

# The Church of Mary Tudor

*Edited by*  
**Eamon Duffy**  
*and*  
**David Loades**

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EAMON DUFFY and DAVID LOADES

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# Contents

<i>List of Tables</i>	vii
<i>List of Contributors</i>	viii
<i>Series Editor's Preface</i>	ix
<i>Editors' Introduction</i>	xi
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	xxvi
Introduction: The Personal Religion of Mary I <i>David Loades</i>	1
<b>Part I: The Process</b>	
1 The Marian Episcopate <i>David Loades</i>	33
2 The English Universities, 1553–58 <i>Claire Cross</i>	57
3 Westminster Abbey Restored <i>C.S. Knighton</i>	77
4 The Clergy, the Church Courts and the Marian Restoration in Norwich <i>Ralph Houlbrooke</i>	124
<b>Part II: Cardinal Pole</b>	
5 The Success of Cardinal Pole's Final Legation <i>Thomas F. Mayer</i>	149
6 Cardinal Pole Preaching: St Andrew's Day 1557 <i>Eamon Duffy</i>	176

7	Spanish Religious Influence in Marian England <i>John Edwards</i>	201
<b>Part III: The Culture</b>		
8	The Marian Restoration and the Mass <i>Lucy Wooding</i>	227
9	The Theology and Spirituality of a Marian Bishop: the Pastoral and Polemical Sermons of Thomas Watson <i>William Wizeman, SJ</i>	258
10	Marking the Days: Henry Machyn's Manuscript and the Mid-Tudor Era <i>Gary G. Gibbs</i>	281
11	The Persecution in Kent <i>Patrick Collinson</i>	309
	<i>Index</i>	334

# List of Tables

3.1	Ordinations at London 1557–58 with reference to Westminster Abbey	86
5.1	Appeals by type of court and year	150
5.2	Appeals beginning with Pole’s return in 1554 through 1555, by month	151
5.3	Appeals in 1557 by month	153
5.4	Appeals by diocese (raw numbers)	154
5.5	Appeals from York by year	160
5.6	Appeals from London by year, including those reserved but not filed	160

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## Series Editor's Preface

The still-usual emphasis on medieval (or Catholic) and Reformation (or Protestant) religious history has meant neglect of the middle ground, both chronological and ideological. As a result, continuities between the Middle Ages and early modern Europe have been overlooked in favour of emphasis on radical discontinuities. Further, especially in the later period, the identification of 'Reformation' with various kinds of Protestantism means that the vitality and creativity of the established Church, whether in its Roman or local manifestations, have been left out of account. In the last few years, an upsurge of interest in the history of traditional (or Catholic) religion makes these inadequacies in received scholarship even more glaring and in need of systematic correction. The series will attempt this by covering all varieties of religious behaviour, broadly interpreted, not just (or even especially) traditional institutional and doctrinal Church history. It will to the maximum degree possible be interdisciplinary, comparative and global, as well as non-confessional. The goal is to understand religion, primarily of the 'Catholic' variety, as a broadly human phenomenon, rather than as a privileged mode of access to superhuman realms, even implicitly.

The period covered, 1300–1700, embraces the moment which saw an almost complete transformation of the place of religion in the life of Europeans, whether considered as a system of beliefs, as an institution or as a set of social and cultural practices. In 1300, vast numbers of Europeans, from the Pope down, fully expected Jesus' return and the beginning of His reign on earth. By 1700, very few Europeans, of whatever level of education, would have subscribed to such chiliastic beliefs. Pierre Bayle's notorious sarcasms about signs and portents are not idiosyncratic. Likewise, in 1300 the vast majority of Europeans probably regarded the Pope as their spiritual head; the institution he headed was probably the most tightly integrated and effective bureaucracy in Europe. Most Europeans were at least nominally Christian, and the Pope had at least nominal knowledge of that fact. The papacy, as an institution, played a central role in high politics, and the clergy in general formed an integral part of most governments, whether central or local. By 1700, Europe was divided into a myriad different religious allegiances, and even those areas officially subordinate to the Pope were both more nominally Catholic in belief (despite colossal

efforts at imposing uniformity) and also in allegiance than they had been 400 years earlier. The Pope had become only one political factor, and not one of the first rank. The clergy, for its part, had virtually disappeared from secular governments, as well as losing much of its local authority. The stage was set for the Enlightenment.

Thomas F. Mayer,  
Augustana College

## Editors' Introduction

The historiography of the Marian Church, like that of the reign as a whole, has been not so much chequered as stereotyped. In the long perspective of history, the most important thing about the Catholic restoration was that it was aborted by Mary's death without heirs of her body, in November 1558. It took about 20 years for the decisiveness of that outcome to become apparent, and much longer before Protestants ceased to worry about Catholic conspiracies, or Catholics to dream of a reversal of fortune.<sup>1</sup> For at least two centuries the historiography was straightforwardly polemical. To John Foxe, struggling in Elizabeth's reign to give the new Protestant establishment credibility, Mary had been the hapless and deluded victim of a sacerdotal conspiracy. To Nicholas Harpsfield she had been the model of a godly ruler, undermined and frustrated by the foul machinations of heretics.<sup>2</sup> Because the Protestant establishment eventually took root, myths of the pre- and non-Roman origins of British Christianity took root along with it, and because Pius V effectively declared war on Elizabeth in 1570, the Roman Church began to be associated, first with rebellion and assassination, and then with foreign invasion and the threat of 'arbitrary government'. By 1600 Protestantism had become an entrenched aspect of England's national identity, and the historiography of Mary's reign had settled into the pattern which it would retain almost to the present. To the majority who defended the establishment, Mary was at best the victim of Spanish manipulation, at worst a wicked tyrant who had tried to defy the 'manifest destiny' of a Protestant realm. To those who sought to justify her actions, on the other hand, she presented a hardly less formidable problem. How could so resolute a defender of God's truth have been so cruelly abandoned?

To say that she had thereafter a 'loser's press' is to state the obvious, but it is more important to notice how tenacious both traditions have been, long outlasting the conflicts which gave them real relevance. When the ninth and last of the old editions of John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* was published in 1684, it was still a piece of occasional propaganda with

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<sup>1</sup> See particularly John Bossy, *The English Catholic Community, 1570–1850* (London, 1975), 11–77.

<sup>2</sup> *Dialogi Sex contra Summi Pontificatus ... ab Alano Copo Anglo* [Nicholas Harpsfield] *editi*, 1566.

a contemporary political resonance; but the same could hardly be said of the bitter dispute between S.R. Maitland, the librarian of Lambeth, and the editors which accompanied the next major edition in 1837.<sup>3</sup> The polarity between John Strype and Charles Dodd in the early eighteenth century was hardly greater than that between John Lingard and J.A. Froude in the middle of the nineteenth, or that between Philip Hughes and Geoffrey Dickens in the middle of the twentieth. At the centre of these divisions lay and lies the Marian persecutions.

To John Foxe, the campaign to root out Protestantism by force and fire was the wicked murdering of the saints of God; to Nicholas Harpsfield or Robert Parsons, the infliction of just punishment for crimes against the law, English law as well as the law of the Church.<sup>4</sup> To the derivatives of Foxe which appeared at regular intervals in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the slaughter was the inevitable result of allowing foreign papists to run the country. For Geoffrey Dickens, the persecutions were the sign of a regime utterly out of touch with political reality, as well as with human decency, a sign of 'the madness of a system which could burn a virtuous human being for his inability to accept a metaphysical theory'.<sup>5</sup> To Philip Hughes, the majority of the victims were in any case radicals who would have been equally readily dispatched by any contemporary government, Catholic or Protestant. All these judgements were coloured by confessional allegiance, and until the early twentieth century conflicting interpretations were often linked to explicitly denominational agendas. Such sectarian contests are no longer considered a respectable use of history, but they have proved a remarkably resilient if sometimes subterranean influence on the historiography of the Reformation, and of the Marian episode in particular.

But if the Marian regime has always been most vulnerable to criticism on the strength of the burning of Protestants, negative judgements based on analogies with the queen's own unhappy life and personality have run those based on persecution a close second. Pollard's judgement on the ultimate 'sterility' of the regime and all its outcomes has proved if anything a more insidious historiographical influence, because less obviously religiously *parti pris*.<sup>6</sup> If the time has come to abandon

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<sup>3</sup> Andrew Penny, 'John Foxe, Evangelicalism and the Oxford Movement', in D. Loades, ed., *John Foxe: An Historical Perspective* (Aldershot, 1999), 182–237.

<sup>4</sup> It has to be remembered that parliament in 1555 revived the early fifteenth-century statute *De Heretico Comburendo*, which had been repealed by Edward VI. This made heresy a statutory offence, and not simply an ecclesiastical one.

<sup>5</sup> A.G. Dickens, *The English Reformation* (London, 1964), 271.

<sup>6</sup> Expressed and elaborated in *The History of England from the Accession of Edward VI to the death of Elizabeth* (London, 1913).

denominational agendas, it is also essential that we attempt to appraise the policies and achievements of the 1550s without the benefit of hindsight. We know that Mary was to die young and childless in 1558, and that Elizabeth was to reign for 45 years. Neither eventuality could have been predicted in Marian England, yet we are prone to judge the policies of Mary's government, ecclesiastical and secular, as if she and her servants should or could have known that they had only five years to achieve their objectives. Recent scholarship, it is true, has changed the agenda in many ways. We no longer believe that the traditional Church was deeply and widely unpopular by 1547, or that significant numbers of people were simply waiting for Edward's council to sweep it away. Nor do we believe that Mary made herself so unpopular that the entire country greeted Elizabeth's accession with a huge sigh of relief. Measured against the upheavals and religious violence of Edward's reign, or the contradictions and uncertainties of religious policy in Elizabeth's early years, the Marian Church no longer looks so straightforwardly ineffectual.<sup>7</sup> And, as a flood of recent work on Foxe makes clear, not least Patrick Collinson's chapter in this book, it is no longer so obvious that John Foxe was always right about the popularity, the godliness or even the orthodox Protestantism of all his martyrs.<sup>8</sup> On the contrary, we know that persecution might be the product of local score-settling as well as of official policy, and that there was often grass-roots support for draconian measures against unpopular Protestant activists. Mary herself was hugely popular in 1553, not least because she stood for traditional religion; and there was considerable pastoral inventiveness in the restored Catholic Church, an impressive episcopate and an efficient ecclesiastical machine.

However, amid so much revision, certain historiographical landmarks have not moved, and that also needs to be recognized. The queen's marriage was unpopular at all levels of society; the persecution itself, whatever its local endorsements, was unprecedented in its scale and severity, and in many places seems to have been alienating even to Catholics and conformists. The event would prove that there was no lay party in the parliament of 1559 committed enough, or at any rate strong enough to prevent Elizabeth from abolishing the whole Marian achievement. What is now needed, therefore, is not so much a self-

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<sup>7</sup> Cf. D. MacCulloch, *Tudor Church Militant: Edward VI and the Protestant Reformation* (London, 1999); and N. Jones, *The Birth of the Elizabethan Age: England in the 1560s* (Cambridge, Mass., 1993).

<sup>8</sup> See Chapter 11, this volume; also John King, 'Fiction and Fact in Foxe's Book of Martyrs', in D. Loades, ed., *John Foxe and the English Reformation* (Aldershot, 1997), 12–35.

conscious attempt to abandon old sectarian or historiographical agendas, as a fresh attempt to locate the events of 1553–58 in the cultural context to which they belong. The fairest comparison is not with the Elizabethan Church, which had such a long run, but with the Edwardian, which was of similar duration. Given its radical (and, in much of England, unpopular) nature, the Edwardian achievement was remarkable; but Mary overturned it in a matter of weeks.<sup>9</sup> Then, starting from a Henrician base, which was not always sympathetic, she reconstructed an orthodox Catholic Church in an even shorter space of time than Edward had, a success which should not be obscured by the fact that it was itself to prove short-lived. How deep-rooted that success would have proved is hard to say, for historians in the nature of things are mostly concerned with externals, and counterfactual speculation about how events could or should have been managed differently is of limited use as a historical tool. Whereof we cannot speak, thereof we must be silent. The Marian Church cared passionately about orthodoxy but, as with the Edwardian or Elizabethan regimes, we have little direct evidence for Mary's and Cardinal Pole's success in converting – or recovering – hearts and minds. What the mass of people believed remains and is likely to remain elusive. We are on surer ground in assessing what they were persuaded or constrained to accept, how they behaved, and the impact of politics and political culture on their behaviour.

But we are in any case coming to appreciate more fully the value of public behaviour as an indicator of political and religious success. Historians were once by and large dismissive of the apparently endless succession of Marian processions and pageants chronicled by Henry Machyn, seeing in them evidence of the superficial obsession of the Marian regime with the enforcement of mere externals, a sort of ritual fiddling while London burned. Henry Machyn, our main source for this London pageantry, was a conservative with a distaste for heretical notions, but hardly a doctrinal zealot – he chronicled 'godly' official religious events in the reigns of Edward and Elizabeth as well as those commanded by Mary,<sup>10</sup> 'never made an explicitly dogmatic or doctrinal statement' and, for all his conservatism, admitted scarcely a hint of disapproval into his descriptions of the quite different public face of Edwardian or Elizabethan worship. It would be hard to tell from his sparse and factual narrative whether or not he had any sympathy with

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<sup>9</sup> D. Loades, *The Reign of Mary Tudor* (London, 1991), 96–128. E. Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars* (New Haven, 1992), pp. 524–64.

<sup>10</sup> See Chapter 10. J.G. Nichols, ed. *The Diary of Henry Machyn* (Camden Society, 1848).

those who followed Thomas Wyatt, or suffered at Smithfield. Machyn was not a man to espouse lost causes, or to stick his head above the parapet. He was, in short, a very typical London citizen, and Professor Gibbs's study here should remind us that we are not looking at a country divided into predefined camps of Catholics and Protestants, no matter what proportions we assign to them, but rather at communities caught in unprecedented religious flux, concerned to obey the law, to protect their identity and to manage their lives in difficult times.<sup>11</sup>

Nevertheless, as Professor Gibbs's essay makes clear, Machyn's 'celebratory' response to such ceremonial Marian 'representations of the regime' should not be dismissed as superficial or unimportant. Machyn, far more than the defiant adherents of the tiny London Protestant underground congregations, was indeed a representative citizen, whose life was bound up with and articulated by the civic pageantry of London, a pageantry which in Mary's reign seems to have blended seamlessly back into the pageantry of the old Church. On the evidence of Machyn's chronicle, the Marian regime's concern to rebuild the ritual life of London was a mark of shrewd engagement with the concerns and tastes of the citizens of the capital, not of unreal distance from them. Communities, both urban and rural, were defined by their rituals, and to attack or reject those rituals was in Tudor England considered both revolutionary and anti-social. In Elizabeth's reign this kind of conservatism would appear unhelpful to theologically committed ideologues, Catholic and Protestant alike, because it both hindered the more drastic changes which reforming Protestants wished to make, and obscured the theological principles upon which recusant Catholic clergy sought to persuade the people to abandon a schismatic or heretical conformity. Under Mary, however, ceremonial reconstruction along traditional lines was probably one of the regime's strongest popular cards.

This collection of essays does not claim to be the comprehensive rewriting of the history of the Marian Church which some have called for, but it is a modest step in that direction. There is no single agenda, except that of trying to get the story right. The contributors do not necessarily agree with each other, or with the editors, and the essays cover what we hope are some of the most central concerns of the Marian Church from a number of different angles. Thus the centrality of the sacraments, and particularly of the Mass, to the devotional life and self-identity of the Church is the subject not only of Dr Wooding's study of Marian writing about the Eucharist, but of Dr Wizeman's examination

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<sup>11</sup> Nichols, *The Diary of Henry Machyn*.

of the works of Thomas Watson: it looms large, too, in David Loades's account of the queen's personal faith. Careful readers of all three essays, however, will detect marked differences of emphasis and perception in exploring this common theme.<sup>12</sup>

Several of the essays reconsider, on the whole favourably, the objectives and competence of Cardinal Pole, whose English career, while escaping the obloquy that has surrounded the actions of the queen he so much revered, has by and large been damned with faint praise. Although he influenced the first year of the reign only indirectly, the priorities of Reginald Pole as cardinal legate and as Archbishop of Canterbury are central to any understanding of the Marian Church as a whole. Professor Mayer's essay represents a significant reappraisal of Pole's effectiveness as legate, based upon a careful examination of the processes which he controlled.<sup>13</sup> Pole may have been thought unworldly, both at the time and since, but his use of both judicial and administrative methods to achieve his ends were, Mayer argues, worthy of a skilled politician and of a committed and alert Counter-Reformation prelate. As Professor Cross shows, he was also the driving force behind the conversion of the universities, both of them heavily penetrated by Protestantism during the previous reign. According to her, his legatine visitations proved a 'watershed' in converting both centres, and especially Oxford, into the strongholds of Catholic learning which were to cause so much trouble to Elizabeth.<sup>14</sup> Pole's concern with the orthodoxy of the universities should not surprise: one of his central strategies, in fact, was the provision of adequate theological education for the clergy, as the foundation of a revived Catholic practice for the laity. Like Thomas More, whose writings supplied the Marian Church with much of its apologetic and polemical armoury, Pole was deeply distrustful of the explosion of religious debate which the reformation had stimulated, and which had led to drastic challenges to the teaching authority of the Church and to the standing of its clergy. Pole recognized the urgent need to instruct the laity in the Catholic faith, and his legatine synod took vigorous and imaginative steps to secure an educated preaching episcopate and parish clergy, and to provide a supply of orthodox printed catechetical and homilistic material for the use of priests unable to generate their own. But though he had a sophisticated humanist appreciation of the value of the Bible and of preaching, Pole condemned undirected Bible-reading and sermon-gadding, especially when the preachers were unauthorized, or worse, of questionable

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<sup>12</sup> See Chapters 8, 9 and Introduction, this volume.

<sup>13</sup> See Chapter 5.

<sup>14</sup> See Chapter 2.

orthodoxy, and when, as he believed was often the case in London, the listeners were more interested in novelty or entertainment than in conversion of the heart. In line with the Council of Trent's teaching on the value of tradition, the restoration of the faith was for him and his coadjutors an endeavour in which sacramental discipline was deemed to be just as important as Bible-reading or preaching.<sup>15</sup> Sound belief was impossible without sound practice, because it was in humble and receptive participation in the Sacraments and sacramentals of the Church, and in obedience to her teaching, that true faith was embodied and manifest.

These reservations have been widely held by historians to have blinded Pole to the urgency of providing Catholic preaching and preachers, and of re-educating the Tudor laity in Catholic orthodoxy. He has been accused of nourishing a complacent conviction that all that was needed to reverse the Reformation was the reimposition of external cult. Eamon Duffy here re-examines this assumption. He argues that the belief that Pole distrusted and discouraged preaching is based on a misreading of his correspondence with Bartolomé Carranza. In fact, Pole believed preaching to be the principal duty of bishops and priests, and insisted on the centrality to his own strategy and that of the Church at large not only of regular and frequent preaching, but also of printed catechetical and polemical writings, which were essential to undo the havoc inflicted by a generation of Protestant preaching and pamphleteering. His own English sermons reveal a topicality and engagement with current events and controversies, and a polemical directness and clarity, startlingly at odds with the received historiography.<sup>16</sup>

The Marian Church thus had more features of strength than it has been generally given credit for. Thomas Watson was probably its ablest pastoral and theological writer, but he was by no means the only one. Pastoral and polemical concerns are here explored in Professor Duffy's analysis of Pole's St Andrew's Day sermon, Dr Wizeman's study of Watson's writings and Dr Wooding's exploration of the diversity of forms in which the Marian Church presented the centrality of the Eucharist. Dr Wizeman's demonstration that Watson made use of the decrees of Trent<sup>17</sup> and Dr John Edwards's exploration of the influence of Spanish theologians, above all Bartolomeo Carranza, on the Marian Church, anchor these English concerns firmly within the wider context of the early stages of the

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<sup>15</sup> See Chapter 6, this volume; also Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, 543–54.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* For a more traditional view of Pole's priorities, see Loades, *The Reign of Mary I*, 297–8.

<sup>17</sup> See Chapter 9.

European Counter Reformation.<sup>18</sup> As all these essays suggest, the conclusion drawn several years ago by Jennifer Loach, that the clergy of the Marian restoration took their responsibilities seriously in respect of a flock which had been without orthodox guidance for more than a generation, looks increasingly secure.<sup>19</sup> Whether they were as successful in converting the heretic or convincing the sceptic as they were in strengthening the faith of the sympathetic is a different and perhaps unanswerable question, but it is clear that the sympathetic were in a large majority.

Having said that, the extent both of Nicodemism, the merely external conformity of secretly convinced Protestants, and of more genuine changes of heart in a period of religious upheaval and flux, is unquantifiable, and Professor Houlbrooke's study of Norwich should warn us against making facile assumptions. Norwich was perhaps unusual in having its leading Edwardian preacher submit so decisively and apparently sincerely, but he was probably a more representative figure than the many more resolute resisters who feature in the pages of Foxe. As in other cities, Norwich's leading citizens conformed, more or less rapidly, in 1553 no less than in 1547 or 1559. On this evidence alone, one should no more conclude that such reversals reflected zealous Catholicism than that they were the mark of committed heresy.<sup>20</sup> Just as the events of 1553–54 appear to have tipped many waverers into conformity, and demoralized many more resolute Protestants with the conviction that their efforts had been inadequate in the sight of God, so the reversals of 1558–59 must have had a similar impact on many conservatives. Only the most zealous on both sides treated these setbacks as calls to labour more earnestly 'under the cross'. Loyalty to the Crown, and perhaps a certain fatalism, were to prove more decisive determinants of general behaviour than theological commitment or devotional conservatism. No one here has assessed the impact of either war or influenza upon the attitudes of ordinary people, but they form a background which should not be ignored. A generation accustomed (and taught) to interpret Divine favour by reading the signs of prosperity and adversity may well have begun to wonder about Mary and her policies. Staunch partisans like Miles Huggarde might attribute England's misfortunes in 1558 to the ingratitude of wicked heretics, but it is unlikely that the population at large saw it that way.<sup>21</sup> It was the

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<sup>18</sup> See Chapter 7.

<sup>19</sup> J. Loach, 'The Marian Establishment and the Printing Press', *English Historical Review*, 101 (1986), 135–48.

<sup>20</sup> See Chapter 4. On Nicodemites in general, see Andrew Pettegree, 'Nicodemism and the English Reformation', in *Marian Protestantism: Six Studies* (Aldershot, 1996), 86–117.

<sup>21</sup> Miles Huggarde [Hogarde], *The Displayinge of the Protestauntes* (London, 1556).

queen who was unfortunate; a situation doubtless more likely to be attributed to her fondness for Spaniards than to her devotion to the Mass, but harvest failure, epidemic disease and the loss of Calais undoubtedly reduced morale in the summer of 1558. That, of course, was not the fault of the Church. However, a determined stand by a resolutely Catholic laity, both in the City and in parliament, could have changed the shape of the Elizabethan settlement drastically. It did not come, not because most were secret Protestants 'wishing for [their] Elizabeth', but in part at least because of the clouds of depression and uncertainty which accompanied Mary's death.

In November 1558 both committed Protestants and committed Roman Catholics were probably small minorities. Though most people were conservative, happy enough with the Marian Church's restoration of the old religion, they were not necessarily equally supportive of the hierarchy's firm but cautious papalism, and certainly less so of the regime's Spanish entanglements. In the event most proved fatalistic; willing to accommodate themselves to whatever the new queen and parliament might now decree. That, of course, was not the same thing as enthusiasm, and Elizabeth's council knew for years that it was skating on thin ice. That was why the queen was so reluctant to force issues, or to allow Protestant zealots to pursue those who celebrated clandestine Masses. The fact is that we do not know what most people thought of the state of the Church in November 1558; we only know what they did about it. In parliament only the attitude of Mary's bishops distinguished the defence of the Catholic establishment in 1559 from the defence of the Protestant establishment in 1553. And whatever the popularity of Mary's Catholic restoration, in the country at large, if we can count the Wyatt rebellion as even partly religious in inspiration, until 1569 there was actually more overt resistance to Mary than there was to Elizabeth.<sup>22</sup> Such ambivalences are perhaps to be expected among the laity: it is more surprising to discover an ambivalence, or at any rate flexibility, even at the highest levels of the Church. Although Mary's treatment of her leading episcopal opponents was both drastic and high

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Sir Thomas Smith (admittedly a Protestant) wrote: 'God did so punish the realm with quartan agues, and with other long and new sicknesses, that in the last two years of the reign of Queen Mary, so many of her subjects were made away, what with the execution of sword and fire, what by sickness, that the third part of the men of England were consumed.' This sort of exaggeration, perpetuated by Foxe, passed into national mythology, but it was not altogether invented.

<sup>22</sup> M.R. Thorpe, 'Religion and the Rebellion of Sir Thomas Wyatt', *Church History*, 47, 4 (1978). The rebellion of 1569 (the 'Northern earls') was certainly religious in its inspiration, but was complicated by having two separate agendas, one papalist, one merely conservative.

profile, a surprising number of those bishops who had accepted the Edwardian settlement continued to serve her. These were men whose episcopal orders went back to before 1550 (no one consecrated under the new ordinal of that year was considered validly ordained), and most had conformed to the Protestant establishment reluctantly. Nevertheless they had so conformed, and it was not until the last two years of the reign that even a majority of the bench were men of the queen's own choosing. To what extent this blunted the efforts of Pole and Stephen Gardiner (himself, of course, compromised by his Henrician conformity) is hard to say. Many of these inherited Henrician and Edwardine conformists were administrators rather than spiritual leaders, and they were effective in that mode, but if anything up to 50 per cent of the episcopal team were effectively civil servants, so it would be surprising if the call to faith was not compromised.<sup>23</sup> By the end of the reign, however, the overhauled bench was a highly respectable body, committed to the Roman allegiance no less than to traditional theology, as their refusal to serve under Elizabeth would demonstrate. It had been an uphill task to achieve that degree of firmness and unanimity. Nevertheless, the transformation in less than five years of the Marian episcopate along lines laid down in the decrees of Pole's legate synod was by any reckoning a notable achievement, one of the earliest and most effective renovations of a national episcopate anywhere in Counter-Reformation Europe.<sup>24</sup>

One of the least explored features of the Marian Church was Spanish influence. Despite the high profile of Philip and his entourage in general assessments of the reign, Dr John Edwards argues here that the presence of influential Spanish ecclesiastics was a far greater factor in the Marian religious restoration than has generally been appreciated. Not only were there numerous Spanish chaplains and confessors at court, but some of them, like Bartolomé Carranza, were men of distinction and real intellectual and strategic influence. A few were placed in university chairs or cathedral prebends, but most would have been unknown to the rank and file, whether clerical or lay.<sup>25</sup> It is consequently a mistake to suppose that the English court was untouched by the theology and intellectual priorities of the Counter Reformation. Whatever Pole's earlier reservations about the Tridentine decree on Justification, by the time of his legate mission he had come to terms with it, and in theologians like Carranza, de Soto and Villagarcia he found congenial

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<sup>23</sup> See Chapter 1, this volume.

<sup>24</sup> T.F. Mayer, *Reginald Pole: Prince and Prophet* (Yale, 2002). See also Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, 527–37.

<sup>25</sup> See Chapter 7.

friends and allies in the fight against ignorance and bewilderment, to say nothing of heresy. To most people, however, Spanish influence did not mean foreign prelates in senior ecclesiastical office, Dominican friars reviving Thomism in the universities or drafting Erasmian catechisms, or even preaching less than comprehensible sermons. Spain meant unpopular war and the contaminating presence of the servants and hangers-on of Philip's courtiers. However critical for the intellectual reconstruction of the Marian Church Spanish clerical participation may have been, this secular presence was a handicap, and was far more keenly felt. Tudor propaganda had long ago succeeded in branding the papacy as a foreign intruder, but that had not noticeably diminished enthusiasm for the 'Old Religion'. Indeed it was Protestantism which was the alien force, associated as it was with the German and Swiss theologians who had sought refuge in England under Edward. Under Mary the seed of a different perception was planted. Stephen Gardiner had seen the danger, which was the main reason why he had taken the risk of trying to restore the papal jurisdiction before Philip's arrival, a move which the emperor's agents successfully aborted, with Mary's help.<sup>26</sup> In the event the papacy returned in Philip's wake, and largely as a result of his efforts. This was good for Habsburg influence in Rome, but not necessarily in the best interests of those who were trying to undo the effects of a generation of Protestant and anti-papal propaganda in England. Ironically, Pole himself had exerted all his influence in an unsuccessful attempt to prevent the Spanish marriage, and its anticipated association of Catholicism with the Habsburgs. Whether opposition to the marriage was in any real sense a Protestant conspiracy scarcely matters. The government chose to present it in that light, and consequently gave its religious opponents the credit for fronting a movement of popular 'patriotism'. Too much should not be made of this shift in Mary's reign itself, but it did help in the long run to drive a wedge between the old religion (which was popular) and the papal/Spanish association (which was not). For most of his reign over England, Philip and Pope Paul IV were at daggers drawn, but that fact did nothing to disperse the mists of prejudice which were beginning to arise, and on which Elizabethan Protestant polemicists would capitalize. None of this might have mattered if Mary had not died when everything was going wrong, but as it was, the association of Spain with disaster helped to make Elizabeth's settlement (which in religious terms satisfied almost nobody except the queen) sufficiently acceptable to survive.

Most of the Spanish clergy who exerted influence over the course of

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<sup>26</sup> J. Loach, *Parliament and the Crown in the Reign of Mary Tudor* (Oxford, 1986), 91-104.

the Marian restoration were friars, but the role of the religious life in Marian England is another problematic area. Mary in fact founded or re-established more religious communities than any other English monarch in history, but the handful of houses which resulted were of course a drop in the ocean by comparison with the vastly greater numbers dissolved in Henry's reign.<sup>27</sup> Pole, as is well known, was much preoccupied by the recovery of monastic property, but he told the courtiers, lawyers and alderman who listened to his St Andrew's Day sermon in 1557 that the restoration of the parishes was a more urgent priority than the rebuilding of monasteries. It is hard to disagree with him, but once again he has been criticized for pursuing his priorities. Famously, he declined an offer of assistance from Ignatius Loyola, but instead sought a Cassinese Benedictine presence, which in the event did not materialize. His Italian career in fact suggests that he highly valued both the older orders of monks and friars, and newer creations like the Theatines and Jesuits, but the place of the religious life in his order of priorities for the longer term of the Marian restoration remains an unanswered question.

In this context the fortunes of the one major house to be re-erected during the reign, the Abbey of Westminster, examined here by Dr Knighton, are instructive but perhaps not decisive.<sup>28</sup> Westminster was technically a new creation, but it carried much of the baggage of the old abbey, and the community included many of those who had been secularized between 1536 and 1540. Abbot Feckenham was a key figure in the Marian establishment, and his community was both large and vigorous, its vigour reflected in the surprising number of young novices it attracted, one of whom was to carry the English monastic tradition forward into the next century. Westminster Abbey played a conspicuous role in the ceremonial life of Marian London, but given the enormity of the task of restoration in the parishes, it should perhaps be viewed more as a symbol of the long-term intentions of the Marian Church than a key aspect of its immediate programme. Nevertheless, the queen took all her new foundations seriously enough to endow them (substantially in the case of Westminster) and to remember them in her will.<sup>29</sup> If the restored church had had more time to gather momentum they might well have

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<sup>27</sup> Altogether six religious houses were established. Apart from the Benedictines at Westminster, there were Observant Franciscans at Greenwich, Carthusians at Sheen, Dominicans at St. Bartholomew's, Smithfield, Bridgettines at Syon and Dominicanesses at King's Langley. The knights of St John were also revived, both in England and Ireland. The total cost to the Crown was somewhat in excess of £3000 a year.

<sup>28</sup> See Chapter 3.

<sup>29</sup> The text of Mary's will is reproduced as Appendix III to D. Loades, *Mary Tudor: A Life* (Oxford, 1989), 370–83.

become important. In the event, it was the Jesuits, kept for whatever reasons at arm's length by Pole, rather than the older orders whom he favoured, who would make the major 'religious' contribution to the formation and perpetuation of recusant Catholicism.

This book is about Catholics, and not about Protestants, but given the priority which the queen particularly gave to the elimination of heresy, it is fitting that one of the essays should be specifically about the persecution. Kent was a county which saw more burnings than anywhere except London. It was a region with a long tradition of dissent, and Professor Collinson carefully scrapes away the whitewash liberally applied by John Foxe to reveal a very miscellaneous collection of victims.<sup>30</sup> It is clear that many of them were not the orthodox Edwardian Protestants which the martyrologist wished to present, and that he frequently massaged the evidence of their real beliefs. However, it does not necessarily follow, as Philip Hughes suggested, that most of these radicals would have been done away with by any sixteenth-century government. Edward's council had burned just two heretics in six years. In Kent alone the Marian authorities executed somewhere between 50 and 70 in a rather shorter time. Nor did anyone, not even Robert Persons, deny that these men and women had died for their religious beliefs. It is unlikely that contemporaries found such events as horrifying as we do, and it is therefore a mistake to project modern revulsion at the idea of torture and execution for sincerely held convictions into the sensibilities of Tudor England. Nevertheless, Professor Collinson suggests here that the 'black legend' of Bloody Mary was more than a matter of Elizabethan propagandist 'spin', and that enough of the men of Kent retained an indignant memory of the Marian burnings to ensure an enduring association between popery and tyranny, however the vicissitudes of dynastic politics had shaken out.

The paradox of the Marian Church thus remains, because in a sense both Foxe and his critics were right. A Church which had a broadly popular programme of worship and practice, and which was committed to education and evangelization, nevertheless carried out one of the most sustained persecutions seen anywhere in Europe, and succeeded in confusing its impeccable English credentials by association with Spain. It is quite legitimate to argue that the Marian Church was overthrown not because of any inherent weaknesses or strategic failures, but simply because the queen who was its great patron and protector died, and her successor was a very different woman. It is legitimate, but it is not necessarily true. We no longer believe that the restored Catholic Church

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<sup>30</sup> See Chapter 11.

lacked serious evangelical purpose, or that it was heavily outgunned by Protestant polemic. However, the fact remains that it was overthrown with comparative ease in 1559 by a queen who may have known what she wanted, but who was feeling her way through what could have been a minefield of dissent.<sup>31</sup> In seeking to defend the Mass against the threat of the bill of uniformity, the bishops had significant support, and failed by a whisker. But seeking to defend the papacy against the bill of supremacy, they had almost none. For this the persecution may have been partly responsible, stirring up neighbour against neighbour and family members against each other more destructively than the Edwardine imposition of Protestant uniformity had done. A sour taste lingered in the communities which had been thus damaged, as Foxe's collection of stories testifies.

But persecution on its own would not have undermined the Church. More important, certainly at the gentry level, were the foreign political trappings and the ever-present threat to the holders of former ecclesiastical property, who rightly understood that Pole did not really hold them absolved of theft, no matter what the official dispensation might say. Political quarrels with the papacy in the last two years of the reign did not help either, ensuring (among other things) that there were far more episcopal vacancies at the time of Mary's death than there should have been.

No one ever did a more effective hatchet job upon a regime than John Foxe. The *Acts and Monuments* was never intended to be objective history in the modern sense. It was a savage polemic intended to demonize the Catholic Church, and particularly its clergy. Because of the eventual success of the Elizabethan settlement, Foxe's narratives came to seem the final verdict on the negative legacy of the Marian restoration for 200 years after he wrote. The positive legacy is less obvious, but equally real. Ironically, Mary's rebuilding of the episcopate may well have preserved it for the future of the Anglican Church. If Elizabeth had followed straight on from Edward, and the trajectory of reform reflected in the progressive radicalization of the Prayer Books of 1549 and 1552 had been continued, it is hard to see how the institution of episcopacy could have survived. More importantly, however, the theological and intellectual stiffening which Pole managed to give the Church laid the basis for the ideologically tough and resilient recusant movement in Elizabeth's reign, and thereby ensured the survival and disruptive presence of Counter-Reformation Catholicism in Elizabeth's Protestant kingdom.

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<sup>31</sup> N. Jones, *Faith by Statute: Parliament and the Settlement of Religion, 1559* (London, 1982).

While most religious conservatives after 1558 drifted more or less reluctantly into Anglican conformity, committed Roman Catholics embraced a new identity, which the propaganda of their opponents and the hard choices of politics in an increasingly confessionalized Europe would project as detached from, and even hostile to, the national community. The struggle of Elizabethan and Jacobean Catholics to retain both their national and their religious identities, torn between allegiances at first openly hostile and enduringly deeply suspicious of each other, is one of the less likely legacies of the Marian Church. It is one which has taken on new and sharp resonances in a Britain in which religious identity and national and cultural allegiances are once again often perceived as being at odds. But that, as they say, is quite another story.

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# List of Abbreviations

These selected abbreviations appear throughout this book, but many are particularly relevant to the Appendix in Chapter 3.

- Acts* *Acts of the Dean and Chapter of Westminster, 1543–1609*, ed. C.S. Knighton (Westminster Abbey Record series i, ii, 1997–99)
- AGS Archivo General de Simancas
- Anstruther G. Anstruther, *The Seminary Priests: A Dictionary of the Secular Clergy of England and Wales, 1558–1850*, i, *Elizabethan, 1558–1603* (Ware and Ushaw, n.d. [1968])
- APC *Acts of the Privy Council of England*, new series, ed. J.R. Dasent (1890–1907)
- Aveling J.C.H. Aveling, ‘Tudor Westminster, 1540–1559’, and Appendix A, ‘The Marian Westminster community’, in *Ampleforth and its Origins: Essays on a living tradition by members of the Ampleforth community*, ed. J.P. McCann and C. Cary-Elwes (1952), 53–80, 271–85
- Baskerville (1927) G. Baskerville, ‘The dispossessed religious of Gloucestershire’, *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucester Archaeological Society*, xlix (1927), 63–122
- Baskerville (1933) G. Baskerville, ‘Married clergy and pensioned religious in Norwich diocese, 1555’, *English Historical Review*, xlviii (1933), 43–64, 199–228
- Bellenger A. Bellenger, *English and Welsh Priests, 1558–1800* (Downside, 1984)
- Biog. Hist. Caius* *Biographical History of Gonville and Caius College, 1349–1897*, ed. J. Venn et al. (Cambridge 1897–1978)
- BL British Library, London

Bodleian	Bodleian Library, Oxford
<i>Cal. Span</i>	<i>Calendar of Letters, Despatches, and State Papers, relating to the negotiations between England and Spain, preserved in the Archives at Simancas and elsewhere</i> , ed. G.A. Bergenroth et al. (1862–1954)
<i>Cal. Ven.</i>	<i>Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts, relating to English affairs, existing in the Archives and Collections of Venice and in other Libraries of Northern Italy</i> , ed. R. Brown et al. (1864–1940)
CERS	Church of England Record Society
Clark, ‘St Albans’	J.G. Clark, ‘Reformation and reaction at St Albans Abbey, 1530–58’, <i>EHR</i> , cxv (2000), 297–328
coll.	collated
CPR	<i>Calendar of the Patent Rolls preserved in the Public Record Office</i>
CRS	Catholic Record Society
CRS, <i>Miscellanea</i>	CRS, <i>Miscellanea</i> , i (1905), ii (1906)
CRS, <i>Recusants</i>	<i>Recusants in the Exchequer Pipe Rolls, 1581–1592</i> , extr. H. Bowler, ed. T.J. McCann (CRS, lxxi, 1986)
CSPD	<i>Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series</i>
CSPDM	<i>Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, of the Reign of Mary I, 1553–1558</i> , revised edition, ed. C.S. Knighton (1998)
CYS	Canterbury and York Society
DBM	Douai, Bibliothèque Municipale
DKR	<i>Reports of the Deputy Keeper of Public Records</i>
<i>Douay Diaries</i>	<i>The First and Second Diaries of the English College, Douay</i> , ed. T.F. Knox (1878)
Dugdale	W. Dugdale, <i>Monasticon Anglicanum</i> , ed. J. Caley, H. Ellis and B. Bandinel (1817–30)
<i>EHR</i>	<i>English Historical Review</i>
Emden	A.B. Emden, <i>A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford, A.D. 1501 to 1540</i> (Oxford 1974)
<i>Excerpta Historica</i>	[S.E. Bentley], <i>Excerpta Historica, or Illustrations of English History</i> (1831)
<i>Fac. Off. Reg.</i>	<i>Faculty Office Registers, 1534–1539: A Calendar of the first two Registers of the</i>

- Archbishop of Canterbury's Faculty Office*, ed. D.S. Chambers (Oxford, 1966)
- Foster *Alumni Oxonienses: the Members of the University of Oxford*, ed. J. Foster (Oxford, 1891–92)
- Foxe John Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, ed. S. Cattley and G. Townsend (1843–49)
- Gasquet F.A. Gasquet, *Henry VIII and the English Monasteries* (1888–89)
- Grace Book Δ* *Grace Book Δ, containing the records of the University of Cambridge for the years 1542–1589*, ed. J. Venn (Cambridge, 1910)
- Greatrex J. Greatrex, *Biographical Register of the English Cathedral Priors of the Province of Canterbury, c. 1066–1540* (Oxford, 1997)
- Guildhall Guildhall Library, London
- HBC *Handbook of British Chronology* (3rd edn, 1986)
- Hennessy *Novum Repertorium Ecclesiasticum Parochiale Londinense*, compiled G. Hennessy (1898)
- Hist. Parl 1558–1603* S.T. Bindoff, *The House of Commons, 1558–1603* (The History of Parliament, 1982)
- HMC, *Salisbury MSS* *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Hon. the Marquess of Salisbury, K.G. etc. preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire* (Historical Manuscripts Commission, 1883–)
- Hodgett *The State of the ex-Religious and former Chantry Priests in the Diocese of Lincoln 1547–1574, from returns in the Exchequer*, ed. G.A.J. Hodgett (Lincoln Record Society, liii, 1959)
- House of Kings* *A House of Kings: The History of Westminster Abbey*, ed. E.F. Carpenter (1966)
- inst. instituted
- Joseph, *Letter Book* *The Letter Book of Robert Joseph, Monk-Scholar of Evesham and Gloucester College, Oxford, 1530–3*, ed. J.C.H. Aveling and W.A. Pantin (Oxford

	Historical Society, new series, xix, 1967 for 1964)
Knowles, <i>Rel. Orders</i>	M.D. Knowles, <i>The Religious Orders in England</i> (Cambridge, 1948–59)
Le Neve	J. Le Neve, <i>Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae, 1541–1857</i> , compiled J.M. Horn et al. (1969–)
Lond.	London
<i>L &amp; P (LP)</i>	<i>Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII</i> , ed. J.S. Brewer, J. Gairdner and R.H. Brodie (1862–1932) [cited in Appendix by entry number]
LPL	Lambeth Palace Library
Lunn	D.M. Lunn, <i>The English Benedictines, 1540–1688: From Reformation to Revolution</i> (1980)
Machyn	<i>The Diary of Henry Machyn, Citizen and Merchant-Taylor of London, from A.D. 1550 to A.D. 1563</i> , ed. J.G. Nichols (Camden Society, old series, xlii, 1848)
Marron	S. Marron, ‘Dom Sigebert Buckley and his brethren’, <i>Douai Magazine</i> , vii, no. 3 (1933), 130–38
Muller (1926)	J.A. Muller, <i>Stephen Gardiner and the Tudor Reaction</i> (1926)
Muller (1933)	<i>The Letters of Stephen Gardiner</i> , ed. J.A. Muller (Cambridge, 1933)
ODNB	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i> (2004)
OHS	Oxford Historical Society
Ollard	S.L. Ollard, <i>Fasti Wyndesorienses: The Deans and Canons of Windsor</i> (Historical Monographs relating to St George’s Chapel, Windsor Castle, [viii], Windsor, 1950)
OSB	Order of St Benedict
PCC	Parochial Church Council
Pantin	<i>Canterbury College: Documents and History</i> , ed. W.A. Pantin (Oxford Historical Society, new series, vi–viii, Canterbury College, xxx, 1947–85)
Pearce	E.H. Pearce, <i>The Monks of Westminster: Being a Register of the Brethren of the</i>

- Convent from the time of the Confessor to the Dissolution* (Notes and Documents relating to Westminster Abbey, no. 5, Cambridge, 1916)  
Public Record Office, London
- PRO *The Registers of Thomas Wolsey, Bishop of Bath and Wells, 1518–1523, John Clerke Bishop of Bath and Wells, 1523–1541, William Knyght, Bishop of Bath and Wells, 1541–1547, and Gilbert Bourne, Bishop of Bath and Wells, 1554–1559*, ed. H. Maxwell Lyte (Somerset Record Society, lxi, 1940)
- Reg. *Bothe* *Registrum Carli Bothe, Episcopi Herefordensis, A.D. MDXVI–MDXXXV*, ed. A.T. Bannister (Canterbury and York Society, xxviii, 1921)
- Reg. *Gardiner & Poynt* *Registrum Stephani Gardiner et Johannis Poynt, Episcoporum Wintoniensium*, ed. H. Chitty and H.E. Malden (Canterbury and York Society, xxxvii, 1930)
- Reg. *Middle Temple* *Register of Admissions to the Honourable Society of the Middle Temple, from the Fifteenth Century to the year 1944*, compiled H.F. McGeagh and H.A.C. Sturgess (1949)
- Reg. *Bracy* Register of Bracy, Westminster City Archives
- Reg. *Parker* *Registrum Matthei Parker, Diocesis Cantuariensis, A.D. 1559–1575*, transcribed E.M. Thompson, ed. W.H. Frere (Canterbury and York Society, xxxv, xxxvi, xxxix, 1928–33)
- Reg. *Pole (arch.)* Lambeth Palace Library, Archiepiscopal register of Cardinal Pole
- Reg. *Whyte* *Registrum Johannis Whyte, Episcopi Wintoniensis, A.D. MDLVI–MDLIX*, ed. H. Chitty (Canterbury and York Society, xvi, 1914)
- RHS Royal Historical Society  
RO Record Office  
RSTC Revised Short Title Catalogue  
Searle 'Lists of the Deans, Priors and Monks of

- Christ Church Monastery', in *Christ Church, Canterbury*, ed. W.G. Searle (Cambridge Antiquarian Society Publications, octavo series xxxiv, 1902), 153–96
- SRS Somerset Record Society
- STP *Sanctae Theologiae Professor*
- TRHS *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*
- VMA Volumes of Miscellaneous Accounts, Canterbury
- Wainewright J.B. Wainewright, 'Queen Mary's religious foundations', *Downside Review*, new series, viii (1908), 125–46
- WAM Westminster Abbey Muniments
- Watkin (1941) A. Watkin, *Dean Cosyn and Wells Cathedral Miscellanea* (Somerset Record Society, lvi, 1941)
- Watkin (1949) A. Watkin, 'Glastonbury, 1538–9, as shown by its account rolls', *Downside Review*, new series, lxxvii (1949), 437–50
- WCA Westminister City Archives
- Wills Doc. Comm.* *Wills from Doctors' Commons: A selection from the wills of eminent persons proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, 1495–1695*, ed. J.G. Nichols and J. Bruce (Camden Society, old series, lxxxiii, 1863)
- Wright *Three Chapters of Letters relating to the Suppression of Monasteries*, ed. T. Wright (Camden Society, old series, xxvi, 1843)
- Zurich Letters* *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*, i, ed. H. Robinson (Parker Society, Cambridge, 1842)

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# The Personal Religion of Mary I

David Loades

Mary was a Catholic. The one thing that is, and always has been, clear about Henry VIII's elder daughter is that she was loyal to the old faith. However, it is less clear exactly what that allegiance involved at different times in her life, because the distinction between 'the old faith' as that term was employed at the time and Catholicism as it was being reformulated by the Council of Trent is only just becoming fully appreciated.<sup>1</sup> Traditionally the Catholic faith, as it had been presented to its lay practitioners, was a matter of sacramental participation and ritual rather than theology. By the early sixteenth century, however, there existed a literate laity which was theologically informed; mainly aristocrats, merchants and lawyers, of whom Sir Thomas More was the outstanding example. From the clerical point of view, such men were a mixed blessing because, although they might bring an informed intelligence to their faith, they were also prone to ask awkward questions. A layman, whether he was a king or a cottager (or a lawyer) was required to confess his sins to a priest, to receive the sacrament of the altar at least once a year and to follow the prescribed rites of passage for baptism, marriage and death. He was also encouraged to give alms to the Church and to the poor, according to his means, and to seek the intercession of a hierarchy of saints, headed by the Blessed Virgin. He was not expected to question the teaching of the Church, or challenge the authority of the clergy. The ordinary actions of piety were deemed sufficient for his soul's health, and were as much a part of the natural order as seed time and harvest. The clergy who provided these spiritual services were as necessary, if not always as unquestioned, as ploughmen and shepherds.<sup>2</sup>

The uncomfortable currents beneath this apparently placid surface came partly from the literate laity, and partly from disgruntled elements

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<sup>1</sup> On this question see particularly E. Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars* (1993), 527–37; and Lucy Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism in Reformation England* (2000), 114–16.

<sup>2</sup> Peter Heath, *The English Parish Clergy on the Eve of the Reformation* (1969) demolishes many traditional myths about clerical behaviour.

among the clergy themselves. By insisting upon the necessity of the sacraments for salvation, and its own monopoly in providing them, the Church had become both rich and powerful. Not everyone thought that this was beneficial to its mission, and there had for centuries been voices raised proclaiming the doctrine of apostolic poverty, and urging the clergy to shed their temporal possessions and pretensions. These voices, which had been largely suppressed during the fifteenth century, were becoming distinctly audible again by 1510. The piety and anxiety of earlier generations had in the past created thousands of houses of prayer in England, controlling about a quarter of the landed wealth of the kingdom, and perfectly orthodox Christians were wondering whether this huge endowment was either necessary or justifiable. Clerical celibacy was a worthy ideal, but an uncomfortable one for a normal man. Were such vows either necessary or realistic for a priest working in an everyday community? These were issues to be addressed, and the Church as an institution was not doing very much about them. Clerical abuses were nothing new, and neither were the voices which drew attention to them and urged reform. John Colet began his celebrated convocation address of 1511 with the words

Ye are come together today, fathers and right wise men, to enter Council; in the which, what ye do, and what matters ye will handle, yet we understand not. But we wish that once, remembering your name and profession, ye would mind the reformation of the church's matter. For it was never more need, and the state of the church did never desire more your endeavours. For the spouse of Christ, the church whom ye would should be without spot or wrinkle, is made foul and ill-favoured, as saith Esias; The faithful city is made an harlot. And as saith Hieremias; She hath done lechery with many lovers, whereby she hath conceived many seeds of wickedness, and daily bringeth forth very foul fruit ...<sup>3</sup>

His words were not generally well received. In some quarters he was denounced as a heretic, but Colet in fact was voicing the concerns of the respectable community to which he belonged. It was because he cared so passionately for the Church that he wished the clergy to be worthy of their calling.<sup>4</sup> He was not a friar; but it was among the mendicants, who were the most effective preachers of the faith, that this kind of anxiety was most frequently voiced. Later a disproportionate number of them were to defect

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<sup>3</sup> J.H. Lupton, *Life of John Colet* (1909), App. C, 293.

<sup>4</sup> Wooding, *Rethinking*, 34–5. For another contemporary expression of the same view, see Richard Whitford, *Werke for Householdiers* (1530). For the context and significance of Colet's convocation address, see Christopher Harper-Bill, 'Dean Colet's Convocation Sermon and the Pre-Reformation Church in England', *History*, 73, 1988, 191–210.

to the reformers.<sup>5</sup> There were also among these questioning voices those who were absorbing the classical scholarship then being transmitted from Italy to the north. These were known as humanists, and their symbolic leader was the Dutch scholar Desiderius Erasmus. Not all the critics of contemporary abuses were so motivated, but many were, so that their learning became a matter of suspicion and hostility among defenders of the *status quo*. Even among the humanists there were differences of opinion; Erasmus, for instance, was much keener on vernacular scripture than was Thomas More; Erasmus was sceptical of the *opus dei* which provided the justification for monasticism; More and John Fisher not so. But they also had many ideas in common; particularly a strong belief in education, for laity and clergy alike, allowing pagan authors as well as Christian and encouraging the theological literacy of laymen. There was much emphasis upon moral probity, and women, particularly those of high rank, were encouraged to follow a similar programme. They were also sceptical about the more physical aspects of contemporary piety. There was an uncomfortable tendency, particularly among the poor and illiterate, to treat images as though they possessed a life and sanctity of their own; and Erasmus was scathing about the pious pretensions of that contemporary form of the package holiday, the pilgrimage.<sup>6</sup> Humanism had seeped into England from about 1470 onward, being signalled by an interest in Greek at Oxford and Cambridge. Among its early patrons was the deeply pious Lady Margaret Beaufort, and she, it is now believed, had a strong influence on the education of her grandson, the young Prince Henry.<sup>7</sup> Henry was the best educated young aristocrat of his generation, and his accession to the throne in 1509 was greeted with exultation by humanists all over Western Europe. Within weeks he had married the even more learned and similarly inclined Catherine of Aragon, the relict of his brother Arthur, who had been left stranded in England by the vagaries of Castilian politics.

Humanism thus became fashionable at court, and its future seemed to be assured. However, it was from the beginning a divisive tendency. Some clergy disliked it simply because they were averse to change, and too idle to meet a new intellectual challenge; others saw the education of the laity as subversive of their own position;<sup>8</sup> but some also had more

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<sup>5</sup> On the role of the friars, particularly as preachers, see Susan Wabuda, *Preaching During the English Reformation* (2002), 107–46.

<sup>6</sup> Erasmus wrote a satirical account of a pilgrimage to Walsingham. A.G. Dickens, *The English Reformation* (1964), 5.

<sup>7</sup> M.K. Jones and M.G. Underwood, *The King's Mother; Lady Margaret Beaufort, Countess of Richmond and Derby* (1992), 202–31.

<sup>8</sup> David Loades, 'Anticlericalism in the Church of England before 1558; an "eating cancer"?', in *Anticlericalism*, ed. Nigel Aston and Matthew Cragoe (2000), 1–18.

respectable doubts. It was very hard, for example, to draw a sensible line between acceptable practice and abuse in devotions to the saints. These cults were immensely popular, for the simple reason that saints, however virtuous, had been real people, and understood how real people felt. Christ, although in a sense a perfect man, was without sin, whereas the heroism of the saints lay precisely in overcoming that unfortunate feature of normal humanity. The orthodox teaching was that saints could only intercede, having no power of their own; but did it matter if that was not always understood? The piety of the simple needed such props. In fact there was little logic or consistency in popular devotion, which varied greatly from place to place. Christ was sometimes approached as a profoundly human friend, in a manner which would seem to remove the need for any form of intercession, and yet that was seldom the conclusion drawn.<sup>9</sup> The analogy with a human family was powerfully felt. God was the father, and the response to all prayer lay in his hands. The son was the human face of the father, but as he shared his power he was hardly an intercessor in the ordinary sense. The saints were the friends of Christ, and would intercede as human friends would do in a similar situation. The greatest intercessor of all, however, was the Virgin Mary, who was deemed not only to have all a woman's susceptibilities, but to share in a mysterious way in the influence which a human mother commonly exercised over her spouse and son. God was also unknowable, and his ways profoundly mysterious; even the learned had great difficulty in understanding his purposes.<sup>10</sup> Consequently it was a mistake to educate laymen to the point where they were able to ask questions to which there might be no answers, or at least no answers which could be formulated in words.

Unfortunately, while these disputes were simmering within the Church, the water was further muddied by Martin Luther. Luther was not a humanist but a traditionally trained theologian. Using St Paul and St Augustine as his starting points, he came to the conclusion that the abuses of the Church were the result, not of poor discipline, or even unworthy motivation, but of profound theological misunderstanding. God, he declared, had already decided upon whom he would bestow the grace of faith, and that was sufficient for the salvation of the recipient. Edifying and helpful as the offices of the Church might be, they were not

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<sup>9</sup> On devotion to the humanity of Jesus, see Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, 232–8.

<sup>10</sup> John Standish later wrote 'Gods commands are unsearchable ... every foole can read and bable of the scripture, but only the Godly learned teachers can play the spiritual masons part in couching the lyvely stones in the spiritual building of Christes churche ...' *A discourse wherein is debated whether it be expedient that the scripture should be in English* (1555), sig. Eiv.

strictly necessary. At the same time Christianity was, and should be, a religion of the Word, and the Word was contained in the Bible. The accumulated traditions, laws and ceremonies of the Church were at best harmless and unnecessary accretions, and at worst a hindrance and an obstruction to true understanding. Threatened at its very heart by this marginalization of the sacraments, the Church in the person of Pope Leo X immediately proclaimed the defiant German a heretic in 1521. Within a decade a major schism had opened within the Western Church.<sup>11</sup>

Superficially, there were many similarities between Luther's teaching and the humanist critique. Both saw dangerous abuses in the practices of popular religion; both wished to open the Bible to the laity through education; both believed that the clergy had become too wealthy, and too often abused their calling. In fact the boundaries were symbolically drawn by a furious quarrel between Luther and Erasmus on the question of free will, but for about 20 years there was a great deal of confusion.<sup>12</sup> This played into the hands of conservatives, who were equally opposed to both, and enabled them to brand their Erasmian opponents as heretics when they were usually nothing of the kind. The Spanish *Alumbrados*, who were Erasmians with some mystical tendencies borrowed from the Brethren of the Common Life, were successfully branded as *Luteranos* by their enemies, and virtually wiped out by the Inquisition.

It was into this uncertain climate that Mary was born, and it provides the context of her upbringing. She was five when Luther was condemned, and just beginning to learn her letters. Because both her parents had received a first-rate humanist training, and were committed to its principles, Mary's academic education was taken seriously. Had Henry been the old-fashioned knight errant that he sometimes pretended to be, his daughter would have learned little beyond needlework and social graces; instead, she became a model for the offspring of ambitious courtiers. Catherine commissioned several treatises on the education of girls, not so much because she needed guidance as to make a point. In 1523 her fellow countryman Juan Luis Vives presented her with *De Institutione Foeminae Christianae*, writing in the preface 'Your dearest daughter Mary shall read these instructions of mine, and follow in living. Which she must needs do if she is to order herself after the example that she hath at home with her ...'<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Luther never considered himself to be a heretic, and blamed his condemnation on the politics of the Church. M. Brecht, *Martin Luther, his road to reformation, 1483-1521*, trans. J.L. Schaaf (Philadelphia, 1985).

<sup>12</sup> Erasmus attacked Luther in *De Libero Arbitrio* (1525), to which Luther replied with *De Servo Arbitrio*. See R.H. Bainton, *Erasmus of Christendom* (1969), 230-35.

<sup>13</sup> *Opera Omnia*, IV, 65-6. The reading programme was set out in another treatise, *De ratione studii puerilis*.

Vives did not suggest that Mary would grow up to have the intellectual capacity of a man, and measured his programme to a girl's supposed inferiority, but his ideas were radical by contemporary standards. A young girl needed protection, both against unsuitable literature and contaminating male company, because virginity was a virtue of the mind as well as the body. Nevertheless he prescribed a diet of scripture, the Latin fathers and certain acceptable pagan classics. Other advice tracts followed: two more from Vives himself, the *Rudimenta Grammatices* from Thomas Linacre and, perhaps most significantly, the *Christiani matrimonii institutio* from Erasmus. Catherine may have started to teach her daughter herself, but they were often apart and the queen had many calls on her time; so it was probably her chaplain, Henry Rowle, who had the first responsibility for this formidable task.<sup>14</sup> Vives himself spent some time in England, but seems not to have acted as a tutor in person.

Mary was not particularly precocious in her studies. The fragmentary stories of her early childhood which have survived refer to her being shown off by her father at court, being solemnly inspected by French envoys when a marriage negotiation was in prospect and toddling after Dominic Memmo, Henry's Venetian organist, with shrill cries of 'priest, priest'. The talents which attracted favourable comment were dancing and playing upon the virginals; if anyone was impressed by her scholarly aptitudes, they did not say so.<sup>15</sup> By the time that she was sent off to Ludlow at the age of nine, Mary could read and write fluently in English, had a good basic grasp of Latin and some French. Both Catherine and Henry were very careful to insist that she should be brought up as an English princess, so although she must have picked up something of her mother's native tongue (which she used with her Spanish servants) Mary never seems to have been formally instructed in the language.<sup>16</sup> The reading programme which Vives had prescribed was, of course, all in Latin. In 1525 the only English Bible was that of Wycliffe, which was both antique and illegal. Apart from being the recipient of frequent exhortations to piety, the content of Mary's

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<sup>14</sup> Wages of the princess's household, 1 October 11 Henry VIII (1519) to i September 12 Henry VIII (1520). *Letters and Papers ... of the Reign of Henry VIII*, ed. S.R. Gardiner et al. (1862–1911), III, 970 and Addenda, 259.

<sup>15</sup> D. Loades, *Mary Tudor; a life* (1989), 31–4. What was mainly commented upon was her robust health.

<sup>16</sup> There is some uncertainty about Mary's facility in Spanish. In 1554 the Venetian Soranzo described her as fluent, but his successor Michieli says at one point that she was competent, at another that she understood it, but did not speak it. It is perhaps safest to conclude that she understood it sufficiently, but spoke it only hesitantly. In conversing with Philip she may well have used Latin, in which they were both fluent.