

**The Church's Worship**  
**The 1979 American Book of Common Prayer in a Historical Perspective**



Thaddaeus A. Schnitker

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Book of Common Prayer  
in a Historical Perspective

*Wipf & Stock*  

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P U B L I S H E R S  

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The Church's Worship  
The 1979 American Book of Common Prayer in a Historical Perspective  
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*To all Episcopal lay persons  
who carry out the mission of the Church  
of restoring all people to unity  
with God and each other in Christ*



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## Prologue

This study is about a dream: a dream of the Episcopal Church about its own life before God. It is a great dream because it is about one of the most important duties, if not the most important task, of the Church: to worship and glorify the Living God. The Episcopal Church has set out its own attempts of living up to the significance of this great dream in a book of which the first version will see its bicentennial in 1989: the *Book of Common Prayer* according to the use of the Episcopal Church. This book manifests the deepest roots of the Church's existence in God's life-giving mercy and goodness which are recorded in joyful celebration.

The present version of this book which has been used in the Episcopal Church since 1979 is the material with which this study is concerned. This *Book of Common Prayer* has been hailed as "perhaps the most splendid achievement of the modern liturgical movement in any Protestant church,"<sup>1</sup> although the Episcopal Church would have some reservations about its inclusion among the Protestant denominations.<sup>2</sup> This prayer book deserves the close attention of liturgists from the various churches and denominations because of the many new features to be found in it, be it in the expression of texts and rubrics, or in the underlying theological ideas and suppositions, all of which try to give form to the vision of the Church in its worship of the Living God. It is with this book that this study concerns itself.

Nobody will deny that there is always a dichotomy between the textual contents and rubrical directions of a liturgical book and all the provisions in it, and the actual performance and celebration of the liturgy in the parishes and congregations. Liturgical life in practice cannot be learned from the study of books. But this latter issue is not within the scope of the present research; it is, again, concerned with the official prayer book and its history.

This study is not intended as a commentary on the 1979 prayer book, nor as a history of the *Book of Common Prayer* in general, or of the American prayer book in particular; all this has been done elsewhere in a very scholarly manner; the reliance on these publications is gratefully acknowledged.<sup>3</sup> Even less is it the purpose to write a history of the Anglican Communion or of the Episcopal Church, either for the past 450 years, or for a particular period; this, too, has been done before.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Geoffrey Wainwright, "'E pluribus unum': Questions of Unity and Diversity on the Ecumenical and Liturgical Scene in the USA," in *Communio Sanctorum: Mélanges offerts à Jean-Jacques von Allmen* (Genève: Labor et Fides, 1982), p. 294.

<sup>2</sup> See the preamble to the constitution of the Episcopal Church.

<sup>3</sup> The standard commentary on the 1979 *Book of Common Prayer* is Marion Josiah Hatchett, *Commentary on the American Prayer Book* (New York: Seabury, 1981). The standard work on the history of the Anglican liturgy in general is Geoffrey John Cuming, *A History of Anglican Liturgy*, 2nd ed. (London: Macmillan, 1982); on the American prayer book, exclusive of the present one, reference has to be made to John Wallace Suter and George Julius Cleaveland, *The American Book of Common Prayer: Its Origins and Development* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1949); the standard commentary on the 1928 prayer book is Massey Hamilton Shepherd, *The Oxford American Prayer Book Commentary* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1950).

<sup>4</sup> For the history of the Church of England in general, see John Richard Humpidge Moorman, *A History of the Church in England*, 3rd ed. rpt. with corrections (London: Black, 1980); for the reformation period, Arthur Geoffrey Dickens, *The English Reformation*, 7th ed. (New York: Schocken Books, 1980), and Geoffrey Rudolph Elton, *Reform and Reformation: England, 1509-1558*, *The New History of England* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1977), are to be consulted. For the history of the Episcopal Church, mention is to be made of James Thayer Addison, *The Episcopal Church in the United States 1789-1931* (1951; rpt. Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1969), Raymond Wolf Albright, *A History of The Protestant Episcopal Church* (New York: Macmillan; London: Collier-Macmillan, 1964), and David E. Sumner, *The Episcopal Church's History 1945-1985* (Wilton, CT: Morehouse-Barlow, 1987). In the broader context of all churches in the United States, Sydney Eckman Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People*, complete and unabridged in 2 vols. (Garden City, NY: Image Books, 1975) is the standard reference.

In the course of the history of the Anglican liturgy, certain ideas recur with a constancy which makes them so obvious as to demand attention; these are underlying themes upon which the texts of the prayer books are based, rather than expressions in the books themselves. To the author of this study, the three ideas most manifest throughout the English and American prayer books are those of uniformity of worship, the search for apostolic liturgy, and the possibility of adaptation. It will be intelligible that, due to the political circumstances in England with the ecclesiastical situation so closely interwoven, the first of these themes flourished in the prayer books of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, based on the respective parliamentary legislation. The quest for adaptation to the local situation dimly emerged from the preface of the 1662 prayer book and is transparent in the American prayer books, to such a degree that the more recent the books become, the easier it is to detect this possibility. The search for the closest possible approach to whatever is regarded as the letter or the spirit of a true liturgy of the primitive Church runs through the entire history of the Anglican liturgy, from the English Reformation through the most recent revision of the American prayer book.

It is above all in the liturgical texts and rites in the prayer books that notions and ideas current at the time of the production of a prayer book come to the fore. These ideas will be mentioned in this study, too. Very often they are closely linked to the political or economic situation of the day, and the ties of this social environment with the liturgical life of the Church deserves attention, possibly more so than has hitherto happened. The author does not deny that his own unemployment during the longest part of the research on this book has sharpened his focus above all for the economic circumstances of the life for the vast majority of the people for whom the prayer books had been made.

As it would have been totally out of the scope of this present study to present all parts of the liturgical life of the Church of England and the Episcopal Church, this book is concerned with the sacraments of Christian initiation as examples of the incarnation of those historical ideas in the Church's liturgy. The rites or parts of the Christian initiation were chosen because baptism and the eucharist were always regarded as owning a special dominical institution and were held, therefore, in highest esteem in the Anglican Communion. The confirmation, on the contrary, has received so different interpretations in the course of Anglicanism<sup>5</sup> that it might rightly be called the crux for any revision process of the liturgy. The relation of confirmation to baptism, and the integrity of the baptismal rite, were the most dominant subjects of discussion during the most recent revision of the prayer book in the United States. It is, therefore, only natural that attention is focused on these parts of the Church's liturgy.<sup>6</sup>

Chapter One of the present study shows the influence of the English Reformation upon the different editions of the prayer book. A prominent place is thereby given to Henry VIII and his mind on ecclesiastical affairs. This chapter leads up to the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer*, still the sole legal prayer book in the Church of England.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> For an account of the different interpretations, see John Douglas Close Fisher, *Confirmation Then and Now*, Alcuin Club Collections, 60 (London: SPCK, 1978), especially pp. 142-52; Ronald Cloud Dudley Jasper, "Christian Initiation: The Anglican Position," *Studia Liturgica*, 12 (1977), 118; Leonel Lake Mitchell, "Revision of the Rites of Christian Initiation in the American Episcopal Church," *Studia Liturgica*, 10 (1974), 27-28; and Louis Weil, "Christian Initiation in the Anglican Communion: A Response," *Studia Liturgica*, 12 (1977), 126-28.

<sup>6</sup> As far as the eucharist is concerned, this book is not a study of the eucharistic liturgy in itself but only insofar as it is connected with baptism (and confirmation) as a part of the initiatory process. Therefore, the revision of the eucharistic liturgy in the 1960s and 1970s has not been traced in different stages; only the final results are shown.

<sup>7</sup> In 1980 the Church of England published *The Alternative Service Book 1980* which contains "Services authorized for use in the Church of England in conjunction with The Book of Common Prayer;" but the authorization runs out on December 31, 1990, with the future prospects as yet undecided. As the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer* has been established by Act of parliament and still is on the statutory books, only parliament

Chapter Two gives an account of the situation of the *Book of Common Prayer* in America, from the time of the colonies to the publication of the 1928 prayer book, the predecessor to the present one.

Chapter Three outlines the revision process of the liturgy of the Episcopal Church, beginning with the publication of the series Prayer Book Studies in 1950 and seriously worked on since 1967. It is the story of an adventure in introducing, or reintroducing, patterns or material to the liturgy which were not known to the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion in general. It culminates in the ratification and authorization of the 1979 *Book of Common Prayer*.

Chapter Four surveys some characteristic lines of the new prayer book and gives a profile of the rite of baptism as it is restored with the reintegration of the bestowal of the gift of the Holy Spirit; the rite of a new concept of confirmation, as the reaffirmation of baptismal vows; and the rites of the eucharist which can be celebrated according to different patterns.

Chapter Five is devoted to a theological-spiritual interpretation of baptism according to the new book, and its close links, within the pattern of Christian initiation, with the eucharist, a theme which deserves a closer link than it has been given in the past.

The epilogue can be rather short: it sums up how much the Church lives up to its great dream of worshipping the Living God. Life before God is not a set of restrictions molded as a strict liturgical uniformity but the total of being in touch with the Church's own historical roots, in this instance in the attempt of an approach to liturgical forms dating back to periods close to the apostolic era, which enable this body to be flexible and to respond to present-day situations in the adaptation to contemporary needs and challenges. The lessening of the restraint of uniformity, after it had been the guiding principle in the English prayer books, in favor of more flexibility and ways of adaptation, and the vastly greater resources and use of the apostolic liturgy (especially in the 1979 *Book of Common Prayer*) are very evident. The ambivalent understanding of confirmation is mentioned again as the one focal point for the future work of education for liturgy. It is suggested that the issue is not so much one of a necessity for a public affirmation of faith but the interpretation of the pastoral office of the bishops which will have to be changed.

A personal statement might be allowed to the author before giving some technical explanations concerning the study. This book has been written with a profound sense of affection and admiration for the liturgy of the Episcopal Church, and for this church in general. Since the first participation in a eucharist on Thanksgiving Day 1978 at Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, the (then proposed and now definitive) prayer book has been a constant source of spiritual nourishment and inspiration for the present writer. If at times the judgment of a given feature or of an underlying theme in the prayer book might seem harsh or unfair, it is written with the intention of revealing those items in order that they might be corrected, if possible. Love of the prayer book of the Episcopal Church determines the relation of the author to the subject.

An attempt has been made in this study to let the documents, which have been relevant to the course of the history scrutinized here, speak for themselves. The contents of those texts give a clearer indication of their purpose and position than the present writer could achieve; moreover, as a number of them might not easily be available to the reader, preference is given to verbal quotations over against paraphrasing the texts. The contents of those texts, of

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could legally abolish it--which it is most unlikely to do as the calamities in 1927/28 have shown and have been echoed in the discussion of the Worship and Doctrine Measure in parliament in 1974. See Gavin White, "'No-one is free from Parliament': The Worship and Doctrine Measure in Parliament, 1974," in *Religion and National Identity: Papers Read at the Nineteenth Summer Meeting and the Twentieth Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society*, ed. Stuart Mews, Studies in Church History, 18 (Oxford: Blackwell, 1982), pp. 557-65.

course, are not subject to the present writer's authority; for the selection of them, however, he takes full responsibility.

All texts are given in modernized spelling. Preference is given throughout this entire study to the use of the name "(The) Episcopal Church" instead of the earlier one "Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America;" the shorter title is also used as the only one throughout the 1979 *Book of Common Prayer*.

American English is employed throughout the writer's text. A special effort has been made in the fourth and fifth chapters to use so-called inclusive or non-sexist language by choosing words or grammatical constructions which do not require the personal pronoun "he." This is done firstly out of respect for the employment of this language pattern in the 1979 prayer book, and secondly out of conviction that the use of a particular language pattern is more revealing than often intended; the present writer agrees with the intentions that govern the application of this speech pattern.

Scriptural texts are mostly quoted from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible which is also used, if necessary, in the 1979 *Book of Common Prayer*.

## Acknowledgments

This book has its origin in the *thèse d'agrégation* of the author submitted in 1986 to the Theological Faculty of the University of Fribourg (Switzerland) under the title "The Quest for Uniformity, Apostolic Liturgy, and Adaptation: The 1979 *Book of Common Prayer* according to the Use of the Episcopal Church in a Perspective of Historical Ideas." Gratitude is due to this body for accepting the study and according the *venia legendi* in the field of liturgiology.

The original thesis was written under the supervision of the Rev. Dr. Jakob Baumgartner, S.M.B., professor of liturgiology at that university. He was the best teacher the author could possibly have wished for.

Dr. John H. Erickson, sometime professor and chairman of the Department of English at Erie Community College, New York, read the drafts in regard to a proper use of American English.

The late Rev. Dr. Geoffrey Cuming, Oxford, read the first chapter on the period from Henry VIII to 1662. The Rev. Dr. Marion J. Hatchett, professor of liturgics and music at the University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee, read the second through fourth chapters about the American prayer books. He also made available a copy of his unpublished master's thesis on Thomas Cranmer and the rites of Christian initiation, as well as his--at that time also still unpublished--doctoral dissertation on the making of the first American prayer book. The Rev. Dr. Massey H. Shepherd, Jr., Sacramento, California, read the third chapter on the revision process leading to the 1979 prayer book. All three experts have endorsed the manuscript and given much encouragement.

The Archives of the Episcopal Church at Austin, Texas, the library at Nashotah House, Wisconsin, the Bodleian Library, Oxford, and the library of the Institute of Historical Research at the University of London opened their material and resources for this study.

The Rev. Dr. Louis Weil, formerly professor of liturgics at Nashotah House, Wisconsin, was very helpful in mailing sources not available in West Germany.

The Liturgical Institute at Trier, West Germany, has been so kind as to grant a subsidy to the printing of this book, a contribution that is gratefully acknowledged.

To all the persons named here as well as to countless others who have in some way or other given assistance, help, and encouragement, the author is very thankful and appreciates what they have done for him.



## The Prayer Books of 1549, 1552, 1559, 1604, 1637, and 1662

The *Book of Common Prayer* as used in the Church of England which is the parent body of the Episcopal Church is one of the effects of the ecclesiastical, political, and social changes summarized under the name "Reformation."

### *The Henrician Reformation*

The Reformation in England was, as far as its driving force and its constitutional implications are concerned, a reformation from above; neither a single theologian nor the desire of the masses but the necessities of the king caused it to happen, resulting in a body politic, both secular and ecclesiastical, which is unique among the effects of the Reformation. With all means legally possible (and sometimes quite beyond the legality), the country was turned from a nation that had lived with a sovereign as temporal head and the pope in Rome as spiritual head in a balance which had sometimes been so weak as to invoke serious clashes, into a state that acknowledged one common head only, a nation which was to become uniform in its sole direction to the king; a prince whose head was two heads, yet if one were attacked the other would retaliate all the more violently.

Henry VIII (born on June 28, 1491, proclaimed king on April 23, 1509, died on January 28, 1547) had his mind set on his hold over the Church from the beginning of his reign. A preserved autograph shows that he intended the coronation oath he had to swear during his coronation on June 24, 1509 to be changed from an expression of the rights and freedom of the Church to be kept, into a text that made these rights and liberties subject to his interpretation of law, his jurisdiction, and his royal dignity.<sup>1</sup> Only insofar as these would not be touched upon could the normal life of the Church continue. Early absolutism has rarely found a clearer phrasing.<sup>2</sup>

The world had to wait, however, for more than two additional decades to see the meaning of his royal prerogatives.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> British Museum, Cotton, Tiberius E VVV, fol. 89. A photographic reproduction can be found in Leopold Wickham Legg, ed., *English Coronation Records* (Westminster: Constable, 1901), no. 21, pp. 240-41. The text is reprinted in Thaddäus A. Schnitker, "Kirche, Staat und Liturgie: Zwei bedeutsame Jahre im Leben der Kirche von England, 1533 und 1833," *Liturgisches Jahrbuch*, 33 (1983), 109:

[The proposed text:]

The king shall swere at ye  
coronacion that he shall  
kepe and mayntene the  
right and the libertees  
of holie church of old tyme  
graunted by the rightuous  
Cristen kinges of Englund.

[The text as *changed* by Henry:]

The king shall *then* swere at ye  
coronacion that he shall  
kepe and mayntene the *lawfull*  
right and the libertees  
of holie church of old tyme  
graunted by the rightuous  
Cristen kinges of Englund  
*to the holy chirche of inglond  
nott preiudyciall to his Jurys-  
diccion and dignite ryall.*

However, the rephrased text was not used.

<sup>2</sup> Percy Ernst Schramm, *A History of the English Coronation*, trans. Leopold George Wickham Legg (Oxford: Clarendon, 1937), pp. 216-17.

<sup>3</sup> John Jay Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII, English Monarchs* (London: Eyre Methuen, 1981), p. 384, disputes the early date of the autography: he would have the alterations made after the Act in Restraint of Appeals (24 Hen. 8, c. 12) 1533 or after the Act of Supremacy (26 Hen. 8, c. 1) 1534. Neither act, however, provided for

In the meantime, on October 11, 1521, Pope Leo X, after more than ten years' pressure from English delegations, had to bestow on Henry the title of "Defender of the Faith," a royal style that put the English sovereign *on par* with his archrival, the King of France, and with his parents-in-law.<sup>4</sup> He had "earned" this honor by writing a defense of the seven sacraments against Martin Luther's *De captivitate babilonica*, presented with great humility to the pope. In his dedicatory letter Henry saw great advantages in a strong uniform religion for a well-functioning state; and at the moment Roman doctrine held the sway.<sup>5</sup>

Eight years later, on August 9, 1529, the "Reformation Parliament" was summoned, linked in timing to Henry's divorce case from Queen Catherine of Aragón but, as far as intentions were concerned, more or less independent from it; it was to sit in several sessions from November 3, 1529 until April 14, 1536<sup>6</sup> and to produce the most revolutionary legislation in the constitutional history of England. Seven bills were passed from 1532 through 1534 which marked the end of the two provinces of the Church in England in communion with the See of Rome and established the Church of England, divided into two provinces, with the See of Canterbury holding the metropolitan dignity. Step by step, the first five bills (and the last one) gave to the prince those unlimited powers which were in the sixth and most famous one designated as the supreme headship of the king over the Church. It was the successful attempt by Henry to concentrate as much power and rule in his hands as possible; there was to be one king, one country, and one Church, the latter two entirely dominated by the former.

The first bill, the Conditional Restraint of Annates (23 Hen. 8, c. 20),<sup>7</sup> passed in the third session, January through March 1532, restricted the payment of money to Rome after the appointment to a bishopric or archbishopric. Persons lacking the documents from Rome due to the non-payment were nonetheless to be duly consecrated. The right to nominate such a person rested with the king.<sup>8</sup> Should the pope retaliate by putting the country under excommunication or interdict, all the sacraments and divine services were ordered by the parliament to be ministered nonetheless. Still,

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this change which, given the predilection of the Tudor legislation for listing even miniscule details, could easily have been done, nor were there any notes on a change in the phrasing of the oath around that time. Above all, there are no allusions to the designation of England as an empire, to the king as emperor, or to the royal supremacy all of which could have easily been worked into the text. It is therefore improbable that the change should have been made at so late a date.

<sup>4</sup> For the history of the fight for a royal style and the politicking behind the scenes, see John William McKenna, "How God became an Englishman," in *Tudor Rule and Revolution: Essays for G. R. Elton from His American Friends*, ed. Delloyd J. Guth and John William McKenna (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp. 34-43.

<sup>5</sup> *Assertio septem sacramentorum aduersus Mart[inum] Lutherum* (Parisiis: Desboys, 1562), p. 2: "Postquam enim in administratanda republica maximam semper vim, maximumque momentum, religionem habere multo vsu aduertimus, vt primum maturiores annos attigimus, coepimus eius contemplari nonnihil studii impendere."

<sup>6</sup> The sessions: first: November 4 to December 17, 1529; second: January 16 to March 31, 1531; third: January 15 to March 28, 1532; fourth: April 10 to May 14, 1532; fifth: February 5 to April 7, 1533; sixth: January 15 to March 30, 1534; seventh: November 3 to December 18, 1536: Frederick Maurice Powicke and Edmund Boleslaw Fryde, eds., *Handbook of British Chronology*, Royal Historical Society: Guides and Handbooks, 2, 2nd ed. (London: Royal Historical Society, 1961), p. 535.

<sup>7</sup> For a summary of how English pieces of legislation are quoted, see Schnitker, "Kirche, Staat und Liturgie," 105-06, note 1; for the regnal years of the English monarchs, see *Guide to Law Reports*, 4th ed. (London: Sweet & Maxwell; Edinburgh: Green, 1962), pp. 27-31. The text of this bill: Henry Gee and William John Hardy, eds., *Documents Illustrative of English Church History* (London: Macmillan, 1896), no. 49, pp. 178-86.

<sup>8</sup> This had effectively been the case since the Norman conquest, with all the inevitable clashes ensuing.

our said sovereign the king, and all his natural subjects, as well spiritual as temporal, [are] as obedient, devout, catholic, and humble children of God and Holy Church, as any people [are] within any realm christened.<sup>9</sup>

The second bill, the Act in Restraint of Appeals (24 Hen. 8, c. 12),<sup>10</sup> passed in the fifth session on February 4, 1533, has been called "the foundation stone of the new order."<sup>11</sup> It can hardly be overestimated in its implications both for the proper selfunderstanding of the state and for the results it showed in the life of the Church. Eight surviving drafts and four fragments show the energy bestowed on this act.<sup>12</sup> It is quite probable that at the moment of voting on it only a small minority, if any, was aware of the impact of this act: it was the severance of England from Rome that was affected by it, and the classification of England as a nation independent of any foreign power. The preamble<sup>13</sup> designated "this realm of England" as "an empire ... governed by one supreme head and king, having the dignity and royal estate of the imperial crown of the same" to whom every person in the country owed "a natural and humble obedience." This supreme head had been given by God "plenary, whole, and entire power, preeminence, authority, prerogative and jurisdiction" to do justice to everybody and to ultimately determine all matters that could possibly happen to his subjects, a power exercised on the one hand without any interference of any foreign prince or potentate, which included the See of Rome, and on the other hand both in temporal and spiritual respect. As the Roman curia had encroached upon the independence of England and had attracted many legal proceedings that were not only lengthy and tedious but also expensive due to the fees, this act attempted to restore the ancient order by forbidding any redress or appeal to any court or instance outside the country, and by establishing the exclusive responsibility of the English courts, both in temporal and spiritual matters. Any appeal to Rome would be liable to the provisions of the Statute of *Praemunire*;<sup>14</sup> the stages of appeal were outlined. All clergy of the realm were bound to disobey any possible interdict or excommunication issued by Rome and to administer the sacraments as usual. Two major premises are obvious in this act: that the country is an empire, a nation totally independent from any other power in all respects, and that the sovereign has "the imperial crown ... by the goodness and sufferance of Almighty God," which means nothing less than a God-given absolute and unlimited authority over both State and Church not subject to any human restriction.<sup>15</sup> The king in the center of his empire: the king is the center of his empire in its totality.

The five remaining acts were "merely" explications of this basic principle of the English Reformation as far as the shape of the Church of England was concerned. The next three statutes were passed in the sixth session of the parliament, January through March 1534.

<sup>9</sup> Gee and Hardy, *Documents*, no. 49, p. 180.

<sup>10</sup> Gee and Hardy, *Documents*, no. 50, pp. 187-95.

<sup>11</sup> Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII*, p. 272.

<sup>12</sup> Stanford Eugene Lehmborg, *The Reformation Parliament 1529-1536* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), p. 164.

<sup>13</sup> "Es handelt sich [in der Gesetzgebung der Tudorzeit] nicht mehr um relativ kurzgefaßte Verordnungen, sondern um wortreiche Ausführungen, die in ihren Präambeln zum Teil den Charakter politischer Willenserklärungen tragen.": Werner Teubner, *Kodifikation und Rechtsreform in England: Ein Beitrag zur Untersuchung des Einflusses von Naturrecht und Utilitarismus auf die Idee einer Kodifikation des englischen Rechts* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1974), p. 42.

<sup>14</sup> "The three *Praemunire* statutes (1353, 1365, 1393) were designated to check papal encroachments against the rights of the Crown; they were ... the outcome of temporary situations and speedily disregarded. ... So loosely, however, had its text [of 1393] been drafted that in subsequent times lay lawyers began to envisage its use as a multi-purpose weapon against ecclesiastical jurisdiction.": Arthur Geoffrey Dickens, *The English Reformation*, 7th ed. (New York: Schocken Books, 1980), p. 87.

<sup>15</sup> Walter Ullmann, "This Realm of England is an Empire," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 30 (1979), 185.

The Submission of the Clergy and the Restraint of Appeals (25 Hen. 8, c. 19)<sup>16</sup> meant that the Convocations of Canterbury and York could be summoned by the king only. The church legislation needed the royal assent to become effective, no canons were to be passed contrary to the royal prerogative or the statutes of the realm, and appeal to Rome was liable to the penalties of the Statutes of *Praemunire*. Appeals of exempt monasteries that formerly went to "the Bishop of Rome, otherwise called pope," were to go to the Court of Chancery of the king.

The following Act about Ecclesiastical Appointments (25 Hen. 8, c. 20)<sup>17</sup> repeated that all nominations to archbishoprics and bishoprics were to be made by the Crown, which would send letters missive to the election body (convent or chapter) containing the name of the person to be elected; after the election, the bishop-elect was to do homage to the king, who would then confirm the election and order the consecration. Disobedience to these directions attracted the penalties of the Statutes of *Praemunire*. The king was hereby given the power to man the bishops' bench, who were at the same time spiritual lords of the realm, with persons of his persuasion, an opportunity he readily seized whenever possible.<sup>18</sup>

The next long Act Forbidding Papal Dispensations and the Payment of Peter's Pence (25 Hen. 8, c. 21)<sup>19</sup> gave most of the dispensing power formerly held by Rome to the Archbishop of Canterbury, dependent of course on the approbation of the supreme lord of the country, as "this your grace's realm recognis[es] no superior under God, but only your grace." However, this power was said to be vested in king and parliament as well as king and council. No payment to Rome was to be made, no visitation from that see was to be allowed, and no oath of allegiance to the Bishop of Rome was permitted. Buried in between all the technical provisions of this act was the intention that

this Act, nor any thing or things therein contained, shall be hereafter interpreted or expounded, that your grace, your nobles and subjects, intend, by the same, to decline or vary from the congregation of Christ's Church in any things concerning the very articles of the Catholic faith of Christendom or in any other things declared, by Holy Scripture and the word of God, necessary for your and their salvations, but only to make an ordinance by policies necessary and convenient to repress vice.<sup>20</sup>

One day after the sixth session of the Reformation Parliament ended, on March 31, 1534, the Canterbury Convocation which had been meeting parallel to the parliament was voting in the present assembly (January 16 to December 19, 1534) on the question "whether the Roman Pontiff has any greater jurisdiction bestowed on him in the Holy Scripture in this realm of England than any other foreign bishop?" The result: thirty-four negative, four positive, and one doubtful vote. The York Convocation, sitting from May 5, 1534 to February 3, 1535,<sup>21</sup> concurred "unanimously, with no dissentient" on May 5 of that year.<sup>22</sup>

All this prepared and cleared the way for what has usually been regarded as the climax of the breach with the Apostolic See, the Act of Supremacy, passed probably on November 16, 1534.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Gee and Hardy, *Documents*, no. 51, pp. 195-200.

<sup>17</sup> Gee and Hardy, *Documents*, no. 52, pp. 201-09.

<sup>18</sup> Taken together with the Act of Conditional Restraint of Annates (23 Hen. 8, c. 20), the first of the seven reformation statutes that acknowledged this power of the king, it is interesting to note that of the twenty-one English and Welsh bishops given for 1540 by Philip Hughes, *Religio depopulata*, Vol. II of *The Reformation in England* (London: Hollis & Carter, 1954), pp. 5-8, fifteen were appointed after 1532, the date of 23 Hen. 8, c. 20; only six were named to their sees before.

<sup>19</sup> Gee and Hardy, *Documents*, no. 53, pp. 209-32.

<sup>20</sup> Gee and Hardy, *Documents*, no. 53, p. 225.

<sup>21</sup> The dates of the Convocations: Powicke and Fryde, *Handbook of British Chronology*, pp. 564-65.

<sup>22</sup> Gee and Hardy, *Documents*, no. 58, pp. 251-52 for both Convocations.

<sup>23</sup> The ambassador of Charles V to the English court, Eustace Chapuys, reported on November 17, 1534 to the emperor that he had heard that morning that the king had been declared by act of parliament supreme head of

From as early as 1531 on, Henry had a position like the Hebrew priest-king in mind, and he had let his desire be known to his Lord Chancellor, Sir Thomas More, and the Convocation<sup>24</sup> which at that time had been able to resist.<sup>25</sup> In exchange for not being put under the provisions of the Statutes of *Praemunire* by cooperation with the then Archbishop of York and *legatus a latere* of the Holy See, Cardinal Wolsey, both Convocations had bribed the king with an immense sum and had granted him the title of "protector and supreme head of the English church and clergy so far as the law of Christ allows."<sup>26</sup> From June 20, 1534 on, declarations of chapters, universities, and other institutions were recorded acknowledging the king as the head of the Church of England.<sup>27</sup> Little is known about the circumstances of the parliamentary debate and passage; apparently there were no obstacles or unexpected delays,<sup>28</sup> and the contents of the act were by that time evident to all. The remarkable shortness of the act (26 Hen. 8, c. 1)<sup>29</sup> is directly contradictory to its intended meaning and the consequences deriving from it. The parliament simply confirmed that the king was and had been recognized as being by the Convocations, namely "the only supreme head in earth of the Church of England, called *Anglicana Ecclesia*" with all the privileges, authorities, and profits belonging to it. Part of this title was the power "to visit, repress, redress, reform, order, correct, restrain, and amend all such errors, heresies, abuses, offenses, contempts, and enormities, whatever they be."

This fullness of royal prerogatives falls just short of ministerial functions and is otherwise the English version of a pope's office; this is exactly what Henry wanted. He was eager to exercise this authority, be it even in matters of faith. The combinations of his amateur theological knowledge and his utter self-glorification and self-righteousness would have posed a serious obstacle to the theological integrity of the emerging Church of England if he had bestowed the majority of his time on the execution of his new title; nobody could have legally prevented him from carrying out a *caesaro-papism* of the worst kind.<sup>30</sup>

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the English Church. "They have also ratified all that was ordained at the last parliament against the Holy See.": James Gairdner, ed., *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII: Preserved in the Public Record Office, The British Museum and Elsewhere in England*, Vol. VII (London: Longmans, Trübner, 1883), no. 1437. The date of November 3 which is sometimes given refers to the opening of the parliamentary session on that day. The roll of the parliament gives this act under no. 8 of this session: Gairdner, *Letters and Papers*, VII, no. 1377. However, on November 4, 1534 already Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, announced to the Convocation that from now on he was to be called metropolitan of England, no longer *legatus natus* of the Apostolic See: Lehmborg, *Reformation Parliament*, p. 214. This change of style, indicating the break with Rome, could mean the passage of the supremacy act on the first working day of the parliamentary session. On the other side, this could also mean a measure of "foresighted disobedience:" of all the lords spiritual, the Archbishop of Canterbury had the best record of attendance at the parliamentary debates; in total he was forty-one days present in 1534: Lehmborg, *Reformation Parliament*, appendix A, p. 257. Another clue might be that it was counted as the first chapter of the statutes passed in the twenty-sixth regnal year of Henry (April 22, 1534 to April 21, 1535).

<sup>24</sup> Steven W. Haas, "Martin Luther's 'Divine Right' Kingship and the Royal Supremacy: Two Tracts from the 1531 Parliament and the Convocation of Clergy," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 31 (1980), 324-25.

<sup>25</sup> Geoffrey Rudolph Elton, *Reform and Reformation: England, 1509-1558* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1977), pp. 144-45.

<sup>26</sup> The story of this shady bargaining is told by Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII*, pp. 273-81, and Dickens, *English Reformation*, pp. 103-04.

<sup>27</sup> Gairdner, *Letters and Papers*, VII, nos. 865, 891, 921, 1024-25, 1121, 1216, 1377, 1594.

<sup>28</sup> Lehmborg, *Reformation Parliament*, p. 202.

<sup>29</sup> Gee and Hardy, *Documents*, no. 55, pp. 243-44.

<sup>30</sup> As is known, Emperor Maximilian I (1493-1519) in 1511 was seriously contemplating to unite the emperorship and the papacy in his hands in order to reform the Church and of course have some financial resources available for his political and military plans. He signed letters with "Maximilian, future pope." Henry VIII was not the only monarch to be plagued by the apparently irresistible temptation to be supreme head of his

So far, parliament had granted him his "heart's desires" culminating in this supremacy act. He as well as the country was free from any temporal or spiritual bond with anybody or anything abroad, and he was the center of the realm. Yet, due to the phrasing of this as well as the other statutes, there arose the unresolved problem of who it in fact was that had been given the supreme headship, and by whom it had been given. Some of the texts suggest that it was the king's person that had been granted an untransferable style; some others, however, indicate that it was the king-in-parliament, the sovereign together with the Lords and Commons, that held this title of supremacy as, after all, the legislative body had apportioned this power in his hand.<sup>31</sup> And even if it were the king's person only who had been vested with this authority, the confirmation as consistent with theology by the Convocations, and the preamble of the Act in Restraint of Appeals (24 Hen. 8, c. 12) implied that it was a God-given prerogative. Can any body bestow anything on somebody who has no superior to himself but God? These questions have never in theory been answered. Fortunately the successors to Henry, his minor son Edward and his daughters Mary and Elizabeth, were either afraid or not unscrupulous enough to exercise the supreme headship in a way envisaged by their father. The Church of England might otherwise have been subject to a disaster.

After this high point of the royal Reformation, the last statute, the Suffragan Bishops Act (26 Hen. 8, c. 14),<sup>32</sup> came as something of sheer necessity for a good working of the everyday life of the Church and as an anticlimax. It provided for the establishment by the parliament of additional titular sees in England and Wales so that the king could present persons to the archbishops to be consecrated bishops suffragan.

With the passage of this act the parliamentary reformation of the Church found its conclusion during Henry's lifetime. Whatever else was voted on by the two Houses or decided by the king was not in the context of this constitutional change. The Church of England had been established, a church that in its outward life revolved around the king. After the liturgical changes resulting in and effected by the *Book of Common Prayer* 1549, this church found itself equipped with a double center which demanded uniformity by the whole nation: the Supreme Head<sup>33</sup> and the *Book of Common Prayer*.

The genius of the king and his legislators in their ability to sell a personal ambition of Henry, a radical breach with what was undisputedly seen as the (personal and institutional) center of the Church, a theological revolution, to the English people with questionable historical arguments;<sup>34</sup> to show the continuity of the present institution with the former one; and to leave intact the medieval shape of the Church that now was the Church of England, is certainly to be marveled at.<sup>35</sup> But it was a very fragile settlement, as it was tailored to Henry's designs and lust for power, prestige, and money.<sup>36</sup>

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people in all respects; he just was the only one to succeed in his plans. See Aloys Schulte, *Kaiser Maximilian I als Kandidat für den päpstlichen Stuhl, 1511* (Leipzig: Dunckler & Humblot, 1906).

<sup>31</sup> See the excellent treatment of this question by Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII*, pp. 383-423 ("The Royal Supremacy and Theology"), esp. pp. 392-98.

<sup>32</sup> Gee and Hardy, *Documents*, no. 59, pp. 253-56.

<sup>33</sup> The Treasons Act of November 1534 (26 Hen. 8, c. 13) (Gee and Hardy, *Documents*, no. 57, pp. 247-51) made it a high treason "to deprive them [the king, the queen who at that time was Anne Boleyn, or the heir presumptive who at that time were Princesses Mary and Elizabeth] or any of them of their dignity, title, or name of their royal estate, or . . . publish and pronounce . . . that the king our sovereign lord should be heretic, schismatic, tyrant, infidel or usurper of the crown." Penalty for such high treason was death. See James Walter Weingart, "The Concept of Treason in Tudor England," Dissertation Northwestern University 1976.

<sup>34</sup> For example, in the preamble to the Act in Restraint of Appeals (24 Hen. 8, c. 12).

<sup>35</sup> William Holdsworth, *A History of English Law*, Vol. I, ed. Arthur Lehman Goodhart and Harold Greville Hanbury, 7th ed. rev. (London: Methuen; Sweet & Maxwell, 1966), pp. 590-91.

<sup>36</sup> The imperial ambassador Chapuys wrote on November 28, 1534 to Charles V: "The king, who, as head of the church in his kingdom, was intending to take back into his hands all church property, and distribute only a frugal sustenance to ministers of the church, is for the present satisfied to leave the churchmen in possession of

Other factors, mainly in the realm of ideas philosophical and theological, of persons appearing on the stage, and of economic problems, contributed to the Reformation in England. They are at least worthy of mention.

The first half of the sixteenth century was an age that saw deep-rooted feelings of anticlericalism come to the surface. Resentment against the negligence of pastoral duties to the detriment of the cure of souls<sup>37</sup> as well as against the pluralism of priests<sup>38</sup> and the accumulation of lands and money by the prelates of the Church ran high. The epitome of all this was Cardinal Thomas Wolsey, *parvenu* at the king's court and at one time the most powerful man in England after Henry. The "well-merited unpopularity"<sup>39</sup> of the *legatus a latere* of the Apostolic See before his fall in November 1530 certainly helped the growth of hatred by the laypeople (and some of the lower clergy) of all prelacy and everything Roman. These feelings were voiced in an official petition by the House of Commons to the king<sup>40</sup> to look into the conduct of bishops, their financial dealings, and their unjust accusations of heresy. The clergy was even said to sometimes deny the ministration of the sacraments if the sum of money were deemed insufficient. The answer of the bishops<sup>41</sup> was an unsuccessful attempt to destroy the fears of the Commons and to purge themselves of the charges. As Henry wanted the upper hand over the Church, as yet against the resistance of the bishops' bench, the strong feelings of the House of Commons were very welcome, and it was not for nothing that during his reign the Lower Chamber of the parliament rose to an equal status with the House of Lords in which the prelates could voice their views.

Another reason for the rise of anticlericalism was the gradual growth of a literate laity. The potentials of book-printing with its rapid increase of production and foundation or refoundation of institutions of higher learning were important not only for the upper classes; lower classes, too, were affected by these changes. The first appointment ever of a non-cleric to the lord chancellorship of the realm was one of the signs of this shift.<sup>42</sup>

Humanism on the philosophical side and the *devotio moderna* on the theological side were two more contributing factors. The age of the "New Learning" brought about a surge of literary, historical, and philosophical ideas,<sup>43</sup> together with a new critique of the medieval view of life as upheld by the Church's authorities. As theology, and even the text of the

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their property, provided they will contribute to him a yearly rent of 30,000 l. st. [= pound sterling], and grant him the first fruits of all benefices. It is true he has always taken by apostolic privilege the revenue of vacant bishoprics but now he claims the whole revenue, not only of the bishoprics but of all other benefices, which amounts to an inestimable sum. Since the king is determined to bleed the churchmen, he has done much better to do it thus than to take all their goods, to avoid the murmur and hatred, not only of the clergy but of the people, especially of those who have endowed churches, or of their successors; moreover, it would have been necessary to stop the mouths of many people, to give the greater part of those goods to gentlemen and others.": Gairdner, *Letters and Papers*, VII, no. 1482. Although biased, it was nonetheless a very accurate account of Henry's utter greediness.

<sup>37</sup> Arthur Geoffrey Dickens, *Reformation and Society in Sixteenth-Century Europe* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1966), pp. 36-39.

<sup>38</sup> See Joel Arthur Lipkin, "Pluralism in Pre-Reformation England: A Quantitative Analysis of Ecclesiastical Incumbency, ca. 1490-1539," Dissertation The Catholic University of America 1979.

<sup>39</sup> Philip Hughes, "*The King's Proceedings*," Vol. I of *The Reformation in England*, 3rd ed. (London: Hollis & Carter, 1954), p. 111.

<sup>40</sup> Gee and Hardy, *Documents*, no. 46, pp. 145-53.

<sup>41</sup> Gee and Hardy, *Documents*, no. 47, pp. 154-76.

<sup>42</sup> Sir Thomas More, one of the greatest European humanists, October 26, 1529 to May 16, 1532: Powicke and Fryde, *Handbook of British Chronology*, p. 86.

<sup>43</sup> See William Paul Haugaard, "Renaissance Patristic Scholarship and Theology in Sixteenth-Century England," *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 10,3 (1979), 37-60.

Bible,<sup>44</sup> were not spared a profound questioning by the representatives of humanism, the results were bound to help bring the fall of the *ancien régime*. The *devotio moderna* limited its criticism to overblown cults of saints and relics which had replaced the primacy of Christ in Christian devotion, and to utterances of late medieval piety of questionable value, in favor of personal religion and a simplified piety suitable for laypersons.<sup>45</sup>

Erastianism was flourishing during Henry's reign. Marsiglio of Padua's *Defensor Pacis* had been published two centuries earlier (1324); the ideas expressed were common knowledge and more or less accepted. More than a century before Henry had acceded to the throne, in 1408, King Henry IV had exercised what Henry VIII had in mind as the royal prerogative to determine church affairs by ensuring one loyalty of the whole nation in the Great Schism of the Church. The king and not the archbishops or any other church authority had become the supreme power in ecclesiastical matters.<sup>46</sup> It was not a new field whereupon Henry sowed; he did it more intensely than others and reaped the fruits.

Facts, rather than ideas, that helped to create a climate in which the Reformation could grow included economic problems that arose in the first half of the sixteenth century.

Some time between 1470 and 1520 an accelerating rise in population began. Between 1525 and 1545 the total population increased by more than twenty percent, from about 2.3 to about 2.8 million people, with all the subsequent food, employment, and sanitation problems. Due to internal migration, the capital of the country rose to a prominent place among the European cities: around 1500 it had about 33,000 inhabitants; by 1650 it counted around 400,000 people; and by the end of the seventeenth century over half a million people lived in London.<sup>47</sup> Hand in hand with the increase in population went a period of a colder climate, together with poor harvests, from about the mid-sixteenth century on. In the sixteenth century, the economy was still one at a predominant subsistence level, and the by far greater part of society had hardly any income available for purchases beyond the basic needs. Roughly half the population of England lived under the poverty line.<sup>48</sup> People whose only comfort in their struggle for survival is an existence which is tied into the complex life of the Church, and the promise of a reward in the next world, are bound to react to any changes which might threaten their way of life and cut the ground under their feet; reforms in church

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<sup>44</sup> See James Barrett Miller, "Scripture and the English Reformation, 1526-1533," Dissertation Fuller Theological Seminary, School of Theology 1982.

<sup>45</sup> Reinhold Mokrosch, "Devotio moderna: II. Verhältnis zu Humanismus und Reformation," *Theologische Realenzyklopädie* 8, p. 616.

<sup>46</sup> Margaret Harvey, "Ecclesia Anglicana, cui Ecclesiastes noster Christus vos prefecit: The Power of the Crown in the English Church during the Great Schism," in *Religion and National Identity: Papers Read at the Nineteenth Summer Meeting and the Twentieth Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society*, ed. Stuart Mews, Studies in Church History, 18 (Oxford: Blackwell: 1982), pp. 230-32. See John Joseph Martin, "Doctrinal Authority in the Church on the Eve of the Reformation," Dissertation University of California Los Angeles 1978; *Reform and Authority in the Medieval and Reformation Church*, ed. G. Fitch-Lytle (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1981).

<sup>47</sup> D. C. Coleman, *The Economy in England 1450-1750* (London: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp. 12, 19-20. Roger Mols, "Population in Europe 1500-1700," in *Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, ed. Carlo Maria Cipolla, The Fontana Economic History of Europe, 2 (Glasgow: Collins, 1974), pp. 28-29, 42-43, gives slightly different numbers: early sixteenth century: 40,000-60,000; early seventeenth century: 150,000-200,000; end of seventeenth century: more than 400,000 people in London. Although an ordinance by Thomas Cromwell in 1538 imposed the registrations of baptisms, marriages, and deaths in the parishes, and despite the fact that in 1600 about half of the English parishes had such registers, it is still difficult to come to agreement upon numbers of the population.

<sup>48</sup> Walter Minchinton, "Patterns and Structure of Demand 1500-1750," in *Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, ed. Carlo Maria Cipolla, The Fontana Economic History of Europe, 2 (Glasgow: Collins, 1974), pp. 88-89; Domenico Sella, "European Industries 1500-1700," in *Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, ed. Carlo Maria Cipolla, The Fontana Economic History of Europe, 2 (Glasgow: Collins, 1974), p. 357.

life receive a response by the populace, as will be seen in the following decades.<sup>49</sup> Besides, the first half of the sixteenth century was an era of high inflation in which above all food and fuel prices rose sharply, whereas the real wages declined to the same degree. It came to a "savage depression of the living standards of the lower half of the population."<sup>50</sup>

During the 1530s several attempts were made for political reasons to come to an alliance with the German Lutheran princes, but these were utterly to no avail as the princes always insisted on an adoption of the Lutheran principles of faith in England as a precondition for any political relations. Lutheran books were known and discussed in Cambridge and elsewhere by 1520, and Martin Luther's ideas were spread throughout the realm, albeit vaguely in the beginning,<sup>51</sup> but concrete tendencies are difficult to assess in the following decade and even harder to point out.

In 1532, however, some of these lines convened in a person who was to become one of the most important figures in the English Reformation for two decades and, as far as the liturgical provisions emanating from this period are concerned, one of the most outstanding creative personalities of all times.

The octogenarian Archbishop of Canterbury, William Warham, died on August 22, 1532. Henry's choice for a successor fell on the person who had had the brilliant idea to propose to the king that the opinions of European universities should be sought regarding the divorce case, in order to lend support to Henry's position. Thomas Cranmer, the Archdeacon of Taunton, had been made ambassador to the court of Charles V in January 1532. Although having been ordained to the presbyterate some time between 1516 and 1520, he had, after having come into contact with the Lutherans in Lent 1532 in Nuremberg, secretly married a niece of the Nuremberg reformer Andreas Osiander in the summer of 1532. This was "a gesture by which Cranmer secretly but unequivocally committed himself to Lutheranism. The priest who had been married by Osiander could not easily return to the ranks of orthodoxy."<sup>52</sup> For the first time after almost two centuries not a bishop was transferred to the See of Canterbury but a presbyter chosen.<sup>53</sup> Pope Clement VII authorized Cranmer's consecration with the issue of eleven bulls on March 3, 1533; at the same time he bestowed the pall on him. The new archbishop was consecrated on March 30 of that year by the Bishops of Lincoln (John Longland), Exeter (John Voysey), and St. Asaph (Henry Standish). Before his consecration, however, in the presence of five witnesses, during the consecration

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<sup>49</sup> The observation by Minchinton, "Patterns and Structure of Demand 1500-1750," p. 169, comprises only half the truth: "For the mass of the population, whose major endeavours were to keep body and soul together, to feed themselves, to clothe themselves and to obtain some degree of protection from the elements for themselves and their families, the degree of change may well have been less perceptible." At least in the period discussed here, alterations in religion obtained a much higher degree of fierce response than economic changes.

<sup>50</sup> Christopher Hill, *Reformation to Industrial Revolution: A Social and Economic History of Britain 1530-1780* (London: Weidenfels & Nicolsen, 1967), p. 64.

<sup>51</sup> See James Edward McGoldrick, *Luther's English Connection: The Reformation Thought of Robert Barnes and William Tyndale* (Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1979). As no other European country was as dependent upon especially the textile trade in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and early seventeenth centuries as was England (Kristof Glamann, "European Trade 1500-1750," in *Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, ed. Carlo Maria Cipolla, The Fontana Economic History of Europe, 2 [Glasgow: Collins, 1974], p. 501), it is understandable that religious ideas from abroad were first known in the harbor towns in Southeast England and in London and were spread mainly through the Merchant Adventurers who had connections with Bruges, Antwerp, and other important trade and fare centers in Europe.

<sup>52</sup> Jasper Ridley, *Thomas Cranmer* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1962), p. 47. It is worth pondering the suggestion by Marion Josiah Hatchett, "Thomas Cranmer and the Rites of Christian Initiation," M.A. Thesis General Theological Seminary 1967, p. 219: "It is interesting to consider how different Cranmer's rites might have been if it had been in Rome or in Geneva rather than in Nuremberg that he had found the woman he loved."

<sup>53</sup> The last Archbishop of Canterbury to be consecrated bishop after his nomination was Simon Islif, elected September 20, 1349, consecrated December 20, 1349, died April 26, 1366: Powicke and Fryde, *Handbook of British Chronology*, p. 211.

itself, and while being given the pall, he read aloud a solemn protestation that no oath to the pope which he would be taking at the consecration would be binding if it was against the law of God, against the king or the commonwealth, or the laws or prerogatives of England; he would feel free to reform the Christian religion and the government of the Church in a direction furthering the prerogatives of the Crown.<sup>54</sup> The king could not have asked for a more subservient primate. His belief in the divine rights of the monarch, in royal absolutism, and in unlimited supremacy of the sovereign stands out as a very extreme type of erastianism.<sup>55</sup> In Cranmer Henry found a very helpful and reliable archbishop who by virtue of his office made the reformation of the Church easier than might have been the case with a more resistant man.

The ideas dominant in the first half of the sixteenth century were prone to give to the people affected a hitherto unknown measure of liberty (with the exception of the erastianism). Establishing the irreplaceable value of the individual whose horizon is opened and whose life needs no longer be dominated totally by the Church's absolute power and authority is a force clearly running in a centrifugal direction. The grip of the king upon the English people by virtue of his not only being the sovereign but also the Supreme Head of the Church is all the more remarkable and astonishing. Uniformity remained the catchword of the day despite all these currents.

The king had been given the power in the Supremacy Act (26 Hen. 8, c. 1) to visit ecclesiastical institutions and to order all matters "for the conservation of the peace, unity, and tranquillity of this realm." Through his viceregent for ecclesiastical affairs, Thomas Cromwell,<sup>56</sup> Henry took the obligation seriously. Two royal injunctions were issued, the first in the summer of 1536,<sup>57</sup> the second in September 1538.<sup>58</sup> The first was mainly concerned with the uprooting of

the Bishop of Rome's pretended and usurped power and jurisdiction within this realm, and for the establishment and confirmation of the king's authority and jurisdiction within the same, as of the supreme head of the Church of England<sup>59</sup>

as well as with the conduct of the clergy who were to take their duty of the cure of souls seriously; besides, "Sacrament [sic] and sacramentals be duly and reverently ministered in the parishes." The second set of injunctions envisaged the same problems: instructions in the faith were to be given to people, superstitions were to be extirpated, the clergy were to live in an orderly manner. Nobody was allowed to "alter or change . . . any prayer or divine service otherwise than is specified in the said Injunctions, until such time as the same be so ordered and transposed by the king's highness's authority."<sup>60</sup> Two changes were immediately provided for: the feastday of St. Thomas Becket was abolished--it was politically inappropriate and not to the advancement of the king's supreme authority--and the invocation of saints in the litany would be better omitted in favor of the following Christ-centered

<sup>54</sup> Ridley, *Cranmer*, pp. 55-58.

<sup>55</sup> Dickens, *English Reformation*, p. 168; Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy*, 2nd ed. (1945; rpt. London: Dacre, 1975), p. 640; Ridley, *Cranmer*, pp. 65-66; Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII*, p. 386. Attempts to white-wash Cranmer (Geoffrey Rudolph Elton, "Cranmer, Thomas," *Theologische Realenzyklopädie* 8, p. 229) are doomed given the letters and words of the archbishop himself and his actions, which were determined only by the wishes of the prince and none else.

<sup>56</sup> See Joseph Simon Block, "Church and Commonwealth: Ecclesiastical Patronage during Thomas Cromwell's Ministry, 1535-1540," Dissertation University of California Los Angeles 1973; Alan Lauffer Hayes, "The Viceregency in Spirituals in England, 1535-1540," Dissertation McGill University 1975.

<sup>57</sup> Gee and Hardy, *Documents*, no. 62, pp. 269-74.

<sup>58</sup> Gee and Hardy, *Documents*, no. 63, pp. 275-81.

<sup>59</sup> Gee and Hardy, *Documents*, no. 62, p. 270.

<sup>60</sup> Gee and Hardy, *Documents*, no. 63, p. 280.

suffrages. These second act of injunctions also brought the breakthrough of the translation of the Bible into English, as they foresaw that a copy of "the whole Bible of the largest volume, in English" be set up in the church for the parishioners; the reading was to be encouraged. The English version thus licensed was that of the "Great Bible," so called because of the size, a revision in 1537 by John Rogers of the former translations by William Tyndale (1526) and Miles Coverdale (1535), which in turn had been heavily influenced by the Luther and Zurich translations of the Bible.<sup>61</sup>

Henry's concern in church affairs, however, was not limited, to visitations. He wanted uniformity not only in outward matters but in the essentials of the faith, too. Although lacking any special theological education,<sup>62</sup> the Supreme Head was empowered to "order all errors and heresies," a duty he discharged in a most astonishing manner.<sup>63</sup>

In 1536 the king had the Canterbury Convocation ratify what were officially called *Articles about Religion*<sup>64</sup> but what came to be known as the Ten Articles. As they were of course published "by the King's authority" and provided with a preface by Henry, they showed his "most chief, most ponderous," and most weighty concern "that [God's] holy word and commandments may sincerely, without let or hindrance, be of our subjects truly believed, and reverently kept and observed." "To the honour of God and ours, the profit, tranquillity, and quietness of all you our most loving subjects,"<sup>65</sup> the three sacraments of baptism, penance, and the altar, the justification, and some provisions about the liturgical order (images, saints, rites and ceremonies) were dealt with. The sacrament of baptism was described in a quite traditional manner, without any extravagancies, as "instituted and ordained in the New Testament by our Saviour Jesus Christ . . . for the remission of sins, and the grace and favour of God." Children dying in their infancy were said to be "undoubtedly saved thereby, and else not."<sup>66</sup> The few sentences on the eucharist expressed a belief in the transubstantiation without using the word.<sup>67</sup> All the "laudable customs, rites, and ceremonies" which were a few years later abolished were upheld and were "to be used and continued as things good and laudable, to put us in remembrance of those spiritual things that they do signify," including "the hallowing of the font, and other like exorcisms and benedictions by the ministers of Christ's church."<sup>68</sup> Although these Ten Articles have been said to be a rapprochement with the German Lutherans,<sup>69</sup> they were rather orthodox in what they said, even in the question of justification.<sup>70</sup>

The omission of four of the seven traditional sacraments was corrected a year later in what came to be known as The Bishops' Book. The *Institution of a Christian Man*,

<sup>61</sup> Basil Hall, "Bibelübersetzungen: III/2. Übersetzungen in andere germanische Sprachen, Übersetzungen ins Englische," *Theologische Realenzyklopädie* 6, pp. 248-50.

<sup>62</sup> Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII*, pp. 4, 15, discards with good reasons the notion first expressed in 1672 that Henry had been destined by his father for the See of Canterbury; but in 1502, when Henry was nine years old, his older brother died, thereby leaving the throne of England in the future to Henry. Theology was one of his pastimes, not a prime occupation.

<sup>63</sup> Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII*, p. 405, quotes from the sources that Henry himself corrected the first commandment in The Bishops' Book as reading: "Thou shalt not have, nor repute any other God, or gods, but me Jesu Christ;" and the Lord's Prayer was to end: "and suffer us not to be led into temptations."

<sup>64</sup> [Charles Lloyd, ed.,] *Formularies of Faith Put Forth by Authority during the Reign of Henry VIII: viz. Articles about Religion, 1536, The Institution of a Christian Man, 1537, A Necessary Doctrine and Erudition for any Christian Man, 1543* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1825), pp. 1-20.

<sup>65</sup> Lloyd, *Formularies of Faith*, pp. 3-5.

<sup>66</sup> Lloyd, *Formularies of Faith*, pp. 6, 7.

<sup>67</sup> Lloyd, *Formularies of Faith*, pp. 11-12.

<sup>68</sup> Of Rites and Ceremonies: Lloyd, *Formularies of Faith*, p. 16.

<sup>69</sup> Dickens, *English Reformation*, pp. 175-76.

<sup>70</sup> "This word Justification signifieth remission of our sins, and our acceptation or reconciliation into the grace and favours of God, that is to say, our perfect renovation in Christ. . . . Sinners attain this justification by contrition and faith joined with charity.": Lloyd, *Formularies of Faith*, p. 12.

containing the exposition or interpretation of the common creed, of the seven sacraments, of the ten commandments, and of the Pater noster and the Ave Maria, justification, and purgatory<sup>71</sup> was completed in July 1537 by a committee of bishops and theologians and submitted to the king. The dedicatory letter to the king explained that

albeit, most dread and benign sovereign lord, we do affirm by our learnings with one assent, that the said treatise is in all points so concordant and agreeable to holy scripture, as we trust your majesty shall receive the same as a thing most sincerely and purely handled, to the glory of God, your grace's honour, the unity of your people, the which things your highness, we may well see and perceive, doth chiefly in the same desire: yet we do most humbly submit it to the most excellent wisdom and exact judgment of your majesty, to be recognised, overseen, and corrected, if your grace shall find any word or sentence in it meet to be changed, qualified, or further expounded, for the plain setting forth of your highness' most virtuous desire and purpose in that behalf. Whereunto we shall in that case conform ourselves, as to our most bounden duties to God and to your highness appertaineth.<sup>72</sup>

Indeed, this is the predominance of the Supreme Head over the truth of Holy Scripture!<sup>73</sup> Of special interest in the first part of the book on the creed is the treatise on the ninth article, "And I believe that there is one holy catholic and universal church,"<sup>74</sup> the longest of all expositions. The holy Church, so it was stated, is catholic, "that is to say, that it cannot be coerced or restrained within the limits or bonds of any town, city, province, region, or country; but that it is dispersed and spread universally throughout all the whole world." Yet this Church consists in particular churches that are "the very parts, portions, or members of this catholic and universal church." No church has any superiority or dominion over the others, which holds true for the Church of Rome, too.

The unity of this one catholic church is a mere spiritual unity, consisting in . . . the unity of Christ's faith, hope, and charity, and in the unity of the right doctrine of Christ, and in the unity and uniform using of the sacraments consonant unto the same doctrine.<sup>75</sup>

These "outward rites, ceremonies, traditions, and ordinances" could be instituted by the churches' governors. All churches were "called" apostolic churches because all were founded on the faith and doctrine of the apostles. The Church of England, therefore, claimed to be a true member of the catholic Church, to the same degree as the Church of Rome and other churches stated. The explanation of the sacrament of baptism was identical with that of the Ten Articles.<sup>76</sup> The confirmation was seen in the traditional theological context prevalent at that time and was strongly upheld as a sacrament.<sup>77</sup> The eucharist was interpreted along the lines of the Ten Articles, without any deviation from catholic belief.<sup>78</sup>

A statute was passed by the parliament in June 1539 that came to be known as The Six Articles Act (31 Hen. 8, c. 14).<sup>79</sup> The Supreme Head, "intending the conservation of the same Church and congregation [of England] in a true, sincere, and uniform doctrine of Christ's

<sup>71</sup> Lloyd, *Formularies of Faith*, pp. 21-211.

<sup>72</sup> Lloyd, *Formularies of Faith*, pp. 26-27.

<sup>73</sup> For some revealing and almost embarrassing passages in The Bishops' Book not relevant to the topic of this chapter, and for an attempt by Henry himself to revise the statements of the book, see Ridley, *Cranmer*, pp. 121-25.

<sup>74</sup> Lloyd, *Formularies of Faith*, pp. 52-57.

<sup>75</sup> Lloyd, *Formularies of Faith*, p. 56.

<sup>76</sup> John Douglas Close Fisher, ed., *Christian Initiation: The Reformation Period, Some Early Reformed Rites of Baptism and Confirmation and Other Contemporary Documents*, Alcuin Club Collections, 51 (London: SPCK, 1970), pp. 73-75; Lloyd, *Formularies of Faith*, pp. 92-94.

<sup>77</sup> Fisher, *Christian Initiation*, pp. 221-22; Lloyd, *Formularies of Faith*, pp. 94-96. See Hatchett, "Cranmer," pp. 33-34.

<sup>78</sup> Lloyd, *Formularies of Faith*, pp. 100-01.

<sup>79</sup> Gee and Hardy, *Documents*, no. 65, pp. 303-19.