Christopherson believed there was a need to remind Mary’s subjects that St. Paul had demanded them to obey the higher powers because they are ordained of God.⁷⁴ Even Christians living under wicked rule must first take their complaint to their prince and if they received no satisfaction the matter should be then committed to God. Christopherson left no room for ambiguity, God alone may judge a prince and subjects must never take up the sword.⁷⁵ But Wyatt’s rebellion was a symptom of a realm suffering from a number of pressures: a residual but ardent evangelical minority, the simmering issue of the Queen’s marriage and there were whispers of a gentry-led political coup intended to place

⁶⁹ John Proctor, *The historie of Wyates rebellion* (London: Robert Caly, 1554), STC 20407, sig. K4v.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, sig. K8r.

⁷¹ John Christopherson, *An exhortation to all menne to take hede and beware of rebellion* (London: by Iohn Cawood, 1554), STC 5207, sig. A5v.

⁷² *Ibid.*, sig. I6v.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, sigs. B3v-B4v.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, sigs. C8r-C8v.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, sig. D6r.

Princess Elizabeth on the throne after wedding her to Edward Courtenay.⁷⁶ The language and tone Christopherson used to denounce the rebels had a striking continuity with that used by reformers for over a quarter of a century. Having attended Cambridge during the period of the late 1530s and early 1540s, Christopherson will have been fully aware of Lutheran theology, and it is possible that he found God's wisdom in an unlikely source. Indeed, in 1525 Luther had asked the rebelling peasants of Swabia 'Do you think that Paul's judgment in Romans 13 [:2] will not strike you, "He who resists the authorities will incur judgment"?'⁷⁷ Similarly Edwardian preachers had forcefully applied the Pauline commandment to rebuke the 1549 rebels and impress upon them that rebellion was not the answer for those suffering oppression.

Nevertheless, Christopherson pondered the purpose of God delivering a wicked prince. He resolved, in rather quaint language, that a 'noughtye lyfe' deserved a 'noughtye ruler.' This conclusion entirely agreed with that found in the homily concerning obedience to rulers which exhorted that even tyrannical rulers are ministers of God and must be obeyed.⁷⁸ Moreover, Christ and the Apostles had demonstrated that Christians must suffer the pleasure of a wicked prince and in doing so they surrender to God's will. Indeed, Christ had articulated his objection to violence against the judgment of worldly authority in the garden of Gethsemane when He informed Peter: 'for all who take the sword will perish by the sword.'⁷⁹ Christopherson argued that although Peter had valid cause to defend the faith, and the maltreated Apostles who were commanded 'not to speak in the name of Jesus' had a reason to defend themselves, they instead rejoiced and patiently suffered persecution in Christ's name.⁸⁰ Therefore, Christopherson did not deviate from the obedience doctrine established by the previous evangelical regime. He concurred that God may suffer a wicked prince to reign over his people as 'a trial of oure patience.' As Job 34 revealed, God provided sinful people with the prince they deserved and they must submit to His will.⁸¹

The language used in Proctor's history of the rebellion is more strident. He declared the uprising was nothing short of villainy against 'Gods anyoynted' and a traitorous molestation of Mary's royal person. True subjects, he insisted, would have matched Mary's 'princely zeale with faith and dutie.' Subsequently, he paraphrased Romans 13 to remind subjects of God's command: 'you shall not resist youre prince, if you doe, you resist me (sayeth he) with present peryll to your soules.'⁸² The rebellion, Proctor claimed, was fuelled by an inordinate desire to

⁷⁶ David Loades, *Two Tudor Conspiracies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), p.19.

⁷⁷ *LW 46*, p.25.

⁷⁸ See Chapter 5.

⁷⁹ Matthew 26:52.

⁸⁰ Christopherson, *An exhortation*, sigs. G1v-G2v. Acts 5:40.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, sigs. D7v-D8r.

⁸² Proctor, *The historie of Wyates rebellion*, sigs. L5v-L6v.

preserve a false religion which had convinced the participants to forget their duty to God, prince and country.⁸³ This new religion was carnal: manifest from contempt for magistrates, licentious living and so divorced from His divine order that it cannot be envisaged to have come from God.⁸⁴ He professed that Scripture provided no just cause for rebellion and any subject that resisted shall receive damnation. Only commands that contravened the Gospel could be disobeyed and by enduring torment they remained obedient to God and followed the examples of 'good godly men' of times past.⁸⁵ This expression of obedience was modelled upon the Apostles and the Church Fathers who, claimed Christopherson, had sought peace and unity; favouring obedience and maintaining order.

Proctor denied obedience was truly observed by the authors of 'our late religion.' Men such as Hus, Luther, Zwingli, Bucer and Calvin had sown confusion and sedition which had caused not only conflict between subject and ruler, but also war amongst princes.⁸⁶ The reformers were the embodiment of the new faith: they were stewards of heresy and sedition. Christopherson was adamant Thomas Wyatt and his fellow conspirators deserved their place in such shameful company. Both Christopherson and Proctor were united in declaring that the author of this malice was not God but the Devil and the seditious undertaking of these 'rank traitors' had always been doomed to end in failure and confusion. Proctor confidently proclaimed that God will never fail to defend His chosen and elect vessel 'against the mallitious and cruell assualtes of her enemies.'⁸⁷ Mary was a providential agent of God sent to defend the true faith against the innovation of the reformers. This determined effort by Christopherson and Proctor portrayed the new faith as a seedbed for sedition and its adherents as seeking to subvert the social order. As Eamon Duffy noted, this agenda was 'strengthened by Wyatt's rebellion, which Mary's government consistently (and plausibly) presented as inspired by a protestant agenda.'⁸⁸

This picture was an inversion of John Hooper's observation that proceeding the 1549 rebellions a great many within the kingdom still adhered to the 'popish faction' and that the authority of magistrates was set to 'nought.'⁸⁹ Nevertheless, Proctor simply enlarged upon the existing portrayal of Wyatt's rebellion by the Marian regime that the uprising 'was the work of disobedient heretics whose objective was to uphold Protestant doctrines.'⁹⁰ The royal proclamations of January 1554 declared Wyatt's uprising to be heretical and seditious, and

⁸³ Proctor, *The historie of Wyates rebellion*, sig. L8v.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, sigs. M2r-M2v.

⁸⁵ Christopherson, *An exhortation*, sigs. H4v-H5v.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, sig. R4r.

⁸⁷ Proctor, *The historie of Wyates rebellion*, sig. L1v.

⁸⁸ Duffy, *Fires of Faith*, p.89.

⁸⁹ John Hooper 'to Henry Bullinger, Dated at London, June 25, [1549]', in *OL I*, pp.65-7 (p.66).

⁹⁰ Barrett L. Beer, 'John Stow and Tudor Rebellions, 1549-1569', *Journal of British Studies*, 27:4 (Oct., 1988), pp.352-74 (p.359).

having nothing to do with any legitimate patriotic concerns.⁹¹ Proctor upheld this view despite conceding that Wyatt had confessed his quarrel concerned the Spanish Match and he insisted 'we mynd no thyng lesse, than anye wise to touche her grace: but to serue her, and honour her accordyng to our duties.'⁹² Wyatt's expressed concern over the royal marriage was, Proctor believed, simply a false veil to conceal his heresy.⁹³ Wyatt's anxiety over the royal marriage was also dismissed by the Queen who stated that her council had informed her 'the matter of the marriage seemed to be but a Spanish cloak to cover their pretended purpose against our religion.' She declared Wyatt, and his conspirators, had 'arrogantly and traitorously' attempted to seize control of England's government and place her counsellors in the Tower.

As possessor of the same regal estate held by her father Mary demanded that her subjects to hold true to their promise of allegiance and obedience to the anointed of God. In doing so, she insisted, they must show that 'ye will not suffer a vile Traytor [such as Wyatt] t to haue the order and gouernaunce of our person, and to occupy our estate.'⁹⁴ However, the papers collected by George Wyatt, son of Thomas, refuted the premise that his father was motivated by religion and asserted that such claims were pure 'invention' fabricated in the idle mind 'of some Popishe Dreamer.' He maintained the real motivation for the uprising was the Queen's marriage to a foreign prince and his father was not a seditious heretic but a concerned and loyal patriot.⁹⁵ In the opinion of John Foxe, the matter of the royal marriage and the yoke of Catholicism were things that Thomas Wyatt could not disentangle. He claimed Wyatt perceived 'that the Quene and the counsell would by foreine mariages bring vpon this realme most miserable seruitude, and establish popish religion.'⁹⁶ In reality the matter appeared to reflect a wider mood of political and nationalistic anxiety over the Spanish Match. Indeed, many subjects would have been aware of the prophetic words concerning the danger of Mary or Elizabeth ascending to the throne contained in *A Glasse of the Truthe*. The diplomat, Nicholas Throckmorton, made a sombre prediction concerning Mary's proposed marriage to Philip. He contended that because of their sin God 'would send us strangers, yea, such tyrants to exercise tyranny over us.'⁹⁷

⁹¹ Loades, *Two Tudor Conspiracies*, p.65.

⁹² Proctor, *The historie of Wyates rebellion*, sig. A5r.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, sig. L8v.

⁹⁴ Foxe, *TAMO* (1570), p.1618.

⁹⁵ 'A Defence of Sir Thomas Wyatt the Elder, and Sir Thomas the Younger, against the Accusations of Nicholas Sanders', in *The Papers of George Wyatt Esquire of Boxley Abbey in the County of Kent son and heir of Sir Thomas Wyatt the Younger*, ed. by D.M. Loades (London: The Royal Historical Society, 1968), pp.181-205 (p.196; p.200; p.203; and p.205).

⁹⁶ Foxe, *TAMO* (1563), p.984.

⁹⁷ 'The Order of Arraignment of Sir Nicholas Throckmorton...the Seventeenth Day of April 1554', in *The Trial of Nicholas Throckmorton*, eds. Annabel Patterson (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 1998), pp.27-82 (pp.49-50).

The prospect of a foreign king aroused within many subjects fierce indignation and xenophobia. Therefore John Edwards is correct to contend that 'Probably, all those involved with the government had some kind of crisis of conscience at the prospect of a foreign consort for the Queen.'⁹⁸ Mary sought to reassure fears by declaring she would marry only with the consent of her people and parliament: the union must be for the 'high benefite and commodity of all the whole Realme.'⁹⁹ The marriage treaty stressed Mary's authority would not be compromised and Philip was not afforded any lasting privilege or claim to the English throne.¹⁰⁰ But fears were not quelled. The pamphlet *Certayne questions demaunded and asked by the noble realme of Englande* (1555) foresaw a single outcome: Philip will seek possession of England's Imperial Crown. This was a concerted attempt to subvert Mary's power by suggesting the reconciliation with Rome and the imposition of Philip were acts of tyranny and treason. The pamphlet asked whether it was lawful for the commons to defend, resist, and even depose a prince that has placed the realm in obvious peril.¹⁰¹ This attempt to undermine the Queen's authority was couched in patriotic sentiment but the implication was clear: the threat of subjugation to a foreign prince and Mary's imposition of the papal supremacy might create a legitimate argument for her deposition. Nevertheless, the author of this seditious work appeared hesitant to rekindle the embers of Wyatt's failed rebellion.

For Miles Huggarde Wyatt's rebellion violated a direct command of God. He contended that the murmuring and slandering made against the magistrates placed the rebels in direct contravention of Romans 13 and this made them both heretics and traitors. Huggarde perceived no difference between Wyatt's rebels and other instruments of heresy, such as Wyclif, Oldcastle, Cromwell and Cranmer, and he insisted they would meet the same end.¹⁰² John Angel rashly asserted that the realm was now free of the seditious teaching of these 'professors' who had falsely interpreted the Gospel and kept 'true knowledge of Scripture from the people.'¹⁰³ Mary

⁹⁸ See Edwards, *Mary I*, p.159.

⁹⁹ Foxe, *TAMO* (1570), p.1618.

¹⁰⁰ Anna Whitelock, "'A queen, and by the same title, a king also": Mary I: Queen-in-Parliament', in *The Birth of a Queen: Essays on the Quincentenary of Mary I*, eds. by Sarah Duncan and Valerie Schutte (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), pp.89-112 (p.97). 'Announcing Articles of Marriage with Philip of Spain [Westminster, 14 January 1554, I Mary I]', in *Tudor Royal Proclamations, Volume II: The Later Tudors, 1553-1587*, eds. by Paul L. Hughes and James F. Larkin (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961), pp.21-6 (p.25).

¹⁰¹ *Certayne questions demaunded and asked by the noble realme of Englande, of her true naturall children and subiectes of the same* (London [i.e. Wesel?]: Myles Hogherde [i.e. H. Singleton?, 1555]). STC 9981, Sigs. A2v-A5r.

¹⁰² Miles Huggarde, *The displaying of the Protestantes, [and] sondry their practises, with a description of diuers their abuses of late frequented* (London: By Robert Caly, 1556), STC 13558, fols. 102v-103r. Peter Marshall notes, it was 'the first English book to use the term [Protestants] in its title.' See Marshall, 'The Naming of Protestant England', *Past & Present*, 214:1 (Feb., 2012), pp.87-128 (p.95).

¹⁰³ John Angel, *Agrement of the holye fathers, and doctors of the churche, upon the cheifest articles of Christian religion* (London: By William Harford, 1555?). STC 634, sigs. A3v-A4r.

had a miraculous victory over her traitorous enemies because of the gifts bestowed upon her by God. Thus, in the opinion of Angel, Judith had now truly defeated Holofernes.¹⁰⁴ Nevertheless, the chaplain-extraordinary to the King and Queen, Richard Smith, implored the wayward to return to the unity of the Catholic Church, forsake their errors, and obey Mary and Philip who were 'chosen and elected of God.' By way of Romans 13 and Proverbs 8:15, Smith provided an irreproachable biblical statement that confirmed the divine origin of temporal authority. He insisted the execution of Wyatt should serve as proof that those who remained obstinate to God, king and queen would only procure for themselves God's vengeance.¹⁰⁵

For Smith Scripture had provided irrefutable proof that rebels never prosper. He contended that God's punishment of Korah, Dathan and Abiram for their rebellion against Moses testified that insurrection only ever delivered death and confusion.¹⁰⁶ Smith, Christopherson and Proctor were united in the conviction that rebels will always fail because God was not with them. Smith conflated Romans 13, I Peter 2:17 and Titus 3:1 to ponder who could be so ignorant of the command 'to obey our Kyng, Quene, and the higher powers, vnder them...not onely for to auoide temporal punishmente, but also for oure conscyence sake.' Smith declared those that defied Mary likewise defied God and they would see no victory from their ignorance but extreme misery.¹⁰⁷ These Marian exhortations to obedience correlated directly with those of the evangelicals under Edward and the continuities are striking. All applied the words of Romans 13 to instruct obedience to the civil powers and it was upon this precept the doctrine of passive resistance was built. Wyatt's rebellion permitted Marian writers to portray evangelicals as insincere subverters of social order inspired by a religious agenda. The favourite biblical weapon of the evangelicals had now been turned against them. Romans 13, so long used by evangelicals to strike against their opponents, was now being employed by the Marian writers to inflict telling wounds of their own.

Dethroning Romans 13

The exiled evangelical preacher John Knox was obstinate in his condemnation of the events occurring in Catholic England. In *A faythfull admonition* (1554) he declared that the restoration of Catholicism and the royal marriage had shown Mary to be a traitor that had overthrown the 'iuste lawes of the realme.' By placing a stranger king over the realm Mary had proven that she

¹⁰⁴ Angel, *Agreement of the holye fathers*, sigs. A5r-A5v.

¹⁰⁵ Richard Smith, *A bouclier of the catholike fayth of Christes church conteynyng diuers matters now of late called into controuersy, by the newe gospellers* (London: by Rychard Tottell, 1554), STC 22816, sig. CC2v. Proverbs 8:15 reads 'By me kings reign, and rulers decree what is just.'

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, sig. CC3r.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, sigs. CC3v-CC4r. Numbers 16

'beareth a Spaniardes herte.'¹⁰⁸ Despite this violent language he maintained the doctrine of passive disobedience. However, in a revised edition of *A Godly Letter of Warning or Admonition to the faithfull in London, Newcastle, and Berwick* (1554), Knox suggested something incendiary: 'the Prophetis of God sumtymes may teache treasone aganis kingis.'¹⁰⁹ Furthermore, while it was the duty of all 'in league' with God to avoid idolatry, it was the particular burden of 'everie Civil Magistrate' to eliminate this mortal sin by slaying 'all ydolateris' in his realm.¹¹⁰ Knox did not, yet, make the distinction between superior and lesser magistrate or make any specific call for an idolatrous magistrate to be deposed. Knox and the other exiles were still in shock after the death of Edward VI and this was a period of phoney war before the Marian regime's policy of persecution had begun. Previously, then, there had been no need to adopt such radical language. However, for those living in exile the situation appeared increasingly desperate. With Hooper imprisoned in the Fleet and Cranmer, Ridley, Bradford and Latimer crowded into the Tower the realm was becoming engulfed by popery.

Knox was increasingly casting himself in the role of a prophet. He beseeched God to stir up a Phinees, Elias or Jehu to spill the blood of the idolaters before England was thoroughly consumed.¹¹¹ Knox was convinced that God's mercy would liberate England from idolatry and superstition, and his prophesising would aid the realm's deliverance from the clutches of 'bloude thirsty tyrants.' These were the first tentative steps on his four-year journey towards a more radical and distinct interpretation of Romans 13. The revisions of *A Godly Letter* were made after he had visited Calvin, Pierre Viret and finally Bullinger, to whom he posed four pertinent questions that directly concerned the situation in England.¹¹² These involved the inter-woven subjects of divine right, adolescent and female rule, whether it was lawful to resist an idolatrous sovereign and if so who should the godly sponsor if a religious nobleman were to resist an idolatrous monarch? Bullinger naturally recognised the explosive nature of the enquiry and the answers he provided Knox were a fudge, in that they were careful not to fully endorse or condemn any position concerning resistance. He noted that any action must not violate God's law but likewise he admitted that particular circumstance may provide opportunity to resist.

Bullinger did recognise that there was some biblical precedent for resistance but he warned Knox that such action would be hazardous. Rather than being rash, he suggested, it was

¹⁰⁸ John Knox, *Faythfull admonition made by Iohn Knox, unto the professours of Gods truthe in England* (Kalykow (Emden: By Egidius van der Erve, 1554). STC 15069, sigs. E3v-E4r.

¹⁰⁹ John Knox, 'A Godly Letter of Warning or Admonition to the faithfull in London, Newcastle, and Berwick', in *The Works of John Knox*, Vol. III, ed. by David Laing (Edinburgh: James Thin, 1895), pp.161-216 (p.184).

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.190-1; p.194.

¹¹¹ Knox, *A faythfull admonition*, sig. G8v.

¹¹² Knox's movements can be ascertained by a letter Calvin sent to Viret in March 1554. John Calvin, 'To Viret', in *Letters of John Calvin*, Vol III ed. by Jules Bonnet (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1858), pp.28-9.

far better to be guided by 'their sense of duty than the conscience of others.'¹¹³ Nonetheless, Bullinger's words were not a departure. He had already warned seditious magistrates who sought to cloak themselves in the Pauline precept that 'all power is of God' would not only inflict injury upon their subjects but would procure God's wrath.¹¹⁴ In fact, God may summon 'noble captains and valiant men to displace tyrants' to restore His people to liberty, but Bullinger also warned that only the divinely called may displace a wicked ruler, otherwise it 'is to be feared lest he do make the evil double so much as it was before.'¹¹⁵ Calvin also suggested something similar by noting that it was God's place alone to depose rulers. However, he added that rather than create agitation by pursuing 'idle enquiries' it was far more prudent to remain quiet and wait until 'some particular call for interference' was made clearly apparent.¹¹⁶ Neither Bullinger nor Calvin advanced any argument that promoted the unsettling of any government that was established by God's providence.¹¹⁷ Nevertheless, Knox's questions demonstrated that he considered the accession of Mary to be perilous and Bullinger confirmed that female rule was against God's prescribed order. 'The law of God', wrote Bullinger, 'ordains the woman to be in subjection, and not to rule.'¹¹⁸ Likewise Calvin supported Bullinger's conclusion and stated 'the government of women...is utterly at variance with the legitimate order of nature.'¹¹⁹

Neither Bullinger nor Calvin allowed themselves to be drawn into judgment upon the particular circumstance of Mary's rule. The responses were reticent and Knox's questions were not specific enough to garner anything other than general advice. However, in Viret, Knox would have found a more sympathetic ear because he had already provided a justification for resistance to a tyrant 'by means of their legitimate magistrate.'¹²⁰ Viret's ideas were well known to the English exiles because he was also visited by William Whittington, Thomas Sampson, Christopher Goodman and Thomas Lever amongst others.¹²¹ This expression of resistance was, Stuart Foster has stated, 'by far the most open statement by a leading French Reformed minister

¹¹³ Heinrich Bullinger, 'to John Calvin. Dated at Zurich, March 26, 1554', in *Original Letters Relative to the English Reformation, Written During the Reigns of King Henry VIII, King Edward VI, and Queen Mary: Chiefly from the Archives of Zurich*, Volume II, edited by Hastings Robinson for the Parker Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1847), pp.743-47.

¹¹⁴ Bullinger, *DHB* I, p.241.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.318.

¹¹⁶ John Calvin 'to Bullinger. Geneva, 28th April 1554', in *Letters of John Calvin*, Vol III, pp.35-8 (p.38).

¹¹⁷ Calvin would later demonstrate this in a 1559 letter to William Cecil. See John Calvin, 'to William Cecil. Geneva, May 1559', in *Letters of John Calvin*, Vol IV, edited by Jules Bonnet and translated by Marcus Robert Gilchrist (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1858), pp.46-8 (p.47).

¹¹⁸ Bullinger, 'to John Calvin, 1554', p.745.

¹¹⁹ Calvin 'to Bullinger, 1554', p.38.

¹²⁰ Viret cited in Robert D. Linder, 'Pierre Viret and the Sixteenth-Century French Protestant Revolutionary Tradition', *The Journal of Modern History*, 38:2 (Jun., 1966), pp.125-37 (p.133).

¹²¹ Robert D. Linder, 'Pierre Viret and the Sixteenth-Century English Protestants', *Archiv für Reformationgeschichte*, 58 (1967), pp.149-71 (p. 153).

at that time.¹²² However, as Robert D. Linder has noted, Viret's assertions on obedience to civil authority were 'riddled with limiting and qualifying phrases' as he repeatedly made distinctions between good authorities and tyrants and argued 'that true Christians should give whole-hearted and unqualified allegiance only to "true kings and true princes."' ¹²³ Such utterances would certainly provide support for anyone that had already internally realised a doctrine of resistance but it appears 'Knox was not yet confident or desperate enough to pursue a wholly independent line of thought.'¹²⁴

It is uncertain whether Knox was attempting to usher Bullinger and Calvin towards conclusions they were unwilling to reach or simply seeking guidance in ascertaining God's will. What is certain is that neither reformer endorsed armed resistance or suggested anything that abrogated the precepts of Romans 13. Knox was acquainted enough to Scripture to conceive that wicked rulers should be considered, as Calvin stated, a means of God's reproach 'for their sluggishness.'¹²⁵ He also already knew that the Apostles had taught, as Bullinger noted, 'that we must not obey the king or magistrate when their commands are opposed to God and his lawful worship.'¹²⁶ Furthermore, he was also likely to have already concluded that the regiment of women was deplorable in the eyes of God before he sought the advice of the continental reformers. All of Knox's specific dilemmas were provided with sound answers by Bullinger and Calvin when considered individually but Mary appeared to be an unprecedented manifestation of more than one of them. Therefore, the questions Knox had asked were ill-fitting to England's present misfortune and in return he received ill-fitting answers. Consequently, Knox needed to address more directly the multifaceted problem of England's idolatrous female magistrate and this necessitated a careful navigation between the opinions of Bullinger, Calvin and Viret. The conclusion of Knox's four year journey would provide a radical interpretation of Romans 13 that found notoriety in *The First Blast*.

The change in mood amongst the evangelicals was, undoubtedly, provoked by the Marian regime's repeal of the laws which mandated burning as a penalty for heresy. This was a determined and visible drive to eradicate those who stubbornly opposed the Catholic restoration.¹²⁷ Many evangelicals, like Cranmer and Becon, continued to believe the restoration

¹²² Stuart Foster, 'Pierre Viret and France, 1559-1565' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of St. Andrews, 2013), p.45.

¹²³ Robert Dean Linder, *The Political Ideas of Pierre Viret* (Genève: Librairie Droz, 1964), p.131.

¹²⁴ J. H. Burns, "Knox and Bullinger", *Scottish Historical Review*, 34 (1985), pp.90-1 (p.91).

¹²⁵ Calvin 'to Bullinger, 1554', p.38.

¹²⁶ Bullinger, 'to John Calvin, 1554', p.746.

¹²⁷ See Thomas S. Freeman, 'Burning Zeal: Mary Tudor and the Marian Persecution', in *Mary Tudor: Old and New Perspectives*, pp.171-205.

of popery reflected God's punishment for sin and not zealously adhering to the true religion.¹²⁸ Consequently, the majority of evangelicals, like Lever, continued to uphold the doctrine of obedience and he contended that 'the woorde of God teacheth neuer to resist authoritie.' Instead of seeking an alternative path, like Knox, Lever insisted that they must not murmur against His ordinance but instead leave the punishment of tyrants to God alone.¹²⁹ John Ponet, now settled in Strasbourg along with his friend Vermigli and French jurist François Hotman, explored a different route entirely in his explosive *A shorte treatise of politike power* (1556). Accordingly, Ponet's tract must be considered in the context of disillusionment: the death of Edward, the accession of Catholic Mary, and the campaign to suppress heresy which resulted in Hooper, Latimer, Bradford, Ridley, Philpot and Cranmer meeting with the flames.

However, Ponet's revolutionary book did not challenge Mary's constitutional right of succession. Nor did he deny her right to return England to Roman obedience because, as Barrett Beer stated, 'the Popish regime despised by Ponet stood on the same parliamentary foundation as the Edwardian reformation.'¹³⁰ Instead he questioned the intellectual foundation of the Royal Supremacy by rejecting the premise that princes were divinely ordained to rule Christ's Church on Earth. This was no better demonstrated than the presence of Psalm 118:9, 'It is better to trust in the Lorde, than to trust in Princes', adorning the cover. Additionally, the classic limitation to obedience Acts 5:29 also proved central to demonstrating Ponet's argument that above all, everyone should execute God's law and all were equally bound by it.¹³¹ Thus, as Skinner noted, Ponet contended 'that all our rulers are ordained to fulfil a particular office.'¹³² The origin of power, the authority to make and execute laws, proceeded from God as Romans 13 confirmed but the people themselves actively determined the manner in which it might be implemented.¹³³ This meant that the 'higher power' was simply the ministry and authority held by officers in their execution of justice. Furthermore, the authority to make law was also conditional upon their compliance with Scripture and likewise good and just laws will adhere with God's Law.

This understanding of the higher powers did not diminish the need for obedience because the temporal office was intrinsic to God's natural structure: the power of husbands over

¹²⁸ Thomas Cranmer, *A confutation of vnwritten verities* (Wesel?: J. Lambrecht?, 1556), STC 5996, sigs. A4r-A4v. Thomas Becon, *A comfortable epistle, too Goddes faythfull people in Englande* (Strasburgh in Elsas [i.e. Wesel?]: J. Lambrecht?, 1554), STC 1716, sigs. A2v-A3v.

¹²⁹ Thomas Lever, *A treatise of the right way fro[m] danger of sinne & vengeance in this wicked world* (London: Henrie Bynneman, 1575), STC 15552, sigs. G5v-G7v.

¹³⁰ Barrett L. Beer, 'John Ponet's *Shorte Treatise of Politike Power* Reassessed', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 21:3 (Autumn, 1990), pp.373-84 (p.379).

¹³¹ John Ponet, *A shorte treatise of politike pouuer and of the true obedience which subiectes owe to kynges and other ciuile gouernours, with an exhortacion to all true naturall Englishe men* (Strasbourg: Printed by the heirs of W. Köpfel, 1556), STC 20178, sigs. C4v-C6r.

¹³² Skinner, *Foundations* II, p.222.

¹³³ Ponet, *A shorte treatise*, sig. A4v-A6r.

wives and parents over children and masters over servants. What Ponet contended was that the commonwealth was 'a degree above the king' because monarchs 'are but members.' A commonwealth can exist and flourish without a ruler but without a commonwealth there can be no king.¹³⁴ Such considerations were nothing new because Scotsman John Major had previously suggested a similar thing: 'A free people confers authority upon its first king, and his power is dependent upon the whole people.'¹³⁵ Melancthon had also asserted that rulers were 'subservient to their function—law, order, and justice, and practice obedience thereto.'¹³⁶ But it was in Strasbourg that Bucer had already made the important distinction between superior and inferior magistrates. Bucer afforded the lesser authority a new dignity and strength that made them no less responsible for the spiritual welfare of their subjects than the superior powers. Significantly, he insisted that inferior magistrates were obliged not to defer to a wicked superior temporal power because they had a greater duty to God.¹³⁷

Furthermore, Theodore Beza asserted that civil government reflected a social contract. The magistrate's power was furnished by God but its legitimacy was founded upon the 'consent of the citizens.' This two-tier structure of government provided a 'necessary defence', with the inferior magistrate dutifully maintaining the true religion and preventing the superior power from descending into tyrannical absolutism.¹³⁸ In the inferior magistrate God had provided a remedy for tyranny. Moreover, the Magdeburg Confession (1550) had resolutely stated that when a 'superior' magistrate tormented their subjects then, by both the law of God and nature, the inferior magistrate should act upon his divine mandate and resist.¹³⁹ This conclusion required a reframing of Romans 13:3 and the understanding that if the higher power failed in their duty to be a terror only for evil, they had abrogated God's ordination.¹⁴⁰ *A shorte treatise of politike power* subscribed to the hierarchy of government and Ponet asserted that the function of the King was to maintain justice for the benefit of the whole commonwealth and not for his own

¹³⁴ Ponet, *A shorte treatise*, sig. D7r.

¹³⁵ John Major, *A History of Greater Britain as well as England as Scotland compiled from the Ancient Authorities*, trans. and ed. by Archibald Constable (Edinburgh: Printed at the University Press by T. and A. Constable, 1982), p.213.

¹³⁶ Melancthon cited in Eugene Linse, 'Beza and Melancthon on Political Obligation', *Concordia Theological Monthly*, 41:1 (January 1970), pp.27-35 (p.32).

¹³⁷ Cynthia Grant Shoemaker, 'The Development of the Lutheran Theory of Resistance 1523-1530', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 8:1 (Apr., 1977), (p.81) pp.61-76. Skinner, *Foundations II*, p.205-6.

¹³⁸ The text referred to here is Beza's *De Haereticis a civili Magistratu puniendi* (Geneva: Olivia Roberti Stephani, 1554). Robert M. Kingdon, 'The First Expression of Theodore Beza's Political Ideas', *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, 46 (1955), pp.88-100 (pp.89-93).

¹³⁹ Skinner, *Foundations II*, p.208. Ester Hildebrandt, 'The Magdeburg Bekenntnis as a Possible Link Between German and English Resistance Theories in the Sixteenth Century', *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, 71 (1980), pp.227-53 (pp.235-8).

¹⁴⁰ See David M. Whitford, 'The Duty to Resist Tyranny: The Magdeburg Confession and the Reframing of Romans 13', in *Caritas et Reformatio: Essays on the Church and State in Honor of Carter Lindberg on his Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. by David M. Whitford (St. Louis: Concordia Academic Press, 2002), pp.97-118.

ambition.¹⁴¹ Thus, princes were permitted to make laws of adiaphoric nature without counsel but they could not violate either divine law or those promulgated to benefit the commonwealth.¹⁴²

While power itself was an ordination of God, Ponet insisted that kingship was a human creation and thereby he distinguished between the provider of law and the law itself. Therefore, the idea that kings were 'gods' that could claim absolute power was given short shrift.¹⁴³ The prince was prone to human fallibility and not exempt from censure for violating human or divine law. The civil office was a servant of both God and the people and neither pope, emperor nor king had the supreme authority to alter divine or positive civil law without consent.¹⁴⁴ Ponet radically suggested that the people, being the earthly power mediated by God, had the positive duty to depose and punish any prince that exceeded the bounds of his office and descended into tyranny.¹⁴⁵ This emphasis upon the pre-eminence of divine law placed a greater stress upon the conscience and Acts 5:29 absolved subjects from obedience to tyranny. However, this argument was also reminiscent of Starkey's *A Dialogue between Pole and Lupset* (c.1529-c.1532) that contended a commonwealth's prosperity depended upon people living under a 'gud ordur and pollycy' guided by God. Any realm suffering oppression, he argued, was no longer governed in accordance with God's nature and dignity. Starkey proposed those suffering ungodly tyranny were permitted to depose their oppressor. It was the duty of the spiritual and temporal powers to ensure the people were nourished by the 'doctryne of Chryst' through both religious instruction and 'gud polycy' respectively. For Starkey, religious instruction alone could not bring the subject to perfection: the institution of law and the 'feare of punnyschment' were also necessary.¹⁴⁶

This discernment of earthly power had immediate resonance because many evangelicals believed Mary was ruling like an ungodly tyrant. By applying such criteria it was only a short step to suggest she should be reprovved or even deposed. By definition England's magistrates were failing in their custodial duty proscribed in divine law because, Ponet argued, 'wher Goddes worde hathe been receaued and embraced...no tirannye could entre.'¹⁴⁷ Two radical positions emerged from Ponet's theorising. Firstly, he rejected over two decades of English political and religious policy because this concept of government was antithetical to the doctrine of Royal

¹⁴¹ Ponet, *A shorte treatise*, sig. A5r.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, sig. B5r.

¹⁴³ Reeves believes this disentanglement by Ponet as a much more radical and distinct reading of Psalm 82:6. See Reeves, *English Evangelicals*, pp.153-5.

¹⁴⁴ Ponet, *A shorte treatise*, sig. B5v-B6r.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, sigs. G1v – H7v.

¹⁴⁶ Starkey '*Pole and Lupset*', p.55; p.147.

¹⁴⁷ Ponet, *A shorte treatise*, sig. A6r.

Supremacy as it 'is predicated on the idea that the king's will is not sovereign within his kingdom.'¹⁴⁸ The people, he insisted, determined how power should be implemented. Secondly, we now begin to see English writers determinedly seeking to dethrone Romans 13. This was not a rejection of Paul's commands because by opposing an idolater who disobeyed divine law, the people were exercising their ordained power to execute wrath upon the evildoer (Romans 13:4). Nevertheless, this notion ran contrary to Tyndale's long held assertion that a subject should be thankful for even a tyrannical king because he was a gift from God.¹⁴⁹ Ponet's call for disobedience was ultimately predicated upon a greater call for obedience to God found in Acts 5:29 and all were equally bound by it.

Christopher Goodman's *How superior powers ought to be obeyd* (1558) followed a similar path. Like Ponet he too subscribed to Bucer and Beza's governmental structure in which God had afforded the inferior magistrates not only a custodial duty to protect the people but also to promote His will.¹⁵⁰ Thus, any superior power, emperor, king or prince, failing in their duty to live by the example of Christ and His Apostles could be disobeyed. This notion was conceived by qualifying Paul's affirmation 'There is no power but of God' with the claim that by resisting tyrants, papists, idolaters and oppressors 'we do not resist Gods ordinaunce, but Satan.'¹⁵¹ He declared because Mary had restored the Antichrist and delivered the realm into the hands of Spain she was guilty of tyranny.¹⁵² But unlike Ponet he openly demanded Mary's deposition by asserting it was their obligation to disobey her ungodly tyranny and doing so was not disobedience to God 'which in his iudgment is not manifeste rebellion.'¹⁵³ The Pauline injunction, he contended, did not relinquish lesser magistrates from their obligations to their office. Rather, by not resisting tyranny, its true meaning was both neglected and their obedience to God forsaken.¹⁵⁴ Therefore, Goodman, like Ponet, insisted that all were bound by God's Law and even the superior power was subject to the sword of correction.

This understanding of Romans 13 leads us to what Skinner described as Goodman's 'most revolutionary political claim.'¹⁵⁵ Goodman contended that if the magistrates fail in their duty the people are without officers and in this case 'God geueth the sworde in to the peoples

¹⁴⁸ Reeves, *English Evangelicals*, p.151.

¹⁴⁹ Tyndale, *Obedience*, p.41.

¹⁵⁰ Christopher Goodman, *How superior powers ought to be obeyd of their subiects and wherein they may lawfully by Gods Worde be disobeyed and resisted. Wherin also is declared the cause of all this present miserie in England, and the onely way to remedy the same* (Geneua: By Iohn Crispin, M.D.LVIII. [1558]), STC 12020, p.51.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p.111.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, pp.99-100.

¹⁵³ Goodman, *How superior powers*, pp.85-6.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 37-8.

¹⁵⁵ Skinner, *Foundations II*, p. 235.

hande.¹⁵⁶ He arrived at this conclusion by way of Deuteronomy 13 and the example of Mattathias from the Book of Maccabees, from which Goodman believed that God will punish any idolater without any respect to person or rank.¹⁵⁷ Jane Dawson has asserted that Goodman's resolution 'made resistance a political and religious duty common to all members of the community irrespective of rank.'¹⁵⁸ However, for this notion to be true we must recognise that a Christian is bound by the primary obligation to God and confirmed by Acts 5:29. When this exegesis is understood in the context of Catholic England, it was clear Goodman had called upon the people to promote God's glory by resisting or even deposing Mary for her spiritual offences by restoring the Antichrist. For both Goodman and Ponet obedience to God surpassed all other concerns and ultimately this was a call for obedience, not resistance or rebellion.

Goodman's radical conclusion could only be reached by tackling head-on the great pillars of biblical support for passive resistance: Romans 13 and Acts 5:29. In doing so he followed a similar path to Bucer but Goodman's interpretation necessitated a robust reconfiguration of Acts 5:29 which was normally applied as a means to restrain temporal power.¹⁵⁹ This was a positive primary action of obedience rather than a negative one of resistance. Obedience to God must always be the starting point of all Christian life. This took precedence over all other duties and the commands of Romans 13 were understood to be utterly contingent. Moreover, Goodman reminds the reader that the context of Peter's declaration, 'We ought to obey God rather than men', was his refusal to obey the Sanhedrin's ungodly command to violate his 'vocation and charge geuen vnto them by their maister Christ, to preache his Gospell throughout all the worlde.' This defiance was important because if Peter had obeyed the ruler's ungodly commands 'the foundation of the Churche shuld haue ben shaken, and the whole assemble discouraged.'¹⁶⁰ The parallel with Marian England was palpable. Consequently this exegesis was not unlike that of Ponet. However, Goodman placed much greater emphasis upon re-employing a negative act of disobedience to magistrates, as a positive action of obedience to God as the superior of all powers. In doing so Goodman had dethroned Romans 13.

This radical interpretation was buttressed by Goodman advocating that Christians must not only adhere to a negative command but they should also perform the contrary action. It was not enough, argued Goodman, to simply follow a command such as thou shalt not kill, steal or

¹⁵⁶ Goodman, *How superior powers*, p. 185.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.182-3; p.77.

¹⁵⁸ Jane E.A. Dawson, 'The early career of Christopher Goodman and his place in the development of English protestant thought' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Durham, 1978), p.313.

¹⁵⁹ See Bucer's, *Commentary on Judges* (1554), *Explications of the Four Gospels* (1530), and *Dialogi oder Gesprech von der gemainsame* (1535).

¹⁶⁰ Goodman, *How superior powers*, pp.29-30.

bear false witness, the Christian must also adhere to the positive contrary commands to preserve life, to be charitable and speak truthfully.¹⁶¹ However, this concept was not unique because Chrysostom had also made similar use of the contrary. Additionally, Calvin thought the same: 'if this pleases God, the opposite displeases him; if this displeases, the opposite pleases him; if he commands this, he forbids the opposite; if he forbids this, he enjoins the opposite.' In this respect, Calvin suggested, each temporal command should be investigated and 'we must seek out its purpose, until we find what the Lawgiver testifies there to be pleasing or displeasing to himself.'¹⁶² This precept of the contrary is described by Dawson as 'a very simple and rather crude device to undermine the doctrine of non-resistance' which permitted the inferior magistrate to 'bypass the text of Romans 13 rather than deny it.'¹⁶³ Dawson's analysis underplayed the fundamental tenet of obedience because disobeying the ungodly commands of the temporal ruler showed true obedience to God the most superior power: only God was truly sovereign.

Goodman had not denied Paul's assertion that God's ordained magistrates should be obeyed but he presumed that ungodly magistrates were not afforded this honour. Possessing political power was no guarantee of divine ordinance because God's sanction was only secured by ruling in accordance with His will. This was a problem of evil and wicked acts nullified any right to rule.¹⁶⁴ This was clearly expressed in the marginal annotation: 'To obey a wicked Prince *in his wickedness* is plaine disobedience to God.'¹⁶⁵ Goodman insisted Paul would never have urged obedience to ungodly rulers because this, in turn, commanded obedience to Satan.¹⁶⁶ Consequently, Knox's ferocious attack upon Mary's rule, *The First Blast*, should also be considered in this context. Knox had already condemned female rule by insisting 'that the vsurped gouvernement of an affeccionate woman is a rage without reason.'¹⁶⁷ In this rejection of female rule he was not exceptional, and such views are not without biblical precedent.¹⁶⁸ Indeed,

¹⁶¹ Goodman, *How superior powers*, p.70.

¹⁶² Calvin, *Institutes* 1559, p.375.

¹⁶³ Jane E.A. Dawson, 'Resistance and Revolution in Sixteenth-Century Thought: The Case of Christopher Goodman', in *Church, Change and Revolution: Transactions of the Fourth Anglo-Dutch Church History Colloquium (Exeter, 30 August-3 September, 1988)*, eds. by J. Van Den Berg and P.G. Hoftijzer (Leiden: Brill, 1991), pp.69-79 (pp.72-4).

¹⁶⁴ Goodman, *How superior powers*, p.110; p.140.

¹⁶⁵ My emphasis.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p.60; p.110.

¹⁶⁷ John Knox, *A faythfull admonition made by Iohn Knox, vnto the professours of Gods truthe in England* (Kalykow [i.e. Emden]: Egidius van der Erve, 1554), STC 15069, sig. E4v.

¹⁶⁸ Most notably: I Timothy 2:12, Colossians 3:7 and 18, I Peter 3:1, I Corinthians 14:34-35 and Ephesians 5:23. However, Knox's views were not shared by the English parliament which declared that Mary's sex did not prohibit her from legitimately inheriting the 'Imperial Crown of the Realme' by way of primogeniture. See 'An Act declaring that the Regall Power of this Realme is in the Quenes Majesty', in *The Statutes of the Realm. Printed by Command of his Majesty King George the Third. In Pursuance of an Address of the House of Commons of Great Britain*, Volume Four, Part I (London: Printed by George Eyre and Andrew Strahan, 1810-28), pp.222-6 (p.222). For a consideration of Knox's attitude towards women

John Fortescue had previously expressed a similar sentiment by stating 'no woman ought soueranyly or supremely to reygne vpon man.'¹⁶⁹ More recently both Lancelot Ridley and Becon had also voiced their disapproval of the subjection of men to women.¹⁷⁰ As we have seen, Knox had raised this troublesome matter with Bullinger and Calvin four years earlier, and their responses affirmed that female rule was 'at variance with the legitimate order of nature.'¹⁷¹

In *The First Blast* Knox openly declared that female rule was a subversion of God's order and, in a much more revolutionary statement, he called for Mary to be deposed.¹⁷² He demanded Englishmen to refuse to serve in the government of a traitor and urged them to resist and repress 'her inordinate pride and tyrannie to the vttermost of their power.' Any person, he argued, that held power 'by vsurpation, violence, or tyrannie' must be removed.¹⁷³ Like Goodman, he believed the ideal vision of government was found in Deuteronomy 17. He contended that God had stated kings and chief magistrates must know His will, be instructed in His Law, and promote His glory as found in the first table of the Decalogue. However, the 'royall seate' belonged to a man alone and Knox petitioned Englishmen to reject Mary's rule because it was repugnant to God's wisdom.¹⁷⁴ This argument was difficult to ignore because Mary was bound by her gender and Knox's words possessed a non-confessional appeal to anyone that felt her sex excluded her from rule.¹⁷⁵ Knox's radical call for Mary's deposition was not a simple case of misogyny because he sincerely believed it was God's expressed wish that a man alone was 'his ministre and lieutenant' and that he should be elected of the people.¹⁷⁶ The elected magistrate must observe the Pauline duty to wield the sword to maintain virtue and punish sin. This obligation to administer the sword entailed not only redressing the maleficence which

see Susan M. Felch. 'The Rhetoric of Biblical Authority: John Knox and the Question of Women', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 26:4 (Winter, 1995), pp. 805-22.

¹⁶⁹ John Fortescue, 'The Declaration...upon certain wrytinges sent oute of Scotteland, ayenst the Kinges title to the roialme of England', in *The Works of Sir John Fortescue, Knight, Chief Justice of England and Lord Chancellor to King Henry the Sixth*, Collected and Arranged by Thomas (Fortescue) Lord Clermont (London: Printed for Private Distribution, 1869), pp.523-41 (p.533).

¹⁷⁰ Lancelot Ridley, *A commentary in Englyshe vpon Sayncte Paules Epystle to the Ephesyans* (London: By Robert Redman, 1540), STC 21038, sigs. L6r-M4r; L8r-L8v; M1r-M1v. Thomas Becon, *An humble supplicacion vnto God* (Strasburgh in Elsas [i.e. Wesel?]: By J. Lambrecht?, 1554), STC 1730, sig. A7r.

¹⁷¹ Calvin 'to Bullinger, 1554', p.38. Also see above.

¹⁷² Calvin would distance himself from Knox's book and later claimed, in a letter to William Cecil, that he had 'testified in the most unequivocal manner that the public was not to be familiarized with paradoxes of that kind.' See John Calvin, 'to William Cecil. Geneva, May 1559', in *Letters of John Calvin*, Vol IV, pp.46-8 (p.47).

¹⁷³ John Knox. *The first blast of the trumpet against the monstrous regiment of women* (Printed in Geneva: By J. Poullain and A. Rebul, 1558). STC 15070, sig. G3r; sigs. G4v-G5r.

¹⁷⁴ Knox, *The first blast*, sigs. E1v-E3r.

¹⁷⁵ Jane Dawson, *John Knox* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2015), p.143.

¹⁷⁶ Knox, *The first blast*, sigs. E1v-E2r.

troubled the commonwealth's tranquillity, such as theft or murder, but also those offences with impugned God's glory, like idolatry and teaching heresy.¹⁷⁷

Throughout *The First Blast* Knox never once directly tackled Romans 13. What makes Knox's silence on the Pauline verses almost deafening is that they were central in his thought concerning obedience in two other 1558 tracts, *The Appellation to the Nobility and Estates of Scotland* and *The Letter to the Commonality*.¹⁷⁸ Furthermore, Romans 13 was afforded a substantial treatment in his later sermon delivered to the General Assembly in Scotland in June 1564. The debate with William Maitland that followed demonstrated Knox's sharp distinction between the office and the ruler which, stated Jane Dawson, 'finally broke the link between God's ordinance and the mere possession of political power.'¹⁷⁹ Amanda Shephard has claimed there is an inconsistency in Knox's understanding of Mary's regiment being a punishment of God and his 'acceptance of her rule as disobedience to God's will.'¹⁸⁰ However, these positions are entirely reconcilable with Romans 13. The position Knox had now adopted was the result of a careful navigation between the advice Bullinger, Calvin, and Viret had offered him in 1554. What Knox had come to observe is that while Mary was behaving like a tyrant, she was not a tyrant, but something categorically different and much more odious to God: an idolatrous female sovereign.

What Knox had now recognised, after four years of contemplation, was a sharp distinction between female rule and tyranny. Tyrants, as both Bullinger and Calvin had confirmed, may be perceived to be instruments of divine wrath and in this way they are, as Romans 13 stated, ministers of God. However, Knox insisted that female rule must never be sanctioned in any form because it openly violated God's revealed natural order. Therefore, Knox understood that this inversion could not ever be divinely sanctioned because female rule was an unnatural usurpation of the royal seat ordained of God, and, as a consequence, Mary's queenship could not ever be perceived as an instrument of God's fury. He had deviated from both Bullinger and Calvin in that he had rejected the idea that a female sovereign could be raised up by God and should be tolerated. The example of illustrious female rule provided by Bullinger and Calvin, that of Deborah, was considered by Knox to be an appointment by an ignorant

¹⁷⁷ Knox, *The first blast*, sigs. E3r-E3v. Also see here Knox's 'Summary of the Second Blast', in *John Knox: On Rebellion*, ed. Roger A. Mason (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp.128-9.

¹⁷⁸ Knox inserted verses 1-4 purposely into *The Appellation* to affirm that legitimate power extended beyond the prince. See 'The Appellation to the Nobility and Estates of Scotland', in *John Knox: On Rebellion*, ed. Roger A. Mason (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp.72-114 (pp.84-5).

¹⁷⁹ John Knox, 'The History of the Reformation in Scotland', in *The Works of John Knox*, Vol. II, collected and ed. by David Laing (Edinburgh: The Wodrow Society, 1847) pp.435-55. Jane E.A. Dawson, 'Trumpeting Resistance: Christopher Goodman and John Knox,' in *John Knox and the British Reformations*, ed. by Roger A. Mason (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), pp.131-53 (p.140).

¹⁸⁰ Amanda Shephard, *Gender and Authority in Sixteenth Century England: The Knox Debate* (Keele: Ryburn, 1994), p.53.

multitude, and not by God. Such foolishness, he declared, was not 'able to iustifie that whiche God so plainlie hath codemned.'¹⁸¹

Knox had made a clear distinction between the 'monstrous regiment of women' and a tyrannical king that derived his legal status from God to punish the people for their sinfulness. Therefore it is in this context that Knox's silence on the precepts of Romans 13 should be understood. By calling upon Englishmen to resist Mary, Knox was not in contravention of Romans 13 because Paul's commands were simply not germane. Mary's rule was a monstrous subversion of God's clearly defined natural order, and unlike tyranny this usurpation must be opposed. In this way Knox was entirely consistent by asserting, in *The Appellation*, that it was the duty of both 'His Lietenants' and the people to repress those which subvert the true faith wherever this occurs 'unless they will provoke the wrath of God against themselves.'¹⁸² Indeed, God had commanded that kings must be obeyed but obedience was contingent upon the ruler's godliness and those which have opposed their wicked commands have been 'greatly rewarded.'¹⁸³

The ink used to print *The First Blast* had barely dried when Mary Tudor died on 17 November 1558 and her successor, Elizabeth I, was well aware of Knox and Goodman's subversive attestations.¹⁸⁴ Knox's opponents circled and blasted trumpets of their own. Laurence Humphrey's *De religionis* (1559) denounced both Knox and Goodman's views on female rule but he did subscribe to Calvin's understanding of the ephors' legitimate right to remove tyrants.¹⁸⁵ John Aylmer's *An Harborowe for Faithfull and Trewe Subjectes* (1559) appealed to Romans 13 to repudiate Knox by insisting that subjects must obey their magistrates. However, he crucially added that Paul had placed no limit upon rulers nor altered any policy, or meddled with democracies, aristocracies or monarchies. Moreover, the Apostle had not prescribed whether the young or old, the rich or poor, the learned or unlearned, or if a man or

¹⁸¹ Knox, *The first blast*, sigs.G6r.

¹⁸² Knox, '*The Appellation*' p.104. Dawson has warned against the tendency of reading Knox's 1558 works 'as a unified whole' because doing so will distort their meaning and she asserts 'it is extremely important to separate them and to make a sharp distinction between their intended audiences and purposes.' However, Knox himself in *An Epistle to the Inhabitants of Newcastle and Berwick* (1558) openly encourages his English readers to consult *The Appellation to the Nobility and Estates of Scotland* and his earlier *A faythfull admonition*. Thus, Knox must have understood, if not intended his readership to be wider than those whom he was immediately addressing. See Jane E. A. Dawson, 'The Two John Knoxes: England, Scotland and the 1558 Tracts', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 42:4 (Oct., 1991), pp.555-76 (p.555) and John Knox, '*An Epistle to the Inhabitants of Newcastle and Berwick*', in *The Works of John Knox*, Vol. V, ed. David Laing (Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter, 1856), pp.473-94 (p.494).

¹⁸³ Knox, '*The Appellation*', p.95.

¹⁸⁴ Jane E.A. Dawson, 'Knox, Goodman and the "Example" of Geneva', in *The Reception of Continental Reformation in Britain*, eds. Polly Ha and Patrick Collinson (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the British Academy, 2010), pp.107-35 (pp.108-9).

¹⁸⁵ Reeves, *English Evangelicals*, pp.180-2.

woman should reign.¹⁸⁶ Consequently, for both Humphrey and Aylmer the Queen was the Supreme Head but not in an absolutist sense because she was bridled by 'mixed monarchy.'¹⁸⁷ Another opponent was Richard Bertie, the second husband of Katherine, the Duchess Dowager of Suffolk, who had been a close friend of William Cecil and, according to Foxe, someone who had keenly insulted Gardiner.¹⁸⁸ Katherine's purse was committed to the evangelical cause and Susan Wabuda has discovered that 'Over a dozen books carried her coat of arms or were dedicated to her, including the *Paraphrases* of Erasmus and biblical translations by Tyndale.'¹⁸⁹

However, Bertie was not seeking to enter the realm of public polemic. The treatise appears to be written at the behest of someone within Duchess' inner circle who had asked Bertie to 'note the weakest (as I thought) places in the authours worke.'¹⁹⁰ Nevertheless, he questioned Knox's sincerity and was puzzled as to why he did not object to the government of Lady Jane Grey if he believed women to be so 'vtterly incapeable.'¹⁹¹ According to Robert Lee Harkins Bertie considered 'Knox's argument against female rule was little more than a convenient lie—a transparent pretense (sic) that Knox himself did not truly believe.'¹⁹² Consequently, Bertie promoted a Platonic model of government which ensured the realm was governed by the best possible regime by elevating a ruler that possessed the required 'gifts', rather than prohibiting an heir to the throne due to their sex. Therefore, it was preferential for a women to sit upon the throne than a man who was a 'lunatike, a fole, an unthrift, or a childe.'¹⁹³ Bertie insisted Knox had misrepresented Deuteronomy 17 and contended that this presented only an example of how rulers could ascend to the throne: those being election, succession 'or by testament of another.'¹⁹⁴ The 'speaciall exceptions' that God had provided to kingly dignity were particular to the Israelites and it was following the expansion of their dominions that contention and violence spread, and 'corruption vsurped the place of free election.'¹⁹⁵

¹⁸⁶ John Aylmer, *An Harborowe for Faithfull and Trewe Subjectes, Agaynst the Late Blowne Blaste, Concerninge the Government of Wemen* (Strasborowe [i.e. London]: John Day, 1559), STC 1005, sig. G2r.

¹⁸⁷ A.N. McLaren, *Political Culture in the Reign of Elizabeth I: Queen and Commonwealth, 1558-1585* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p.59-69 and 120-6.

¹⁸⁸ Foxe, *TAMO* (1570), p.2323.

¹⁸⁹ Susan Wabuda, 'Bertie, Katherine, duchess of Suffolk (1519–1580)', *ODNB*, [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/wam.leeds.ac.uk/view/article/2273>, accessed 20 July 2016].

¹⁹⁰ British Library Additional MS 48043, fols. 1r-10r (fol. 1r).

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, fol. 3r.

¹⁹² Robert Lee Harkins, 'The Dilemma of Obedience: Persecution, Dissimulation, and Memory in Early Modern England, 1553-1603' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 2013), p.98.

¹⁹³ BL Add. MS 48043, fol. 5r.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, fols. 5r-6r.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, fols. 6r-6v. Bertie believed these exceptions are outlined in Deuteronomy 17:14-19. They include instructions such as kings must be appointed from their brethren, they must take only one wife, not seek to enlarge their own wealth and they must read and study the law.

Subsequently, Richard Bertie insisted, primogeniture and testament were implanted as legitimate models of government. He contended that in the 'firste monarchie amonge the Chaldees, it was no monstre [for] a woman to reigne.' He contended that God's prophets had warned that the appointment of women or children as governors was punishment for sinfulness.¹⁹⁶ These rulers were imperfect but they were nonetheless legitimate because, as Romans 13 had revealed, they were ministers of God and those that resist will receive damnation. However, Bertie differed from the established model of obedience in that he suggested two ways in which Christians would be delivered from oppression: firstly, subjects should amend themselves and God would, in turn, amend their magistrate; and secondly, for elected rulers the remedy was the same 'ciuile meane, whiche erected him.'¹⁹⁷ The latter was not a call for active resistance because he maintained that Christians cannot rise against or slay their magistrate, whether good or evil, that rules by His ordination. This was a sophisticated refutation of Knox that was firmly rooted in Scripture. The silence of Knox's *The First Blast* on the precepts of Romans 13 and his ill-reading of Deuteronomy provided Bertie with the ammunition he needed to condemn what he believed to Knox's spurious fury at the regiment of women.

Conclusion

It is impossible to discuss the Christian's obligation to obedience during the reign of Mary Tudor without considering the significant contributions of Ponet, Goodman and Knox. However, these three incendiary tracts do not reflect the wider evangelical sentiment. In the immediate aftermath of Edward's death ardent evangelicals like John Bradford did not challenge the notion that Mary had been chosen to rule by God's providence. The evangelicals remained committed to the doctrine of passive disobedience, even though they believed England again was under the tyranny of the Antichrist. But disobedience did not necessarily entail active resistance. The policy was intrinsically Pauline, and demanded that all magistrates, whether good or evil, should be obeyed and the faithful must avoid all tumult, rebellion or resistance. Moreover, it did not advocate nicodemism or quietism, because the darkness of popery and idolatry always had to be refuted and the pure Word of God served. Therefore obedience should always be rendered unless Mary commanded anything contrary to Scripture. In such cases the Christian was obliged to disobey, and commit the matter to God where vengeance belonged. In doing so, the Christian would ultimately be rewarded. As a consequence, the evangelicals made great capital out of the perceived hypocrisy of English clerics for their ready acceptance of the popish traditions that

¹⁹⁶ BL Add. MS 48043, fols. 6v-7r.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, fol. 7v.

had been rejected under Edward. The contempt for the laws and divine authority of their lost king shown would procure damnation.

The policy of non-resistance was greatly facilitated by the fact that the new Catholic regime initially took an irenic approach to religion, and in doing so it made a concerted effort to emphasise the unity of the Catholic Church. Pole stressed the need for England to reconcile with the Roman See for salvation's sake, and as such there was no papal appetite for recrimination. The message being sent to Mary's subjects was clear: the realm could now enjoy the beautiful harmony of unity with the universal congregation, and no longer suffer the cacophony of division and heresy. The matter of papal supremacy, after twenty years of schism, was deftly handled, and some, like John Standish, believed that obedience to the pope was a means of securing this unity rather than a sacred purpose in itself. During the early years of Mary's reign Catholic writers were noticeably reluctant to stumble onto matters of controversy, and this is particularly discernible in their lack of engagement with Romans 13. The few that did tackle Romans 13 exegesis were careful not to bind the spiritual under the temporal, and they insisted that Christians must obey both authorities.

However, the marriage of Mary to Philip II of Spain provoked a significant crisis of conscience. Wyatt's Rebellion, while predominantly inspired by a patriotic anxiety over the Spanish Match, could not conceivably be disentangled from religious concerns. The Queen declared that the rebels' purported concern over her marriage was nothing but a cloak to conceal their true religious motivation. She demanded her subjects to respect their promise of allegiance to God's anointed. The regime responded to the rebels in a language and tone that was indistinguishable from that employed under Henry and Edward. Christopherson condemned the rebels and demanded obedience in unmistakably Lutheran terms. Despite his conservatism, Christopherson, as a Cambridge graduate, would have been familiar with Lutheran theology. It is certainly conceivable that his response was pragmatic enough to recognise that true wisdom had its origin in God, and that it is possible to honour that truth no matter where it is found. This strict reading of Romans 13 would have ruffled few feathers. Others were more strident in their condemnation of the rebels, and they explicitly connected their dissent with a desire to preserve a false faith. The author of this malicious contempt for their magistrates was Satan not God, and as a result the traitorous rebels were always doomed to failure.

The marriage of Mary and Philip aroused indignation and xenophobia, and many close to the government had at least some kind of crisis of conscience at the prospect of a foreign king. Despite the marriage treaty firmly shielding the throne from any lasting Spanish privilege, fears were not suppressed. The determined repeal of the heresy laws and the persecution of conscientious opponents to Catholicism provoked only horror and condemnation from the

evangelical community. Nevertheless, many religious exiles continued to call upon their brethren in England to endure Mary's misuse of the sword provided to her in Romans 13. But others, such as Knox and the author of the anonymous *Certayne questions demaunded and asked by the noble realme of Englande*, began to openly question whether subjugation to a foreign prince and the imposition of popery were legitimate reasons to consider Mary's deposition. The climate was changing, and the obedience doctrine would be radically reconfigured.

The evangelicals had always sought the authoritative counsel of continental theologians, but the conclusions concerning obedience reached by Ponet, Goodman and Knox would now far out-strip those embraced by Calvin, Bullinger and Vermigli. This change in mood amongst the evangelicals was provoked by the determined repeal of the laws that mandated burning as a penalty for heresy, as much as it was the wider disillusionment of the death of Edward and the accession of a Catholic monarch. Central to these doctrines of obedience was Peter's command to obey God rather than men. Irrefutably, Acts 5:29 was never believed to be ambiguous in its command to disobey the wicked commands of the civil powers. However, Ponet and Goodman powerfully emphasised that this was the prerequisite positive primary action concerning obedience. The origin of civil power proceeded from God, as Romans 13 confirmed, but the people determined the manner in which this authority was implemented. Ponet stressed that the authority to make and execute law was conditional upon compliance with Scripture and likewise good and just laws would always adhere to God's higher law.

Temporal authority was intrinsic to God's natural hierarchy, but kings, princes, and magistrates were subservient to their function, and it was their duty to ensure their subjects were nourished by Christ's doctrine. Ponet and Goodman, believed that Mary and her magistrates were ruling like ungodly tyrants, and in doing so they had failed in their divinely prescribed custodial duty. Tyranny could not reign in a truly godly realm. As a consequence, Goodman insisted that Mary must be reprov'd or even deposed. This was not to be achieved by violent insurrection, but by the already existent, and legitimate, means of government: the lesser magistracy. This was an exegesis of Romans 13 that sought not to destroy but to defend and preserve.

Ponet and Goodman had rejected the notion of unconditional kingly sovereignty, and likewise the doctrine of Royal Supremacy. However, this was not a rejection of the precepts of Romans 13, only the recognition that in opposing an idolater who violated divine law, the people were exercising their ordained power to execute wrath upon the evildoer. As Goodman clearly noted, God had placed the sword into the people's hands. The purpose of the sword was not only to punish those that contravened earthly injunctions, but also the transgressors of God's Law. As a consequence neither Ponet nor Goodman had articulated a theory of resistance

because firstly, the people were sovereign, and secondly, this demand for disobedience was predicated upon a greater call for obedience to God. The authority of the higher power, and the duty of Christians to obey them outlined in Romans 13, was conditional upon righteous rule, and therefore the ungodly should not be afforded this honour. The civil magistrate had an obligation to serve God and those who failed should be removed.

Refusing to obey the wicked commands of a prince and showing obedience to God is not radical resistance theory. In fact, every Christian would accept that obedience to God was fundamental. Nevertheless, the exiled evangelicals had weakened the pillar of passive resistance and dethroned Romans 13 as the positive primary action concerning obedience to civil authority. It appeared to be self-evident to Ponet and Goodman that God would never have urged obedience to impious rulers, because this essentially represented obedience to Satan. However, Knox provided a more distinctive understanding of Romans 13. He recognised that the rule of Mary was far worse than tyranny, because it was a regiment that openly violated God's revealed natural order. He accepted the notion of tyrants being an instrument of divine fury, but female rule was utterly repugnant to God's wisdom, and therefore an inversion of the divinely ordained royal seat. Therefore, female rulers could never fulfil the function of being a minister of God to execute wrath upon evil doers. This was a clear distinction between unnatural female rule and tyrants that derived their legal status from God to punish the people for their sinfulness. Therefore, Knox's call for Englishmen to disobey Mary was not a contravention of the precepts of Romans 13, because the commands were not germane.

Nevertheless, these radical views concerning obedience were not universally accepted, and Knox in particular would be fiercely repudiated by leading English evangelicals. Humphrey's denounced Knox for his views on female rule, but he subscribed to Calvin's understanding of ephoral power as a legitimate means to remove tyrannical rulers. Aylmer reaffirmed the established doctrine of obedience by offering a strict reading of Romans 13 which had not placed any limit upon rulers. Both Humphrey and Aylmer believed that the Queen of England should rightfully be called the Supreme Head, albeit her power was bridled by the fact that the realm was a mixed monarchy. Bertie was more vociferous in his criticism and contended that Knox had revealed himself to be a hypocrite who had deliberately misread Scripture for his own convenience. Bertie insisted that the regiment of women was entirely legitimate because female rule was established as God's punishment for sinfulness. Therefore, Romans 13 revealed that even imperfect rulers were ministers of God, and those that resist would receive damnation.

What had emerged during the reign of Mary were two distinct readings of Romans 13. The first was upheld by both Catholics and evangelicals and understood that civil power, whether pious or impious, was of God and rulers must always be obeyed unless they commanded something contrary to Scripture. The second, offered by a minority of exiled

evangelicals, explicitly dethroned Romans 13 in order to recognise that the command to obey God rather than men must always be the prerequisite positive primary action, and consequently impious civil authority should be disobeyed, and unseated. The commands of Acts 5:29 were a not a limitation placed upon Christian obedience, they were the embodiment of Christian obedience. Moreover, the second interpretation maintained the distinction between the office and the individual. The difference between the two readings are subtle but significant. The difference between resistance and passive disobedience should not be conflated.

What was radical about the understanding of obedience offered by Ponet, Goodman, and Knox was not the centrality of obedience to God, but their utter rejection of impious rule. This was an exegesis of Scripture that was born out of a sincere need to obey God, and not the result of men searching for a means to resist civil power. As Romans 13 clearly states: rulers are ministers of God ordained not to be terror for good works but to evil. Moreover, rulers must execute wrath upon those that do evil, and protect the good. Romans 13 demanded obedience not resistance, and in this way it reinforced the principal premise of Christian obedience found in Acts 5:29. Ponet, Goodman, and Knox had not constructed artful theories of resistance, because what they articulated in their interpretations of Acts 5:29 and Romans 13 were in their very essence doctrines of obedience.

Chapter 7: A Challenge from Within (1558-1603)

Introduction

Following the loss of both Mary and Archbishop Pole on 17 November 1558, there was enough discontent within the nation for Elizabeth's new administration to exploit. Mary's critics lamented her 'wicked' government which defaced 'her Princely title' for bringing forth the reign of a foreign king and restoration of papal tyranny.¹ Nevertheless, the blame for these 'abuses' were not entirely laid at the Queen's door. Mary's spiritual counsel was universally condemned but Gardiner was singly reproached for seizing the opportunity 'to reign and rule over lords, & triumph like a tyrant.'² Lawyer Richard Goodrich urged Elizabeth to make cautious preparations before announcing schism. He advised that Mary's principal prelates and councillors should be restrained and their armoury and horses pre-emptively seized. Goodrich's blueprint for reform recognised that being too radical or moving too fast too soon would endanger the commonwealth by provoking disgruntled ranking Catholics.³ Nevertheless, English subjects were once again instructed that a wicked ruler had been the instrument of God's wrath, sent to punish them for their sinfulness. England must repent for the wickedness of her recent past. The response to the re-imposition of Protestantism was a mix of ambivalence, delight, and repulsion, conformity and intransigence. Elizabeth's government, under the watchful eye of William Cecil, was assembled swiftly but a considerable amount of uncertainty remained.

England's Protestants were by no means united, but they were united enough to recognise the difference between an imperfect friend and the enemy. Additionally, they envisioned themselves as standing shoulder-to-shoulder with their continental brethren in the fight against a renascent Rome. This unity against the true enemy muted initial anxiety over the direction of religious reform, a journey which was considered to be a work-in-progress rather than a fixed settlement. But soon what was perceived by some to be the temporary compromise in religion was understood to be unchangeable and Elizabeth's stubbornness antagonised a minority whose conscience compelled them to appeal for further reformation of the Church. This discontent unleashed a persistent challenge from within, and non-conformists demanded a change to the structure of the English Church. This was an unsettled religious settlement because not all supported Elizabeth's supremacy within the Church. Archbishop Heath

¹ *A speciall grace, appointed to have been said after a banquet at Yorke, vpo[n] the good nues and Proclamacion thear, of the entraunce in to reign ouer vs, of Our Soueraign Lady Elizabeth* (London: Ihon Kyngston, for Nicholas England, 1558), STC 7599, sig. E5v.

² *Ibid.*, sigs. C2r-C2v.

³ See Norman Jones, *Faith by Statute: Parliament and the Settlement of Religion 1559* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1982), pp.20-5.

concluded before Parliament that according to the Gospel a woman could not be an Apostle, preach or be a shepherd: 'Therefore, she can not be suprem head of Christe's mylitant Church, nor yet anie parte therof.'⁴ But the real challenge came from another source and one which had its antecedence in the exile Church in Geneva. Elizabeth would face a prolonged and bitter challenge from within as Protestants began to vigorously deny the civil magistrate's supremacy over the Church. English Protestants and their continental brethren now scrutinised the fundamental assumptions concerning the nature of government and in doing so Romans 13 was once again thrust front and centre.

Adiaphora

A driving force of internal pressure found its antecedence in the Marian exile congregations. Of especial concern were matters of liturgy, doctrine or morality which were defined as *adiaphora* or 'things indifferent.'⁵ *Adiaphora* nestled in fertile ground between divine and human law. In fact the most straightforward definition, and one that reflected the position of the Henrician, Edwardian and Elizabethan regimes, can be found in the *Formula of Concord* (1577) which confessed *adiaphora* to be 'ceremonies or church usages which are neither commanded nor forbidden in the Word of God, but which have been introduced solely for the sake of good order and the general welfare.'⁶ The rejection of Catholic practices by the reformers created a fiercely contested theological battleground. The conflict over *adiaphora* was far from being a peripheral squabble; it was central to the thought of English reformers.⁷ Following England's break with Rome Robert Barnes had defined *adiaphora* as a matter of conscience and he argued that if a ruler sought to bind Christians in these matters as 'a thyng of necessite, than shalle we not do it, not bi cause it is eville to do, but that it is damnable to be done as a thyng of necessite.'⁸ According to Korey D. Maas, Barnes was entirely in tune with the judgment concerning *adiaphora* expressed in the Wittenberg Articles (1536). The Lutherans had maintained liberty

⁴ '[House of Lords] Archbishop Heath's speech on the supremacy bill, 18 March (?)', in *Proceedings in the Parliaments of Elizabeth I*, Volume I 1558-1581, ed. by T.E. Hartley (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1982), pp.12-7 (p.17). [Hereafter PPE].

⁵ Of particular importance are Romans 14 and I Corinthians 10.

⁶ 'Formula of Concord', in *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, trans. and ed. by Theodore G. Tappert (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), pp.463-636 (p.493).

⁷ See Bernard J. Verkamp. *The Indifferent Mean: Adiaphorism in the English Reformation to 1554* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1977).

⁸ Barnes, *A supplicatyon*, Sig. Q2r. There is a suggestion that Barnes shifted his position on *adiaphora* and liberty following Henry's spiritual supremacy because these comments were removed from the 1534 edition of the *A supplication*. See W.D.J. Cargill Thompson, 'The Sixteenth-Century Editions of "A Supplication unto King Henry the Eighth by Robert Barnes, D.D.: A footnote to the History of the Royal Supremacy"', *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society*, 3:2 (1960), pp.133-42 (p.140) and William A. Clebsch, *England's Earliest Protestants 1520-1535* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1964), p.64.

and conscience of the Christian by declaring that indifferent things should be observed, although they were not necessary for salvation.⁹

The right of rulers to define adiaphoric matters had previously been recognised by Melanchthon in his *Loci communes* (1521). Melanchthon had concluded that because human laws were managed by faith, love and principally necessity, the latter liberated Christians from all traditions that placed their soul and body in danger. Human tradition did not, he insisted, oblige the Christian in cases of necessity, and any that obscured the faith and gave occasion to sin should be transgressed. Any tradition that did not trouble the conscience, however, must be obeyed.¹⁰ Furthermore, the Augsburg Confession stated: 'It was not necessary for true unity of the Christian church that ceremonies, instituted by men, should be observed uniformly in all places.'¹¹ This formulation was used by Thomas Starkey who, while presenting a religious case for civil obedience following the executions of Fisher and More, defined things indifferent as the prerogative of the worldly authority. And compliance to the commands of the temporal power, as Romans 13 clearly stated, was binding under pain of damnation.¹²

Starkey recognised that Scripture placed a limit upon the worldly power's jurisdiction over the ecclesiastical sphere. Indeed, as Acts 5:29 decreed rulers, cannot command obedience in matters contrary to God's law.¹³ Fealty to God was not adiaphoric and faith must always guide both spiritual and temporal life. Starkey did not advocate quietism, but rather he sought to relieve any pricks to the conscience caused by the King's laws that, while not precisely contravening Scripture, may potentially agitate unrest.¹⁴ Things indifferent were further entwined with temporal obedience by William Marshall's *Godly Primer* (1534) and Cromwell's 1538 Injunctions that insisted only the king was permitted to alter the 'divine service.'¹⁵ The Royal Supremacy granted Henry VIII discretion over *adiaphora* and this included not only ceremonies 'but all *doctrinal* issues except the few necessary and indisputable rules of the *philosophia Christi*.'¹⁶ However, the Christian's conscience was particularly burdened when

⁹ Korey D. Maas, *The Reformation and Robert Barnes: History, Theology and Polemic in Early Modern England* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2010), pp.62-4. 'The Wittenberg Articles, 1536', in *Documents of the English Reformation*, ed. Gerald Bray (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co., 1994), pp.118-61 (p.142).

¹⁰ Melanchthon, *Communes 1521*, pp.189-91.

¹¹ 'The Augsburg Confession', p.32.

¹² Thomas Starkey, *An exhortation to the people, instructyng them to Unitie and Obedience* (Londini: Thomae Bertheleti, 1536), STC 23236, sigs. B2v-B3v.

¹³ *Ibid.*, sigs. B4v-C1r.

¹⁴ Eppley, *Defending Royal Supremacy*.50.

¹⁵ William Marshall, 'A Godly Primer', in *Three Primers put forth in the Reign of Henry VIII* (Oxford: The University Press, 1848), pp.1-300 (p.72). 'The Second Royal Injunctions of Henry VIII, A.D. 1538', in *Documents Illustrative of English Church History*, eds. by Henry Gee and William John Hardy (London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1921), pp.275-81 (p.280). William Underwood, 'Thomas Cromwell and William Marshall's Protestant Books', *The Historical Journal*, 47:3 (Sept., 2004), pp.517-39.

¹⁶ Ethan H. Shagan, *The Rule of Moderation: Violence, Religion and the Politics of Restraint in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p.83.

princely decrees appeared to infringe upon liberty and *adiaphora* brought civil obedience into sharper focus.

Adiaphora extended over both the beliefs and the actions of the Christian and the *Bishops' Book* had sought to define 'outward ceremonies' as indifferent.¹⁷ Furthermore, in 1548 Somerset, on behalf of Edward VI, wrote to condemn any licenced preachers who believed it was the duty of a private man to alter ceremonies or engage in innovation concerning church orders. Neither was it the preacher's duty to bring into contempt or hatred the things the prince 'doth either allow, or is content to suffer.'¹⁸ This interpretation was challenged in 1550 by John Hooper who argued that vestments, ornaments and ceremonies were the 'superstitious invention of man' and their retention demonstrated that the Devil sought to 'preserve a mixed and mingled religion.'¹⁹ His rejection of what he considered to be popish elements within the Oath of Supremacy and opposition to the Ordinal and vestments provoked a fierce response from Cranmer and Ridley.²⁰ Vermigli also failed to persuade Hooper to conform on the matter but he nevertheless 'left him sufficiently admonished...of the dangers which hung over him.'²¹

Hooper's thesis that *adiaphora* was the preserve of the conscience and not princely prerogative was declared rash by Ridley who asserted this interpretation threatened 'the subversion of all good and godly order.'²² Hooper eventually conceded but Catharine Davies contends that he was purposely challenging the boundaries of obedience. Her evidence is Hooper's 1549 assertion that superior powers ('Godes Vycars') should be disobeyed if they encouraged the transgression of Scripture. In doing so, rulers ceased to be 'oure fathers' and

¹⁷ The *Bishops' Book* defined *adiaphora* as matters 'neither commanded expressly in scripture, nor necessarily contained or implied therein, nor yet expressly repugnant or contrary thereunto.' See 'The Institution of a Christian Man', in *Formularies of Faith put forth by authority during the reign of Henry VIII*, ed. by Charles Lloyd (Oxford: University Press, 1856), pp.21-211 (pp.114-5).

¹⁸ Edward Seymour, 'A Letter sent to all those Preachers which the King's Majesty hath licensed to preach [1548]', in *Miscellaneous Writings and Letters of Thomas Cranmer*, ed. by John Edmund Cox for the Parker Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1846), pp.512-3 (p.512).

¹⁹ John Hooper, 'An Oversight and Deliberation upon the Holy Prophet Jonas', in *Early Writings of John Hooper, D.D. Lord Bishop of Gloucester and Worcester, Martyr, 1555*, ed. by Samuel Carr for the Parker Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1843), pp.431-558 (pp.435-6).

²⁰ See Jasper Godwin Ridley, *Nicholas Ridley: A Biography* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1957), pp.221-7, D.G. Newcumbe, *John Hooper: Tudor Bishop and Martyr (c.1495-1555)* (Oxford: Davenant Press, 2009), pp.145-64 and MacCulloch, *Cranmer: A Life*, pp.471-3.

²¹ Peter Martyr Vermigli, 'To Bucer, February 1551', in *Gleanings of a few Scattered Ears*, ed. by George Cornelius Gorham (London: Bell and Daldy, 1857), pp.231-3. Torrance Kirby, "'Relics of the Amorities" or "Things Indifferent"? Peter Martyr Vermigli's Authority and the Threat of Schism in the Elizabethan Vestiarian Controversy', *Reformation and Renaissance Review*, 6:3 (2004), pp.313-26.

²² Nicholas Ridley, 'Reply of Bishop Ridley to Bishop Hooper on the Vestment Controversy, 1550', in *The Writings of John Bradford*, Vol. II, ed. by Aubrey Townsend for the Parker Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1853), pp.375-95 (p.380).

became strangers, drawing Christians from obedience to God 'oure very father.'²³ Davies argued that although Hooper did not advocate rebellion 'he made resistance necessary' and his obstinacy was a precursor of Protestant resistance doctrines because he 'was exceptional in putting these principles into practise.'²⁴

However, Hooper's conscientious stance and limitation of princely power accorded with Acts 5:29. Certainly if pushed to extremes, Hooper's argument would arrive at the position that Collinson described as reducing 'to almost nothing the discretionary powers of the magistrate in matters of religion.'²⁵ But his opposition to the Ordinal was not a direct challenge to the Royal Supremacy because, as Reeves noted, Hooper 'had not argued that the oath was inherently wrong, only that its form was unbiblical...[and] that the Bible alone gave the king his authority.'²⁶ Hooper followed the path cut by Luther, Tyndale and Calvin that recognised because magistrates represented divine power they were rightly 'called gods' (Psalm 82:6). Furthermore, he concurred that the magistrate's laws may concern both civil and spiritual matters and although the former must be obeyed 'without exception' the latter must be measured against Acts 5:29.²⁷ Romans 13 was enough to keep good and true subjects in obedience and Paul's commands did not advocate resistance but rather instructed Christians to 'look upon the power and authority of the higher powers, and not upon their manners.'²⁸ Subsequently, the government sought to dampen any murmuring by declaring any disquiet over the prescribed traditions or ceremonies not only wounded the order of the Church and the conscience of 'weake brethren' but also the authority of the magistrate.²⁹ Although Hooper had violated kingly commands, he certainly did not believe he had violated the precepts of Romans 13 by acting upon his conscience.

The broad implications of *adiaphora* soon provoked bitter conflict within the exile community in Frankfurt.³⁰ Free from the mechanisms of the Royal Supremacy they sought the

²³ John Hooper, *A declaration of the ten holy cof[m]maundementes of allmygthye God wroten Exo. 20. Deu. 5. Collectyd out of the scripture canonicall*, by Joanne Hopper (Zurich: Augustin Fries, 1548, i.e. 1549?), STC 13746, sig. K4v.

²⁴ Davies, *A religion of the Word*, p.160.

²⁵ Patrick Collinson. *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1967), p.77 and Reeves, *English Evangelicals*, p.72.

²⁶ Reeves, *English Evangelicals*, p.122.

²⁷ Remarkably, Hooper immediately provides an exception: commands that are 'contrary to the law of nature.' An example of such was Pharaoh's command to kill all male children in Exodus 1:22.

²⁸ John Hooper, *A godly confession and protestacion of the christian faith* (London: Ihon Daye, 1550), STC 13757, sig. F4r. John Hooper, 'Godly and most necessary Annotations in the xiii Chapter too the Romaynes', in *Later Writings of Bishop Hooper together with his letters and other pieces*, ed. by C. Nevinson for the Parker Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1852), pp.94-116 (pp.102-3).

²⁹ *Articles agreed on by the bishoppes, and other learned menne in the Synode at London, in the yere of our Lorde Godde, M. D. LIII.* (London: Richardus Graftonus, 1553), STC 10034, sig. C2v.

³⁰ For recent accounts see Timothy Duguid, 'The 'Troubles' at Frankfurt: a new chronology', *Reformation & Renaissance Review*, 14:3 (2012), pp.243-68 and Karl Gunther, *Reformation Unbound: Protestant Visions of Reform in England, 1525-1590* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp.158-88.

advice of Calvin over what some considered to be 'unprofitable ceremonies' retained in the Edwardian Prayer Book.³¹ What emerged from the subsequent 'Troubles' was two competing visions of the Church. The first, espoused by Richard Cox and John Jewel, was more Erastian in persuasion, and the second, that of William Whittingham and Knox, was more internationalist with 'a theological ethos founded on the rock of primitive apostolic Christianity.'³² Consequently, some of the congregation migrated to Geneva where they established a church and, enthused by their host's religious discipline, they set aside the Prayer Book.³³ The exiles, with Anthony Gilby and Christopher Goodman as their ministers, composed a *Confession of Faith* (1556) which consciously diminished the magistrate's power within the Church. The *Confession* confirmed that Romans 13 had prescribed the 'political magistrate' with the custodial duty to defend against 'rascals' such as papists, Anabaptists and heretics who sought to draw people away from 'society of Christ's Church.' However, the exiles refused to recognise any magistrate as the supreme head or governor of the Church and acknowledged Christ 'the only Head thereof.'³⁴

The issue of *adiaphora* resurfaced following the return of the exiles and the enforcement of Elizabeth's Royal Supremacy along with the ambiguity over certain conservative articulations that remained in the 1559 Prayer Book.³⁵ The situation in England, with a monarch enshrined as Head of the Church by act of parliament, ensured that the terms of the debate were very different to those previously held by the exiles in Frankfurt.³⁶ The exiles' autonomy to preside over *adiaphora* was rejected outright by Elizabeth who, unsurprisingly, demanded to exercise the same ecclesiastical powers enjoyed by her father.³⁷ But the soon to return exiles gave fair warning of what they expected of a godly Queen in a dedicatory epistle to Elizabeth

³¹ Calvin had advised that the Prayer Book contained 'manye tollerable foolishe thinges' and lacked the desirable purity. William Whittingham [?], *A brieff discours off the troubles begonne at Franckford in Germany Anno Domini 1554* (Heidelberg: M. Schirat, 1574), STC 25442, p.XXXV; p.XXI.

³² Dan G. Danner, *Pilgrimage to Puritanism: History and Theology of the Marian Exiles at Geneva, 1555-1560* (New York: Peter Lang, 1999), p.21.

³³ The Genevan congregation published their order in 1556. See *The forme of prayers and ministracion of the sacraments, &c. vsed in the Englishe Congregation at Geneua and approued, by the famous and godly learned man, Iohn Caluyn.* (Geneua: By Iohn Crespin, 1556), STC 16561.

³⁴ 'The Confession of Faith Used in the English Congregation at Geneva, 1556', in *Reformed Confessions of the 16th Century*, ed. Arthur C. Cochrane (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1966), pp.131-6 (pp.135-6).

³⁵ A sense of Elizabeth's innate conservatism can be found in the Injunctions of 1559 which declared that clergy 'shall use and wear such seemly habits, garments, and such square caps' even though no meaning, holiness or 'special worthiness' such be attributed to them. See 'The Injunctions of Elizabeth, A.D. 1559', in *Documents Illustrative of English Church History*, eds. Henry Gee and William John Hardy (London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1921), pp.417-42 (p.432).

³⁶ Karl Gunther, *Reformation Unbound: Protestant Visions of Reform in England, 1525-1590* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), p.188.

³⁷ This was done, of course, under the title of Supreme Governor as opposed to Supreme Head of the Church.

which prefaced their complete and heavily annotated translation of the Bible.³⁸ The Geneva Bible, completed during 1555-1560, was much more than a translation of Scripture, it was a political text. The Queen's 'humble subjects' declared that she had been saved from 'the mouthe of the Lyons' by God's providence in order to complete the godly work of Edward VI. She must, like her brother, emulate the godly rulers Josiah, Hezekiah and Jehoshaphat who destroyed idols, slayed wicked priests and prophets, reformed their realms and established the Word of God.

The message contained in the Geneva Bible was clear; it was Elizabeth's duty to complete the process of godly reformation and build God's true temple.³⁹ The exiles seized the opportunity to outline their vision of a church structure that reflected their Deuteronomic reading of history and firmly confirmed God as the only 'chefe gouvernour of his Church.' What was necessary to govern the commonwealth successfully, stated the annotations of Joshua 1:7-8 and Genesis 20:9, was the continuous study of Scripture and the exiles contemplatively warned that a wicked king brought upon the realm God's wrath.⁴⁰ It was the divine duty of kings and governors to set forth His Word and to preserve the Church. The annotations to the Books of Kings, Daniel and Deuteronomy were unequivocal: ruling by anything other than godly means was tyranny and these rulers may be deposed by the faithful. However, the annotation to I Kings 14:16 rejected the position of passive obedience by stating: 'The people shal not be excused, when they do euil at the commandement of their gouvernours.'⁴¹ The translation of the Bible provided the exiles with a vehicle to promote and popularise their political readings of Scripture. The epistle and the marginal annotations unashamedly drew attention to the biblical justification for radical concepts such as active resistance, and popular sovereignty by underlining that Elizabeth was answerable to both God and her people. These concepts undoubtedly reflected 'the political and ecclesiastical, as well as the doctrinal, preoccupations of its translators.'⁴² The exiles had delivered an unambiguous warning to Elizabeth and in doing so they had weaponised the sacred text.

³⁸ Dan G. Danner suggests the translation was the scholarly output of Knox, Goodman, Thomas Cole, John Pullain, Thomas Sampson, Anthony Gilby, Coverdale and Whittingham. See Danner, 'The Contribution of the Geneva Bible of 1560 to the English Protestant Tradition', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 12:13 (Autumn, 1981), pp.5-18 (p.12).

³⁹ *The Bible and Holy Scriptures...Translated according to the Ebrue and Greke, and conferred with the best translations in diuers languges.* (Geneva: Rouland Hall, 1560). STC 2093, sig.***2v. The biblical exemplar the epistle applies here is that of Zerubbabel in the Book of Ezra.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, sig. B1r; B4v.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, sig. R3r.

⁴² Charles Davis Cremeans, *The Reception of Calvinistic Thought in England* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1949), p.66.

Significantly the Geneva Bible offered a subtle change to Romans 13:2 not found in previous English translations.⁴³ The Genevan text, along with the former Geneva resident Laurence Tomson's Englished version of Beza's complete bible (1576) and the Geneva-Tomson-Junius Bible (1599/1600), all substituted the fatalism in the assertion that those that resisted the higher powers will receive 'damnation' with the more abated 'judgement.'⁴⁴ Moreover, Tomson's later versions of Beza's New Testament (1580 and 1599) used neither word and instead opted for 'condemnation.' These subtle changes introduced ambiguity and suggested that those who resist may be permitted to defend their actions and be judged. Therefore, it was not inevitable that those who resisted will suffer eternal torment. The Geneva Bible translators also made another change that better reflected their opinion regarding church structure. Instead of insisting that evildoers should fear 'rulers', the Geneva Bible, Beza's complete bible, and the Geneva-Tomson-Junius all opted for 'Princes' and the Tomson editions of Beza's New Testament selected 'Magistrates.'⁴⁵ These changes intended to closely define the temporal power's duty as a coercive force for the protection of the Church and explicitly demonstrate that they were not the rulers thereof.⁴⁶ This was, of course, entirely in tune with Calvin's central principle, that the only true sovereign was God.

The production of a markedly Calvinist bible that suggested a distaste for Elizabeth's ecclesiastical authority motivated Archbishop Matthew Parker to conceive the Bishops' Bible (1568) as a means to curtail Genevan influence.⁴⁷ Both Parker and the Queen had no interest in replicating the Genevan model of church governance and the ecclesiology of the Elizabethan Church greatly reflected Zurich.⁴⁸ Unsurprisingly, the Bishops' Bible used the more incriminatory

⁴³ I refer here to the Tyndale, Coverdale, Matthew and Great Bibles.

⁴⁴ Tomson's puritanism is difficult to determine. He was connected to the authors of the *Admonition to Parliament* (1572), and Thomas Cartwright, and William Fulke. See Irena Backus, 'Laurence Tomson (1539-1608) and Elizabethan Puritanism', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 28:1 (Jan., 1977), pp.17-27.

⁴⁵ See [Geneva Bible] *The Bible and Holy Scriptures*, Sig. TT3r; [The 1557 Tomson translation of Beza's complete bible] *The Bible and holy scriptures contained in the Olde and Newe Testament* (London: Christopher Barker, 1576), STC 2117. sig. Mmmmm4r; [Tomson's translation of Beza's New Testament, 1580] *The Newe Testament of our Lord Iesus Christ, translated out of Greeke by Theo. Beza, and Englished by L.T.* (London: Christopher Barker, 1580), STC 2881.3. sig. X6r; [Tomson's translation of Beza's New Testament, 1599] *The Bible, that is, the Holy Scriptures contained in the Old and New Testament* (Amsterdam?: s.n., ca. 1599), STC 2180, sig. lii3r; [Geneva-Tomson-Junius, 1599/1600] *The Bible, that is, the Holy Scriptures, contained in the Old and New Testament* (London: Christopher Barker, 1600), STC 2181, sig. Fff7r.

⁴⁶ The Rheims New Testament (1582) uses the word 'damnation' rather than 'judgement' or 'condemnation.' It also substitutes 'rulers' for 'princes.' See Appendix.

⁴⁷ Daniell, *The Bible in English*, p.342.

⁴⁸ The Queen's dislike of Geneva is acknowledged by Beza. See Theodore Beza, 'to Henry Bullinger. Dated at Geneva, Sept. 3, (1566)', in *The Zurich Letters, (second series) comprising the correspondence of several English Bishops and others, with some of the Helvetian Reformers, during the early part of the reign of Queen Elizabeth*, ed. by Hastings Robinson for the Parker Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1845), pp.127-36 (p.131).

‘damnation’ rather than ‘judgement’ in its translation of Romans 13:2.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, this was not a violent reaction. The annotations within the Bishops’ Bible were distinctly Protestant but hostility towards the Catholic episcopal hierarchy were noticeably absent.⁵⁰ The preface attempted to subdue the intensifying presbyterian voice by emulating Jewel’s redefinition of ‘catholic’ in order to emphasise the connection to antiquity.⁵¹ Additionally, it countered the presbyterian desire to emulate the Apostolic Church by employing the example of King Lucius to demonstrate England’s shared universal history with the true Church.⁵² Lucius was presented as ‘the vicar of God’ and a King that received wise counsel and governed according to Scripture.⁵³ The murmuring presbyterians were warned about the consequences of their challenge to princely authority in the annotation to Romans 13: ‘For we are bounde in conscience by the worde of God, to obey the hygher powers, and in disobeyng we shoulde hurt the consciences of others, thorowe our euill example.’⁵⁴

The obvious problem was that the genie could not be put back in the bottle. There was a disparity of vision between Elizabeth, who understood the religious Settlement to be permanent, and an increasingly frustrated minority that demanded further reformation in order to eradicate any residual traces of popery. Thomas Lever had rejected wearing vestments in Frankfurt, but upon his return he declared that retaining ‘outward habits’ helped preserve an ‘inward feeling of popery.’⁵⁵ The conflict between Elizabeth’s innate conservatism and the Injunctions of 1559 serve to exemplify the problem of *adiaphora*. The Queen retained an altar and crucifix in her private chapel but Article 23 of the Injunctions ordered the removal and destruction of, amongst other things, shrines, tables, candlesticks, pictures and glass windows in churches and house which depict ‘feigned miracles, pilgrimages, idolatry, and superstition.’⁵⁶ It is also possible to conceive further that Elizabeth’s support for liturgical conservatism was owing to her policy of moderation towards Catholics at home, and the demand for clerical

⁴⁹ *The. holie. Bible conteynyng the olde Testament and the newe* (London: Richarde Iugge, 1568), STC 2099, sig. M8r.

⁵⁰ S.L. Greenslade, ‘English Version of the Bible, 1525-1611’, in *The Cambridge History of the Bible: The West from the Reformation to the Present Day*, ed. by S.L. Greenslade (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), pp.141-74 (p.161).

⁵¹ See Angela Ranson, ‘The Challenge of Catholicity: John Jewel at Paul’s Cross’, in *Paul’s Cross and the Culture of Persuasion in England, 1520-1640*, eds. by Torrance Kirby and P.G. Stanwood (Leiden: Brill, 2014), pp.203-21.

⁵² See Felicity Heal, ‘What Can King Lucius Do for You? The Reformation and the Early British Church’, *The English Historical Review*, 120:487 (Jun., 2005), pp.593-614.

⁵³ *The. holie. Bible conteynyng the olde Testament and the newe*, sig. *iiV.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, sig. M8r.

⁵⁵ Thomas Lever, ‘to Henry Bullinger. Dated at Coventry, July 10, 1559’, in *The Zurich Letters, comprising the correspondence of several English Bishops and others, with some of the Helvetian Reformers, during the early part of the reign of Queen Elizabeth*, ed. by Hastings Robinson for the Parker Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1842), pp.84-8 (pp.84-5).

⁵⁶ ‘The Injunctions of Elizabeth, A.D. 1559’, in *Documents Illustrative of English Church History*, eds. by Henry Gee and William John Hardy (London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1921), pp.417-42 (p.428).

conformity over vestments demonstrated that the religious settlement was a concession to both subjects and Queen.⁵⁷

English Protestants sought learned advice over what John Jewel described as ‘theatrical habits.’⁵⁸ Indeed, Laurence Humphrey and Thomas Sampson wrote to Vermigli and Bullinger during 1566 and raised a number of serious concerns over royal prerogative in matters of *adiaphora*. Both Vermigli and Bullinger recognised the political reality of the situation. So long as the decrees of pious kings did not induce sinfulness, Vermigli argued, there was simply no need to oppose ‘harmless regulations of that kind.’⁵⁹ As Torrance Kirby has observed, Bullinger believed that ‘Separation is a greater injury than the burden of conformity.’⁶⁰ Indeed, Bullinger argued it was more advisable for the English clerics to adopt the habits than to desert the churches of Christ.⁶¹ The Queen recognised that such murmuring promoted a diversity of opinions which not only threatened the religious settlement but also her position as Supreme Governor.

The questions posed by Sampson and Humphrey not only clearly show their troubled conscience but also served to demonstrate that the Royal Supremacy was now beginning to be re-evaluated by a determined Protestant minority. In fact, Sampson, in all intents purposes, was doing just that when he asked: ‘Whether any thing of a ceremonial nature may be prescribed to the church by the sovereign, without the assent and free concurrence of churchmen?’⁶² At the heart of the matter was that, as Felicity Heal has noted, ‘Obedience, order, and a disciplined hierarchy were not only the requirements of the Supreme Governor, they reflected the nature of the Church itself.’⁶³ Elizabeth informed Parker that ‘variety’ amongst her officers could not be tolerated, and, in an allusion to Romans 13, she declared any that frustrated or violated her divinely ordained authority must be brought before her for amendment unless ‘we might be well thought to bear the sword in vain.’⁶⁴

⁵⁷ Christopher Haigh, *Elizabeth I* (London: Routledge, 2001), pp.48-9 and Patrick Collinson, *Elizabethan Essays* (London: The Hambledon Press, 1994), pp.109-10.

⁵⁸ John Jewel, ‘to Peter Martyr. Dated at London, Nov. 5, 1559’, in *The Zurich Letters*, pp.52-4 (p.52).

⁵⁹ Peter Martyr Vermigli ‘Peter Martyr to [Thomas Sampson.] Dated at Zurich, Feb. 1, 1560’, in *The Zurich Letters, (second series)*, pp.38-41 (p.39). Kirby, ‘“Relics of the Amorities”’, pp.313-26. Heinrich Bullinger ‘to Laurence Humphrey and Thomas Sampson. Dated at Zurich, May 1, 1566’, in *The Zurich Letters*, pp.345-55 (p.349; pp.353-4). Melancthon had made already drawn this conclusion. See Melancthon, *Commentary on Romans*, p.222.

⁶⁰ Kirby, ‘“Relics of the Amorities”’, p.319.

⁶¹ Heinrich Bullinger, ‘to Miles Coverdale. Dated at Zurich, Sept. 10, 1566’, *The Zurich Letters, (second series)*, pp.136-7 (p.136).

⁶² Thomas Sampson, ‘to Henry Bullinger. Dated at London, Feb. 16, 1566’, in *The Zurich Letters*, pp.153-155 (p.154).

⁶³ Felicity Heal, *Reformation in Britain and Ireland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p.376.

⁶⁴ Elizabeth I ‘to Archbishop Parker. 25th January, 1564-5’, in *Correspondence of Matthew Parker, D.D. Archbishop of Canterbury*, eds. by John Bruce and Thomas Thomason Perowne for the Parker Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1853), pp.223-7 (p.227).

What was at stake was royal authority. The argument concerning clerical dress questioned the need to obey the Supreme Governor when it pronounced over *adiaphora* and more broadly over matters of religion. Parker acted with Elizabeth's approval, albeit not formal royal assent, and produced the *Book of Advertisements* (1566), a futile attempt to attain 'perfect unity of doctrine' in manners, in order to promote the advancement of the true religion but the matter refused to die down.⁶⁵ While Parker was the loyal enforcer, Elizabeth was responsible for maintaining the use of traditional clerical dress. Indeed, the 1559 revision of the Prayer Book retained Cranmer's attempt to perform a delicate balancing act between the pressure for reform and conservative resistance over ceremonies. The essay stated that any wilful transgression of a common order offended God and the 'Order in Christs Church' was not to be appointed or altered by private men but only by he who 'be lawfully called and authorized thereunto.'⁶⁶ Following years of pulpit controversy, a pamphlet war erupted during 1566 and *adiaphora* became a question which struck at the heart of the conflict between the infringement upon Christian liberty and obedience to the civil magistrate. The outward observance demanded by Elizabeth over *adiaphora* essentially dictated matters previously prescribed by Scripture as a religious duty was to be regulated by the civil magistrate.⁶⁷

Therefore, it was the opinion of Elizabeth that any offense or spiritual concern the clergy had over dress or cosmetics became irrelevant when their use was mandated by law: it was their duty to obey their higher power. For men like Parker and Jewel Christian liberty consisted in due obedience to the law, as proclaimed in the Injunctions and Act of Uniformity, but for others it was exactly this perceived infringement upon Christian liberty that caused them to fiercely oppose the Queen's proclamations over things indifferent. Indeed, Robert Crowley insisted that vestments did not edify the Church but simply confirmed idolatry and encouraged men to return to the popish religion. Moreover, he argued, clerical apparel was adiaphoric and if magistrates continued to demand conformity they would themselves be in violation of Romans 13 which required them to dutifully execute only the commands of God.⁶⁸ Crowley argued that civil sanction over adiaphoric matters was inappropriate because the prince had no power to legislate over matters of conscience and could not infringe upon the liberty of Christ's religion. It was the duty of the ministers of God's Word to refuse such decrees and willingly submit to the

⁶⁵ See specifically 'Of the apparel of clergy without cure' within 'The Advertisements, A.D. 1566', in *Documents Illustrative of English Church History*, eds. by Henry Gee and William John Hardy (London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1921), pp.467-75 (p.475).

⁶⁶ *The Book of Common Prayer: The Texts of 1549, 1559, and 1662*, ed. Brian Cummings (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp.214-5.

⁶⁷ J.S. Coolidge, *The Pauline Renaissance in England: Puritanism and the Bible* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1970), p.26.

⁶⁸ Robert Crowley, *A briefe discourse against the outwarde apparell and ministring garmentes of the popishe church* (Emden: Egidius van der Erve, 1566), STC 6079. sigs. A4v; B2v.

punishment of the temporal magistrate. This was not, for Crowley, disobedience but obedience to God and adherence to Acts 5:29. Therefore, the precepts of Romans 13 were inapplicable because princely commands concerning *adiaphora* improperly induced subjects into disobedience and infringed upon 'Christian libertye, wich is to vse things indifferent, to edification and not to destruction.'⁶⁹ Consequently, Crowley turned to I Corinthians 14:26, 'Let all things be done to edifie', as a barometer to measure whether things may be used for benefit.⁷⁰ This verse, according to Donald Joseph McGinn, would become 'the battle-cry of the "hot gospeller."⁷¹

The principle Crowley revealed threatened the unity of the English Church throughout the Elizabethan period and beyond. It demanded that the construction and order of God's Church was demonstrated in Scripture and, sounding like Boniface VIII's *Unam Sanctam*, insisted the Church was superior in authority to all temporal power.⁷² However, Parker refuted Crowley's objections and he reminded Christians of their duty of obedience to their prince and established laws of the realm.⁷³ He dismissed the claim that matters of *adiaphora* were not the prerogative of the King as a display of 'sore judgement, to condemme all your brethren for manpleasers, that obey their supreme gouernour vnder god.' It was the divine duty of the prince to preside over the good use of *adiaphora* and Parker attacked what he perceived to be the contradiction in Crowley's affirmation of princely authority and his exemption from any blame for disobedience. Parker identified a clear danger: if subjects were not bound to obey laws which are not forbidden by God, this will grant subjects the liberty to judge for themselves the legitimacy of the prince's laws, proclamations and ordinances.⁷⁴ The Supreme Governor had presided over indifferent things for the tranquillity of the Church and, Parker argued, now the law was in place 'offence is taken, and not geuen, when the subiect doth his duetie in obedience.'⁷⁵ By disobeying laws not proven to be wicked, Crowley had violated the ordinance of God to obey the prince as His minister.

An anonymous response to Parker's *Advertisements* struck at the heart of Elizabeth's Royal Supremacy. *An answer for the tyme* (1566) employed the same language used by the Genevan congregations' in their earlier *Confession* by insisting that Kings and Queens were

⁶⁹ Crowley, *A briefe discourse*, sigs. B2v-B3r.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, sig.A4v.

⁷¹ Donald Joseph McGinn, *The Admonition Controversy* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1949), pp.17-8.

⁷² See Chapter 2.

⁷³ Matthew Parker, *A briefe examination for the tyme, of a certaine declaration, lately put in print in the name and defence of certaine ministers in London, refusyng to weare the apparell prescribed by the lawes and orders of the realme* (London: Richarde Iugge, 1566), STC 10387, sig. *2v.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, sigs. ****1v-****3r.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, sig. ***3v.

‘Nurcies of the Church but not Lordes of it, nor of our consciens.’⁷⁶ The Elizabethan government clearly understood that *adiaphora* were inexplicitly linked with attempts to place a limitation upon royal prerogative within the Church. Elizabeth was not seeking to extend her privilege beyond anything her father had enjoyed and therefore she likewise insisted that private innovation in matters of *adiaphora* was not to be tolerated. As Bucer recognised the matter was not only about ‘caps’ or ‘other externals’ but rather the submission of ‘godly brethren...[to] those who are in general both unlearned and in their hearts the most bitter enemies of true religion.’⁷⁷

In 1566 two antagonistic pamphlets, *Whether it be a mortall sinne to transgresse ciuill lawes which be the commaundementes of ciuill magistrates* and *The Fortress of Fathers*, were produced in an effort to win the argument over *adiaphora*.⁷⁸ The former was produced by the Queen’s printer Richard Jugge and the opening anonymous essay, generally attributed to Parker, demonstrated the government’s attitude by applying Romans 13 to reaffirm that subjects must obey for fear of punishment. The Archbishop’s declaration that God had bestowed upon the prince authority to decide upon matters of *adiaphora* was explicitly reaffirmed.⁷⁹ Essentially Parker had reaffirmed the revisions made to Cramer’s *Articles of Religion*. The Thirty-Nine Articles, which became official in 1571, exposed the divergence of opinion over authority within the Church. In 1553 Cranmer had sought to limit the role of the Church with the declaration that ‘the churche be a wnesse and a keper of holie writte’ but this was significantly changed in 1563 and the article now begun by stating ‘The Church hath power to decree Rites or Ceremonies, and auctoritie in controuersies of faith.’⁸⁰ This change not only recognised the English Church an independent *magisterium*, but also its authority over all matters of the faith including, in the eyes of the Elizabethan regime, legitimate authority over doctrine and *adiaphora*.

A number of other revisions made to the Forty-Two Articles are also significant when considering the battle over *adiaphora*. The changes made to article concerning the traditions of the Church (articles thirty-three and thirty-nine in the 1563 Articles) granted the Elizabethan government the authority of judgment over ceremonies and reinforced the *magisterium* of the

⁷⁶ *An answer for the tyme, to the examination put in print, with out the authours name, pretending to mayntayne the apparrell prescribed against the declaration of the mynisters of London* (Rouen: Abel Clémence, 1566), STC 10388, p.28.

⁷⁷ Theodore Beza ‘to Henry Bullinger, Dated at Geneva, Sept. 3, (1566)’, *The Zurich Letters, (second series)*, pp.127-36 (pp.129-30).

⁷⁸ These excerpts contained in *Whether it be a mortall sinne* had their antecedence in the earlier Hooper-Ridley controversy over *adiaphora* and Torrance Kirby dates its publication to 1566. See Kirby, *The Zurich Connection*, p.215, n.45.

⁷⁹ *Whether it be a mortall sinne to transgresse ciuill lawes* (London: Richard Iugge, 1570?), STC 10391.5, p.4.

⁸⁰ ‘*The Articles of Religion, 1552-1571*’, in *A History of the Articles of Religion: to which is added a series of documents, from A.D. 1536 to A.D. 1615*, by Charles Hardwick, 3rd edn (London: George Bell & Sons, 1881), pp.313-53 (pp.316-7).

English Church by permitting the authority of the magistrate, as the chief authority within the Church, the freedom to make future alterations to ceremonies for the sake of remaining true to Scripture. Any men who, either through their own private judgment or conscience, purposely violate any of the established rites and ceremonies of the Church not proven to be repugnant to God's Word, will be rebuked. Such transgressors, both articles insisted, offend the order of the Church, and damage the authority of the magistrate, and wound the consciences of the brethren. In 1563 the power to change, or even abolish, rites or ceremonies of the Church ordained by the authority of man (Queen and Parliament as ordained by God) found in article thirty-nine, was further reinforced by the appended words from I Corinthians 14:26 'so that all things be done to edifying.'⁸¹ The article demonstrated the view held by Elizabeth, and her more conservative Protestant ministers, that any rites or ceremonies that are truly adiaphorous can be retained or abolished for the benefit of the brethren because no spiritual hurt will be inflicted.

What the revised *Articles of Religion* and Parker's essay contained in *Whether it be a mortall sinne* sought to achieve was to eliminate any ambiguity over *adiaphora*; this was reinforced by Romans 13. The Church, with Elizabeth as Supreme Governor, had complete authority over things indifferent, and any dissent or failure to comply with its judgments would be in violation of the Pauline command for obedience. As article thirty-seven made abundantly clear; Scripture had granted all godly princes prerogative over all the estates within their realms and any stubborn or evil doers that disrupted God's order and disobeyed the commands of the divinely appointed magistrate will be restrained with the civil sword.⁸² Unsurprisingly, *Whether it be a mortall sinne* insisted that it was the duty of all to obey the promulgations of the prince and not to infect the commonwealth with discontent. Alternatively, *The Fortress* served unequivocally to emphasise obedience to God over the prince. Therefore, the respective tracts sought to use *adiaphora* as a means either to create a space of magisterial control or to limit the freedom of magistrates over the Church. What is significant about the two tracts was the apparent ease with which both sides of the bitter dispute turned to the very same continental reformers for authoritative support: most notably Melanchthon, Bullinger, Bucer, and Vermigli.

Consequently the conformist tract based its central premise upon a citation found in Melanchthon's gloss on Romans 13 which stated that 'it is mortall sinne, to breake the statutes of the magistrate.' Moreover, the excerpt warned against innovation and confirmed the Lutheran position of non-violence and obedience to magistrates unless they commanded something contrary to God's Word.⁸³ Notably, Melanchthon's earlier deliberations over the

⁸¹ 'The Articles of Religion, 1552-1571', pp.336-7.

⁸² Ibid., pp.343-5.

⁸³ Ibid., pp.11-2; p.19; p.26.

matters of tradition and conscience contained within his *Loci Communes* (1521) were not included. He had previously concluded that when tradition obscured the faith or gave occasion to sin then human laws 'should be violated' and furthermore necessity freed the Christian from all traditions. In this he claimed unity with Jean Gerson, whom Melanchthon contended had agreed that 'consciences should not be bound by human traditions and that he who violates human tradition does not sin so long as a scandal does not arise from it.'⁸⁴ However, the 1555 revision of his *Loci Communes* provided support for princely prerogative in matters of *adiaphora* by resolving that when no instruction is found in Scripture 'then it is right, not immediately to break the custom in indifferent things.'⁸⁵

Melanchthon's apparent ambiguity over the matter of *adiaphora* provided the compiler of *The Fortress* to also petition the reformer for support. The tract included three short excerpts from Melanchthon's commentaries on Romans 13 and 14, and Matthew 27 but they were deliberately shorn of the customary Lutheran calls for obedience to magistrates. Therefore, his exegesis of Romans is included to argue that temporal power was limited and to highlight the inherent danger of men's opinions over ceremonies while arguing that some traditions 'darcken' the Gospel. Melanchthon's words on Matthew served both to reinforce the existence of and distinction between the Two Kingdoms and to underpin the central premise: the command to obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29). Consequently, as Leonard J. Trinterud has argued, the battle over clerical vestments 'symbolized rather than constituted the issues of the controversy.'⁸⁶ *The Fortress* was not a randomly compiled selection of excerpts but a carefully chosen, edited and purposely presented collection of authoritative opinions that was intended to be read consecutively in order to win the bitter argument over the vexatious matter of indifferent things.

Despite appealing to the same respected authorities the arguments put forward concerning *adiaphora* in the two tracts sharply differentiated. For example, while Bullinger was not an advocate of popish ceremonies, the Elizabethan government found his comments to be convenient because he asserted that certain apparel may be worn by the commandment of the King, and such things do 'seemeth to be an indifferent thing.' However, he also demonstrated a degree of ambiguity by attempting to swerve the thorny issue with the declaration that he wished to leave adiaphoric concerns 'free vnto other mens iudgement & wrytyng.'⁸⁷ Contrariwise *The Fortress* found support for the rejection of apparel, ceremonies and rites in Bullinger's

⁸⁴ Melanchthon, *Loci Communes 1521*, pp.85-6; p.189.

⁸⁵ Philip Melanchthon, 'Loci Communes', in *Melanchthon on Christian Doctrine: Loci Communes 1555*, trans. and ed. by Clyde L. Manschreck (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), p.320.

⁸⁶ Leonard J. Trinterud ed., *Elizabethan Puritanism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), p.69.

⁸⁷ *Whether it be a mortall sinne to transgresse ciuill lawes*, p.35; p. 37; p.45.

Decades where he declared that since 'leuiticall' things had already been abrogated 'they ought not be brought againe into the Church by any man.'⁸⁸ Aside from the inclusion of Bullinger's clear reservation concerning temporal prerogative over things indifferent, *The Fortress* initially appeared to provide a conventional Protestant understanding of princely power. It recognised the authority of the prince to reform the Church by permitting him to unsheathe the sword in order to discipline wayward clerics by suspending, depriving or even executing them. However, what followed was more subversive because it suggested that the enforcement of the regimes decrees over *adiaphora* was an act of tyranny, and such a line of argument, if read in isolation, could be interpreted as a challenge to the doctrine of Royal Supremacy.

The Fortress forcefully insisted that neither prince nor prelate had the authority to create ecclesiastical laws that bind the conscience. In support the tract turned to acclaimed reformer Wolfgang Musculus in order to remind the Christian that in matters of conscience their ultimate obedience was to God and not the civil magistrate.⁸⁹ Moreover, an excerpt from Vermigli's commentary on Romans 13 was included with the intention to support Melancthon's earlier limitation on princely power and further demonstrate its carnality.⁹⁰ Rulers, Vermigli argued, were 'chosen owt of Men' and he insisted that any prince that strayed beyond his temporal bounds must not be obeyed.⁹¹ It is unsurprising given the intensity of the debate surrounding *adiaphora* that Bucer's assertion that the unity of the Church did not stand or consist in ceremonies or garments was seized upon. Princes may justly be called 'heads' but, Bucer argued, their title pertained only to 'the politick bodie' and Christ alone was the Head of the Church.⁹² However, as N. Scott Amos has argued, 'Bucer was willing to preserve a larger measure of outward continuity with past practise than those keen on more rapid reform were willing to countenance.'⁹³

Indeed, in 1549 Bucer defended the use of ceremonies and rituals in the English Church. He argued that such things should be retained only out of 'respect for antiquity', but also in order to ensure that subjects are not deterred from embracing the true faith by 'too extensive innovations.'⁹⁴ Therefore, it is unsurprising that authority of Bucer was also petitioned by the

⁸⁸ I. B., *The fortresse of fathers* (Emden: Egidius van der Erve, 1566), STC 1040, sig. D2v.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, sigs. D3v-D4v.

⁹⁰ Both sides of the argument do appear to see Vermigli as an advocate of their cause. See Kirby, "Relics of the Amorities", pp.313-26.

⁹¹ I. B., *The fortresse of fathers*, sigs. A8v-B1r.

⁹² *Ibid.*, sigs. A3v-A4v.

⁹³ N. Scott Amos, 'Protestant Exiles in England. Martin Bucer, the Measured Approach to Reform, and the Elizabethan Settlement—"Eine gute, leidliche Reformation"', in *Sister Reformations: The Reformation in Germany and in England*, ed. by Dorothea Wendebourg (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), pp.151-74 (p.160).

⁹⁴ Martin Bucer and Paul Fagius, 'to the Ministers at Strasburgh. Dated at Lambeth, April 26, 1549', in *OL I*, pp.534-7 (pp.535-6).

organiser of *Whether it be a mortall sinne* in order to construct support for princely prerogative because his words also served to support Parker's argument that the wearing of vestments 'forasmuch as the vse of them is receaued, neither vpon superstitious or lyght cause: but by the publique lawe of the Realme, and by the consent of the Churches.'⁹⁵

Parker's judgment was supported by another extract from Vermigli which asserted it should be taught that 'no part of Gods honour and religion' is placed in adiaphoric matters. The inclusion of Vermigli's opinion appears to be an attempt to corroborate Article 30 of the 1559 Injunctions that declared clerical apparel contained no 'holiness or special worthiness.'⁹⁶ While this conclusion was not explicitly rejected by *The Fortress*, the anxiety of the non-conformists is evident by the inclusion of Rodolph Gualter's assessment that it was both ungodly and tyrannical to create new articles of faith or 'thrust into the Church traditions by the aduise of mans reason.'⁹⁷ Additionally, the judgment of Matthias Flacius Illyricus was imparted to show that 'the poison of indifferent thinges' had profited only the Devil and additionally no man possessed the power 'to ordaine any woshippings of God, withowte the commaundement of God.'⁹⁸ For Flacius nothing should be conceded to the impious and they should resist anything foisted upon the Church by ambitious magistrates. It was far better to offend Caesar than God.⁹⁹ The support of such distinguished authorities are used to introduce what Collinson has described as a 'platform of high Calvinism.'¹⁰⁰ Despite this it is curious that *The Fortress* made no appeal to Calvin himself who had challenged the interpretation that because Romans 13:5 demanded obedience to the magistrate this implied 'that consciences are bound by civil laws.'¹⁰¹ Instead it concluded that while Christians were bound more generally by the divine command for obedience to civil power, they were not obligated by conscience 'to obey the specific laws promulgated by the secular authorities.'¹⁰²

The Fortress provided the powerful and respected testimony of leading continental reformers in an attempt to convince the reader that the prince had no authority over *adiaphora*. Such things, the tract argued, must be left to the conscience of the individual, and in this way the precepts of obedience found in Romans 13 were not violated. Nevertheless, the arguments contained with both *Whether it be a mortall sinne* and *The Fortress* could not be reconciled

⁹⁵ *Whether it be a mortall sinne to transgresse ciuil lawes*, p.55.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.77. 'The Injunctions of Elizabeth, A.D. 1559', in *Documents Illustrative of English Church History*, eds. Henry Gee and William John Hardy (London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1921), pp.417-42 (p.432).

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, sigs C1r-C3r; D3v-D4v; . E1v.

⁹⁸ I. B., *The fortress of fathers*, sigs. B4v; B5r.

⁹⁹ For more insight on Flacius' views on *adiaphora* see Wade R. Johnston, 'The Adiaphoristic Devils: Matthias Flacius Illyricus *In Statu Confessionis*, 1548-1552' (unpublished master's thesis, Erasmus University, Rotterdam, 2013), pp.51-7.

¹⁰⁰ Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, p.115.

¹⁰¹ Calvin, *Institutes* 1559, p.1181.

¹⁰² Verkamp. *The Indifferent Mean*, pp.50-1.

because the Supreme Governor insisted upon conformity and obedience over all civil and ecclesiastical matters. Therefore, the thorny issue of *adiaphora* proved to be an enduring obstacle to unity within the Elizabethan Church. The liberty enjoyed by the Genevan exiles over matters of liturgy, order and discipline was curtailed by the Elizabethan Settlement, but it was not foreseen that the demand for royal prerogative in matters of indifference would meet such fierce resistance. The government attempted to close the door but effectively the horse had already bolted. The Genevan exiles had not banished temporal power from the Church but their vision had begun to demarcate its duty as custodial. Ultimately, Humphrey and Sampson had gone much further than Hooper in questioning of the Queen's authority to preside over matters of indifference. This battle was far from being a peripheral debate, it was central to the English reformers' thinking and *adiaphora* proved to be the seedbed for a persistent Protestant challenge to the doctrine of the Royal Supremacy.

Admonition Controversy

It is of little surprise given the rising tensions that the bishop of London, Edwin Sandys, stood before Parliament in 1571 and made a telling observation: 'To dislike and cast off a good magistrate is to dislike and cast off God; because "all power is of God."' ¹⁰³ Sandys understood the centrality of obedience to the political power, but he also recognised that the clergy were indispensable to the nation's political and spiritual wellbeing. It was important that all spiritual ministers agreed on one truth and all must build upon one foundation. ¹⁰⁴ The desire for unity of religious opinion was shattered by John Field and Thomas Wilcox's *An Admonition to the Parliament* (1572) which openly criticised the Prayer Book and called for the removal of the Homilies and the Thirty-Nine Articles. ¹⁰⁵ The authors hankered after the abandonment of 'al popish remnants both in ceremonies and regiment' and the Elizabethan episcopal government was declared to be 'Antichristian and devilishe and contrarye to the scriptures.' ¹⁰⁶ This manifesto not only demanded a clearly defined separation of the civil and spiritual office, but it insisted upon parity between ministers and the congregation, and that discipline should be maintained by consistory 'made up of pastor and lay officers, known as elders, who represented, and were

¹⁰³ Edwin Sandys, "'A Sermon Made Before the Parliament at Westminster', in *The Sermons of Edwin Sandys, D.D., successively bishop of Worcester and London and archbishop of York; which are added some miscellaneous pieces by the same author*, ed. by John Ayre for the Parker Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1841), pp.34-54 (p.36).

¹⁰⁴ Sarah Bastow, 'Sin and Salvation in the sermons of Edwin Sandys: 'Be this sin against the Lord for from me, that I should cease to pray for you.'" in *Sin and Salvation in Reformation England*, ed. by Jonathan Willis (Abingdon: Routledge, 2015), pp.209-22 (p.214).

¹⁰⁵ 'An Admonition to the Parliament', in *Puritan Manifestoes: A Study of the Origin of the Puritan Revolt*, eds. by W. H. Frere and C. E. Douglas (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1907) pp.1-39 (p.30; p.12).

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p.8.

responsible to, the congregation.¹⁰⁷ This challenge necessitated a dethroning of the civil magistrate within the Church along the lines previously outlined by the exiled congregation in Geneva.

The *Admonition* contended that it sought to restore Christ to His rightful place, not abolish the 'authoretie of the civill Magistrate and chief governour' established in Romans 13. This restoration of Christ ensured that the prince would be better obeyed and the realm flourish.¹⁰⁸ This attempt to dethrone Elizabeth as chief magistrate of the Church was placed into sharper focus by a former teaching colleague of Beza, Thomas Cartwright. *A Second Admonition to Parliament* (1573) announced fealty to the Queen not as the Head of the Church but rather 'as supreme governour in all causes, & over all persones within her dominions appointed by God, and we flie to the lawes of this realme.'¹⁰⁹ While the title of Supreme Governor had already been adopted in the Act of Supremacy (1559) as a pacification of zealous Protestants, this was not envisioned by Elizabeth to be dilution of her Royal Supremacy. Nevertheless, it provided Cartwright and others with the opportunity to manoeuvre the jurisdiction of the magistrate outside of the Church. This vision of governance was openly antagonistic and the move came to be seen as being indistinguishable from attacking the Queen's authority itself.

However, what permitted Cartwright, amongst others, to deny any enmity towards Elizabeth's authority was the remaining ambiguity within the now installed Thirty-Nine Articles. Indeed, article thirty-seven was conceived to limit the magistrate's authority in the Church to being a divine agent of coercive power by prescribing that Scripture afforded Elizabeth equal power with all godly princes.¹¹⁰ This alternative definition of the magistrate's authority allowed presbyterians to acknowledge Elizabeth's duty within the Church and subscribe in good conscience to the oath embedded within the Act of Supremacy. In this way Elizabeth's preeminent authority in civil matters, confirmed in Romans 13, was maintained and Cartwright could agree with the designation that chief governors were the 'nursse of christes church.'¹¹¹ This article not intended to be a denial of Elizabeth's supremacy over the Church, but the ambiguity allowed presbyterians to subscribe to the Act of Supremacy by conceiving of a doctrine which they believed 'was consistent with the absolute sovereignty of God.'¹¹²

¹⁰⁷ Antoinina Bevan Zlatar, *Reformation Fictions: Polemical Protestant Dialogues in Elizabethan England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p.153.

¹⁰⁸ 'Admonition to Parliament', p.18.

¹⁰⁹ 'A Second Admonition to the Parliament', in *Puritan Manifestoes*, pp.79-133 (p.130).

¹¹⁰ 'The Articles of Religion, 1552-1571', p.345.

¹¹¹ 'Second Admonition to Parliament', p.85.

¹¹² A.F. Scott Pearson, *Church & State: Political Aspects of Sixteenth Century Puritanism* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1928), p.57.

This challenge elicited an urgent reply by John Whitgift who defended the necessity of episcopal governance. He contended the assertion that God 'spiritually' governs the Church cannot be denied by 'either Papiste, or Protestant' and this truth should not lead to the erroneous conclusion that the civil magistrate should be excluded from the Church or that it did not need external regiment.¹¹³ He warned the presbyterians that in their denial of the authority of the prince over ecclesiastical matters they were shaking hands with both the papists and Anabaptists.¹¹⁴ The doctrines of disobedience offered by the presbyterians and papists were conceived to represent a similar threat in that both appeared to take their authority from a foreign church, and likewise they were characterised as seeking to overthrow the supreme authority of the magistrate.

Whitgift contended that the absence of Christian magistrates and any prescribed episcopal structure in Scripture was explained by the fact that the Church had not yet been established at the time of the Apostles. He argued that the diversity of each Church required their appropriate government.¹¹⁵ Each primitive Church contained 'seniors' charged with governance but following the establishment of the Church under public authority these officers were superseded by the Christian magistrate whose authority God considered to 'moste conuenient.' However, he made a concession which duplicated the position of Ponet and Goodman; the duty of the magistrate was custodial and 'that the diuersitie of tyme and state of the Church requireth diuersitie of gouernement in the same.'¹¹⁶

The tremor created by the exiled congregation in Frankfurt provided a more violent and dangerous aftershock during Elizabeth's reign. Cartwright rejected Whitgift's notion that the construction of a secure Church required the aid of the magistrate and he asserted that this view debased the accomplishments of the Apostles. Nevertheless, he acknowledged that the Church cannot enjoy peace and security 'without a godly magistrate' and this benefit must be maintained by ardent prayer.¹¹⁷ But, the position concerning Elizabeth's supremacy outlined in the *Second Admonition* was, for Whitgift, 'very suspicious' and he adjudged that Cartwright had been both artful and circumspect.¹¹⁸ Indeed, Cartwright was justifiably hesitant to espouse anything obviously offensive. He declared the Queen's authority to be the greatest on earth,

¹¹³ John Whitgift, *An answere to a certen libel intituled, An admonition to the Parliament* (London: Henrie Bynneman, 1572), STC 25427, sig. Ll4v.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.126-7.

¹¹⁵ Whitgift, *An answere to a certen libel*, p.45.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 114-5.

¹¹⁷ Thomas Cartwright, *A repleye to an answere made of M. Doctor Whitgifte Against the admonition to the Parliament* (Hemel Hempstead?: John Stroud?, 1573), STC 4712, p.51.

¹¹⁸ John Whitgift, *An anwvere to a certen libell intituled, An admonition to the Parliament, by Iohn Whitgifte* (London: Henrie Bynneman, 1573), STC 25429, sig. Uu3r.

before adding the qualification that it was 'lymitted by the word of God.'¹¹⁹ Someone who subscribed to this expression was the chaplain to earl of Leicester Robert Dudley, William Fulke, who articulated his strongest presbyterian impulses in a journey from 'young firebrand to middle-aged moderate.'¹²⁰ He believed the 'title of the princes supremacie' contained no controversy because it appropriately appertained to the Queen as the superior governor within the realm.¹²¹

Cartwright outlined a distinction between the jurisdiction of the civil and ecclesiastical authority: a mixed polity in which these powers were separate but related. The Church was superior because it is 'an institutional expression of the divine will' which the commonwealth could not articulate.¹²² Therefore, the Church was the foundation upon which the commonwealth was built and framed.¹²³ Cartwright was supported by Geneva-based Walter Travers who produced the fullest elaboration of Elizabethan presbyterianism.¹²⁴ Travers conceded that the restoration of the Gospel had returned the Church to better health, but he warned that unless the original principles of true discipline were embraced, the danger of calamity lingered.¹²⁵ He recognised the necessity of the two kingdoms but restricted them to their respective realms: the clergy subject to the magistrate in civil matters and the soul of all men committed to the care of the officers of the Church. This revealed a simple exegesis of Romans 13 that demanded 'euery one to be subiect to those who in Lord are set ouer them.'¹²⁶ The caveat was that as an expression of divine will made manifest in Scripture, the Church could not comply to the dictates of the civil authority over those of God (Acts 5:29).

This application of Acts 5:29 revealed the almost immemorial antagonism between Christ's declaration that His kingdom was not of this world (John 18:36) and the command to render duty and tribute unto those it was rightly due (Matthew 22:21 and Romans 13:7). But Cartwright's concept of the two kingdoms required clarification because the notion that both seats of government, civil and ecclesiastical, should be occupied by a single body appeared to compromise the liberty of the Church. Fulke recognised this, attesting that only the ignorant

¹¹⁹ Cartwright, *A replye to an answere made of M. Doctor Whitgifte*, p. 192.

¹²⁰ Peter Lake, *Moderate puritans and the Elizabethan Church* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p.57.

¹²¹ William Fulke, *A briefe and plaine declaration, concerning the desires of all those faithfull ministers, that haue and do seeke for the discipline and reformation of the Church of Englande* (London: Robert Walde-graue, 1584), STC 10395, pp.137-8.

¹²² Scott Pearson, *Church & State*, p.17.

¹²³ Thomas Cartwright, *The rest of the second replie of Thomas Cartwrihgt [sic]: agaynst Master Doctor Vuhitgifts second ansvuer, touching the Church discipline* (Base]: Thomas Guarinus, 1577), STC 4715, p.66.

¹²⁴ Burgess, *British Political Thought*, p. 119.

¹²⁵ Walter Travers, *A full and plaine declaration of ecclesiasticall discipline owt off the word off God and off the declininge off the churche off England from the same* (Heidelberg: by Michael Schirat, 1574), STC 24184, pp.2-3.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.83-4; p.185.

conceived that 'all thinges in the Ecclesiastical state, ought to be disposed by that onely high authoritye and absolute power of the Ciuil magistrate.'¹²⁷ While this chimed with Calvin who noted a 'great difference and unlikeness' between the two powers, he also insisted that: 'The church does not assume what is proper to the magistrate; nor can the magistrate execute what is carried out by the church.'¹²⁸ Nevertheless, despite this distinction the two powers were not antithetical nor was, as the Anabaptists believed, 'the whole nature of government a thing polluted, which has nothing to do with Christian men.' Rather Calvin resolutely confirmed, that the magistracy was divinely ordained and therefore both were His ministers and 'vicars of God.'¹²⁹

The presbyterians believed a return to the constitution found in the eternal model of the Apostolic Church was urgently needed. This was a time, Fulke declared, when the Church 'was perfect in all her regiment' because it rested upon the ordinance of God alone, and not the governance of the Christian prince. Only by His wisdom were magistrates established to wield the coercive sword for the preservation of the Church and primarily to glorify God with their laws that bind the people unto the true faith.¹³⁰ The English crown, he attested, had no sacerdotal power or any authority to change the articles of faith.¹³¹ Any matters of religious controversy should be presided over by the clergy who must seek the counsel of Scripture. This was not a denial of civil power, only a limitation. Only those seeking anarchy, Calvin attested, would contend that kingship was incompatible with the perfection of Christ's Gospel and this 'betray[ed] not only their ignorance but devilish arrogance, when they claim a perfection of which not even a hundredth part is seen in them.'¹³² Nevertheless, for presbyterians the doctrine of Royal Supremacy was preposterous and was no more legitimate than the tyranny of the pope.

Obviously, the government considered such opinions to be seditious. However, Cartwright never denied the magistrate's authority over the commonwealth, and although they provided the Church a great service, they were only a member of the same. Consequently, Travers stated, the prince's membership of the Church possessed no spiritual authority and he, like Emperor Theodosius I, was subject to ecclesiastical sanction.¹³³ Cartwright underscored the distinction between the two kingdoms by noting that while a Christian could be separated from

¹²⁷ Fulke, *A briefe and plaine declaration*, p.8.

¹²⁸ Calvin, *Institutes* 1559, p.1215.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.1487-91.

¹³⁰ Fulke, *A briefe and plaine declaration*, pp.9-10; p.141.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, pp.138-39. While neither Henry VIII nor Elizabeth made any claim to sacerdotal power, the Queen's parliament nevertheless ratified the Thirty-Nine Articles in 1571.

¹³² Calvin, *Institutes*, 1559, p.1490.

¹³³ Travers, *A full and plaine declaration*, p.187. The implications and utility of this case continued to be debated. See Patrick Collinson, 'If Constantine, then also Theodosius: St Ambrose and the Integrity of the Elizabethan *Ecclesia Anglicana*', *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 30:2 (April, 1979), pp.205-29.

the Church by excommunication, he remained a member of the commonwealth.¹³⁴ Christ alone was the Head of the Church and although 'the prince may wel be Monarch immediatly betwene God & the common wealth, but no man can be Monarch betwene God & hys Church.' It was the duty of all Christians, irrespective of rank, to obey God's Law and this necessitated submission to the authority of the Church. Whilst the spiritual ministers should not meddle in civil matters, neither should the magistrate attempt to exceed their function by presiding over the order and ceremonies of the Church. Cartwright and Travers firmly believed the function of the magistrate was to establish, preserve, maintain and promote Christ's Church in accordance with God's will and this required being attentive to spiritual counsel. The explicit duty Romans 13 furnished the magistrate, Cartwright asserted, was the authority to punish those which transgressed God's law or any ecclesiastical minister who failed in their duty of office.¹³⁵

Therefore, civil magistrates were nurses, servants even, and they must subject themselves, and their sceptres and crowns to the greater authority of the Church. Furthermore, Cartwright noted, the Prophet Isaiah had commanded kings should 'licke the dust of the feete of the churche.'¹³⁶ This did not, for Fulke, signify the abolition of royal power or the subjugation of princes to the clergy, but rather to God and His Word.¹³⁷ All of this smacked a little too much of popery for Whitgift, and he argued such degradation caused the prince to be 'be a seruant no master a subiect no Prince, vnder gouernment no gouernoure in matters pertheyning to the Church.' This was a diminishing of power that God's Law would not suffer because, Whitgift believed, Christ had not come into the world to overthrow civil rulers and polity. Christ's rule, as Luther's Two Kingdoms theory attested, was spiritual and the prince's political. Furthermore, he noted, Peter had clearly demanded: '*Submit yourselues vnto all manner ordinance of man for the Lords sake, whether it be vnto the king, as to the superior*' (I Peter 2:13).¹³⁸ To ensure the Lord's order was kept obedience must be rendered to the civil magistrate and all others placed under him in the Church. This godly order was confirmed, he asserted, by Romans 13 and found in the examples of the godly Old Testament Kings and judges.¹³⁹

Whitgift's complaint was clear; Cartwright sought to overthrow God's appointed order. Whitgift exclaimed that this order distinguished the Two Kingdoms as spiritual and external with the former being inward and invisible, and the latter the opposite. The inward is governed directly by Christ, as Prince, King or Judge, and the external by ministers as representatives of

¹³⁴ Cartwright, *The rest of the second replie*, pp.151-2.

¹³⁵ Cartwright, *A replye to an answere made of M. Doctor Whitgifte*, p. 192.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 180. Isaiah 49:23.

¹³⁷ Fulke, *A briefe and plaine declaration*, pp.141-2.

¹³⁸ John Whitgift, *The defense of the aunswere to the Admonition against the replie of T.C* (London: Henry Binneman, 1574), STC 25430, p.647.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p.684.

Christ by degree. But while Christians were all equal under God they did consist of a dual character: one related to the Church and the other was subject to a political order.¹⁴⁰ Cartwright rejected this magisterial distinction as a denial of Christ's true sovereignty to which all were subordinate. In this he appeared to have the support of Beza who, in an allusion to Romans 13, defined the function of the sovereign as custodial, albeit divinely ordained.¹⁴¹ Moreover, he declared that the New Testament contained nothing that justified placing certain pastors above others, and any hierarchical separation was an 'intolerable corruption' which could only have been conceived of Satan.¹⁴² As Patrick Collinson noted, 'This was to call the Elizabethan episcopate devilish.'¹⁴³ The accusations of the presbyterians were unambiguous, the Royal Supremacy and the episcopacy were subversions of the government revealed in Scripture.

Whitgift was joined in his refutation of the presbyterians by the dean of Salisbury, John Bridges, and his enormous *A defence of the government established in the Church of Englande* (1587) frequently cited Romans 13 to refute the argument of Fulke and Beza. He insisted that because God was the author of both the magistracy and episcopacy, the ecclesiastical and temporal had always been adjoined with the former confirmed by Romans 13 and the latter devised by the Apostles by divine will. Moreover, possession of the coercive sword did not remove the magistrate from the Church because Paul very clearly stated that this office was of divine institution.¹⁴⁴ Indeed, Thomas Bilson concurred and insisted the Church embodied all the people and priests must obey prince not rule over him. Bilson was articulating full-blown Erastianism, the duties of prince and clergy were separate but complimentary. The former established and maintained the Church by punishing the wicked and the latter guided the prince to the truth by persuasion.¹⁴⁵ For Bridges and Bilson the prince was the ordained Head of the visible church and it was his right to ensure it was properly administered.¹⁴⁶ Nevertheless, by seeking to tear down the episcopacy and replace it with an apostolic model the presbyterians had struck at the heart of the Royal Supremacy. Their aim necessitated an exegesis of Romans 13 that manoeuvred the supreme authority of the prince outside the Church while simultaneously retaining the divine functions Paul had prescribed. The Admonition Controversy

¹⁴⁰ Whitgift, *The defense of the aunswere*, pp.300-1.

¹⁴¹ Theodore Beza, *The iudgement of a most reuerend and learned man from beyond the seas concerning a threefold order of bishops, with a declaration of certaine other waightie points, concerning the discipline and gouernement of the Church* (London: Robert Waldegrave, ca. 1585), STC 2021, sig. C3v.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, sig. A3r; B1r-B1v.

¹⁴³ Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, p.110.

¹⁴⁴ John Bridges, *A defence of the government established in the Church of Englande* (London: Iohn Windet and T. Orwin, 1587), STC 3734, p. 337; pp.140-1.

¹⁴⁵ Thomas Bilson, *The true difference betweene Christian subiiection and unchristian rebellion* (Oxford: Ioseph Barnes, 1585), STC 3071, pp.123-4.

¹⁴⁶ John Bridges, *The supremacie of Christian princes ouer all persons throughout their dominions* (London: Henrie Bynneman, 1573), STC 3737, pp. 678-9; Bilson, *The true difference*, p.217.

marked the first systematic attack of an English Protestant minority on the government of an established Protestant Church and sovereign.

A French Dilemma

Throughout the Reformation England remained in close communication with continental Europe, and they looked to their brethren in Christ to help provide solutions and precedents to perplexing religious and political dilemmas. This was an exchange of theological, philosophical and political ideas welcomed or rebuffed depending upon circumstance and conscience. Some of the most explosive polemical material, commonly known by the pejorative term 'Monarchomach' coined by William Barclay, was produced in France during the six year period that followed the shocking St. Bartholomew's Day Massacres (1572).¹⁴⁷ The works of François Hotman, Beza, the author of the *Vindiciae contra Tyrannos*, and Parisian resident George Buchanan were products of same dilemma: the Christians' duty towards tyrannous civil authority. But their willingness to advocate destabilising theories of constitutionalism, resistance and deposition of rulers proved to be unpalatable to most English readers.¹⁴⁸ Elizabeth reviled the 'cruel murderers' of innocents and lamented that her religious brothers were served by 'such inhumane counsellors.'¹⁴⁹ The horror of the massacres were burned into the English consciousness by the lucid depictions of the thousands of Huguenot refugees.¹⁵⁰

The ambassador to France, Francis Walsingham, witnessed first-hand the events in Paris and both his and Robert Beale's account only served to reinforce Cecil's suspicions. The violence that erupted across France were evidence for Cecil of a great papal conspiracy, and this brought into question the loyalty to the crown of any English Catholic that believed they owed greater obedience to another higher power.¹⁵¹ The massacres were, John Cooper stated, 'a lurid stimulus to the imagination.'¹⁵² The violence stirred English fear of civil war and crystallised in the minds of many English Protestants that popery was duplicitous and Catholics were simply

¹⁴⁷ See William Barclay, *De Regno et Regale Potestate* (1600).

¹⁴⁸ See Donald R. Kelley, *The Beginning of Ideology Consciousness and Society in the French Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp.301-14 and Mack P. Holt, *The French Wars of Religion, 1562-1629* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp.98-120.

¹⁴⁹ Elizabeth I, 'To Sir Francis Walsingham, Ambassador to France, December 1572', in *Elizabeth I: Collected Works*, eds. by Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), pp.215-7 (p.216).

¹⁵⁰ A.G. Dickens, 'The Elizabethans and St. Bartholomew,' in *The Massacre of St. Bartholomew: Reappraisals and Documents*, ed. by Alfred Soman (The Hague: Martinus Jijhoff, 1974), pp.52-70 and Catherine Buchanan, 'The Massacre of St. Bartholomew's (24-27 August 1572) and the Sack of Antwerp (4-7 November 1576): print and political responses in Elizabethan England' (unpublished doctoral thesis, The London School of Economics and Political Science, 2011), pp.66-114; pp.238-9.

¹⁵¹ See Conyers Read, *Mr Secretary Walsingham and the policy of Queen Elizabeth*, Vol. I (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925), pp.198-262, H.M. Salmon, *The French Religious Wars in English Political Thought* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), pp.15-20, and Marshall, *Heretics and Believers*, p.509-10.

¹⁵² John Cooper, *The Queen's Agent: Francis Walsingham at the Court of Elizabeth I* (London: Faber and Faber, 2011), p.84.

not to be trusted. Nevertheless, the Monarchomach literature exposed English imaginations to the danger of radical Protestant thought beyond anything they had previously witnessed. But this development was sparked by a passage contained in Calvin's *Institutes* (1536—) that suggested that 'perhaps' it was possible for inferior magistrates to employ their 'ephoral powers' to withstand licentious kings.¹⁵³ But this did not represent a universal call for the right of resistance and these thoughts '[did] only a little to shade Calvin's general insistence on the duty of Christians to obey their governments.'¹⁵⁴ Certainly Viret and Beza were more vociferous in affording the inferior magistrate a custodial role in preventing tyranny.¹⁵⁵ But in 1572 religious tension in France finally reached boiling point, and the implementation of a policy that actively sought the extermination of heretics provoked some Huguenots to re-examine constitutionalism and doctrines of obedience that appeared to be wholly inadequate for those living in persecution.

As a result of the religious anxiety a number of Calvinist writers produced polemical tracts that considered biblical, legal and historical precedents in order to develop a coherent theory of political consent and obligation between king and subject. What they produced would place significant limit upon royal power. Despite appearing to be a humanist investigation into French constitutional history, Hotman's *Francogallia* (1573) was concerned with contemporary events.¹⁵⁶ Hotman sought to salvage a legitimate means of restraining royal power and he 'used the best of all pedagogical devices, that of allowing the reader to make his own inferences and thus flatter himself about his own intellectual prowess.'¹⁵⁷ Contentious theological exegesis was avoided but the Pauline precept that God was the ultimate source of all power was a presupposed precedent. What offended Elizabethan readers, apart from a Knoxian rejection of female rule, was that he advocated a theory of popular sovereignty in which royal power was elective and the *populus* were *dominus*.¹⁵⁸ Princes were elected magistrates restrained by constitutional law and the people had the right to not only establish them but also, through

¹⁵³ See Chapter 2.

¹⁵⁴ Robert Kingdon, 'Calvinism and resistance theory, 1550-1580', in *The Cambridge History of Political Thought 1450-1700*, ed. by J.H. Burns with the assistance of M. Goldie, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp.193-218 (p.205).

¹⁵⁵ See Chapter 6.

¹⁵⁶ Julian H. Franklin, 'Introduction', in *Constitutionalism and Resistance in the Sixteenth Century: Three Treatises by Hotman, Beza, and Mornay*, trans. and ed. by Julian H. Franklin (New York: Pegasus, 1969), pp.11-46 (p.19).

¹⁵⁷ Ralph E. Giesey, 'When and Why Hotman Wrote the "Francogallia"', *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance*, 29:3 (1967), pp.581-611 (p.583).

¹⁵⁸ On the regiment of women Hotman states: 'A women cannot be queen in her own right, nor can an hereditary claim to the kingdom be derived from her or her descendants.' See François Hotman, *Francogallia*, Latin text ed. by Ralph E. Giesey and trans. by J.H.M. Salmon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), p.481.

legitimate political assemblies, depose them for violation of office.¹⁵⁹ He contended that absolute power inevitably leads to tyranny and counsel was required to provide protection and restraint. As such, Glenn Burgess correctly noted, *Francogallia* 'was an attempt to construct an ancient French constitution that provided institutional and legal checks on the monarchy—checks that could be exploited by Huguenot rebels.'¹⁶⁰

Indeed, both Beza and the *Vindiciae contra Tyrannos* (1579) repeatedly stressed the need to adhere to the commands of Romans 13 in their contemplation of worldly government.¹⁶¹ The *Vindiciae* guided the reader through the Pauline verses and offered two further proof texts: Matthew 22:21 and I Peter 2:17, which command Christians to fear God and honour the king. Any impious suggestion that contradicted these precepts could not be recognised as anything but absurd.¹⁶² Obedience to princes must be rendered not for fear of wrath but by dictate of conscience and out of love for God. The sometime Parisian resident and close correspondent of Beza, George Buchanan, also addressed the matter of obedience and order in his *De Iure Regni apud Scotos Dialogus* (1579). The inherent goodness of the law was emphasised and he insisted that those that occupied divine office must execute their duties to maintain the peace and ensure any that resisted the higher powers will be subject to the coercive sword. This duty was confirmed by Romans 13:4 which Buchanan paraphrased: 'He is not a terror to the good, since he protects them from harm; but if he is a terror for the bad, that does not affect you, who are ruled by the Spirit of God.'¹⁶³

What was being explicitly argued by the Monarchomachs is that there was a clear distinction between obedience for consciences sake and things which pertained to conscience. Certainly, the superior power had the authority to eject inferior officers for violation of the law, but the Monarchomachs all radically contended that lesser magistrates had the intrinsic duty and authority to admonish or even depose the higher authority based upon this same premise. The *Vindiciae* insisted that any king who 'perfidiously and persistently' broke the covenant by serving only his own desires whilst neglecting the rule of law 'can fittingly be called a tyrant.'¹⁶⁴

¹⁵⁹ Hotman, *Francogallia*, p.235.

¹⁶⁰ Burgess, *The Politics of the Ancient Constitution*, p.16.

¹⁶¹ The authorship of the *Vindiciae* is debated and consequently this thesis will simply refer the work by title. This debate is best served by George Garnett in the 'Editor's Introduction' to *Vindiciae contra Tyrannos: or, concerning the legitimate power of a prince over the people, and of the people over a prince*, trans. and ed. George Garnett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp.lv-ixxvi.

¹⁶² *Vindiciae contra Tyrannos: or, concerning the legitimate power of a prince over the people, and of the people over a prince*, trans. and ed. by George Garnett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp.32-3.

¹⁶³ George Buchanan, 'De Iure Regni apud Scotos Dialogus', in *A Dialogue on the Law of Kingship among the Scots: A Critical Edition and Translation of George Buchanan's De Iure Regni apud Scotos Dialogus*, eds. by Roger A. Mason and Martin S. Smith (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), p.113.

¹⁶⁴ *Vindiciae*, p.172; p.69.

Consequently, even though God furnished kings with the sword for the benefit and protection of his subjects, if a monarch polluted the realm with wickedness the people could disobey his commands. This was no promotion of active resistance by a private person against magistrates legitimately seated by the consent of the people, those which did so will suffer God's wrath.¹⁶⁵ Instead, the *Vindiciae* argued, the private person was to adhere to Christ's words to Peter in Matthew 25:52 and keep the sword in the sheath. Within the covenant there was a legitimate right of resistance because no sovereign power was absolute, power was retained in the office and not the individual.¹⁶⁶ The sword of coercion found in Romans 13:4 was thus possessed by the entire magistracy.

However, Beza still needed to provide greater clarification concerning obedience. Consequently, he stressed three things: (1) resistance was only advocated against 'flagrant tyranny'; (2) resistance could only be performed by the magistrate in concord with the people; (3) resistance was a defensive action.¹⁶⁷ This level of resistance was beyond anything Calvin had suggested. The case was cautiously and precisely drawn and the tract would 'prove more influential and enduring than the work of his Scottish and English predecessors.'¹⁶⁸ Beza clearly recognised the magnitude and the slipperiness of the terrain. Any notion of unquestionable obedience to magistrates was forcibly answered: 'if the tyrant forbids you to do what God has commanded, then you will not have done your duty merely by refusing to obey the tyrant, but you must render obedience to God.'¹⁶⁹ Beza dethroned Romans 13 in the same way Goodman had done, by placing the positive primary action of Christian obedience in Acts 5:29. The *Vindiciae* would reinforce this, contending that no pious Christian would be deemed rebellious for refusing to obey wicked commands and even the most sycophantic supporter of kings could ascertain from Scripture that God must be obeyed antecedently.¹⁷⁰ Far better to desert a king than God.¹⁷¹

The political concepts of the Monarchomachs were adopted by some British writers. John Bridges suggested that the regiment of the prince was established by consent and their

¹⁶⁵ Theodore Beza, '*Right of Magistrates*', in *Constitutionalism and Resistance*, trans. and ed. by Julian H. Franklin (New York: Pegasus, 1969), pp.100-35 (pp.109-10).

¹⁶⁶ The princely absolutism of Jean Bodin would find the right of resistance professed by Hotman and Beza only served as a disturbing exemplar for others to follow. Bodin unpicked Calvin's classical parallels concerning 'ephoral power' by declaring that because 'the kings of Sparta were but simple senators and captains' their power was not absolute and could be resisted. Absolute power, he argued, could not be resisted because it is neither equalled nor superseded and it was exercised at its own discretion. See Jean Bodin, *The six books of a common-weale* (London: Adam Islip, 1606), STC 3193, pp.224-5.

¹⁶⁷ Beza, '*Right of Magistrates*', pp.111-2.

¹⁶⁸ Franklin, 'Introduction', pp.32-3.

¹⁶⁹ Beza, '*Right of Magistrates*', p.102.

¹⁷⁰ *Vindiciae*, p.32.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p.55.

rule was conditional. It was possible, then, for the faithful to be free from the unfaithful prince. Thomas Bilson also alluded to a concept of popular sovereignty. He affirmed that Romans 13 established the divine origin of the temporal office but added the right of the individual to assume the function of wielding the sword was legitimised by grant of the people.¹⁷² Bilson presented the normative Calvinist safeguard against tyranny which was appended to national custom. If the law permitted it, then nobles, not private citizens, should function as a legitimate possessor of the sword of correction in order to procure the reformation of the wicked prince 'but in no case deprived where the sceptre is inherited.'¹⁷³ This was frustratingly imprecise. Bilson could be read as a rejection of resistance to the English crown, but simultaneously he denied the magistrate supreme ecclesiastical jurisdiction, God was not subject to the judgment of man. Moreover, princes were not ascribed any power to move against the 'precepts of Christ or Canons of his Church' and nor should they 'frustrate the liberties of their people against reason and justice.'¹⁷⁴

Buchanan certainly concurred with Bilson's understanding of the popular governance. However, he provided what, at first, appeared to be a conventional reading of Romans 13: God bestowed kings with the sword to punish the wicked and encourage and maintain the good. Nevertheless, his application of Chrysostom descended into *eisegesis*. He claimed Chrysostom understood that Paul had not demanded obedience to tyrants but 'true and lawful' magistrates that were earthly representatives of God.¹⁷⁵ Andrew Melville also wrestled with this dilemma. When the violence erupted across France he was teaching in Geneva and would have been well aware of the theories of Hotman and Beza.¹⁷⁶ Melville drew great inspiration from Buchanan but this did not mean he necessarily shared his fellow Scot's radical views. He concurred that magistrates derived their lawful power from God but added that because Paul detested the wicked devices of Satan power the office itself should be distinguished from the individual.¹⁷⁷ Furthermore, his *Stephaniskion* (1590) supported the premise that kings were accountable to the people.¹⁷⁸ Nevertheless, Buchanan's approach mimicked that of John Colet because he contended that Paul had composed the letter to prevent the rashness of some Christians who denied that the commands of pagans were germane. Therefore, Paul's commands concerned

¹⁷² See the Chapter 6 and Bridges, *The supremacy of Christian princes*, p.912; p.1034.

¹⁷³ Bilson, *The true difference*, pp.520-1.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 242.

¹⁷⁵ Buchanan, '*De lure Regni apud Scotos Dialogus*', p.113.

¹⁷⁶ Steven John Reid, 'Early Polemic by Andrew Melville: The *Carmen Mosis* (1574) and the St Bartholomew's Day Massacres', *Renaissance and Reformation*, 30.4 (Fall 2006/2007), pp.63-81 (pp.67-74).

¹⁷⁷ Andrew Melville, 'Commentary on Paul's Epistle to the Romans, Chapter 13. v.1-7', in *Andrew Melville (1545-1622): Writings, Reception, and Reputation*, trans. by Steven J. Reid and eds. by Roger A. Mason and Steven J. Reid (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), pp.72-4 (p.73).

¹⁷⁸ Andrew Melville, *Stephaniskion* (Edinburgh: Robertus Walde graue, 1590). STC 17809, sigs. A4-B1r.

the office, function and duty of lawful 'higher powers' and not the disposition of those holding authority.

Therefore, Buchanan concluded that Paul's argument was not with those who believed that wicked magistrates must be restrained, but rather with those that rejected the authority of all magistrates.¹⁷⁹ He agreed with the premise that God had conferred power on the office rather than the individual. This distinction permitted subjects to legitimately disobey a wicked magistrate without dishonouring God's divinely ordained function. He noted, like Bernard of Clairvaux and Knox, the plurality of Paul's commands to obey the 'higher powers' and this buttressed his argument that degenerate princes should be restrained. The lesser powers should be revered because they enjoyed divine ordination, served the same purpose and were moderated by spiritual and temporal law.¹⁸⁰ Romans 13 did not, then, prohibit the punishment of a wicked magistrate for a violation of either the laws of God or man. The prestige of temporal or spiritual office did not provide shelter from correction.¹⁸¹ The Pauline commands, the *Vindiciae* argued, had not abrogated Christians from their foremost duty to God and furthermore 'if the king is to be obeyed on account of God, it certainly cannot be against God.'¹⁸² Beza and the *Vindiciae* offered the normative remedy to tyranny: bear the yoke and put their faith in God through prayer or seek exile because often this scourge was divine wrath. Buchanan certainly agreed and asserted that while God could appoint 'an evil man to punish evil men' it cannot be concluded that this providential act revealed God as the 'author of human malice.'¹⁸³ Far better to suffer tyranny 'than to allow the twin 'monsters' of sedition and rebellion to be unleashed in a kingdom.'¹⁸⁴

Beza also supported the application of a lawful antidote to the torment of oppression. This recognition of the coercive duty of the ruler required a distinction to be drawn between a legitimate ruler who had descended into tyranny and a tyrant ruling by usurpation. But the *Vindiciae* identified an acute problem, that 'although God did not commit His law as clearly to [unbelieving kings] as to believers, yet they should recognise that they rule thanks to God, the highest king.' This complied with Paul's assertion that all power, even heathen, is of God and the *Vindiciae* added that it was through God's will that kings were strengthened or overthrown.¹⁸⁵ The obligation of the subject towards a tyrant was more straightforward. The citizen, Beza contended, should staunchly defend legitimate institutions against any individual that 'would

¹⁷⁹ Buchanan, 'De Iure Regni apud Scotos Dialogus', p.113.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., p.115.

¹⁸¹ Ibid., p.119.

¹⁸² *Vindiciae*, p.32.

¹⁸³ Buchanan, 'De Iure Regni apud Scotos Dialogus', p.115.

¹⁸⁴ Scott M. Manetsch, *Theodore Beza and the Quest for Peace in France, 1572-1598* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), p.68.

¹⁸⁵ *Vindiciae*, pp.26-7.

usurp, or has usurped, dominion in violation of the law.’ The subject must never serve as an instrument of tyranny because this constituted a failure in their duty towards both God and their fellow citizens. However, Beza did not reject the possibility that a tyrant could become a legitimate ruler but this may only be achieved ‘through that free and lawful consent’ of the people. Should a ruler arise ‘like a viper’ then a citizen should appeal to the inferior magistrate for comfort because it was the custodial duty of the civil officer to repulse the enemy ‘by common consent.’¹⁸⁶

Therefore, neither the Monarchomachs nor Buchanan supported the premise that a private person could perform the coercive duty of the magistrate. It was seditious for individuals to ‘draw the sword without orders...even though the cause may seem just.’¹⁸⁷ But the *Vindiciae* acknowledged the problematic feasibility that a ‘vindicator’ or ‘liberator’ may be providentially called to act as an instrument of God’s wrath to free the people from their suppression.¹⁸⁸ This matter was approached with understandable caution and the *Vindiciae* only offered that such a person was only ‘called extraordinarily’ by divine inspiration in order to preserve the covenant.¹⁸⁹ More generally the people must act collectively because doing otherwise was a violation of their covenantal duty. The failure to resist wicked rulers will result in the people being punished, just as they were under the deplorable reigns of King Manasseh, King Herod and procurator Pontius Pilate.¹⁹⁰ The pious must not tolerate crimes against God and they should restrain by legitimate means any prince which abrogated His Law because failure to act made them complicit in their crimes.

While Englishmen like Bridges and Bilson were receptive to the notions of popular sovereignty and kingly deposition, it is also evident that most were far more circumspect. Bancroft considered the opinions of Beza, Buchanan, and the author of the *Vindiciae* to be highly seditious and stated that their works contained ‘most strange and rebellious propositions stifled maintained, dilated and amplified.’ In matters concerning the civil magistrate it is apparent that Bancroft believed there was little to distinguish between the revolutionary spirit of the presbyterians and the sedition of the Monarchomachs.¹⁹¹ Sutcliffe also fiercely rejected the ‘dangerous opinions’ of Hotman, Beza, and Buchanan, along with the arguments of Fenner and

¹⁸⁶ Beza, ‘*Right of Magistrates*’, pp.107-8.

¹⁸⁷ *Vindiciae*, p.169.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.61-2; pp.171-2.

¹⁸⁹ Garnett, ‘Editor’s Introduction’, p.xxix; p.xlii.

¹⁹⁰ *Vindiciae*, p.44.

¹⁹¹ Richard Bancroft, *A sermon preached at Paules Crosse the 9. of Februarie being the first Sunday in the Parleament, Anno. 1588* (London: By E. B[ollifant] for Gregorie Seton, 1588), STC 1347, pp.76-8. See also Richard Bancroft, ‘Certaine slanderous speeches against the present Estate of the Church of Englande published to the people by the Precisians’, in *Tracts ascribed to Richard Bancroft*, ed. Albert Peel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953), pp.22-169 (pp.61-69).

Cartwright, all of whom, he insisted, had taught disobedience to princes or were '*great patrons of the consistoriall discipline.*' He noted that the doctrine contained in the *Vindiciae* not only provided subjects with the power to resist, '*but also to depose, and kill the prince if he oppugne Gods lawes and religion.*'¹⁹² The Dutch born Calvinist Adrian Saravia, appointed rector at Tatenhill in 1588, also took the opportunity to attack the Monarchomachs for their views on limited monarchy, and promoted instead, what J.P. Sommerville described as, 'a fully-fledged and strikingly Bodinian theory of royal sovereignty.'¹⁹³ The resistance theories of the Monarchomachs and the puritans were, for Saravia, both innovative and seditious.

Richard Hooker appeared to be more conflicted. On the one hand, he condemned the notion of elective monarchy and hereditary succession espoused in the *Vindiciae* as being 'strange untrue and unnatuall conceites' devised by agitators seeking to animate 'unquiet spirites' into believing they may aspire to the throne. While on the other hand, Hooker admitted to a distinction between a monarchy in which ephoral powers 'had the most restrayned power' and a king that possessed absolute power and was 'invested with reall soveraigntie.'¹⁹⁴ In either case the commands of Romans 13 remained germane because 'publique power is above every soule', and it must always be obeyed 'unlesse there be reason shewed which may necessarily enforce that the lawe of reason or of God, doth enjoyne the contrarie.'¹⁹⁵ The religious conflict in France and political arguments espoused by Monarchomachs penetrated English consciousness. However, there was no great sympathy for the 'dangerous opinions' of those promoting theories of resistance and advocating the deposition of kings. The landscape of Elizabethan England did not provide fertile enough ground for the political theories of the Monarchomachs to fully bloom, because no comparable religious or political situation existed in order to tempt puritans into adopting their more radical doctrines. As a consequence, the ideas of the Monarchomachs, and their sympathisers, proved to be a stimulus to English political thought, even if the Elizabethan Protestants did, on the whole, chose to reject their conclusions concerning resistance.

Martin Marprelate

The embers of the Admonition Controversy were still glowing when Whitgift added fuel to the fire with revival of the *ex officio* oath intended to force non-conformist ministers to incriminate

¹⁹² Matthew Sutcliffe, *An ansvere to a certaine libel supplicatorie, or rather diffamatory* (London: By the deputies of Christopher Barker, 1592), STC 23450, pp.71-5.

¹⁹³ J.P. Sommerville, 'Hooker, Saravia & the Divine Right of Kings.' *History of Political Thought*, 6:2 (Summer 1983), pp. 229-45 (p.237).

¹⁹⁴ All references to Richard Hooker's *Of the Lawes of Ecclesiasticall Politie* are taken from the Folger Library Edition of the Workes of Richard Hooker, ed. W, Speed Hill (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1977—). Hooker, *Lawes* VIII.3.2; FLE 3:338.2-5; *Lawes* VIII.3.3; FLE 3:341.8-12.

¹⁹⁵ Hooker, *Lawes* I.16.5; FLE I:139.17-23.

themselves.¹⁹⁶ This was a full-frontal attack on the religious non-conformists and Whitgift's onslaught provoked renewed belligerency. During the parliament of 1584-85, offences such as pursuing innovation or impugning the Prayer Book were ideally handled within the diocese and the Church was to be kept free from parliamentary intrusion by operating as a distinct sphere of power. Opposition to the *ex officio* oath, claimed Whitgift, came only from those who hated government and sought to plunge the Church into anarchy.¹⁹⁷ Elizabeth stood firm behind Whitgift's policy of imposing conformity, but the puritans battled on and made effective use of the printing press. Dudley Fenner, a protégé of Thomas Cartwright, conceded that princes were a remedy for ignorant priests, but he insisted that a Christian's duty to obey civil governors, established in Romans 13, was superseded by obedience to spiritual ministers.¹⁹⁸ The doctrine of the Royal Supremacy continued to be fiercely challenged.

The puritans would be persistently accused of disloyalty to the Crown. However, Fenner's denial of Elizabeth's supremacy over the Church never actually challenged the Pauline premise that she had been divinely appointed. Indeed, very few puritans openly rejected the doctrine of Royal Supremacy. The bishop of Durham, James Pilkington disclosed to Rodolph Gualter that: 'We are under authority, and cannot make any innovation without sanction of the queen, or abrogate any thing without the authority of the laws.'¹⁹⁹ Nevertheless, a serious attempt to dispel charges of disobedience appeared in a raucous mud-slinging dialogue composed by John Udall. Udall rejected the accusation that presbyterians were in violation of Romans 13 and were the authors of the hurt and schism that had caused the realm to suffer the continued presence of so many papists.²⁰⁰ His defence was straightforward; not all disquiet was schism and the unacceptable abuses introduced by the bishops were the true cause of mischief within the Church.²⁰¹ Moreover, the Law of God was perfect but the bishops which dispensed it suffered human deficiency and could stray from the truth. Consequently, the conscience of Christians must not be bound by the wayward judgment of men and, sounding like the *Vindiciae*,

¹⁹⁶ See Jonathan Michael Gray, 'Conscience and the Word of God: Religious Arguments against the *Ex Officio* Oath', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 4:3 (July 2013), pp.494-512 and Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, pp.266-70.

¹⁹⁷ John Guy, 'The Elizabethan establishment and the ecclesiastical polity', in *The reign of Elizabeth I: Court and culture in the last decade*, ed. John Guy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp.126-49 and J.E. Neale, *Elizabeth I and her Parliaments 1584-1601* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1958), pp.65-6.

¹⁹⁸ Dudley Fenner, *A counter-poyson modestly written* (London: Robert Waldegraue, 1584), STC 10770, p.173; p.137.

¹⁹⁹ James Pilkington 'to Rodolph Gualter, Dated July 20, 1573', in *The Zurich Letters*, pp.286-8 (pp.287-8).

²⁰⁰ *A dialogue, concerning the strife of our churche wherein are answered diuers of those vniust accusations, wherewith the godly preachers and professors of the Gospell, are falsly charged* (London: Robert Walde-graue, 1584), STC 6801, pp.15-6; p.29.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p.32; pp.36-7.

he contended that God would never judge a man to be disobedient if he humbly disobeyed any worldly command not grounded in Scripture.²⁰²

Udall denounced the English bishops just as early reformers had the Roman clergy. He insisted the bishops were ambitious, they dishonoured the Gospel and maintained a corrupt ministry that placed their sovereign at risk by strengthening the hand of the Jesuits.²⁰³ It was the presbyterians, he attested, who were God's obedient messengers and they would fight against the insatiable 'Dogs' that burdened the Church.²⁰⁴ Nevertheless, Richard Bancroft almost revelled in poking the 'precisions' with a stick. The congregation at St. Paul's Cross were witness to a vivid portrait of volatility in which the revolutionary spirit of the puritans found in France and Scotland sought to destroy Elizabeth's supremacy.²⁰⁵ The opinions of Beza, the *Vindiciae* and Buchanan were denounced by Bancroft for containing 'strange and rebellious propositions.'²⁰⁶ These claims may have been overstated, but as Peter Lake suggests, 'there remained more than a grain of truth in them.'²⁰⁷ Bancroft contended that the non-conformists were so confused that they could not even find harmony amongst themselves. The precisions, he argued, resembled Catholic priest Nicholas Sander, who had contested that while the prince should promote religion, he possessed no power to constitute in matters of faith (*autoritas promouendi religionem, non constituendi*).²⁰⁸ The Church structure they advocated, Bancroft warned, was a sure-fire way to guarantee the return of the pope.²⁰⁹

Bancroft's sketch of the disciplinarian was a simple one: they sought to defraud princes of their rightful power by implementing an ecclesiastical structure that was neither proven by Scripture nor witnessed in the Apostolic Church. The substitution of the magistrate's lawful authority by Elders, he argued, contravened the declaration in Scriptures that stated kings and queens were 'the nursing Fathers and mothers' of the Church (Isaiah 49:23).²¹⁰ Instead, the structure of the Church should emulate that outlined by Chrysostom in his homily on Romans 13, where the duty of subjection and obedience was owed to natural superiors, for example servants to masters or sons to fathers. Moreover, Bancroft insisted that Chrysostom had clearly expressed that the Church faced the danger of turmoil, mischief and confusion if it failed to

²⁰² *A dialogue, concerning the strife of our churche*, pp.37-40.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, pp.105-7.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p.133-6.

²⁰⁵ Torrance Kirby and P.G. Stanwood, 'Introduction', in *Paul's Cross and the Culture of Persuasion in England, 1520-1640*, eds. by Torrance Kirby and P.G. Stanwood (Leiden: Brill, 2014), pp.1-19 (pp.14-5).

²⁰⁶ Bancroft, *A sermon preached at Paules Crosse*, p.78.

²⁰⁷ Peter Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans?: Presbyterianism and English Conformist Thought from Whitgift to Hooker* (London; Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1988), p.130.

²⁰⁸ Bancroft refers here to Sander's *De visibili Monarchia Ecclesiae* (1571). Bancroft, 'Certen slaunderous speeches', p.81. For Sander see chapter 8.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p.79; p.81.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.105.

accommodate rule and government.²¹¹ The sermon certainly raised puritan hackles and he was denounced for not only being in error but also of 'affirming her Majesty to be a petty pope.'²¹² Undeterred, Bancroft continued his attack, and again he refused to distinguish between the principles held by precisions and the sedition of the Monarchomachs. He condemned the Huguenots for authorising subjects to depose their princes, dismissed Cartwright's complaints as popish and insisted that the 'spitful railing' of Geneva declared to be a denial of princely supremacy.²¹³ Moreover, any theories of disobedience, including those of Goodman and Knox, were firmly identified as 'being of the Geneua humor.'²¹⁴

Bancroft had not engaged in an indiscriminate railing against all enemies. Rather he sought to demonstrate a common nefarious intent: the elimination of princely power within the Church. The demands of the presbyterians were a lethal cocktail of the volatile doctrines of the Monarchomachs and the radical Marian exiles blended together with a splash of poisonous popery. Some presbyterians famously responded to the sustained attacks with the rapid-fire publication of seven surreptitiously printed pamphlets, under the pseudonym of Martin Marprelate, which agitated for further church reform. The Marprelate Tracts (1588) were the result of the long standing presbyterian frustration and are therefore inseparable from the history of Elizabeth's reign.²¹⁵ Nevertheless, they represented a shift in approach as they were an *ad hominem* attack that shamed bishops by naming names and promoted an apostolic model of government by adopting the style of popular satire. Consequently matters of *adiaphora* again merged with anti-episcopal arguments and anti-clericalism. Bancroft maintained Starkey's position on *adiaphora* and he repelled the disciplinarians by citing Wolfgang Musculus: 'There be some whome no Church canne please, having always something to reprove in other men, but nothinge in them selves.'²¹⁶ The puritans were, then, persistent murmurers who could never be satisfied.

Consequently, the Marprelate Tracts were recognised as a direct challenge to established polity. But rather than making an original contribution the pamphlets embodied earlier positions found within *An Admonition to the Parliament* and Cartwright's polemical duel

²¹¹ Bancroft, 'Certen slaunderous speeches', pp.135-6.

²¹² 'Theses Martinianae', in *The Martin Marprelate Tracts: A Modernized and Annotated Edition*, ed. Joseph L. Black (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp.145-63 (p.157). Bancroft is notably singled out here. See theses 76, 108, 109, and 110.

²¹³ Richard Bancroft, *A suruay of the pretended holy discipline* (London: Iohn Wolfe, Thomas Scarlet, and Richard Field, 1593), STC 1352, p.15; pp.250-7.

²¹⁴ Richard Bancroft, *Daungerous positions and proceedings published and practised within the iland of Brytaine* (London: J. Windet, 1593), STC 1344.5, pp.14-8; pp.34-41.

²¹⁵ Leland H. Carlson, *Martin Marprelate, Gentleman: Master Job Throkmorton laid open in his colors* (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1981), pp.3-8.

²¹⁶ Bancroft, 'Certen slaunderous speeches', p.156.

with Whitgift.²¹⁷ Elizabeth was informed that the demands contained in Martin's 'lewd and seditious' *Epistle to the terrible priests* not only dishonoured God but also encouraged the subversion of both church and civil government.²¹⁸ The Queen responded by denouncing the tracts as 'notoriously vntrue, and slaundersous to the State, and against the godly reformation of Religion and Gouvernement Ecclesiasticall established by Law.' This was, according to Elizabeth and her government, an attempt to overthrow the Queen's lawful prerogative established in God's law.²¹⁹ The *Theses Martinianae* replied and among its multitude of 'demonstrative conclusions' was a rejection of the magistrate's role within the Church. It declared that any Church which contained officers other than 'pastors, doctors, elders and deacons' was grossly deformed. Elizabeth's government smelt more than a whiff of Anabaptism in the assertion that it was both unlawful and ungodly for the Church to be placed under the ordinance of the magistrate and any 'human law' which permitted magistrates and bishops to do so must be abrogated.²²⁰

The Marprelate Tracts sparked a counter polemical volley that resembled that of the earlier Admonition Controversy, with one side drawing attention to the danger of residual popery and the other making accusations of treachery. The bishop of Winchester, Thomas Cooper, offered a standard defence of the Elizabethan Settlement. He insisted that princes possessed the authority to prescribe over civil matters and *adiaphora*, and their pronouncements must be obeyed unless they contravened God's Word.²²¹ Cooper forewarned that:

if this outrageous spirit of boldenesse be not stopped speedily, I feare he wil proue himselfe to bee, not onely *Mar-prelate*, but *Mar-prince*, *Mar-state*, *Mar-lawe*, *Mar-magistrate*, and all together, vntill hee bring it to an Anabaptisticall equalitie and communitie.²²²

Cooper was not alone making this connection. Matthew Sutcliffe warned that the Martinists' hatred of the magistracy made them even more dangerous than the Anabaptists. He charged

²¹⁷ Joseph L. Black, 'Introduction', in *The Martin Marprelate Tracts: A Modernized and Annotated Edition*, ed. Joseph L. Black (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp.xv-cxii (p.xix).

²¹⁸ William Cecil, 'Lord Burghley's autographic Minutes of a letter to Archbishop Whitgift, on the first appearance of the Epistle: dated 14th November 1588', in *An Introductory Sketch to the Martin Marprelate Controversy 1588-1590*, ed. by Edward Arber (London: Archibald Constable and Co., 1895), pp.107-8 (p.107).

²¹⁹ Elizabeth I, *A proclamation against certaine seditious and schismatical bookes and libels* (London: Christopher Barker, 1588 [i.e. 1589]), STC 8182.

²²⁰ *Theses Martinianae*, pp.150-1.

²²¹ Thomas Cooper, *An admonition to the people of England wherein are answered, not onely the slaundersous vntruethes, reprochfully vttered by Martin the libeller* (London: Christopher Barker, 1589), STC 5682, pp.212-3.

²²² *Ibid.*, p.36.

them with treacherously swearing the Oath of Supremacy and simultaneously denying the Queen her rightful supremacy.²²³ Leonard Wright accused the Martinists with simple disobedience and Thomas Nash joined Bancroft in mocking their disunity and described them as ‘foolish builders of *Babel*.’²²⁴

It is important to recognise that the genre of the Marprelate Tracts ensured that the rules of normal academic or theological argument were not of great consequence. Martin’s polemic was intended to be consumed and disseminated in the streets and alehouses as much as it was the universities or rectories. The aim was to encourage wider participation in ecclesiological debate, and subsequently the tracts did not engage in high theologising. The Martinists attempted to deliver the presbyterian message that they did not deny the magistrate’s authority over the commonwealth, but rather they sought to banish an unbiblical episcopal structure that ruled over the English Church. Nevertheless, given the forceful nature of the tracts’ argument, it may appear surprising that none of the seven tracts turned to Romans 13 for support. The reason for the omission of Paul’s commands parallels the rationale behind Knox’s lack of engagement with Romans 13 in the *First Blast*: the precepts of obedience were not germane. The civil magistrate was not the rightful Head of the Church, and therefore the precepts of obedience were not appropriate. Accordingly, Elizabeth must not exceed her function and preside over the order of the Church. The Martinists sought to restore Christ to His rightful place as Head of the Church, and in doing so they believed the authority of the civil magistrate was not diminished or destroyed because Elizabeth remained the divinely sanctioned chief governor of the commonwealth.

However, Martin’s opponents were appalled by such a seditious argument, and some had no such reservation in calling upon Romans 13 for support. Wright proposed that in attempting to deprive Elizabeth of her rightful dignity and title the ‘seditious Schismatikes’ had contravened Romans 13 and he reminded them that ‘to resist her Maiesties proceedings, is to resist against God himselfe.’²²⁵ An anonymous poem simply accused Martin of being a Machiavellian traitor seeking to aid the non-conformist groups ‘pull Religion downe.’²²⁶ In a sermon at Bedford, Tobias Bland attempted to correct all the ‘erronious spirits’ whether Martinist, puritan, Brownist, Anabaptist or papist by reminding them of Peter and Paul’s demand for obedience to the ‘chief Magistrates.’ He accusatively asked: ‘For now what vncircumcised hart and mouth dare not whet his stile and sharpen his tongue to spit spight and venome, strife

²²³ Sutcliffe, *An answer to a certaine libel*, pp.90-1.

²²⁴ Leonard Wright, *A summons for sleepers* (London: John Wolfe, 1589), STC 26034.3, [-]1r. Thomas Nash, *A myrror for Martinists, and all other schismatiques* (London: Iohn Wolfe, 1590), STC 23628, p.7.

²²⁵ Leonard Wright, *The hunting of Antichrist With a caueat to the contentious* (London: Iohn Wolfe, 1589), STC 26031, pp.21-4.

²²⁶ *Marre Mar-Martin: or Marre-Martins medling* (London(?): Thomas Orwin?, 1589?), STC 17462.

& rebellion against the higher powers?'²²⁷ The allegations against the Martinists were persistent and were precisely summed up by Nash who contended that the rebellious 'monsters' taught 'no learning, no Magistrats, no Prince, no Church, no Sacrament, no praier, no nor God' to worship or fear.²²⁸

Richard Hooker's *Of the Lawes of Ecclesiasticall Politie* provided a magisterial diagnosis of the presbyterian affliction in a far more reasonable tone than Bancroft. Hooker sought to dispel the disciplinarian challenge to the ecclesiastical structure by persuading his opponents that the Elizabethan Settlement was doctrinally orthodox. He believed Elizabeth was blessed with sacred power and was 'God's most happy instrument, by him miraculously kept for works of so miraculous preservation and safety unto others.' Therefore, the people were not in subjugation but willingly placed themselves under Elizabeth's rule and sanctuary.²²⁹ Hooker understood all power to be of God and he treated the Royal Supremacy as a form of popular sovereignty held by consent of the people not 'as a right annexed by God to Kingship.'²³⁰ By way of Calvin's understanding of 'ephoral powers' which possessed the authority to restrain the power of Kings, Hooker distinguished between limited and absolute power and he attested both were legitimate.²³¹ It was in England's royal institution, founded upon the consent of the people, supported by custom and God's Law, that Elizabeth could claim supreme power over both temporal and spiritual affairs. As sovereign Elizabeth had no superior within the realm.

Hooker acknowledged the existence of both the laws of Reason and Nature.²³² The former directed beings to honour God their Creator and the latter not only demonstrated how to glorify Him but also aided the former law to guide the moral actions of men.²³³ However, because mankind participated in both the temporal and spiritual realm a further law was required to govern 'the demands and limits of its nature.'²³⁴ Therefore, God provided Paul with the commands of Romans 13 which attested that the 'publique power' of all societies was above every soul within it, and the principle application of this power was to provide laws to those it governed. These laws must be obeyed unless it was evident that they were contrary to the law

²²⁷ Tobias Bland, *A baite for Momus so called vpon occasion of a sermon at Bedford iniuriously traduced by the factious* (London: Iohn Wolfe, 1589), STC 3127, pp.35-6.

²²⁸ Thomas Nash, *Martins months minde that is* (London: Thomas Orwin, 1589). STC 17452, sig. C3r.

²²⁹ Hooker, *Lawes* VIII.3.2; *FLE* 3:336.16—337.1.

²³⁰ Hooker, *Lawes* VIII.3.2; *FLE* 3: 338.21—339.9. Alan Cromartie, 'Theology and Politics in Richard Hooker's Thought', *History of Political Thought*, 21:1 (Spring, 2000), pp.41-66 (p.43).

²³¹ Hooker, *Lawes* VIII.3.3; *FLE* 3:341.19—342.14. See also *Lawes* VIII.3.1; *FLE* 3:335.22-336.4.

²³² It is not permissible to discuss Hooker's understanding of Law in any greater detail. Instead see Damian Grace, 'Natural Law in Hooker's *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*', *The Journal of Religious History*, 21:1 (Feb., 1997), pp.10-22 and Torrance Kirby, 'Creation and Government: Eternal Law as the Fountain of Laws in Richard Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity*', in *Divine Creation and Ancient, Medieval, and Early Modern Thought*, eds. Michael Treschow, Willemien Otten and Walter Hannam (Leiden: Brill, 2007), pp.405-24.

²³³ Hooker, *Lawes* I.16.5; *FLE* 1:138.32—139.10.

²³⁴ Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans?:* pp.147-48.

of God.²³⁵ All power was derived of God either by His institution or permission: parents over children, husbands over wives and superiors over subjects. Hooker argued that it was necessary for the Church to be placed into the 'speciall care' of the magistrate to both ensure its correct order and that the people were suitably guided and governed. It was entirely appropriate, then, that the magistrate should be called the Head of the Church.²³⁶

Hooker provided support for the doctrine of the Royal Supremacy with a gloss of I Corinthians 3:21-23 and he placed particular emphasis on Paul's assertion 'all things are yours' by way of understanding the magistrate was directly under God on earth.²³⁷ This principle appears to be informed by Marsilius of Padua because Hooker sought to draw together civil and ecclesiastical power in the body of the godly prince.²³⁸ Consequently, this exegesis rejected Cartwright's version of the two kingdom doctrine and proposed something more akin to Luther in its place. The true 'head' of the Church was God and He was the fountainhead of life and His spiritual blessing poured into the body of the Church. The civil magistrate was God's principal instrument in the government of the Church on earth and Elizabeth was 'head' because she was His 'chiefest' overseer.²³⁹ The spiritual regiment was both invisible and visible: the former exercised by Christ alone and the latter was external provided by God to perform spiritual duties within the Church.²⁴⁰ Thus, Hooker sought to very precisely distinguish between something that appeared entirely inseparable: the visible and invisible Church.²⁴¹ The answer Hooker provided to the disciplinarian attack was entirely theological and unambiguous; Scripture had confirmed Elizabeth's Royal Supremacy.

Conclusion

Elizabethan England was a realm of mutually hostile Christian theologies and all insisted that Scripture authorised their own truth. In this conflict the interpretation of Romans 13, and the doctrine of Royal Supremacy would be fiercely contested. However, during the years that preceded and immediately succeeded Elizabeth's settlement of religion Protestants were placated enough to remain united against the threat of Catholicism rather than concerning themselves with trying to amend their imperfect friends. This was a muted but confused period

²³⁵ Hooker, *Laws* I.16.5; *FLE* 1:139.18-23.

²³⁶ Hooker, *Laws* VIII.4.6; *FLE* 3:369.1-24.

²³⁷ Hooker, *Laws* VIII.4.6; *FLE* 3:369.10-16.

²³⁸ See Torrance Kirby, "'Law Makes the King': Richard Hooker on Law and Princely Rule" in *A New Companion to English Renaissance Literature and Culture, Volume I*, ed. Michael Hattaway (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), pp.274-88 (p.282-3), and W.D.J. Cargill Thompson, 'The Source of Hooker's Knowledge of Marsilius of Padua', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 25:1 (Jan., 1974), pp.75-81.

²³⁹ Hooker, *Laws* VIII.4.8; *FLE* 3:374.6-16.

²⁴⁰ Hooker, *Laws* VIII.4.9; *FLE* 3:377.2-10.

²⁴¹ W. Bradford Littlejohn, *Richard Hooker: A Companion to His Life and Work* (Eugene, Or.: Cascade Books, 2015), p.151.

in which some Protestants waited for Elizabeth to take the next step towards ensuring that England would enjoy a purer form of religion. There was a clear disparity of vision between Elizabeth, who understood her religious Settlement to be permanent, and a frustrated minority that demanded further reformation to expel the remaining traces of popery. This discontent unleashed a persistent challenge from within England's Church. Of especial concern were matters of liturgy, doctrine or morality that were neither commanded nor forbidden in Scripture, and consequently the princely prerogative over *adiaphora* granted to the Queen by the Royal Supremacy became a polarising issue.

The heated debate over *adiaphora* struck at the heart of civil obedience and challenged Elizabeth's position as Supreme Governor of the Church of England. However, the antecedence of this challenge can be traced back to the 'Troubles' at Frankfurt, and subsequently the exile Church in Geneva during the reign of Mary. The rejection of the Edwardian Prayer Book and the composition of a *Confession of Faith* were a conscious decision to emulate the religious discipline of Geneva. The *Confession* explicitly diminished the magistrate's power within the Church, but it did not eliminate its divine function. Rather the exiles prescribed the 'political magistrate' a custodial duty to defend the Church from all those that sought to draw believers away from Christ. This was a clear refusal to recognise any civil magistrate as the Head of the Church because this dignity belonged to Christ alone. The Geneva Bible reinforced this vision of the Church. The annotations made it clear that it was the divine duty of princes and magistrates to set forth God's Word and to preserve the Church. The exiles delivered a message to Elizabeth that was far from ambiguous; it was her duty to complete the godly reformation begun under Edward VI, and build Christ's temple. Moreover, they warned that ruling by anything other than godly means was tyranny and such rulers may be deposed by the righteous.

Despite this stark warning Elizabeth had no desire to replicate the Genevan model of Church governance, and instead her Church would more closely reflect the ecclesiology of Zurich. With Elizabeth enshrined as Head of the Church by act of parliament it is unsurprising that she demanded to exercise the same ecclesiastical powers enjoyed by her father, and as such the autonomy to preside over *adiaphora* enjoyed by the exiles in Geneva was rejected outright. The preface to the Bishops' Bible was an attempt by Parker to subdue the presbyterian voices that insisted that church ceremonies and vestments were at best not edifying, and at worst dangerously popish. Parker's warned that not only did the presbyterian model of government equate to a direct challenge to princely authority, but it simultaneously violated the commands of Romans 13. Elizabeth and her government were adamant that princely authority and the precepts of obedience revealed by Paul were in no way adiaphoric. What the battle over *adiaphora* demonstrated was that the Royal Supremacy was beginning to be re-evaluated by a determined Protestant minority.

At the very heart of the conflict over *adiaphora* was obedience, hierarchy, order, and the function of the higher power as Head of the Church. These were, in a nutshell, the very obligations that Paul had revealed to both the Christian and the government in Romans 13. The primary motivation of those who participated in the polemical exchanges was not a desire to dishonour the prince or subject people to temporal yoke but rather a sincere desperation to respect God's will. It is a significant leap from opposing a king's policy and being willing to depose or even execute them over it. We must not fall into the trap of conflating passive disobedience with active resistance. Nevertheless, conflict over *adiaphora* was not a peripheral debate, it was central to the English reformers' thinking and the matter was the seedbed for a persistent Protestant challenge to Elizabeth's authority over the Church. As a consequence, the *Admonition to Parliament* and the Marprelate Tracts were stimulated by similar impulses: the dethroning of the civil magistrate from headship of the Church, and the restoration of Christ to His rightful place. As a result the ecclesiastical structure of the Church was declared to be anti-Christian, devilish, and contrary to Scripture.

The Elizabethan regime recognised a clear and present danger in granting subjects the liberty to judge for themselves the legitimacy of the laws, proclamations and ordinances of magistrates. The conformists again turned to Romans 13 in order to firmly stress the duty of all subjects to obey their magistrates unless they commanded anything that directly contravened God's Word. Conversely, the puritans subscribed to the same position previously adopted by Goodman, and emphasised obedience to God as the positive primary action concerning Christian subjection to civil authority. The non-conformists insisted that the prince had no authority to legislate over matters of conscience, and suggested that the enforcement of the regime's decrees over religion was an act of tyranny. It was argued that leaving adiaphoric matters to the conscience of the Christian actually prevented the precepts of Romans 13 from being violated. This was not an attempt to banish the civil magistrate from the Church, but instead an alternative vision of the Church in which the function of Elizabeth and her government was demarcated as custodial. In order to reconcile their consciences the English Protestants once again reached out to their continental brethren for guidance and illumination. What proved greatly problematic was the ease in which both sides of the argument found authoritative support in the writings of the very same authors. As a consequence the matters of Church governance proved to be an enduring obstacle to unity within the Elizabethan Church.

During the Reformation period England was never isolated from the political and religious thought of continental Europe. The political ideologies and debates that were aroused during the religious wars in France did not go unnoticed in England. The idea of limited government and princely absolutism were not alien concepts to English political thinkers. However, the news coming from France, and Geneva, was that it was far better to desert a king

than God. Furthermore, the pious must not tolerate crimes against God, and failure to act made Christians complicit in their ruler's abrogation of divine law. Once again the primary action of Christian obedience was placed in Acts 5:29 because it was the duty of the righteous to disobey the impious commands of tyrant and render themselves to God. The Monarchomachs were vociferous in their assertion that Paul had not demanded obedience to ungodly tyrants, and they insisted that God had provided a lawful antidote to oppression: the inferior magistrate. It was the inherent duty of the lesser authority to admonish or even depose the higher power, and this was reinforced by the Pauline precept that rulers must be a terror for evil and protect the good. Therefore, tyrannous rulers were subject to the coercive sword, because civil authority was not absolute. The instrument of God's wrath identified in Romans 13:4 was the possession of the entire magistracy.

While some Englishman were receptive to the notions of popular monarchy and princely deposition, most believed that the political concepts of the Monarchomachs were highly seditious and overflowed with revolutionary spirit. For Bancroft and Sutcliffe the presbyterian doctrines of disobedience greatly corresponded with those emanating from France. Therefore, the radical concepts espoused by the Monarchomachs following the massacres throughout France had indeed penetrated the consciousness of English political thought. Ultimately, as Hooker clearly recognised, all civil authority was founded upon popular consent, even if the fundamental origin of that authority was by divine institution or permission. It was deemed necessary by God to place the Church into the care of the magistrate in order to ensure it was both correctly ordered, and that the people were suitably guided towards Christ. In the end Elizabeth's unsettled settlement of religion, and the ecclesiastical structure of the English Church remained in place. Romans 13 was integral to the hostile Protestant exchanges that sought to establish the rightful place of the higher power within the Church in accordance with God's will. The doctrine of Royal Supremacy survived the separate, yet related, waves of conflict that threatened to erode its Pauline foundations, and the civil magistrate remained as God's principal instrument in the government of the visible Church.

Chapter 8: A Challenge from Without? (1558-1603)

Introduction

As the previous chapter has shown, internal wrangling engulfed theological debate concerning the nature of the English Church. However, this conflict must not obscure the fact that the Protestants recognised that their principal enemy was papistry. England had lost both Mary and Pole on 17 November 1558, but English Catholicism did not die with them. Subsequently, Elizabeth's first parliament extended the Oath of Supremacy and criminalised the celebration of the Mass and other essentials of their faith. Nevertheless, Catholics faced little active persecution and the prohibitive measures that were installed to foster conformity were widely evaded.¹ The Queen and her government attempted to curtail clandestine Catholicism by forbidding 'upon payne of imprisonment' any ministers or subjects congregating in secret to celebrate Mass or 'any maner of deuine service.'² England's Catholics existed in an atypical circumstance: they held the majority faith but this differed from their anointed sovereign. The emerging confessional patchwork of Elizabethan England ensured that the debate over obedience and resistance would never disappear and religious non-conformity was a permanent menace to Elizabeth's government. Following the death of Mary the religious tables had turned once more and Catholics again needed to wrestle with the theological nuances contained within Romans 13.

For Catholics living under a heretical Queen the question of fidelity was a recurring one and certainly the great majority considered themselves loyal to their sovereign. Indeed, the exiled John Martial sought to demonstrate that Catholics were truly obedient subjects: 'There is no blast blowen against the monstrous regiment of women...there no word vttered against dewe obedience to the soueraine.'³ Nevertheless, English pulpits were filled by preachers bellowing out sermons reminding subjects of their duty of obedience to princely authority as prescribed by Romans 13. Generally Catholics sought to swerve the Pauline injunction in political exchanges, but following papal support for insurgency, Jesuit missions and Spanish invasion this was an impossible endeavour. These events only served to provide Protestants with opportunities to portray Catholicism as a seedbed of sedition. The repeated Catholic expressions

¹ Arnold Pritchard, *Catholic Loyalism in Elizabethan England* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979), p.3.

² Elizabeth I, *By the Quene the Quenes Maiestie vnderstandyng that of late tyme sundrye persons beyng infected with certayne dangerous and pernicious opinions in matters of religion* (London: Rycharde Iugge and Iohn Cawood, 1560), STC 7916.5.

³ John Martiall, *A replie to M. Calfhills blasphemous answer made against the Treatise of the crosse* (Louaine: Iohn Bogard, 1566), STC 17497, sig. **1v.

of loyalty and obedience were undermined by the adoption by some of the theoretical justifications for active resistance. The polemic had turned full circle with Catholics adopting concepts of popular sovereignty to support the doctrine of papal supremacy. After decades of denouncing reformers for novelty, Catholics now provided an exegesis of Romans 13 that proved to be equally innovative in debates concerning political obedience. English Catholicism had survived the loss of Mary and Pole, and what emerged was a starker and more militant form of the faith.

A Policy of Persuasion II

William Cecil was convinced that the nation's Catholic enemies were circling and waiting for the opportunity to destroy Protestant England. Cecil found it inconceivable that Catholics could truly love and be loyal to both Queen and pope. However, the Catholic responses to Protestant accusations of disloyalty were not driven by changes in doctrine but by the reality of living in a state governed by a heretical sovereign. This dilemma necessitated a practical reading of Scripture and consequently Romans 13 was 'consistently molded, and remolded, to fit the changing debates of the time.'⁴ The common policy Catholics adopted was persuasion but attitudes became more belligerent when a papal-led Spanish offensive against England was anticipated. Nevertheless, during the early years of Elizabeth's reign English Catholics pursued a policy of political non-resistance. The bishop of Winchester, John White, was a solitary voice in uttering words of resistance. He prophetically warned that the returning exiles sought to infect the people with their heresy and if the spiritual ministers failed to withstand these ravenous wolves their flocks will be devoured.⁵ Compellingly his oration adopted Bucer's position by imploring lesser magistrates not to neglect their function. They must protect their subjects with the sword, provide justice and good counsel because otherwise God would punish them severely.⁶

Initially religious tension was dampened by Elizabeth's inclination to pursue a policy of moderation rather than persecution towards religious non-conformity. This policy permitted an auspicious juxtaposition with the seditious doctrines of Ponet, Goodman and Knox. Consequently, the Catholic condemnation of the restoration of a reformed faith was firm but far from belligerent. Catholic writers were well aware that although Elizabeth had returned the realm to practising the new faith, neither she nor the Church were officially under papal interdict. However, John Jewel's 'Challenge Sermon' first delivered at Paul's Cross in November

⁴ Bowman, 'Catholics and Romans 13', p.533.

⁵ John White, 'A sermon preached at the funerals of Queen Mary: by the Bishop of Winchester', in *Ecclesiastical Memorials.*, Vol. III, Part II, ed. John Strype (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1822), pp.536-50 (p.542).

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.542-3.

1559 triggered a decade-long controversy over who represented the true nature of Christ's Church.⁷ Jewel waved away any claims of papal supremacy by denying the dogmatic principles outlined in *Unam sanctam* and Jean Gerson's contention that the Bishop of Rome possessed both the spiritual and temporal swords.⁸ He grounded Elizabeth's Church in the examples of the Apostles and the authority of the primitive Church rather than the customs of 'old catholic' doctors, fathers or councils.⁹ For Jewel this was the restoration of the true 'catholic church of Christ' after centuries of contrary teaching and practice.¹⁰

Jewel's provocation extracted numerous responses seeking to refute his assertion that English pulpits were now teaching 'Christ's catholic doctrine.'¹¹ The Jesuit John Rastell countered with an understanding of the papal supremacy that recognised even the lowliest of priests to be more honourable than the greatest of emperors.¹² The transitory nature of the prince's physical power paled in comparison to a bishop's authority in the eternal Church.¹³ Rastell denounced Jewel's understanding of obedience as a simple misreading of Romans 13. However, what was significant about this response was the appeal to Hebrews 13:17, because it permitted Catholics to uphold obedience to worldly authority but simultaneously subordinate it to spiritual power.¹⁴ This provided the opportunity to mock the premise of the Royal Supremacy because, he argued, under such doctrine it would be considered against English Law to appeal to the counsel of St. Peter or Paul if they resided in Rome. The evidence was irrefutable for Rastell; Romans 13 was continually distorted by heretics, such as Jewel, to justify the bequeathing of supremacy to kings directly under God.

The Catholic responses remained more apologetic than confrontational. The Portuguese bishop, Jeronimo Osorio da Fonseca was savvy enough to place his fist in a velvet glove when he attempted to persuade Elizabeth of her errors and return England to the bosom of the Mother Church. However, Osorio's epistle to Elizabeth contained a rather ill-defined statement

⁷ Norman Jones, *The Birth of the Elizabethan Age: England in the 1560s* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), pp.69-71 and Gary W. Jenkins, *John Jewel and the English National Church: The Dilemmas of an Erastian Reformer* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), pp.70-7.

⁸ John Jewel, 'A Sermon Preached at Paul's Cross', in *The Works of John Jewel, Bishop of Salisbury*, Vol. I, ed. by John Ayre for the Parker Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1845), pp.1-25 (p.14).

⁹ Jewel, 'Sermon at Paul's Cross', pp.3-4; p. 20.

¹⁰ Ibid., p.5. Angela Ranson, 'The Challenge of Catholicity: John Jewel at Paul's Cross', in *Paul's Cross and the Culture of Persuasion in England, 1520-1640*, eds. by Torrance Kirby and P.G. Stanwood (Leiden: Brill, 2014), pp.203-21.

¹¹ John Jewel, 'An Apology or Answer in Defence of the Church of England', in *The Works of John Jewel, Bishop of Salisbury*, Vol. III, ed. by John Ayre for the Parker Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1848), pp.49-108 (p.85).

¹² John Rastell, *A confutation of a sermon, pronou[n]ced by M. Iuell, at Paules crosse, the second Sondaie before Easter* (Antwerp: Aegidius Diest, 1564), STC 20726. sig. O6r.

¹³ Rastell, *A confutation of a sermon*, sigs. O7v-O8r.

¹⁴ John Rastell, *The third booke, declaring by examples out of auncient counceles, fathers, and later writers, that it is time to beware of M. Iewel* (Antuerpiae: Ex officina Ioannis Foulerei, 1566), STC 20728.5, Sig. Z6r.

regarding princely eminence in which he admitted 'all Kynges for theyr owne parte, are the Vicars of God.'¹⁵ But his vague assertion was not a concession because he still stressed 'the absolute incompatibility of monarchical authority and Protestant reformation.'¹⁶ Nevertheless, Osorio was joined by Thomas Harding in contending that the true peril to English souls came not from Elizabeth herself but her oppressive 'craftye council.' These wicked ministers had persuaded her to separate from the harmony with Christian princes and both Osorio and Harding urged her to reject the heretical faith and embrace 'religion purely.'¹⁷ It was Osorio's purpose to sharply distinguish between loyal Catholics whose obedience was only limited by divine law and what he believed to be Protestant hypocrisy and disorder.¹⁸

Osorio represented an emerging theme. The abbot of Westminster, John Feckenham, spoke before Parliament to urge Elizabeth to reject the heresy and rebelliousness of Protestantism. Only Catholicism, he contended, truly taught humble obedience to God, sovereign and 'all other superiour powers.' It was not Catholics, he reminded Elizabeth, that openly disobeyed her sister's royal proclamations, blasphemously trampled the sacrament under their feet, and de-spoiled churches.¹⁹ The bishop of Winchester, Robert Horne, rejected Feckenham's expression of fealty. He echoed Cecil's sentiment by insisting that those upholding the papal primacy could never show true obedience to the crown. Horne sought to convince Feckenham that Elizabeth's rightful possession of ecclesiastical authority was confirmed by I Peter 2 and Romans 13.²⁰ He insisted that Paul had revealed that the prosperity of God's people and the true religion 'springeth from the rule and gouvernement of kynges and Magistrates, vnto the weale of the people.'²¹

¹⁵ Jeronimo Osorio da Fonseca, *An epistle of the reuerend father in God Hieronymus Osorius Bishop of Arcoburge in Portugale* (Antwerp: Iohn Latius, 1565), STC 18888. Sig. B3r.

¹⁶ Anne McLaren, 'Reading Sir Thomas Smith's *De Republica Anglorum* as Protestant Apologetic', *The Historical Journal*, 42:4 (1999), pp.911-39 (p. 923).

¹⁷ Thomas Harding, *A confutation of a booke intituled An apologie of the Church of England* (Antwerpe: By Ihon Laet, 1565), STC 12762, Sig. *5. Osorio da Fonseca, *An epistle*, sigs. D2r-D3v.

¹⁸ Osorio da Fonseca, *An epistle*, sigs. H1r-H1v.

¹⁹ John Feckenham, '[House of Lords] Abbot Feckenham's speech on the uniformity bill, 27/28 April (?)', in *PPE*, pp.27-32 (pp.30-1). Feckenham produced a tract, *The declaration of suche scruples, and staies of conscience, touchinge the Othe of the Supremacy*, which is now lost. However, he was later refuted point-by-point by theologian William Fulke in *A confutation of a popishe, and sclaunderous libelle in forme of an apologie* (London: By Ihon Kingston, 1571), STC 11426.2. It is from Fulke's reply that I take Feckenham's views. See Alexandra Walsham, *Church Papists: Catholicism, Conformity, and Confessional Polemic in Early Modern England* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1993), p.24.

²⁰ Robert Horne, *An answeare made by Rob. Bishoppe of Wynchester, to a booke entituled, The declaration of suche scruples, and staies of conscience, touchinge the Othe of the Supremacy* (London: Henry Wykes, Anno. 1566), STC 13818, sigs. C1r-D4r. The most applicable Old Testament passages used by Horne are II Samuel, Deuteronomy 13 and 17, and the examples of kings possessing spiritual power were Hezekiah and Josiah.

²¹ *Ibid.*, sig. E2v.

Thomas Stapleton's retort to Horne not only provided a straightforward defence of Two Sword theory which confined the prince's coercive duty under the authority of the spiritual magistrate, but also defended Catholics, like Feckenham, who had refused to subscribe to the Oath of Supremacy.²² Thus, he argued that by rejecting the oath Catholics were not dishonouring Elizabeth but rather acting upon conscience because this vow was not observed in the canons and laws of the Holy Church.²³ He argued that this was a delimitation of princely power which even 'the soberer sort of Protestants' would recognise because Elizabeth's spiritual function extended only to ensuring the observance of the faith and punishing the wicked. However, Louvain exile Nicholas Sander was more provocative and he provided a glimmer of his theory of political resistance that was soon to come. He understood that that royal power was an instrument created to serve God's 'eternal purpose' and conceived of His 'angry permission' rather than merciful grace and election.²⁴ Sander recognised that royal office rested upon the consent of men and this was confirmation that it would always be superseded by the superior and more perfect spiritual power because this was established directly by God.²⁵

The most significant English Catholic publisher during the 1560s and early 1570s was John Fowler and his considerable output included the controversial and devotional works by Thomas Harding, William Allen, Thomas Stapleton, Richard Bristow and Nicholas Sander. His publication of Peter Frarin's vociferous declaration of Protestant duplicity, *An oration against the vnlawfull insurrections of the protestantes of our time* (1566), gathered its ammunition from the exiles' assaults on Mary I which served to support the claim that English evangelicals were regicidal rebels.²⁶ Consequently, Frarin did not hesitate to contend Protestants 'hadde the words in their mouthes, the Sword in their handes: their word sounded peace, theyr Sword coyned war.'²⁷ However, Catholics were now trapped in the same ideological dilemma previously faced by the Marian evangelicals and it is unsurprising that Elizabeth, like her three predecessors, would suffer insurgency. The Northern Rebellion (1569) was a hastily ill-planned affair that was a product of a range of motives but because Mary, Queen of Scots appeared to be intimately associated religious motivations cannot be considered discrete from this attempt at Elizabeth's disposition.²⁸ The Parliamentarian Thomas Norton seized upon this treachery and borrowed

²² Thomas Stapleton, *A counterblast to M. Hornes vayne blaste against M. Fekenham* (Louanii: Ioannem Foulurum, 1567), STC 23231, sig. S4r.

²³ *Ibid.*, sig. D2v.

²⁴ Nicholas Sander, *The rocke of the Church wherein the primacy of S. Peter and of his successours the Bishops of Rome is proued out of Gods worde* (Lovanii: Ioannem Foulurum, 1567, STC 21692, p.51.

²⁵ Sander, *The rocke of the Church*, pp. 52-3.

²⁶ Petrus Frarinus, *An oration against the vnlawfull insurrections of the protestantes of our time* (Antverpiae: Ioannis Fouluri, 1566). STC 11333, sigs. E5v-E6r; Sig. F2r.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, sig. B4r.

²⁸ Susan E. Taylor, 'The Crown and the North of England, 1559-70: a study of the rebellion of the Northern Earls, 1569-70, and its causes' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Manchester, 1981) and K. J.

Frarin's accusatorial pen to declare the conspirators were deceitful for feigning loyalty while simultaneously rejecting their Queen and God's ordinance to obey.²⁹

While the rebellion did not prove to be a serious threat to Elizabeth, it did confirm in Cecil's mind that urgent action was needed. The rebellion demonstrated the vulnerability of England's military defences and the incompatibility of Catholicism with loyalty to the crown, both of which, Cecil believed, could easily be exploited by Elizabeth's enemies.³⁰ While the rebels met with greater repression than previous Tudor conspirators, the bellowing condemnation from the pulpit was identical. Thomas Drant's sermon at Windsor Court supported the 'good policie' to punish the rebels who had proven themselves to be enemies of both God and their Queen. While Drant called for Elizabeth to be merciful, he also reminded her that she did not bear the sword in vain.³¹ The rebellion, he insisted, was conclusive proof that 'no perfect Papist can be to any Christian Prince a good subiect.'³² The lawyer Norton declared that the rebels faced eternal damnation because they had 'forsaken faith & dutie to God, naturall loue and dutie to the realme, alleageance and dutie to the Croune, obedience and duetie to lawe and gouernement.'³³ The rebels, he claimed, had forfeited their right to be considered either Englishmen or Christians in their treason against God and Queen.³⁴ The principles of Romans 13 were applied by poet Edmund Elviden to support his judgment that the rebellion was a rejection of God's love because Scripture bound all subjects, in fear and duty, not to resist their prince or 'earthly magistrates.'³⁵

The proposition that Catholics suffered from innate disloyalty to earthly rulers was put to the test by the promulgation of *Regnans in excelsis* (1570). The excommunication of Elizabeth sought to place English Catholics on a spiritual hook and Pope Pius V's ferocious castigation absolved them from fealty and obedience by declaring Elizabeth a heretical usurper. Moreover, those that failed to comply with the bull will be likewise placed under anathema by the authority of Peter's successor who alone Christ 'made ruler over all peoples and kingdoms.'³⁶ The bull was

Kesselring, *The Northern Rebellion of 1569: Faith, Politics and Protest in Elizabethan England* (Palgrave, 2007), p.52.

²⁹ Thomas Norton, *To the Quenes Maiesties poore deceyued subiectes of the north countrey* (London: Henrie Bynneman, 1569), STC 18680, sig. A4v.

³⁰ Stephen Alford, *Burghley: William Cecil at the Court of Elizabeth I* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), p.160.

³¹ Thomas Drant, *Two sermons preached the one at S. Maries Spittle on Tuesday in Easter weeke 1570 and the other at the court at Windsor the Sonday after twelfth day, being the viij of Ianuary, before in the yeare 1569* (London: Iohn Daye, 1570?), STC 7171.5, sigs. I7v-I8r.

³² *Ibid.*, sigs. K3r.

³³ Norton, *To the Quenes Maiesties poore deceyued subiectes*, sigs. G1r-G2v.

³⁴ Thomas Norton, *A warning agaynst the dangerous practises of papistes and specially the parteners of the late rebellion* (London: Iohn Daye, 1569), STC 18685.7.

³⁵ Edmund Elviden, *A neweyer gift to the rebellious persons in the north partes of England* (London: Richarde Watkyns, 1570), STC 7625, sig. B3r.

³⁶ 'Regnans in excelsis', in *TCD*, pp.425-8 (pp. 425-7).

clumsy but it did explicate the link between disloyalty to Elizabeth and reverence to the pope.³⁷ But while Thomas H. Clancy is correct to assert that neither side of the religious divide in England possessed any great desire to give prominence to the bull, it is wrong to believe that it was essentially a 'dead letter.'³⁸ The force of the bull was not found in the general acceptance of its canonical legitimacy—it was largely eschewed despite a sustained effort to distribute it across Europe—but in its mere existence.³⁹ Consequently, the implementation of the bull effected a theoretical shift in Catholic political thought. *A Treatise of Treasons against Q. Elizabeth, and the Crowne of England* (1572) asked English Catholics to consider whether religion could be found in the hearts of their superiors, but it did not articulate a theory of resistance.⁴⁰ Rather it provided 'an inverted mirror image' of the official propaganda denouncing Catholics as seditious and called for Elizabeth to liberate herself from her deceptive advisors and reconcile with Rome in order that she may not only regain the love and obedience of her people but find again the honour of God.⁴¹

Sander's *De visibili monarchia ecclesie libri octo* (1571) was the first to demonstrate a truly revolutionary thrust. As Stefania Tutino explained: 'the Catholic Church is defined as a "visible monarchy", a temporal institution existing in reality [and is] diametrically opposed to a conception of the church as a community of the devout united by a spiritual bond.' Sander augmented his earlier judgment concerning the nature of princely power by stressing that the spiritual power that presided over the souls of men was more sublime than any that merely governed over earthly matters. The ultimate origin of all power was divine but the "visible monarchy" was ruled by the papacy because its power uniquely emanated from God. This monarchical concept entirely validated the papal bull because the spiritual power was conceived as God's only direct representative upon earth. The civil and spiritual authority were aspects of a single entity within a unified church and this hierarchy permitted the pope to censure subordinates, depose heretical rulers and release subjects from obedience which then

³⁷ Walsham, *Church Papists*, p. 13.

³⁸ Clancy takes the view that the bull had little direct influence but more recent work by Muller suggests otherwise. See Thomas H. Clancy, *Papist Pamphleteers: The Allen-Persons Party and the Political Thought of the Counter-Reformation in England, 1552-1615* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1962), p.47 and Aislinn Muller, 'Transmitting and Translating the Excommunication of Elizabeth I', *Studies in Church History*, 53 (2017), pp.210-22. These polemical exchanges did breathe new life into the bull during the 1580s when England became subject to a determined Jesuit missionary campaign. See below.

³⁹ For more detail on the bull's distribution see Muller, 'Transmitting and Translating', p.214.

⁴⁰ A. C. Southern attributes the work to John Leslie, however, Bossy questions this. See, Southern, *Elizabethan Recusant Prose, 1559-1582: A historical and critical account of the books of the Catholic refugees printed and published abroad and at secret presses in England together with an annotated bibliography of the same* (London: Sands, 1950), p.447 and Bossy, 'The Character of Elizabethan Catholicism', *Past and Present* 21 (1962), pp.39-59.

⁴¹ Peter Lake, *Bad Queen Bess? Libels, Secret Histories, and the Politics of Publicity in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth I* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), pp.70-83. *A treatise of treasons against Q. Elizabeth, and the crowne of England* (Louvain: J. Fowler, 1572), STC 7601, sigs. Y3v; Y4r-Y4v.

exonerated them from accusations of rebellion.⁴² Subsequently the civil power resembled a popular monarchy and a true Christian prince would consent to being guided and mastered by the priesthood. The prince affirmed this twice: firstly, at his baptism where he joined the Church and secondly, upon his coronation where he submitted to the unction of the priest and swore to protect the faith. This represented a divine pact between prince and Church, and failure to perform his duty risked deposition.⁴³

Elizabeth's retreat from the true Church was a breach of this spiritual contract and this not only released her subjects from their obligation of obedience but also provided legitimate grounds to resist a heretical queen. As a consequence of the Queen's failure to uphold her sacred duty, Sander had recognised, just as Knox had previously in the *First Blast*, the precepts of obedience in Romans 13 were not germane. He never denied Paul's assertion concerning the origin of power, but he notably swerved the Apostles' rejection of active resistance.⁴⁴ Therefore, the Treasons Act (1571) fiercely renounced the papal censure and declared that anyone holding, affirming or publishing anything that denied Elizabeth's legitimacy was a traitor and they would suffer accordingly.⁴⁵ Once again the regime instructed preachers to bluster from the pulpit and *A Homily against Disobedience and Wilful Rebellion* (1570) was a discernible attempt at fomenting greater loyalty by reminding subjects that princes reign by God's ordinance. The sermon opened by reciting Romans 13:1-7 and I Peter 2:13-18 in their entirety before Psalm 82:6 is introduced to affirm the god-like qualities of kings. The homily contended that the more a prince replicates God's regiment, the greater blessing and mercy both he and his subjects would receive. Conversely, the more they deviate from this divine example, the greater scourge the prince would become because wicked governors are placed by God's providence to punish evildoers.⁴⁶ Furthermore, the congregation's ears were filled with well-rehearsed tropes concerning the pope's efforts to usurp princely power.

The homily had delivered a fierce condemnation of the northern rebels and an extensive treatment on the duty of subjects to obey even tyrannical kings. Nevertheless, the arrival of Mary, Queen of Scots in England during 1568, following her forced abdication the previous year, was a troubling matter. The rebellions and the Ridolfi Plot (1571), which sought to place Mary upon the English throne, demonstrated that her continued presence was an enticement to

⁴² Stefania Tutino, *Law and Conscience: Catholicism in Early Modern England, 1570-1615* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp.22-3.

⁴³ Peter Holmes, *Resistance and Compromise: The Political Thought of the Elizabethan Catholics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p.1982), p.29.

⁴⁴ Bowman, 'Elizabethan Catholics and Romans 13', p.537.

⁴⁵ 'An Act whereby certain offenses be made treasons', in *TCD*, pp.73-7 (p.75).

⁴⁶ 'A Homily against Disobedience and Wilful Rebellion', in *Certain Sermons or Homilies Appointed to Be Read in Churches in the Time of Queen Elizabeth*, published under the Direction of the Tract Committee (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1890), pp.587-640 (p.592).

revolt. Indeed, the bishop of Ross, John Leslie, attempted to make the case for Mary to succeed Elizabeth in a bold solution to the problems Catholics faced.⁴⁷ The Parliament of 1572 identified the desperate need to address the anxiety created by Mary who, for many, lingered like a menacing spider. The choice before Elizabeth and parliament was, according to Paul Wentworth, 'whither we should call for an axe or an acte.'⁴⁸ The bishops applied great pressure upon Elizabeth in a manoeuvre that Patrick Collinson described as 'double-distilled resistance theory.'⁴⁹ They forcefully reminded Elizabeth that Romans 13 prescribed that she must protect the realm, administer justice and be 'the revenger of wrath towards him that hath done evell.' This dramatic subversion of Paul's commands left no room for ambiguity; God will punish all magistrates for neglecting their divine duty.

The bishops had delivered their explicit verdict. Mary must be punished for her crimes and they warned Elizabeth that if she failed to execute the duties outlined in Romans 13 both her realm and dignity would be in peril. Moreover, it was God's wish to punish by death any that sought to seduce the faithful into superstition and idolatry. Consequently, they turned, like Goodman and Knox, to Deuteronomy 13 and demanded that Elizabeth should not show Mary pity or compassion for her treachery against God.⁵⁰ However, others did not share their certainty and disturbingly the Bishops had, for many, endorsed an act of regicide. The vexing question was whether a queen could be subject to the law and charged with treason. Francis Alford was unconvinced and argued Mary should be provided due process. His conscience was obviously troubled by the prospect of men condemning God's anointed. Thomas Wilson conceded that condemning a king was an agonising undertaking but he insisted that wickedness must be punished and argued Mary was merely a private person because a king from another land was no king of England.⁵¹ Wilson's almost flippant argument did not betray the persistent menace many in parliament felt by Elizabeth allowing Mary to linger. Nevertheless, the bishops had delivered a hammer blow by subverting Romans 13 in an attempt to admonish Elizabeth into addressing the Catholic threat. Elizabeth left the chamber fully aware that failure to execute the duties of her divine office would place her queenship in great jeopardy. But Elizabeth continued to frustrate those baying for Mary's blood.⁵²

⁴⁷ See John Leslie, *A treatise concerning the defence of the honour of the...Princesse, Marie Queene of Scotland* (Leodii [and Louvain]: Gualterum Morberium and J. Fowler, 1571), STC 15506.

⁴⁸ 'Thomas Cromwell's journal, 8 May-30 June [1572]', in *PPE*, pp.336-418 (p.376). See Gerald Butler, "'An Axe or an Acte": The Parliaments of 1572 and Resistance Theory in Early Elizabethan England', *Canadian Journal of History/Annales Canadiennes d'Historie*, 19, (December 1984), pp.349-59.

⁴⁹ Collinson, *Elizabethan Essays*, p.46.

⁵⁰ 'Arguments against Mary Queen of Scots presented to Elizabeth by both Houses, 26 May (?) [1572]', in *PPE*, pp.274-90 (pp.274-6).

⁵¹ 'Anonymous journal, 8 May-25 June [1572]', in *PPE*, pp.317-35 (p.335; p.329).

⁵² Alford, Burghley, p.193-201.

Catholic Loyalism

In the decade that followed there appeared to be little appetite amongst English Catholics to act upon Pius V's condemnation and Sanders incendiary conclusions. According to Peter Holmes this seemed to be 'a conscious decision by Catholic leaders...to revert in their books to their usual, rather insincere, loyalism.'⁵³ However, Catholic priest Richard Bristow did attempt to navigate the treacherous waters and his opinions, along with those of Sander, were included in the 'Bloody Questions' put to Catholic prisoners by the Elizabethan government as a means of ascertaining their true allegiance.⁵⁴ Bristow's *A brief treatise of divers plain and sure ways* (1574) confessed that the pope had the right to discharge subjects from their obedience to apostates and heretics when there was no 'hope of amendment.'⁵⁵ While he appeared to be a straightforward proponent of active resistance, Bristow was more concerned with religious conversion than political ideology. His central thesis was founded upon theology intended to promote the nature of Catholicism over Protestantism. Intrinsic to this brief foray into politics was the assumption that Catholicism was innately more dutiful than the destructive forces of Protestantism. Rulers, he argued, would be better served by Catholics who truly observed Paul's commands in good conscience than Protestants who taught disobedience to both Swords.⁵⁶

The French theologian Jean d'Albin de Valsergues also decried Protestant exegesis that permitted subjects to scrutinise or correct their rulers. He appealed to Romans 13 to insist that regardless of how rulers acquired power submission to them was an act of love towards God and furthermore 'the obedience of the inferiors is not limited by the duty of the superiors.' Valsergues' policy of non-resistance was founded upon the fact Romans 13 had made no distinction between 'Magistrate Ecclesiastical or temporal, whether it be a king or a Pope, a Bishop or a Lorde.'⁵⁷ While both Bristow and Valsergues avoided Sander's antagonistic policy of resistance, this did not signal a Catholic withdrawal from the political battlefield. Instead it reflected the conscious decision by leaders such as William Allen and Robert Parsons to emphasise obedience to the higher powers, whether spiritual or temporal. The political reality necessitated a less combative approach. Parsons' *A brief discours contayning reasons why Catholiques refuse to goe to Church* (1580) and Robert Southwell's *An epistle of comfort* (1587) were composed to strengthen Catholic resolve in the face of persecution. Parsons desperately

⁵³ Holmes, *Resistance and Compromise*, p.29.

⁵⁴ Patrick McGrath, 'The Bloody Questions Reconsidered', *Recusant History*, 20:3 (May 1991), pp.305-19.

⁵⁵ Richard Bristow, *A briefe treatise of diuers plaine and sure waies* (Anwerpe [sic, i.e. England]: the English secret press, 1599), STC 3800, sig. X5v.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, sigs. X6r-X7r.

⁵⁷ Jean d' Albin de Valsergues, *A notable discourse, plainelye and truely discussing, who are the right ministers of the Catholike Church* (Duaci [i.e. London]: Iohannem Bellerum [i.e. William Carter], 1575), STC 274, sigs. E2r-E2v.

sought to convince Elizabeth that Catholic non-conformity was an act of conscience not disobedience.

The government's acid test for measuring non-conformity was church attendance. However, the existence of 'Church Papists' who conformed outwardly but inwardly remained Catholic was a contentious issue. Parsons vigorously denounced such 'conformable men' and he articulated numerous reasons to support a principled refusal to attend Protestant services such as scandal, exposure to heretical ideas and the appearance of condoning England's break with Rome.⁵⁸ *A discourse delivered to Mr. Sheldon, to persuade him to conform* (1580), attributed to English Catholic Alban Langdale, countered Parsons by recalling several biblical precedents that supported the church papistry of those who feared for their lives.⁵⁹ Parsons distanced himself from accusations of disobedience. He argued that resistance had always been condemned by Catholic teaching and even under persecution the faithful must patiently bear any punishment the prince wishes to bestow because God, not the subject, shall judge the prince.⁶⁰ Parsons keenly pointed to Wyclif, Luther, Calvin and Goodman as examples of the 'newer relygion' providing exemption from compliance to civil laws and failing to uphold the commands of Romans 13.⁶¹ This was a plea for tolerance but one which purposely transposed accusations of disloyalty and treachery back onto Elizabeth's Protestant Church.

Parsons' insistence that conscience dictated obedience rather than Parliamentary Law was viewed with great suspicion by the government. He contended that any danger realised by princely commands would be avoided if conscience was permitted to dictate in matters of faith. This way the Christian may live in true obedience and safely navigate the treacherous waters of Romans 13 and Acts 5:29. He indicated that those who altered their religion upon the will of their prince were following a destructive path, an unmistakable attempt to elucidate a lack of genuine fealty. Therefore, he chided Protestants for their innovation in doctrine which ultimately seeks 'to haue noe governour or ruler at al.'⁶² However, Parsons' approach does appear to contravene Rome's existing apolitical policy and contrast with Edmund Campion's *A Letter to the Lords of the Privy Council* (1580). Campion claimed that the pope had forbidden him to engage with in political polemic and he stated his intention to refrain from matters beyond his spiritual vocation.⁶³ Indeed Rome had provided both Parsons and Campion with

⁵⁸ Robert Parsons, *A brief discours contayning certayne reasons why Catholiques refuse to goe to church* (Doway [i.e. East Ham]: Iohn Lyon [i.e. Greenstreet House Press], 1580), STC 19394.

⁵⁹ [Alban Langdale?] *A discourse delivered to Mr. Sheldon, to persuade him to conform*. (1580). Document Ref.: SP 12/144 fols. 137-142r.

⁶⁰ Parsons, *A brief discours why Catholiques refuse to goe to church*, sigs. H4r-H6v.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, sig. ¶6v.

⁶² *Ibid.*, sig. ¶¶2r.

⁶³ Edmund Campion. 'A Letter to the Lords of the Privy Council', in *Elizabethan Recusant Prose*, pp.153-5 (p.154). This was a standard refrain of the Jesuits during the 1580's. See Harro Höpfl, *Jesuit Political*

guidance over the contentious matters of Elizabeth's excommunication and obedience to tyranny. But this instruction was problematic in itself. Rome affirmed that the papal censure remained in force, while at the same time insisting that although Elizabeth was an unlawful queen she must be obeyed in civil matters alone much like any other tyrant.

These instructions could be viewed as an incomprehensible fudge but in reality they merely demonstrated that Rome lacked any means of enforcement. The Jesuits were confusingly informed that private persons were prevented from slaying a tyrant but if someone could free the realm by oppression by means of tyrannicide then 'doubtless it would be lawful for him to kill her.' The Roman directives admitted that Elizabeth's administration continued to cause great harm and that she should be deposed, but it was recognised that given present circumstances all they could advise was that it was best for Catholics not to talk about it.⁶⁴ Consequently, Campion expressed his wish to engage with Elizabeth whom God had enriched 'with notable gifts of nature, learning and princely education, [if she] would grant him the privilege.'⁶⁵ Campion's reticence did not last. His bullish *Ten Reasons* (1581) firmly rejected Protestant claims to be the true embodiment of the Christian faith and attempted to prove the heretical nature of Elizabeth's Church.⁶⁶ He informed Elizabeth that following the doctrines of Luther and Calvin will find her no place in heaven.⁶⁷ The royal proclamations of 1581 took aim at Jesuit activity and recusancy. Not only was reconciliation with Rome a treasonable offence but any that encouraged others to, withdraw submission to Elizabeth or allegiance to the English Church, or promise obedience to 'pretended authority of the see of Rome' or any other foreign prince, would be 'adjudged to be traitors.'⁶⁸

The net was beginning to tighten. William Allen responded by asserting that Catholics could disobey any civil law that subjected religion to the wills and fantasies of mortal men and limited God's constant and permanent truth.⁶⁹ He argued that by rejecting laws that were

Thought: The Society of Jesus and the State, c.1540-1630 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp.56-63.

⁶⁴ 'Some Questions for the Consolation and Instruction of Catholics who are Perplexed', in *Recusancy and Conformity in Early Modern England: Manuscript and Printed Sources in Translation*, eds. Ginevra Crosignani, Thomas M. McCoog, and Michael Questier (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 2010), pp.94-100 (pp.98-9).

⁶⁵ Campion, 'Letter to the Lords', p.154. The charm offensive concluded with Campion stating that if his requests were denied he would recommend England's case to God in the hope that upon the day of reckoning 'we may at last be friends in heaven, when all injuries shall be forgiven', *Ibid.*, p.155.

⁶⁶ Edmund Campion, *Ten Reasons Proposed to His Adversaries for Disputations in the Name of the Faith and Presented to the Illustrious Members of Our Universities* [1581] (London: The Manresa Press, 1914), p.121.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p.142.

⁶⁸ 'An Act to retain the Queen's Majesty's subjects in their due obedience', in *The TCD*, pp.431-3.

⁶⁹ William Allen, *An apologie and true declaration of the institution and endeouours of the two English colleges, the one in Rome, the other now resident in Rhemes* (Henault [i.e. Rheims]: Jean de Foigny?, 1581), STC 369, sig. E5v.

repugnant to God, the Church and nature, Christians demonstrated true obedience to both God *and* country. Allen, like Parsons, insisted they were bound by conscience to disobey antithetical ordinances. However, Allen provided a much more explicit rejection of the Royal Supremacy which firmly denied that temporal government had any mastery over Christ's spiritual and mystical commonwealth. The spiritual duty of the prince was defined as a coercive force that protected the Church and punished the wicked. Peter's commission, Allen claimed, was established to prevent overzealous princes straying into error and as such the Royal Supremacy was like placing a sheep above the shepherd. This was an attempt to convince the reader that Catholic doctrine taught adherence to God's Law and subsequently the true law of England.⁷⁰ What made Allen's message so treasonous to Elizabeth's government was that it advocated resistance to any laws radiating from the heretical doctrine of the Royal Supremacy because they *ipso facto* contravened Scripture.

The charge of treason against the Catholics needed to be constantly refuted. Parsons countered the accusations by drawing attention to the Apostles' rejection of paganism while simultaneously remaining loyal to the Roman state. The question he posed was obvious, should the Apostles have been condemned for treason for teaching rebellion against the prince? Parsons found the answer in Romans 13, Titus 3 and I Peter 2. The Catholic Church, he asserted, did not teach treason only dutiful obedience in temporal matters to all princes, pious or otherwise and this was witnessed by the Apostles who commanded all Christians, in good conscience, to obey them 'as substitutes of God.' In comparison the books and sermons of England's ministers brimmed with 'cruel and bloody spirite' in order to incite magistrates into inflicting greater persecution upon the Catholics which they falsely depicted as traitors.⁷¹ Campion had once bragged to the Lords of the Privy Council that: 'The expense is reckoned, the enterprise is begun; it is of God, it cannot be withstood. So the faith was planted, so it must be restored.'⁷² In December 1581 Campion was executed. To the very end he denied any charges of treason and confessed only to be a loyal subject upholding his faith. The persecution Catholics faced was not imagined.

The stark reality Catholics believed they now faced was succinctly revealed by Thomas Alfield: 'truth is made treason, religion rebellion.'⁷³ A wealth of martyr literature followed Campion's death and it all argued that the execution of Catholics for treason confirmed that

⁷⁰ Allen, *An apologie*, sigs. E6v-E8r; sigs. F1v-F3v; F6v-F7r.

⁷¹ Robert Parsons, *A brief censure vppon two booke written in answere to M. Edmonde Campions offer of disputation* (Doway [i.e. Stonor Park [Pyrton]]: Iohn Lyon, 1581), STC 19393, sigs.D8r-D8v; sig. E1r.

⁷² Campion, 'Letter to the Lords', p. 155.

⁷³ Thomas Alfield, *A true reporte of the death & martyrdome of M. Campion Iesuite and preiste, & M. Sherwin, & M. Bryan preistes, at Tiborne the first of December 1581* (London: R. Rowlands or Verstegan, 1582), STC 4537, sig. B1v.

Elizabeth's regime was ungodly and diabolical.⁷⁴ Nevertheless, the policy of non-resistance was maintained. Parsons sought to turn the tables on Protestants by maintaining only Catholics truly adhered to Paul's commands in Romans 13. Whether good or evil, he insisted, the magistrate must be obeyed for the sake of conscience both externally but also in 'private and secret' because breaking the just laws of God's minister was sinful. Parsons noted with relish Calvin's observation that human laws do not bind the conscience of subjects to obedience.⁷⁵ The danger of demanding obedience only for fear of punishment rather than sake of conscience, Parsons contended, was that it provided no deterrent for the unscrupulous. Such teaching only threatened the commonwealth with disorder and anarchy.⁷⁶ The policy of non-resistance was supported by the 1582 translation of the New Testament into English by exiled Catholics at their college at the University of Douai. The project was an undeniable incursion upon the vernacular stronghold of their opponents and it demonstrated the enthusiasm of the exiles and the Jesuits to do battle for English souls.

The Rheims annotations placed Romans 13 in its historical context and explained that Paul sought to counter accusations that Christians taught liberation from the yoke of civil law. A distinction was made between rulers that were divinely appointed and those God merely permitted to rule. However, whether wicked or pious rulers must be obeyed because Christians may be legitimately punished for non-compliance to any temporal laws that did not contravene Scripture.⁷⁷ As the annotation on I Peter 2:13 confirmed, there was no greater bind to a Christian King than a heathen one. The annotations were politically sensitive in that they rejected the Royal Supremacy as a corruption of Paul's command that temporal powers 'bearth not the sword without cause' because the doctrine insisted that all obedience 'is giuen to the secular power, and nothing to the spiritual.' While the policy of non-resistance was upheld by the annotations to I Peter 2:13-18, these explanations provided evidence of Sander's earlier notions of popular sovereignty. The text asserted that people had the power to 'choose to them selues some kinde or forme of Regiment, vnder which they be content to liue for their preseruacion in peace and tranquillity.'⁷⁸ The translation judiciously avoided mentioning any papal claim to political power or the problematic of *Regnans in excelsis*. The English Catholics at Douai knew their audience and unlike their Genevan counterparts they produced a prudent text that contained no incendiary support for the deposition of a heathen or heretical ruler. The policy of obedience remained in place, but cracks were beginning to show.

⁷⁴ Tutino, *Law and Conscience*, p.48.

⁷⁵ Robert Parsons, *An epistle of the persecution of Catholickes in Englande* (Douay in Artois [i.e. Rouen: Fr. Parsons' Press, 1582), STC 19406, pp.18-19. See Calvin, *Institutes* 1559, pp.1183-4.

⁷⁶ Parsons, *An epistle*, pp.19-20.

⁷⁷ *The New Testament of Iesus Christ, translated faithfully into English, out of the authentical Latin* (Rheims: Iohn Fogny, 1582), STC 2884, pp.415-6.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p.659; p.416; p.658.

Non-Resistance II

William Cecil was convinced that Catholicism and fealty to Elizabeth's government were antithetical dispositions. He contended that the pope's 'tyrannous warrant' denying Elizabeth's position as 'God's anointed servant' had stirred up and seduced Englishmen into engaging in armed rebellion against the Queen. The recent executions of Catholics were legitimised by Cecil as a defensive action against traitors rather than the slaying of religious non-conformists.⁷⁹ It was Elizabeth's divine duty to maintain peace and order and if necessary repel rebellion and sedition by the sword. The duty of obedience, he insisted, was revealed in the teaching of the Apostles: 'Let every soule be subiect to the higher powers' and that they should be subject to 'every humane ordinance or creature, for the Lorde, whether it be to the King, as to him that is supereminent.'⁸⁰ For Cecil England was engaged in a war against clandestine enemies that sought to tear its government and install the papal Antichrist. Catholics were not merely heretics but enemies of the state. Cecil's argument failed to convince his Catholic opponents. Allen's *A True, Sincere and Modest Defence of English Catholiques* (1584), was a 'vigorous, plausible and clearly organized argument for the right of resistance to a heretic prince.'⁸¹ The Catholic priests that perished at the hands of the government, he argued, were not traitors but martyrs and there was a difference between respecting a prince's right to rule and disobeying ungodly commands.

Allen's defence outlined a conventional Catholic understanding of the temporal and spiritual realms. Therefore, he defended the pope's authority to excommunicate or depose princes if they strayed into heresy or apostasy and absolve subjects from obedience.⁸² He not only reminded his opponents of the judgments of Luther, Zwingli, Beza, Goodman, Knox and the Magdeburg ministers but he also quoted Calvin's lectures on Daniel (1561): 'Earthlie Princes doe bereaue them selues of al authoritie when they doe erect them selues against God...and therefore we must rather spit vpon their heads, then obey them.'⁸³ However, Thomas Bilson dismissed Allen's 'canker' and insisted princes could not be displaced by men and those that resisted were not spared damnation by papal dispensation.⁸⁴ The manner of the Apostles was witness to the superiority of the magistrate and their right to enact justice over both the spiritual

⁷⁹ William Cecil, *The execution of justice in England* (London: Christopher Barker, 1583 [i.e. 1584]), STC 4903, sig. A2r-A4r. Also see Alford. Burghley, pp.241-59.

⁸⁰ Cecil, *The execution of iustice*, sig. C3v.

⁸¹ Garrett Mattingly, 'William Allen and Catholic propaganda in England', *Travaux d'humanisme et renaissance* 28 (Geneva, 1957), pp.325-39 (p. 334).

⁸² William Allen, *A True, Sincere and Modest Defence of English Catholiques* (Rouen: Fr. Parsons press, 1584). STC 373, pp.55-6; p.73.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p.77. See John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Book of the Prophet Daniel*, Vol. I, trans. and ed. by Thomas Myers (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1852), p.382.

⁸⁴ Thomas Bilson, *The true difference betweene Christian subiiection and unchristian rebellion* (Oxford: Ioseph Barnes, 1585), STC 3071, A5r-A6r.

and temporal realms confirmed by Scripture. But although Bilson rehearsed the usual lines that accused Catholics of dislocating the princes' sword by binding it to the side of the pope, he offered a nuanced appropriation of Two Sword theory by refusing to place the prince above spiritual sanction.⁸⁵ He accepted the legitimacy of Ambrose's famous spiritual condemnation of Theodosius but rejected the notion that this permitted bishops to strip emperors of their sceptre, sword and throne.⁸⁶ This was a necessary division because the sword of the spirit was manifest in Scripture and the prince's sword was corporal and 'touchesh the body, but not the soule.'⁸⁷

Nevertheless, Allen considered it nothing short of shameful heresy for Cecil to counsel that Elizabeth could ignore papal sanction by insisting she had no superior other than God.⁸⁸ Allen, like Rastell, turned to Hebrews 13:17 to insist that Paul had command that kings are bound to obey their prelates and be subject to them.⁸⁹ The Protestant interpretation that Peter had instructed all men to obey those that ruled over them was unpicked by flippantly asking whether this demand placed heathen kings above Peter, Paul or Christ in the regiment of the Church. It was an absurdity, Allen insisted, to believe Romans 13 validated kingly supremacy or demonstrated Christ had placed the temporal power above the spiritual. Only the papal dignity was beholden directly of Christ and arguments to the contrary unjustly elevated the prince to god-like status within his realm.⁹⁰ While this was the normative Catholic understanding of papal and princely authority it was not the only interpretation. Twenty years earlier Thomas Reynolds, the dean of Exeter, had articulated to Sander an exegesis of Romans 13 that was similar to that of the evangelicals: kings rule through the providence of God and it was not their place to question divine will.⁹¹

Moreover, Catholic lawyer Pierre de Belloy expressed similar sentiments in his articulation of princely absolutism. He asserted that kings should be feared because their election was of God and furthermore their just commands were an extension of God's favour and grace over the people. The opposite, however, were the rods of God's justice and wrath. Belloy's absolutism rejected any notion that princes could be stripped of their dominions because they possessed them immediately of God.⁹² The existence of 'two kinds of Iurisdictions'

⁸⁵ Bilson, *The true difference*, sig. A2r; p.129.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.372-3.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p.244.

⁸⁸ Cecil, *The execution of iustice*, sig. D2v.

⁸⁹ Bilson, *The true difference*, p.195.

⁹⁰ Allen, *A True, Sincere and Modest Defence*, pp.199-205. Pritchard, *Catholic Loyalism*, p.14.

⁹¹ Nicholas Sander, 'Dr Sander's report to Cardinal Moroni [? May, 1561],' in *Catholic Record Society Miscellanea I* (1905), ed. J.H. Pollen (London: Art and Book Company Limited, 1905), pp.24-47 (pp.36-7).

⁹² Pierre de Belloy, *A Catholicke apologie against the libels, declarations, aduices, and consultations...by those of the League* (London: G. Robinson, 1585 or 1586), STC 15137, sigs. E4r-E4v.

is accepted, but he nonetheless argued Romans 13 confirmed that the superior power of the prince must obeyed by all men whether temporal or spiritual. Consequently, Belloy argued that the primitive Church had never sought to challenge these matters but it was only after pride and ambition took hold that these things were questioned. The true function of the Keys imparted upon the clergy was to consult God's Word and declare, along with the judgment of the 'vniuersal Church', who had sinned or departed from the Mystical Body. This was Catholic anti-papal sentiment implanted into a concept of political absolutism that envisioned the irreversible transfer of power from the people to king.⁹³

Authoritative Catholic theologians never sought to deny the necessity of political power. Indeed, Cardinal Robert Bellarmine noted that 'the Prophets predicted that all kings of the earth would become servants of Christ and of the Church, [and this] cannot happen unless there are kings in the Church.'⁹⁴ This was an entirely normal Catholic understanding of temporal authority with the earthly sword always subject to the spiritual. However, Bellarmine perceived that Luther and Calvin's exegesis of Romans 13, Titus 3:1 and I Peter 2:17 suffered from a fundamental flaw. Political authority, he attested, did not emanate from God's Grace but rather it ascended from the law of nature which was also divine law. This was revealed by Paul's command that those which resist the power also resists God's ordinance.⁹⁵ This view was not dissimilar to those held by Sander and the Monarchomachs because he stated that political authority 'immediately resides in the entire multitude as its subject because this authority is of divine law.' The 'multitude' then transferred their power to an individual or small assembly because 'the commonwealth cannot in itself exercise this authority.' It was from this transmission that the prince derived his authority indirectly from God, because all power was ultimately established in natural and divine law.⁹⁶

Consequently, Bellarmine argued, the appointment of princes rested upon the consent of the people. However, this consent could be legitimately withdrawn because the manner of government was a construction of man and pertained 'to the law of nations.'⁹⁷ The commands of Romans 13 related to the disruption of the external peace but it bound the Christian's conscience because infringement constituted an offense to both divine law and God's minister. Stefania Tutino has argued that this intellectual challenge was ill-suited for gritty pamphlet wars and furthermore Bellarmine had little affection for Elizabethan England, and this sentiment was

⁹³ Belloy, *A Catholicke apologie*, sig. l8r; sig. K3r.

⁹⁴ Robert Bellarmine, 'On Laymen or Secular People', in *On Temporal and Spiritual Authority*, trans. and ed. by Stefania Tutino (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2012), pp.1-120 (p.10).

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.21-2.

⁹⁶ John Courtney Murray, 'St. Robert Bellarmine on the Indirect Power', *Theological Studies*, 9:4 (Dec., 1948), pp.491-535.

⁹⁷ Bellarmine, 'On Laymen or Secular People', pp.22-3.

reciprocated by most of England's Protestant writers and controversialists.⁹⁸ Nevertheless, publication of Sixtus' *A declaration of the sentence and deposition of Elizabeth, the usurper and pretended queen of Englande* (1588) demonstrated a change of tone. Pope Sixtus V stoked the embers of *Regnans in Excelsis* with the declaration that Elizabeth's presumption of supreme jurisdiction and spiritual authority was against 'nature, reason, and all laws both of God and man.' The broadside was explosive because it declared that Philip II of Spain had received papal sanction to 'employ those forces which almighty God hath giuen him' and depose Elizabeth along with her accomplices.⁹⁹

This was a bold but purposeful call to arms. The papal tract was essentially an abstract of Allen's *An Admonition to the Nobility and People of England* (1588) and both texts were composed during an intensification of Anglo-Spanish hostilities, to prepare the ground for the Spanish Armada. Allen's tract sought to convince English Catholics that they were not duty-bound to defend a ruler over causes which were contrary to their conscience. This was an explicit command to revolt or risk the vengeance of God, the 'chefest magistrate', for their disobedience. This policy differed from that previously advocated by the Marian exiles because it was the removal of a heretical governor by papal sanction and violent Spanish incursion not by the legitimate existing constitutional means: the lesser magistracy. Allen's attack reflected the confidence of having papal and Spanish support and his attack was intensely personal. His message was simple. Elizabeth could be justly resisted because she was an illegitimate bastard and a heretic that deserved deposition for her heinous crimes. Moreover, the Queen was in direct violation of Acts 5:29 by masquerading as 'the cheefe spiritual gouernesse vnder God.'¹⁰⁰ Given such circumstances, the Protestant depictions of Catholics as traitors gained greater traction. Writers such as Laurence Humphrey employed this language in powerful denunciations of Catholics and demanded nothing short of unconditional obedience.

Humphrey chose to fight Catholics head-on by appealing to the very same ecclesiastical authors that his opponents considered to be authoritative. Of particular note was his turn to John of Salisbury's *Policraticus* to support the notion of regal duality.¹⁰¹ This notion was firmly rooted in Romans 13 and argued, as Stephen A. Chavura has explained, 'that the prince bears two distinct images of God: the image of God in his humanity, and the image of God in his

⁹⁸ Stefania Tutino, *Empire of Souls: Robert Bellarmine and the Christian Commonwealth* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp.117-8.

⁹⁹ Sixtus V [?], *A declaration of the sentence and deposition of Elizabeth, the usurper and pretended queen of Englande* (Antwerp: A. Coninx, 1588), STC 22590. Thomas H. Clancy attributes the work to Allen in *Papist Pamphleteers*, pp.52-3.

¹⁰⁰ William Allen, *An admonition to the nobility and people of England and Ireland* (Antwerp: A. Coninx, 1588), STC 368, sig. A2v-A3r; B4r-B6v.

¹⁰¹ Laurence Humphrey, *A view of the Romish hydra and monster, treason, against the Lords anointed* (Oxford: Ioseph Barnes, 1588), STC 13966, p.35.

authority.¹⁰² This 'double image of God' was affirmed by Psalm 82:6 but Humphrey further sought to disprove the Catholic assertion that princes rule by papal dispensation by demonstrating that kings reign by divine providence. It was necessary to love and assist the bearer of God's image and Humphrey invoked, like so many others, the authority of Chrysostom to confirm the natural order of hierarchical governance amongst all creatures upon the earth.¹⁰³ Those that resisted the divinely instituted minister will justly receive punishment of the sword.¹⁰⁴ Consequently, any Catholics that heeded Allen's call to arms not only confirmed the suspicions of Protestants like Cecil but, more perilously for their souls, disobeyed an ordinance of God.

During this period of Anglo-Spanish conflict Cecil did not hesitate to accuse the Jesuits of being agents of King Philip and deliberately inciting disloyalty. Cecil called upon all subjects to repel the traitors and inform the authorities of any 'venemous Vipers' in their midst.¹⁰⁵ Those persons found aiding and abetting such sedition will be likewise adjudged to be a traitor and charged with treason.¹⁰⁶ Cecil's accusing finger again pointed at the 'King Catholikes Confessour' Allen who had been rewarded for his treason with a cardinal's hat.¹⁰⁷ However, despite Allen's combative demeanour it would be wrong to assume his policy of active resistance had achieved unilateral support. A group of Catholic nobles, led by Sir Thomas Tresham, sought to distinguish themselves from the policy of active resistance by presenting Elizabeth with a heartfelt petition of toleration.¹⁰⁸ They proclaimed that it was their desire to help defend Elizabeth and England from their enemies and announced that no pope or cardinal had the power to command any man to commit a mortal sin, much less one that involved the spilling of an anointed sovereign's sacred blood.¹⁰⁹ The petition of the Catholic nobles was a brave reaction to the significant parliamentary prohibition. Nevertheless, the government would not permit any nefarious activity that encouraged subjects to withdraw their due obedience and to Elizabeth or stir up rebellion.¹¹⁰

¹⁰² Stephen A. Chavura, *Tudor Protestant Political Thought 1547-1603* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), p.179.

¹⁰³ Humphrey, *A view of the Romish hydra*, p.36; p.41.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.43-4.

¹⁰⁵ *A declaration of great troubles pretended against the realme by a number of seminarie priests and Iesuists* (London: Christopher Barker, 1591), STC 8208, sig. A3r; sigs. B1r-B3v.

¹⁰⁶ Rafael E. Tarrago, 'Bloody Bess: The Persecution of Catholics in Elizabethan England', *Logos: A Journal of Catholic Thought and Culture*, 7:1 (Winter, 2004), pp.117-33.

¹⁰⁷ *A declaration of great troubles*, sigs. A4r.

¹⁰⁸ B. Manning, 'Richard Shelley of Warminhurst and the English Catholic Petition for Toleration of 1585', *Recusant History*, 6:6 (Jan., 1961), pp.265-74.

¹⁰⁹ BL Add MS 39828. fols.100r-101v. The petition is also found in Richard Broughton's, *English protestants plea, and petition, for English preists [sic] and papists to the present court of Parliament, and all persecutors of them:* (Saint-Omer: C. Boscard], 1621), STC 3895.5, pp.34-44.

¹¹⁰ See specifically here the already enacted legislation: 'An Act against Jesuits, seminary priests and such other like disobedient persons', in *TCD*, pp.433-7 (p.434).

Jesuit Robert Southwell's *An Hvmbles Svppliation to her Maiestie* (1591) responded to Cecil by providing a detailed description of the religious persecution suffered by English Catholics. Southwell remained deferential and confirmed that Catholics owed their queen loyalty and, importantly, in return she owed them mercy. He remained committed to the policy of non-resistance previously outlined by Parsons and argued that Catholics are bound by conscience to obey their prince's just laws or they will, under pain of death, forfeit their right to enter Heaven. Any attacks upon Elizabeth would provide calamity not comfort, and attempting her regicide was self-defeating because it was not only disloyal to their country 'but a tyrannie to our selues.'¹¹¹ While Southwell's public remarks were guarded, his private observations to Richard Verstegan were more candid. He accused the government of attempting to entrap Catholics and unlawfully convict them of rebellion and conspiracy to murder the Queen.¹¹² Despite his imprisonment and impending execution Southwell expressed his loyalty until the end: 'I confes I am a chatholick preist, and I thank God for it, but no traytour; nether can anie law make it treason to be a preist.'¹¹³ Significantly, neither Southwell nor Verstegan sought to blame Elizabeth for the injustice faced by Catholics and instead, they focused their scorn on the ambition of her cruel and malicious counsellor Cecil 'the great Lord Trecherer.'¹¹⁴

Although Southwell had rejected regicide the matter did not dissipate. Catholic priest William Rainolds gingerly discussed the delicate subject and stressed that temporal government was both necessary and natural. However, he acknowledged that some forms of rule were circumscribed by the people and consequently a tyrant may be deposed or even executed with the consent of the majority. However, Rainolds was decidedly more Sander than Hotman and attempted to put clear water between himself and the Protestants by arguing the best way of identifying genuine tyranny would be to pass the matter over to the judgment of the Church.¹¹⁵ Parsons also advanced a similar concept of sovereignty in which kingship was almost a negotiated inheritance and tyrannical rulers may be deposed or even executed by the will of the people. In the controversial work, *A Conference about the Next Succession to the Crowne of England* (1594), Parsons made a direct appeal for Englishmen to consider wisely the prince that

¹¹¹ Robert Southwell, *An Hvmbles Svppliation to her Maiestie* (England: English Secret Press, 1595 [i.e. 1600]), STC 22949.5, pp. 29-30; pp.60-1.

¹¹² Robert Southwell(?), 'Fr. Southwell? to Verstegan', in *The Letters and Despatches of Richard Verstegan (c. 1550-1640)* ed. Anthony G. Petti (London: Catholic Record Society, 1959), pp.1-33 (p. 10).

¹¹³ '[Thomas] Leake, 'Relation of the Martyrdom of Father Southwell', in *Unpublished Document Relating to the English Martyrs, Vol. I 1584-1602*, eds. J.H. Pollen (London: Catholic Record Society, 1908), pp.334-7 (p.334).

¹¹⁴ Southwell (?) 'to Verstegan', in *The Letters and Despatches of Richard Verstegan*, p.14. Richard Verstegan, *A declaration of the true causes of the great troubles, presupposed to be intended against the realme of England* (Antwerp: J. Trognesium?, 1592), STC 10005, pp.65-70; p.73.

¹¹⁵ See Thomas H. Clancy, *Papist Pamphleteers*, p.97 and J.N. Figgis. *Studies of Political Thought from Gerson to Grotius 1414-1625* 2nd edn (Cambridge: The University Press, 1916), p.182.

would succeed Elizabeth in order to prevent the coronation of an undesirable prince. He took particular aim at Belloy's 'flattery of Princes' that advocated the notion that princes receive their authority by primogeniture. It was absurd, he argued, to believe that nature made any man a king and he insisted that princes were subject to the law.

Parsons acknowledged that Romans 13, I Peter 2 and Proverbs 8 confirmed that authority was of God and subjects must obey their magistrates 'for God's cause.'¹¹⁶ However, he also stressed that the words of the Apostles did not support the notion that kingship was a form of government imposed or even preferred by God. Rather, he argued, these texts showed the necessity of temporal authority and that God approved of whichever form of government was chosen by the people. Nevertheless, the kingly office was considered 'most excellent' by Peter because not only had history proven it to be the most advantageous but also it was the regiment that most resembled the government of God.¹¹⁷ Parsons had no doubt that the princely office was sacred and divinely ordained but the holder of the office only enjoyed this blessing so long as she faithfully fulfilled the duties prescribed by the commonwealth.¹¹⁸ This was largely a reiteration of Sander's *De visibili monarchia* in that rulers took a sacred promise presided over by the spiritual estate in which they acceded to a limitation on regal rule.¹¹⁹ Governorship was contingent not a right. It was essential that they ruled christianly or they faced deposition and this good rule was only achieved by the mediation of God.

Although Parsons articulated a concept of civil government that sounded similar to Sander, these arguments also clearly resembled the conclusions of the *Vindiciae contra Tyrannos*. Parsons' exegesis had now come full-circle. He now strongly proposed that it was the duty of the people to oppose wicked governors because 'Princes are subject to Law and Order' and government in itself was 'not inferior, but superiour to the Prince.' Parsons now wrote without restraint and his considerations on resistance, unlike those of Allen, were not dependent upon Rome's intervention. The chief purpose of government, he insisted, was to serve God (*cultus Dei*) and to maintain religion. Any magistrate which failed in this duty 'commiteth high treason against his lord and master, in whose place he is, and consequently is not fit for that Charge and Dignity.'¹²⁰ Parsons had delivered a damning indictment of the Elizabethan government for eschewing their divine obligation to both God and the people, and

¹¹⁶ Robert Parsons, *A conference about the next succession to the crowne of Ingland diuided into two partes* (Antwerp: A. Conincx, 1594 [i.e. 1595]. STC 19398, sigs. B4r; B7^r-B7^v).

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, sig. B7^v. This translation of I Peter 2:13 was disputed. See Parsons' *A temperate ward-word* discussed below.

¹¹⁸ Michael L. Carrafiello, *Robert Parsons and English Catholicism, 1580-1610* (London: Associated University Presses, 2007), p.36.

¹¹⁹ Parsons, *A Conference*, sigs. F2r-F2v.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, sig. E5v; M5r.5

permitting the realm to fall into apostasy. The lines between Parsons and the constitutional positions of the Monarchomachs were now blurring and both were met with revulsion in England.

Francis Hastings rebuffed the conclusions of Parsons in the customary way by casting all Catholics as villainous 'home-traytors' that hoped to deliver the realm into the hands of Spain.¹²¹ However, Parsons responded by chiding Hastings for his offensive misreading of I Peter 2:13 in which he stated the Apostle taught subjection to '*all manner of ordinance of man, for the Lords sake; whether it be vnto the King, as vnto the superior.*'¹²² Parsons preferred the translation from the Vulgate as found in the Rheims New Testament which importantly translated *praecellenti* as 'excelling' rather than 'superior.'¹²³ This was not a simple matter of semantics because Parsons believed this translation was a subtle but deliberate Protestant manipulation intended to 'make their booke of conscience to say what they will haue sayd without scruple.' The Word of God had been consciously corrupted in order to make the false assertions that Peter had confirmed princely supremacy. Parsons continued to harangue Hastings and he sought to disprove the supremacy of kings by invoking Hebrews 13:17. In doing so he placed emphasis on the word '*praepositis*' by translating Paul as demanding Christians to 'Obey your prelates.'¹²⁴ He found additional support in Acts 20:28 and when combined the texts provided prelates prerogative and superiority by confirming that God had placed them to guide men, watch over their souls and govern the Church.

Parsons insisted that the sublimeness of the spiritual estate should not negate obedience to temporal princes and both Romans 13 and Matthew 22:21 confirmed deference. This was moderated not only by the laws of God and nature, but also by nations in which princes dwell.¹²⁵ Christians were bound in obedience to princes in temporal matters alone and not things pertaining to religion or conscience. Therefore, princes could only legitimately demand obedience in matters pertaining to civil matters and not those that governed the conscience. Consequently, Parsons declared that Hastings' denial of the right to resistance made him a '*Prince-idolater*' because the Books of Kings and annals of English history showed that subjects could amend the temporal government with God's approval.¹²⁶ Hastings rejected outright this promotion of popular sovereignty under the direction of the Church. While he appeared to relish

¹²¹ Francis Hastings, *A watch-word to all religious, and true hearted English-men* (London: Felix Kingston for Ralph Iackson, 1598), STC 12927, p.19; pp.64-5.

¹²² *Ibid.*, p.73.

¹²³ *The New Testament of Jesus Christ*, p.657.

¹²⁴ Robert Parsons, *A temperate ward-word, to the turbulent and seditious Wach-word of Sir Francis Hastings* (Antwerp: A. Conincx, 1599), STC 19415, p.85.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.87-88.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p.34.

Parsons' hermeneutical challenge, the clandestine activities of the Jesuits was testimony enough that Catholics were disloyal schemers seeking to entice subjects away from their natural obedience from God's anointed.¹²⁷

While Hastings acknowledged that rulers were limited by God's Law, he also conflated Romans 13 and I Peter 2:13 to maintain the normative Protestant assertion that princes had no temporal superior because they resided immediately under God. Therefore, he rhetorically asked Parsons, 'who euer attributed lesse to Magistrates, or deposed mo[r]e Princes, then you Papistes?'¹²⁸ The dean of Exeter, Matthew Sutcliffe, was more vehement in his condemnation of Parsons. He insisted that the teaching of cursing princes, rebellion and regicide was founded upon Boniface VIII's doctrine of the Two Swords that charged the pope with the destruction of both souls and the slaughter of their bodies.¹²⁹ Moreover, Catholic Henry Constable also assailed Parsons for defacing the monarchical state and to seeking dispose Elizabeth of the crown of England.¹³⁰ The act of ceding love and obedience to God and the sovereign was, Constable observed, 'the greatest preseruatiue of quyet among people.'¹³¹ The English Catholics suffered from a lack of clear leadership. Consequently, the solutions to their persecution by the Elizabethan government vacillated between a position of enthusiastic non-resistance and determined resistance. What emerged from this confusion were two competing visions of English Catholicism and a deep sense of antagonism.

The Archpriest Controversy

The view that princes held power indirectly from Christ's Vicar promoted by Sander and Parsons was not universally welcomed amongst English Catholics. The assertion that kingly authority was legitimised by religious adherence placed further strain upon subjects torn between allegiance to their Queen or pope. Parsons' *A Conference* provoked instability and agitation amongst the Catholic community because many believed it advocated both rebellion and collaboration with a foreign power that had designs on conquest.¹³² This situation was further aggravated by the

¹²⁷ Francis Hastings, *An apologie or defence of the watch-word, against the virulent and seditious ward-word* (London: Felix Kyngston, 1600), STC 12928, p.69.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p.101; pp.106-8.

¹²⁹ Matthew Sutcliffe, *A New Challenge made to N.D.* (London: Arn. Hatfield, 1600), STC 23453, p.61. *A briefe replie* and *A New Challenge made to N.D.* are bound together under the STC 23453 and all references are from this combined version. Thus, the pages referenced page numbers are appropriate to the respective tracts.

¹³⁰ Henry Constable, *Discoverye of a counterfecte conference helde at a counterfecte place, by counterfecte travellers, for thadvancement of a counteefecte tytle* (Collen [i.e. Paris?]: s.n., 1600). STC 5638.5, pp.2-3.

¹³¹ Constable. *Discoverye of a counterfecte conference*, pp.36-7.

¹³² Peter Lake and Michael Questier, 'Taking it to the street? The Archpriest controversy and the issue of the succession', in *Doubtful and dangerous: The question of succession in later Elizabethan England*, eds. by Susan Doran and Pauline Kewes (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014), pp.71-91 (pp.72-4).

papal imposition of an Archpriest that possessed 'a kind of propulsive power, but no real jurisdiction, over the seminary clergy.'¹³³ While Jesuits saw the appointment of George Blackwell as an overdue attempt at establishing order, some of the secular clergy understood him to be a shadowy puppet sent to ensure the Society's domination over an already persecuted community.¹³⁴ Ultimately, the conflict concerned the right to speak for the English Catholic community, and this claim, noted Michael Questier, 'was itself a political issue of some considerable moment.'¹³⁵ The Appellants unsuccessfully appealed to Rome in 1598-9 but the ensuing controversy ultimately forced some to re-examine the matter of papal supremacy in order to reconcile their Catholic faith with political loyalty to the English Crown.

The English Catholic community had understandably lacked organisation. Earlier plans to establish a formal association between Jesuits and secular priests were shelved because of what secular priest Christopher Bagshaw identified as not only a diversity of opinion and lack of funds but mostly for fear that their practices would be interpreted as sinister or suspicious.¹³⁶ Rather than encouraging unity Rome's final rejection of the Appellant faction's petition against the Archpriest in 1602 only served to create greater ill-feeling and strengthen their resolve. The Appellants' resistance to Blackwell was considered by Parsons to be a wilful failure to show respect to 'their prelate and lawful immediate Superior.' Parsons insisted that Blackwell was 'Gods substitute among them' and he was ordained to govern them by authority of the Apostolic See. This was a vision of hierarchical ecclesiastical government in which the superior always spoke with God's voice to those who are inferior.¹³⁷ Consequently, he castigated the Appellants for failing to adhere to the commands of Romans 13. In their disobedience the Appellants were guilty of the greatest of all sins: 'the highest point of spiritual synne, pride, and presumption is, to molest, & make warre against them, but much more to despise and abuse them.'¹³⁸

The Jesuit Richard Holtby was even more emphatic. He insisted that the Appellants had no cause to deny Blackwell's legitimate authority and declared that they were guilty of rebellion not simple disobedience. The priests, Holtby contended, were no longer listening to Christ's Church. The very testimony of God, found in Romans 13 and Hebrews 13, revealed that

¹³³ John Bossy, *The English Catholic Community 1570-1850* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1975), p.46.

¹³⁴ T.G. Law, *The Archpriest Controversy, Documents Relating to the Dissension of the Roman Catholic Clergy, 1597-1602*, 2 Volumes (London, 1896-98) and J.H. Pollen, *The Institution of the Archpriest Blackwell* (London, 1916). Carrafiello, *Robert Persons and English Catholicism*, pp.88-102.

¹³⁵ Michael C. Questier, *Catholicism and Community in Early Modern England: Politics, Aristocratic Patronage and Religion, c.1550-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p.253.

¹³⁶ 'A Memorandum by [Christopher] Bahshaw, Oct. 19, 1698,' in Law ed. *Archpriest Controversy*, Vol. I, pp.205-6 (p.205).

¹³⁷ Pritchard, *Catholic Loyalism*, p.131,

¹³⁸ Robert Parsons, *A manifestation of the great folly and bad spirit of certayne in England calling themselues secular priestes* (Antwerp: A. Coninx, 1602), STC 19411, sig. H1v.

'disobedience or rebellion against lawfull authoritie is not only sinful but a most grievous and damnable sin.'¹³⁹ The actions of the Appellants, he argued, was akin to mutiny. Nevertheless, the Appellants conceived the imposition of Blackwell to be the realisation of the political programme earlier outlined by Parsons' *Conference*. Consequently, secular priest John Mush refused to stain Catholicism with Parsons' sedition and fiercely condemned the Jesuits for their 'faule dealing' and 'slanderous touns.'¹⁴⁰ The appointment of the sympathetic Blackwell was, he contended, a conduit to aid the Jesuit ambition to dislodge Elizabeth and place themselves at the summit of ecclesiastical affairs.¹⁴¹ For Mush the archpriest provided a platform for Spanish invasion, and therefore epitomised the opprobrious conduct of conspiracy and treason.¹⁴²

Similar patriotic sentiment was shown by Bagshaw and he argued that it was the desire of Catholics to remain faithful subjects of their Queen. He explicitly drew a straight line between obedience to Blackwell and Parsons, and obedience to the Devil who was the author of rebellion, treason and murder.¹⁴³ Fellow priest Thomas Leake also highlighted the connection between the Jesuits and sedition. He noted that the importation of books and the erection of seminaries were considered by the government to be part of an aggressive policy to dissuade Elizabeth's subjects from their obedience and garner support for either open rebellion or Spanish invasion.¹⁴⁴ The great fear was that closer association with the Jesuits would lead to further repercussion and far better was it, argued lay Catholic Anthony Copley, to petition their natural sovereign for toleration than to seek relief from foreign princes or warlike means.¹⁴⁵ The Appellants saw treachery hiding behind a mask of religious zeal. The thoughts of many lingered on the narrative of popular sovereignty embraced by the Catholic League in France, particularly Jean Boucher, which replicated the constitutional theories of the Monarchomachs by advocating tyrannicide.¹⁴⁶

The Appellant Thomas Bluet also attempted to distance himself from the 'Emperor-like Jesuits' and declared that neither the Catholic Church nor the English commonwealth could ever

¹³⁹ Richard Holtby, 'Letter to a Lady, from Father Richard Holtby, alias Duckett, S.J. June 30, 1601', in *The Archpriest Controversy*, Vol. I, ed. by Thomas Graves Law (London: Nichols and Sons, 1896), pp.176-200 (p.178).

¹⁴⁰ John Mush(?), 'Letter from M.J. [John Mush] to Dr. Bagshaw, [1597]', in Law ed. *Archpriest Controversy*, Vol. I, pp.1-3 (pp.2-3).

¹⁴¹ John Mush, *A dialogue betwixt a secular priest, and a lay gentleman* (Rhemes. [i.e. London]: Adam Islip, 1601), STC 25124.5, p.86-7.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, sig. *4v.

¹⁴³ Christopher Bagshaw, *A sparing discoverie of our English Jesuits* (London: Felix Kingston, 1601), STC 25126, p.70.

¹⁴⁴ [Thomas] Leake, 'Relation of the Martyrdom of Father Southwell', in *Unpublished Document Relating to the English Martyrs, Vol. I 1584-1602*, eds. J.H. Pollen (London: Catholic Record Society, 1908), pp.333-7 (p.334).

¹⁴⁵ Anthony Copley, *An answer to a letter of a Jesuited gentleman* (London: Felix Kingson, 1601), STC 5735, pp.67-8.

¹⁴⁶ Allen, *A History of Political Thought in Sixteenth Century*, pp.343-53.

find more wicked members as Parsons or Blackwell.¹⁴⁷ Additionally priest William Clark sought separate English Catholics from both Parsons and the external plots against the realm. Clark was convinced that 'by the very law of nature' subjects must defend themselves and their country against incursion irrespective of 'of person, or intention of the inuader.'¹⁴⁸ Secular priests John Colleton and Humphrey Ely wholeheartedly agreed. They contended that the commands of superiors, including the pope, were not binding if they exceeded the limit of their office or demanded something evil. The priests maintained that resistance in these circumstances was neither sinful or an act of 'criminall disobedience.'¹⁴⁹ The position of the Appellants was formally articulated in the Protestation of Allegiance (1602), signed by both priests and laymen, which not only rejected the political position of the Jesuits but also contended the Bishop of Rome had no political jurisdiction in the realm.

The Appellants had firmly aligned themselves with their queen and government. The submission acknowledged that all subjects, of any degree and calling, were bound by Scripture to faithfully serve and obey Elizabeth 'as theyr onlye true, vndoubted and lawfull soveraigne Quen.' The signatories confirmed that they would not adhere to any papal bulls or sentences against Elizabeth's undoubted lawful authority. Moreover, they would willingly help withstand any foreign power, whether pope or prince, that attempted to 'overthrow the present estate of his kingdome, or of the religion' that was not professed and established in law by Elizabeth.¹⁵⁰ Moreover, asserted Mush, it was the duty of all subjects to defend the realm against its enemies because obedience to their sovereign negated any sin or imagined disobedience towards the Apostolic See.¹⁵¹ The Protestation had drawn a distinction between the jurisdiction of prince and pope on almost on Henrician lines. A sense of a national Church first conceived under Henry VIII was re-invigorated and this propelled the Appellants towards accepting a form of Gallicanism that stressed Church over papalism and king over pope.¹⁵²

The mutual exasperation over Jesuit activity facilitated a closer relationship between the government and Catholics than at any previous time during Elizabeth's reign. This shared ideology was demonstrated by priest William Watson who cursed both the Jesuits and puritans for their doctrines of disobedience. Watson's tract, *A Decacordon of Ten Quodlibeticall*

¹⁴⁷ Thomas Bluet, *Important considerations, which ought to moue all true and sound Catholikes, who are not wholly Iesuited* (London: Richard Field, 1601), STC 25125, sig. ***2v.

¹⁴⁸ William Clark, *A replie vnto a certaine libell, latelie set foorth by Fa: Parsons, in the name of vnited priests* (London: J. Roberts, 1603), STC 4321, sigs. L4r-L4v.

¹⁴⁹ John Colleton, *A iust defence of the slandered priestes* (London: R. Field, 1602). STC 5557, pp.27-9. Humphrey Ely, *Certaine briefe notes vpon a briefe apologie set out vnder the name of the priestes vnited to the archpriest* (Paris: Peter Sevestre, 1602), STC 7628, p.241.

¹⁵⁰ 'Protestation of Allegiance' in Law ed. *Archpriest Controversy*, Vol. II, pp.246-8 (p.247).

¹⁵¹ Mush, *A dialogue*, sig. *iV.

¹⁵² Lisa Ferraro Parmelee, *Good Newes from Fraunce: French Anti-League Propaganda in Late Elizabethan England* (Rochester, N.Y.: University of Rochester Press, 1996), pp.146-51.

Questions concerning Religion and State (1602), condemned the traitorous resistance doctrines of Calvin, Knox, Buchanan and the Monarchomachs, and gathered together with the policies of the Jesuits as enemies of 'regal sovereignty' and stirrers of rebellion and disquiet.¹⁵³ It was a purposeful policy of the Appellants to emphasise the similarity between the disobedience doctrines of the Jesuits and presbyterians because it allowed the seminary priests to demonstrate to the Elizabethan government the clear water between themselves and the treasonous papists and seditious puritans. Antipathy towards Jesuit policy compelled Bluet to dissociate both the Catholic religion itself and the priestly function from the stains of treasonous Jesuitical conspiracy and Genevan popularity.¹⁵⁴ Indeed, the notions of popular sovereignty touted by Parsons were rejected by Humphrey Ely as 'a most perillous and pestiferous peece of doctrine.'¹⁵⁵ Watson was equally damning. He declared that of the two groups the Jesuits were a greater danger to the stability of the commonwealth than the puritans.¹⁵⁶ Moreover, he observed that the 'enuie and malice' the Jesuits had shown towards the secular priests in France had agitated the people against their king and warned that this would be repeated in England.¹⁵⁷

Consequently, Watson espoused the principles of non-resistance and couched his defence of this principle in Augustine's exegesis of Romans 13. Whether princes were good or tyrannous, if they embraced Catholicism or became apostate, they were regardless lieutenants of God. He added that princes held their power and kingdoms of Him and 'are to be obeyed in all things which are not against the law, diuine, and Gods church here militant on earth.' The resistance doctrines of both puritans and Jesuits, Watson insisted, were not found in the Primitive Church or the writings of the Church Fathers, but instead 'built vpon a new fond exposition of the Scriptures.'¹⁵⁸ Both Jesuits and puritans instructed the people in treason and error. The genial relationship between the Appellants and the Elizabethan government can be witnessed in Watson's translation, upon Richard Bancroft's authority, of Antoine Arnauld's *Le franc discours* (1602). Arnauld took particular aim at Robert Bellarmine and accused the Cardinal of sophistry by purposely avoiding engagement with Romans 13 and I Peter 2. This style of polemic, he asserted, only made their religion one of imposters and Machiavels that feigned

¹⁵³ William Watson, *A decacordon of ten quodlibeticall questions concerning religion and state* (London: Richard Field, 1602), STC 25123, p.228.

¹⁵⁴ Bluet, *Important considerations*, sig. ***2r-***v.

¹⁵⁵ Ely, *Certaine briefe notes*, p.16.

¹⁵⁶ Watson, *Ten quodlibeticall questions*, p.26.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p.191.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p.291; p.299.

obedience to governors in order to seize the temporal sword.¹⁵⁹ The Jesuits, Arnauld contended, were purposely training up men in treason.¹⁶⁰

Watson also translated Etienne Pasquier's *The jesuites catchisme* (1602), a tract that accused the Society of similar Machiavellian tendencies and criticised their blind obedience to the 'Popedome' and wicked doctrines which smacked of Anabaptism. Pasquier placed the cause of the Archpriest Controversy at the door of 'grand Captaine Frier Parsons' who had colluded with Spain against Elizabeth in order that the Jesuits would 'beare rule ouer al both Priests & people.' The Jesuits were accused of glorifying regicide and he declared it was shameful that they needed to be convinced that subjects could not assault their prince, whether tyrannous or pious, because it was clearly taught by the epistle of Peter and Paul's letters to the Romans, Titus and Timothy.¹⁶¹ Kings were bestowed by God, their royalty bore His image and it was not the place of subjects to examine them because kingly hearts were in God's hands. Consequently, the doctrines espoused by the Appellants were not conceived as dissention or insubordination but confirmation of Paul's explicit command for obedience. They ultimately believed they were upholding God's prescribed order. In the minds of the secular priests the Jesuits had aligned themselves with the seditious policies of the radical Protestants. The Archpriest Controversy demonstrated that the confrontational policies of Parsons and the Jesuits were not accepted by the wider English Catholic community. The loyalism of the secular priests was confirmed by Romans 13 and what emerged was a concept of Catholicism that would have been at home in the later Church of Henry VIII.

Conclusion

The adoption of a policy of persuasion and non-resistance by English Catholics during the formative years of Elizabeth's reign greatly contrasted with the belligerent polemic of the Marian exiles. The Catholic answers to the Protestant polemics were apologetic rather than confrontational. These composed responses were facilitated by a government that engaged in little active persecution and enforcement of the prohibitive measures against Catholicism. Nevertheless, a moderate voice is not a silent one, and Catholics continued to decry the restoration of the new faith. In both print and Parliament Catholics urged Elizabeth to reject the rebelliousness of Protestantism and embrace the only faith that taught true obedience to God and all other higher powers. The polemical exchanges included well-rehearsed tropes that either side could return both instinctively and with equal force. The Protestant refutation was simple but efficacious: anyone that upheld the papal primacy could never show true obedience to the

¹⁵⁹ Antoine Arnauld, *Le franc discours A discourse, presented of late to the French King, in aunsver of sundry requests made vnto him, for the restoring of the Iesuits into Fraunce* (London: J. Roberts, 1602), STC 780, pp.21-3.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, sig. ¶3r.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, sig. Ss2r.

crown. The Queen's rightful possession of ecclesiastical authority was confirmed by Romans 13 and I Peter 2, and likewise the Apostles revealed that the prosperity of God's people and the true faith rested upon the rule of kings and magistrates.

The level of persecution English Catholics suffered did intensify, and their reaction to the oppressive policies of the Elizabethan government changed accordingly. The Catholic responses to the persistent accusations of disloyalty were not driven by changes in doctrine, but rather the practical reality of existing in a heretically governed state. Therefore, it is inappropriate to think in terms of a single systematic Catholic approach to the dilemma of living under a heretical and discriminatory government throughout a period of over forty years. As the 1560s drew to a close there was a noticeable shift away from a policy of persuasion, and Catholics began to slowly embrace a more belligerent position. The Northern Rebellion and the promulgation of *Regnans in excelsis* trapped Catholics in the same ideological dilemma previously faced by the Marian exiles, and they were commanded to disobey the heretical Elizabeth or be placed under anathema. Catholics now suffered as a result of strict government policies that sought to curtail Jesuit activity and ensure religious conformity. The conviction that England's Catholic enemies were circling and waiting for the opportunity to strike, served to increase Protestant angst.

The preacher and his pulpit remained a powerful conduit in broadcasting the need for obedience, and fomenting loyalty amongst Elizabeth's subjects. *A Homily against Disobedience and Wilful Rebellion* thrust Romans 13 centre stage, and the divine qualities and duties of the prince were vociferously reaffirmed. However, Catholic insurgency and conspiracy identified a need to confront the fact that Mary, Queen of Scots, acted as stimulus for revolt. This continued presence of Mary created disquiet and discomfort amongst Protestants, and Elizabeth was forcefully reminded of her duty to protect the realm from evildoers. Neither Parliament nor the bishops were oblivious to the obligations of higher powers outlined by Paul in Romans 13. As a consequence, Elizabeth was explicitly warned that failing to punish Mary for her crimes against the realm placed both her kingdom and dignity in peril. The bishops left no room for ambiguity: God will punish magistrates for neglecting their divine duty. This was exegesis of Romans 13 that deeply troubled the conscience, and some recognised this radical interpretation as an endorsement of regicide.

The promulgation of *Regnans in excelsis*, that excommunicated Elizabeth and released her subjects from the obligation of obedience, announced a theoretical change in Catholic thought. The revolutionary thrust demonstrated by Sander combined the principle of papal monarchy with a concept of popular sovereignty, and firmly placed rulers under the guidance and mastery of the priesthood. Sander's understanding of the Church as a visible monarchy reaffirmed the legitimacy of the papal bull and insisted upon the right of the pope to censure

wayward rulers, and depose them. Elizabeth's retreat from the true Church had breached the spiritual pact between ruler and the true Church, and this released her subjects from their obligation of obedience. As a consequence of the Queen's failure to uphold her sacred duty, Sander had recognised, just as Knox had previously, that the precepts of obedience in Romans 13 were not germane. In fact, subjects were obliged to disobey the commands of their heretical prince, and as a result the precepts of Romans 13 were not violated or consciences troubled.

In the face of an increasingly hostile environment Catholics adopted a less combative approach to Elizabeth's government while simultaneously attempting to foster greater resolve in the face of persecution. Catholics insisted that their non-conformity was an act of conscience, and not an attempt to dishonour their Queen or engage in active resistance. Romans 13 remained unviolated. The guidance from Rome further demonstrated this pragmatic approach. Jesuit missionaries were instructed to avoid political matters and confine themselves to their spiritual vocation. The political reality was that Rome lacked any effectual means to enforce the pronouncements of the papal bull and secure the deposition of England's heretical and unlawful ruler. The royal proclamations of 1581 sought to reduce the space for recusancy and Jesuit activity by essentially making it a treasonable offence to adhere to the key tenets of the Catholic faith. In the eyes of many Catholics the government had made the truth a treason, and religion rebellion. This threat of persecution forced Catholics to swim in the treacherous waters of Romans 13. Nevertheless, despite the wealth of martyr literature that emerged from Catholic presses, much of which stressed the diabolical nature of Elizabeth's government, the policy of non-resistance was maintained.

The Rheims New Testament endorsed the policy of non-resistance. While the annotations of Romans 13 and I Peter 2:13 made the distinction between the divinely appointed and those God had permitted to rule, they also confirmed that Christians should obey impious rulers unless their laws contravened Scripture. The text is noticeably sensitive to the political landscape in England. The tenets of the Catholic faith were maintained, and Royal Supremacy vigorously denied, but the annotations prudently offered no support for incendiary notions concerning the deposition of heretical rulers. Nevertheless, the English government remained convinced that the realm was under attack from a clandestine enemy that sought to install the papal Antichrist. As such Catholics were conceived as not merely heretics but enemies of the state. Consequently, the regime insisted that Catholics were executed for treason and not for their religious non-conformity. The vocal opponents of the government rejected this justification for slaying subjects who acted upon their conscience and contended that there was a significant difference between respecting the prince's right to rule and disobeying civil laws that subjected the faith to the fantasies of men.

Catholics forcefully asserted that civil magistrates did not possess the authority to limit God's perpetual truth. Moreover, in rejecting doctrines that are repugnant to Scripture and the Church, such as Elizabeth's Supremacy, Catholics demonstrated obedience to Christ and the true laws of their country. They declared that it was a shameful heresy for Elizabeth's counsel to impart the belief that princes had no superior other than God. As Hebrews 13:17 witnessed, kings must subject themselves to their prelates. Only the dignity of the pope was beholden of Christ, and the Royal Supremacy fiendishly elevated the prince to a god-like status. However, the traditional understanding of papal supremacy was not universally accepted by Catholics, and the concept of princely absolutism, founded upon a strict reading of Romans 13, gained limited support. Radical readings of Romans 13 that legitimatised the concept of popular sovereignty, espoused by Sander and the Monarchomachs, started to infiltrate Catholic political thought. This penetration can be witnessed in the Rheims New Testament and the writings of Bellarmine which confirmed that princely authority rested upon popular consent. Catholic political thought was beginning to reflect the wider panorama.

The intensification of Anglo-Spanish hostility during the 1580s tested the principles of non-resistance. The conflict provided Catholic agitators an opportunity to stoke the burning embers of old polemical battles, and embark on a more combative policy of resistance. English Catholics were issued with a bold and explicit call to arms that reflected the confidence of being furnished with both papal and Spanish support. The government responded by appealing to the commands of Romans 13 in order to demand unconditional obedience to Elizabeth who was installed by divine providence. Those that resisted God's minister would justly meet with the sword. The imprudent and intensely personal attack on the Queen only served to provide Cecil and Protestant polemics with greater ammunition to depict Catholics as traitors. English Catholics were forced to confront a terrible dilemma and choose between papal obedience and national loyalty. The direct attack upon the realm by a foreign military force, even one sponsored by Rome, cultivated a sense of patriotism and as a result many English Catholics distanced themselves from the policy of active resistance.

Nevertheless, the concept of popular sovereignty was increasingly embraced. Parsons adopted a notion of civil government that contained elements which could have been lifted from the pages of both Sander and the *Vindiciae contra Tyrannos*. The chief purpose of government was to serve God and to maintain religion. This recognition of the civil magistrates' duty provoked a damning condemnation of England's government: the higher powers were guilty of eschewing their divine obligation to God and their people by permitting the realm to fall into heresy. This lapse of duty was tantamount to committing treason against God. What the Catholics had provided was an exegesis of Romans 13 that made a clear distinction between the office that was imbued by divine sanction, and the individual that held authority by popular will.

It was suggested that Scripture did not indicate that any particular form of government was preferred by God, only that temporal authority was necessary, and consequently any administration chosen by the people was divinely sanctioned. The Royal Supremacy remained an offensive manipulation of Scripture because it failed to respect divine will concerning the power of the keys which demonstrated that magistrates held power indirectly.

However, these radical concepts of civil government provoked instability and agitation within the English Catholic community. The polemics of Allen and Parsons were considered by Catholics, and Protestants, to promote rebellion and collaboration with a foreign power. The imposition of the Archpriest was intended to establish order and stability within a distressed priesthood, but the result was exactly the opposite. Rather than accepting Blackwell as God's substitute the Appellants perceived his installation as the realisation of Parsons' malignant political programme. Consequently, the precepts of obedience found in Romans 13 were used as a weapon by Catholics against Catholics. The Jesuits demanded obedience to Blackwell and warned that disobedience against their lawful authority was a damnable sin. The insubordinate actions of the Appellants was likened to mutiny. Conversely, the secular priests believed that the imposition of a pliant Archpriest was platform for Spanish invasion and evidence of a seditious Jesuit plot to depose Elizabeth and place themselves at the summit of ecclesiastical affairs. The Archpriest Controversy, and the political policies outlined by Parsons, served unite the Appellants with their Protestant government in a mutual loathing of Jesuit activity, and arouse patriotic sentiment within the wider Catholic community.

Two distinct visions of English Catholicism had emerged. The first was founded upon traditional papalism and it remained antagonistic towards the doctrine of Royal Supremacy. The second more closely reflected the Church of Henry VIII. The radical doctrines of resistance promoted by Parsons inadvertently served to foster a closer relationship between Elizabeth's Protestant government and her Catholic subjects. In terms of obedience to their anointed sovereign, the Appellants and the Protestant government sang from the same hymn sheet: Romans 13 taught that princes, whether good, tyrannous, Catholic or apostate, should be obeyed because they were God's lieutenants. Consequently, the Appellants joined Elizabeth's government in condemning both Jesuits and puritans for their seditious doctrines of disobedience. The treason and regicide espoused by the Calvinists, Monarchomachs, and Jesuits were recognised by Catholics and Protestants alike as the work of those who despised regal sovereignty. The difference between the Jesuits and puritans was believed to be paper-thin. Throughout the Elizabethan period the dilemma of Christian obedience and the obligation of the magistrate was vigorously contested. What can now be recognised is that Catholic political thought, and specifically their exegesis of Romans 13, was every bit as radical and innovative as that of their Protestant enemies.

Conclusion

Romans 13:1-7 is one of the most important passages of the Bible concerning political obligation, but without an analysis into how the text was received and interpreted we lack a vital insight into how Christians negotiated the English Reformation. The exegesis of Paul's commands was integral to the immediate debates concerning the nature of temporal and spiritual power, duty, obedience, resistance, conscience and loyalty. Therefore, the commands of Paul forced all Christians, during a time of tremendous religious anxiety, to answer fundamental questions about their relationship with the higher powers ordained of God. As a consequence, Romans 13 was the most contested theological battlefield throughout the English Reformation because the participants in this conflict were divided not only by Catholic or Protestant belief, but by confession and political persuasion. On the strictest of levels Romans 13 offered no support for any notions of disobedience to civil authority. However, deeper exegesis of Romans 13 revealed that there was a variety of multi-coloured understandings of what appeared to be Paul's black and white instructions.

Therefore, in order to better understand the interpretation of Romans 13 it is important to construct a genealogy of religious and political thought that includes the historical and contemporary voices of both Catholics and Protestants. The participants of the English Reformation, despite, for the most part, being removed from the jurisdiction of Rome believed themselves to be the inheritors of exegetical tradition, and they turned to both their spiritual forefathers and continental brethren for illumination of their present dilemmas. However, the question of the relationship between spiritual and worldly power had not been comprehensively answered by the Church Fathers or the medieval theologians and philosophers. As such biblical interpretation remained a process of debate, accommodation, negotiation, between rulers and subjects, clergy and laity, and Catholics and Protestants. Therefore early modern readers of Paul received a collection of pertinent, yet contrasting, conclusions that needed to be refuted or augmented. The interpreters of Romans 13 all confirmed that earthly power was an instrument of God created to suppress evil and preserve order in a world corrupted by sin. Moreover, all concurred that worldly governance was an integral part of God's natural order that was created to guide mankind to Christ. As a consequence rulers must be obeyed unless their commands were contrary to Scripture, or risk retribution.

Where these historical readers of Romans 13 diverge is in their understanding of the hierarchical structure of authority. As a result two highly influential, and antithetical, interpretations can be witnessed. The first, and most dominant exegesis of Scripture, acknowledged that both the spiritual and temporal powers must be respected but it also recognised a hierocratic theory of governance in which the sacred *auctoritas* of the priest was

of a greater dignity than the royal *potestas*. This was a dramatic expression of monarchical papal power in which the pope was believed to have been bequeathed a distinctive *plenitudo potestatis* over both spiritual and temporal affairs. This afforded the papal office universal jurisdiction over all of Christendom, and the power to depose any temporal power for heresy or schism. The second rejected the notion that God had entrusted the pope with the enjoined power of *rex et sacerdos*, and insisted that Romans 13 had confirmed that temporal rulers receive their power directly from God without intermediary. Therefore temporal rulers possessed *potestas iurisdictionis* because of their unique ability to preserve order by providing a suitable hierarchy to adjudicate over and create law.

The sixteenth century readers of Romans 13 inherited these polarised understandings of the relationship between the spiritual and temporal power. In the period that immediately preceded the Reformation interpreters of Paul offered entirely orthodox readings of Romans 13 that revealed rulers to be ministers of God provided to protect the good and punish the wicked. In return subjects must respect the worldly authority and obey all commands that did not contravene God's Word. The temporal prince was informed that his duty was to rule for the profit of his people and emulate God's benevolence. As the impulses of reform grew stronger Christian princes were urged to utilise their divinely ordained authority for the benefit of the Church. The reformers understood Romans 13 revealed that God had bestowed upon the prince, as God's minister, a protective and preventative responsibility to defend the Church from corruption. The duty of the prince was explicitly outlined by the reformers who informed princes that they must ensure righteousness and oppose the oppressive doctrines of the pope. In rejecting the orthodox understanding of the papal primacy and elevating the judicial status of the princely office, they stood on the shoulders of the medieval interpreters of Romans 13 that had insisted that temporal authority alone was divinely furnished with judicial authority by right of the coercive sword.

The temporal authority was installed to preserve order and ensure the virtuousness of the Christian who dwelled in a corrupted world. As such both the spiritual and temporal government were established by God and they fulfilled positive and complimentary functions. In fact, Luther, Melanchthon and Zwingli all agreed that the source of all good law and government upon the earth was God, and that Christians must obey the temporal rulers unless, of course, they commanded something contrary to Scripture. Obedience was an act of love, and the temporal ruler a sacred gift that must be revered and celebrated. The magistrate's coercive power was exalted as a divine obligation to protect the righteous and to revenge sin. The sacred duty of the magistrate is essential to all interpretations of Romans 13. Indeed, Luther's crucial distinction between the unlawful rebellion and a legitimate act of self-defence by an inferior power against an aggressive superior authority can not be understood without the confirmation

that it was the duty of all magistrates to protect the good against evil. Luther, Melancthon, and the jurists had articulated positive action of self-defence against an impious superior power and not rebellion or a theory of resistance.

This recognition of the duty of the lesser powers is entirely concordant with the ephoral structure previously suggested by Zwingli and later more powerfully emphasised by Calvin. The continental reformers understood that the remit of the civil magistrate contained a spiritual and constitutional duty to withstand tyranny or impious superior powers. Calvin had not articulated a coherent theory of resistance and nor was it a vehement promotion of the individual's right to take up arms against their magistrates. The reformers were of the opinion that temporal rulers must remain on the side of the righteousness, and in return God had commanded every soul to be subject to their higher powers. The precepts of obedience found in Romans 13 and Acts 5:29 remained unbroken, and both civil and divine law is preserved. The doctrine of obedience and non-resistance remained fundamental to the continental reformers' understanding of the Christians relationship with the temporal and spiritual authority.

This exegesis of Romans 13 is clearly perceptible in the writings of Tyndale and Barnes. Indeed, both men advanced an archetypal articulation of Lutheran passive obedience. Tyndale petitioned the same biblical texts used by the continental reformers to refute the papal primacy: Romans 13 and the commandment to honour thy father and mother established the fundamental duty of obedience, and Exodus 22:28 and Psalm 82:6 confirmed rulers possessed judicial authority. This notion of *rex imago dei* was not an innovation having previously been propounded by Ambrosiaster, Erasmus, Luther, and subsequently Calvin. The rally-call for kings to renounce the papal supremacy and restore their lost authority that was established by Romans 13 was intoxicating. The rightful possession of the sword was fundamental to the denial of the papal primacy and the adoption of the Royal Supremacy. Romans 13:4 provided the blueprint for princely duty because it proclaimed that the possessor of the sword must defend their subjects from all evildoers. In wielding the sword the king was a conduit of God's vengeance and an expression of God's love.

Therefore Henry exemplified God's benevolent hierarchy: rulers above subjects, husband above wife, and man above woman. This divine hierarchy endorsed Chrysostom's recognition of a natural order and revealed the aspiration of all true Christians to love, and be subject to the higher powers. However, the dethroning of papal supremacy was corroborated by theological, historical and legal testimony that announced Henry enjoyed *institutio*, *officium* and *potestas* over the spiritual and earthly realms. Significantly, Romans 13 was employed to demonstrate Henry's divine ordination, emphasise the king's jurisdiction over the Church, and demand that every soul was subject to royal power. The Royal propaganda intensified the anti-papal rhetoric and the examples of illustrious biblical kings were invoked in order to convince

England's subjects that the king possessed *potestas jurisdictionis* within his realm. The formal deprivation of Rome's legislative sovereignty over the English Church, by act of Parliament, declared the restoration of England's ancient *imperium*, and provided Henry an authority that was second only to God.

The Henrician Reformation was a conservative revolution. The rejection of papal supremacy was not a rejection of the Catholic faith, but the recognition of a distinct *ecclesia Anglicana* that existed within the sacred Catholic Church. Moreover, what made the Royal Supremacy so powerful was that it demonstrated that Scripture did not necessarily support papalism. Indeed, the doctrine was intrinsically Pauline in its central premise that God had bestowed upon kings an authority that was preeminent to all other powers upon the earth. Henry did not seek to follow the religious agenda of the reformers, but rather he sought practical solutions to his foreign and domestic dilemmas. Nevertheless, Henry's reformation of the Church was not universally supported. The rhetoric employed by the government against the rebels of 1536 and religious dissenters was immersed in Romans 13, and it established a pattern of almost shrill denunciation and a demand for obedience that would be repeated throughout the Reformation. Resisting the King was resisting God, and rebellion questioned divine wisdom. Nevertheless, Pole's defiant defence of the Catholic Church articulated an entirely orthodox distinction between the spiritual and temporal authority which stressed that the sacerdotal function of the priest was more sublime and divine than that of kings.

Captivatingly, Pole suggested that princes did not receive their authority directly from God and instead they were appointed by popular will. This distinction between the office and the individual was a radical notion but not a unique one because it had already been adopted by theologians such as Abelard, Aquinas, Wyclif, and more recently by Pole's former secretary Thomas Starkey. Pole's proposition did not reject the Pauline precept that God was the ultimate origin of all power, but instead it recognised that kings were not established by God's will but by His consent. For Pole the two fundamental principles of kingship, protection and governance, were revealed in Romans 13:3-4, and possession of civil office was conditional upon the fulfilment of these duties. This was a notion of popular sovereignty that differed from that previously advocated by Marsilius of Padua in the respect that the papal primacy was firmly maintained, however, it also corresponded because likewise it recognised all power was of God, and the structure of government was decided by the people.

The Henrician Church suffered from theological division, and the numerous statements of doctrine that were produced reflected this disunity and incoherence. The anti-clericalism of Fish and Bale's revisionist histories urged Henry to pursue a policy of further reform, and muster the power of his sword against the popish clergy that sought to abolish the supremacy of kings. The plethora of works by Becon bound the divine duty of the prince to protect his subjects and

promote God's glory to the obligation to reform the Church. Time and time again the reformers turned to precepts of Romans 13 to emphasise the divine duty to protect the realm against evil, and the subject's obligation to obedience. Conversely, the conservatives ushered Henry away from the Schmalkaldic League and towards the adoption of the more orthodox Six Articles, Kings Book and the Act for the Advancement of True Religion. Nevertheless, despite the reduced legal space in which the reformers could safely operate they remained committed to the doctrine of non-resistance, and they focused their fury on the papal Antichrist and his villainous servants in the clergy. Consequently, they continued to argue that Henry was duty bound to wield the sword against the Romish foxes that continued to perpetuate the papal tyranny. This was a Reformation defined by kingship and Romans 13 provided an authoritative biblical roadmap.

The incessant demand for obedience continued throughout the reign of Edward VI. From the very outset the principles of Romans 13 were impressed upon both Edward and his subjects: the mutual obligation of servitude. What was cultivated was the notion of a young reforming king, a new Josiah, who had been elected by God in order to complete the godly reformation. However, Edward's minority would ensure that his kingship was like a mighty stone giant that was inherently weakened by feet made of clay. Moreover, leading conservatives, particularly Gardiner, openly questioned the validity of the reforms promulgated in Edward's name and were deeply concerned about religious innovation. This was a battle to win hearts and minds, and Romans 13 provided the indispensable theological ammunition to confront any dissidence. The homilies attempted to address the desperate lack of evangelical preachers, and they proved to be a powerful conduit for the precepts of Romans 13. The pulpit was a powerful instrument for religious change, and the message Edward's preachers delivered was unambiguous: Scripture demanded all must obey God's lieutenants and all resistance was resistance to divine wisdom. As a result, England's congregations were inculcated with a Lutheran doctrine of non-resistance that forcefully announced that whosoever resisted the higher power, whether it be pious or impious, also resisted God's providence.

The Edwardian government urgently needed authoritative theological support in its battle against popery. The continental reformers acted as couriers of the Gospel, and their exegesis was a wellspring that helped place England at the centre of European theological activity. An abundance of translated and English anti-papal works sought to persuade Edward's subjects with well-rehearsed tropes that condemned the pope as Antichrist, and of the need to continue the reform initiated by Henry VIII. The influx of reformers like Vermigli, Ochino, and Bucer was welcomed by the government because they all articulated a theology that strongly defended magisterial authority, and this, in turn, reinforced Edward's Royal Supremacy. The divine nature of Edward was accentuated by references to Romans 13, I Peter 2, and Psalm 82. This understanding of government is reflected in Bucer's insistence that kingly authority was

imbued with a spiritual duty: the king had possessed the sword and was responsible for both the lives and morality of his subjects. Romans 13 demonstrated Edward's divine function to restore the Kingdom of Christ, and ensure his commonwealth was guided spiritually and politically by the Word of God. The authority of the prince was not strictly absolute because inherent to the relationship between governors and the governed was a reciprocal duty of servitude. This reciprocal duty is clearly perceptible in the words of Romans 13.

Similarly, the Reformation was not an imposition from above but a collaboration between magistrates, clergy, and subjects. The magistrates should advance the true faith and punish evildoers, clergy should devote themselves to teaching the Gospel, and subjects should obey their superiors and live virtuously. Therefore rebellion was considered by the government and the clergy to be in direct breach of prescribed duty. However, more nuanced analysis concerning the causes of the 1549 uprisings identified that there had been, almost without exception, a dereliction of duty *en masse* throughout God's natural hierarchy. The magistrates, clergy, and subjects had violated the precepts of Romans 13 by neglecting not only their reciprocal duty to each other but also to God. In the end, the conservative challenge against the establishment of the evangelical religion, the critical problem of Edward's minority, and civil unrest all ensured that the government believed it was necessary to persistently demand obedience. As a result, the commands of Romans 13 were never far from evangelical lips.

As a consequence, evangelicals remained committed to a strict reading of Romans 13 that promoted the doctrine of non-resistance even though they believed that England was once again placed under the tyranny of the Antichrist following the accession of Mary Tudor. The evangelicals did not, for the most part of Mary's reign, question Mary's right to rule. Nevertheless, non-resistance did not necessarily mean nicodemism or quietism; the dark forces of popery needed to be refuted and the true Word of God must be served. The evangelicals clearly understood that obedience to the commands of the magistrate was limited by its concurrence with Scripture. This principle was, of course, entirely orthodox and simply acknowledged Peter's command to obey God rather than man. The policy of non-resistance was facilitated by the new Catholic regime's irenic approach to religion which favoured reconciliation over recrimination. Mary and her Catholic government recognised that following a generation of schism the papal supremacy would be a difficult doctrine to sell. As a result, Catholic writers were reluctant to stumble onto matters of controversy, and this explained their discernible lack of engagement with Romans 13. Those few writers that did engage with Romans 13 were attentive enough not to bind the spiritual under the temporal, and to stress that Christians must obey both authorities.

However, the royal marriage provoked a serious crisis of conscience. Whether opposition to the union was rooted in xenophobia or religious belief, or even a potent blend of

both, the prospect of a foreign consort for Mary revealed a significant sense of alarm. Mary's government responded to Wyatt's rebellion in the now customary manner: with condemnation and a demand for obedience. The strict readings of Romans 13 that emerged could have been lifted from the pages of either Catholic or Protestant polemics. Nevertheless, the Marian government's determined change of policy towards religious persecution caused some evangelicals to re-examine the precepts of obedience. What can be observed from Knox's obstinate condemnation of Mary's restoration of Catholicism, and in his suggestion that the prophets of God may sometimes teach treason against kings, is the formative emergence of a distinct policy concerning obedience. What we now witness is a more concrete shift away from the belief that Romans 13 only supported non-resistance to an exegesis that recognised Paul had commanded magistrates to fulfil their religious duty, and in failing to carry out this obligation the 'higher power' became a conduit of wickedness. As a result obedience was conditional upon the magistrate's fidelity to God's law, and the people had the authority to repudiate or even depose them.

These were the first tentative steps on a journey towards distinct readings of Romans 13 that have dominated the political historiography that relates to the reign of Mary I. While Ponet accepted that the origin of political power proceeded from God, he also observed that all were bound by divine law and that the people actively determined that the commonwealth and not the king was sovereign. The concept of popular sovereignty and the distinction between the office and the individual were not innovations of early modern thought. However, they were more powerfully elaborated and coherently expressed by reformers like Bucer and Beza than at any previous time. Furthermore, the notion of the superior and inferior magistrate was now common parlance. The three exiles subscribed to this hierarchy of government that afforded magistrates a custodial duty to ensure evildoers were punished, and their subjects were nourished by Christ's doctrine. Therefore, the inferior magistrate possessed the legitimate authority to reject the wicked commands of their tyrannical superiors, and even reprove or depose them.

Fundamental to this understanding of Christian obedience was an exegesis of Acts 5:29 and Romans 13 that outstripped the continental reformers. Ponet and Goodman emphasised that the command to obey God rather than men was the prerequisite positive action concerning Christian obedience. Therefore, in their interpretation of Scripture neither Ponet nor Goodman were engaging in artful *eisegesis* in an attempt to secure a biblical foundation to disobey or even depose princes. Neither was the demand to obey God rather than man radical resistance theory. These are subtle differences but it is important not to conflate passive disobedience with resistance. The radicalism contained in these propositions is not found in their identification that all are bound by a higher obligation to God, but in their rejection of unconditional kingly

sovereignty, and likewise the doctrine of Royal Supremacy. The specific rationale behind Knox's rejection of Mary's rule, however, was significantly different. Knox made a clear distinction between the regiment of women which was repugnant to God's natural order, and a tyrannical ruler that derived his legal status from God to punish the people for their sinfulness. This rejection of Mary's legitimacy did not contravene the precepts of Romans 13 because they were not germane.

The freedom of religious expression enjoyed by Marian exiles would not be tolerated by Elizabeth. In a realm in which hostile Protestant theologies existed alongside residual Catholicism the interpretation of Romans 13, and the doctrine of Royal Supremacy would be fiercely contested. Discontent unleashed a persistent challenge from within and without Elizabeth's Church. The Genevan exile Church had rejected the Edwardian Prayer book, and composed a *Confession of Faith* that was hostile to Elizabeth's Royal Supremacy. Moreover, the Geneva Bible reinforced a vision of the Church that refused to recognise the 'political magistrate' supreme authority over the Church. The exiles did acknowledge the magistrate's custodial role within the Church, and this was confirmed by their exegesis of Romans 13: Elizabeth was the chief governess, but not the Head of the Church of Christ. The exiles delivered to Elizabeth a warning that could have been lifted directly from the incendiary books of Ponet and Goodman: ruling by anything other than godly means was tyranny and such rulers may be deposed by the righteous. Nevertheless, Elizabeth rejected the Genevan model for church governance, and her regime recognised the danger of a religious liberty that permitted subjects to pass judgment over the ordinances of magistrates.

The conflict over *adiaphora* was not peripheral squabble. At the very heart of the matter was obedience, hierarchy, order, and the function of the higher power as Head of the Church. These very concerns are inherent in Romans 13. The participants of the polemical exchanges were not motivated by a desire to dishonour the magistrate or place Christians under the temporal yoke, but rather the need to respect God's will. The *Admonition to Parliament* and the Marprelate Tracts were stimulated by similar impulses: the dethroning of the civil magistrate from headship of the Church, and the restoration of Christ to His rightful place. This was about restoration not destruction. The Elizabethan government naturally turned to Romans 13 to stress the duty of all subjects to obey their magistrates, and their opponents affirmed that obedience to God was the positive primary action concerning subjection to civil authority. When the English Protestants customarily turned to their continental brethren for guidance they found that the writings of Melancthon, Bullinger, Bucer, and Vermigli could be used to support or refute their arguments. The matter proved to be an enduring obstacle to unity within Elizabeth's Church, and the exegesis of both Romans 13 and Acts 5:29 constantly contested.

There was a sharp contrast between the policy of persuasion and non-resistance adopted by English Catholics during the early years of Elizabeth's reign and the confrontational polemic of the evangelicals exiled under Mary. However, the promulgation of *Regnans in excelsis* and the intensification of Anglo-Spanish hostility tested the principles of non-resistance as England's Catholics were issued with a bold and explicit call to arms. English Catholics were forced to confront a terrible dilemma and choose between papal obedience and national loyalty. The government responded to these threats with policies of persecution and called upon preachers to broadcast the precepts of Romans 13 in order to demand obedience, and foment loyalty. Problematically, leading Catholics expounded policies that oscillated between passive disobedience and active resistance. There was a pattern. When persecution increased or the possibility of foreign invasion appeared likely, the Elizabethan exiles were more inclined to embrace resistance. In doing so, Catholics rarely cited Romans 13 in support, and if they did it was not to promote civil obedience, but to defend themselves from the charge of treason. The incessant expressions of loyalty by the domiciled English Catholics were frustrated by the imposition of an Archpriest and the adoption of theoretical justifications for active resistance by prominent Jesuits. Most English Catholics disassociated themselves from Rome's antagonistic policies.

Throughout the Reformation period England was never isolated from European political and religious thought. The political ideologies and debates which considered concepts such as limited government and princely absolutism were not alien concepts to English political thinkers. Romans 13 was, as always, a lightning rod for political change and radical concepts of government. Just as Ponet and Goodman had done, the Monarchomachs placed the primary function of Christian obedience in Acts 5:29 and recalibrated Romans 13 as an explicit call for action: it was the duty of the righteous to refuse to obey the impious commands of tyrant and render themselves to God. Failure to act made them complicit in the tyrant's abrogation of divine law. The Pauline antidote for princely oppression was again the civil magistrate who possessed the intrinsic duty to admonish or even depose the higher power, because rulers must be a terror for evil and protect the good. The notions of popular monarchy and princely deposition had long been imbued in Christian thought, and these radical ideas found fertile ground amongst both Protestants and Catholics, and Romans 13 was used as evidence that the 'higher powers' that Paul had spoken of referred to the magistrates that held their authority by the consent of the people. However, radical thought only remains radical or heretical if it is not adopted into orthodoxy.

Although theologians from Marsilius to Hooker accepted notions of popular monarchy, the political concepts of the Monarchomachs were considered by most to be highly seditious. Even if we accept theories of resistance were beginning to emerge, there is no evidence of a

widespread adherence to such radical notions. As a result, the Protestant conformists and the Appellants sang from the same hymn sheet in order to denounce both presbyterians and Jesuits for their revolutionary spirit. During the latter years of Elizabeth's reign we find Protestants condemning Protestants for sounding like Catholics, and Catholics condemning Catholics for sounding like Protestants. The line between the constitutional positions of the Jesuits and Monarchomachs had effectively disappeared. Moreover, two competing visions of English Catholicism emerged, and after decades of condemning Protestant innovation early modern Catholics had, in their radical exegesis of Romans 13, shown themselves to be as radical as their enemies. Nevertheless, all sides of the debates petitioned Romans 13 as incontrovertible proof of their veracity. The true faith taught obedience, but heresy taught disobedience and resistance.

Romans 13 was ever-present in the charged polemical exchanges of the Reformation. The commands of Romans 13 are indispensable to understanding sixteenth-century debates touching politics and religion because the text spoke to the very immediate concerns of Christians such as the nature of temporal and spiritual power, duty, obedience, resistance, conscience and loyalty. This was a living dialogue that crossed national borders and all confessional divides. As such, early modern political thought and biblical exegesis was part of a continuous conversation with both the Christian past and present. The true interpretation of Romans 13 was essential in an English realm besieged by the internal pressures of royal supremacy, popular rebellion, changes to religion and anxiety over the succession, and the external menace of excommunication or the threat of foreign incursion. These pressures provoked interpretations of Romans 13 that fuelled polemical debates and generated within both Catholicism and Protestantism momentous and lasting political concepts. This reception history of Romans 13 has demonstrated a number of things: that Paul's commands were ubiquitous, the participants of the English Reformation were in active dialogue with historical interpretation, that Catholic and Protestant political thought was equally radical and innovative, and that the exegesis of Romans 13 helped shape the religious and political landscape of England and Europe. Romans 13 was indeed the most important single political passage of the Reformation age.

Appendix: Biblical Texts and Key Variations in Translation

Tyndale New Testament 1534 (STC 2826)

Romans 13:1-7

¹Let every Soule submit him selfe vnto the auctoritie off ye hyer powers. For there is no power but of God. The powers that be, are ordeyned off God. ²Whosoever therefore resysteth power, resisteth the ordinaunce off God. And they that resist, shall receave to them selfe damnacion. ³For rulars are not to be feared for good works, but for evyll Wilt thou be with out feare of the power? Do well then: and so shalt thou be prayded of the same. ⁴For he is the minister of God, for thy welth. But and yf thou do evyll, then feare: for he beareth not a swearde for nought: but is the minister of God, to take vengeance on them that do evyll. ⁵Wherfore ye must nedes obeye, not for feare off vengeance only: but also because of conscience. ⁶And even for this cause paye ye tribute. For they are goddes ministers, servynge for the same purpose. ⁷Geve to every man therefore his duetie: Tribute to whom tribute belongeth: Custome to whom custome is due: feare to whom feare belongeth: honoure to who honoure pertayneth.

I Peter 2:13-14 and 17

¹³Submit youre selves vnto all manner ordinaunce of man for the lordes sake, whether it be vnto the kynge as vnto the chefe heed: ¹⁴other unto rulars, as vnto them that are sent of him, for the punysshment of evyll doars: but for the laude of them that do well.

¹⁷Honoure all men. Love brotherly felishippe. Feare god, honour the kynge.

Matthew 16:18-19

¹⁸And I saye also vnto the, yt thou arte Peter: and apon this rocke I wyll bylde my congregacion. And the gates of hell shall not prevayle ageynst it, ¹⁹And I wyll geve vnto the, the keyes of the kyngdom of heven: and what soever thou byndest vpon erth, shall be bounde in heven: and whatsoever thou lowsest on erthe, shalbe lowsed in heven.

Matthew 22:21

Geve therefore to Cesar, that which is Cesars: and geve vnto god, that which is goddes.

Hebrews 13:7

Obeye them that have the oversight of you, and submit youre selves to them.

Coverdale Bible 1535 (STC 2063.3)

Psalm 82:6

I haue sayde: ye are goddes.

Acts 5:29

We ought more to obeye God then men.

Geneva Bible 1560 (STC 2093)

Romans 13:3-4

³Whosoeuer therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist, shal receiue to them selues iudgement. ⁴For princes are not to be feared *for* good works, but *for* euil.

Rheims New Testament 1582 (STC 2884)

Romans 13:1-4

¹Let euery soul be subiect to higher powers, for there is no power but of God. And those that are, of God are ordained, ²Therefore he that resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God. And they that resist, purchase to them selues damnation. ³for princes are not feare to the good worke, but to euil. But wilt thou not reare the power? Doe good: and thou shalt haue praise of the same. ⁴for he is gods minister vnto thee for good. But if thou doe euil, feare. for he beareth not the sword without cause. For he is Gods minister a reuenger vnto wrath, to him that doeth euil.

I Peter 2:13-14 and 17

¹³Be subiect therefore to euery humane creature for God: whether it be to king, as excelling: ¹⁴or to rulers as sent by him to the reuenge of malefactors, but to the praise of the good.

¹⁷Honour al men. Loue the fraternitie. Feare God. Honour the king.

Matthew 16:18-19

¹⁸And I say to thee: That *thou art Peter; and vpon this Rocke will build my Church, and the gates of hel shal not preuaile against it.* ¹⁹*And I wil giue to thee the keyes of the kingdom of heauen. And whatsoever thou shalt binde vpon earth, it shall be bound also in heauens: and whatsoever thou shalt loose in earth, it shall be loosed also in the heauens.*

Hebrews 13:17

Obey your Prelates, and be subiect to them.

Theodore Beza New Testament, Translated by Laurence Tomson 1580 (STC 2881.3)

Romans 13:2-3

²Whosoeuer therefor resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they thay resist, shall receiue to themselues condemnation. ³For Magistrates are not to be feared *for* good works, but *for* euill.

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