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Reform

THE TRANSITION FROM THE Latin Rite as principally used in the Sarum Missal to the first Book of Common Prayer is the starkest transition in the reform of oblation in the offertory. How that transition occurred, and how the theological themes of almsgiving, propitiation, preparation, and participation would influence the reform of oblation in the offertory is the focus of this chapter. Beginning with a brief description of the historical context, we will then continue with an analysis of the significant texts and contextual elements that contributed to the reform of oblation and will conclude with a theological analysis of these texts and contextual elements.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

To describe the Reformation in England as a singular event occurring within a prescribed period would be inaccurate. In his book *English Reformations*, Christopher Haigh suggests that

the religious changes of sixteenth-century England were far too complex to be bound together as “the Reformation,” too complex even to be “a Reformation.” England had discontinuous Reformations and parallel Reformations. There were three political Reformations: a Henrician political reformation between 1530 and 1538, much of it reversed between 1538 and 1546; an Edwardian political Reformation between 1547 and 1553, almost completely reversed between 1553 and

1558; and an Elizabethan political Reformation between 1559 and 1563—which was not reversed.¹

Almost parallel to these three political reformations were three liturgical reformations: the promulgation of the first Book of Common Prayer in 1549, its radical successor in 1552,² and its more stable successor in 1559.³ The parallels between political and religious change were by no means coincidental. When Parliament issued the Act of Supremacy in 1534, making King Henry VIII the head of the Church of England, a tight relationship between Tudor monarchs and liturgical changes began.

Initially, the changes were quite slow. Some historians, such as Christopher Haigh and Eamon Duffy, argue that Roman Catholicism was alive and well in England at the beginning of the sixteenth century, particularly outside the dioceses of London, Oxford, and Cambridge.⁴ Other historians suggest a growing discontent with the medieval church and its liturgy.⁵ The rise of humanism and what would become known as the “New Learning” began in continental Europe but eventually crossed the Channel into England and would grow in influence.⁶ However, Haigh does not view the advance of Protestantism in England as the result of the chronologically parallel political reformations. Instead, Protestantism became popular through individual conversions and personal contacts and would continue to increase in influence for some time.⁷ These developments would eventually have a dramatic impact on the liturgy of the church in England.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, the liturgy of the church in England was steeped in medieval accretions. While the liturgy’s basic form stemmed from the Roman Rite, local uses had developed. By the sixteenth century, Sarum had become the predominant use in England.

Before beginning a closer examination of the offertory rite, a few general features about the liturgy can provide important context. Of course, the liturgy was in Latin. Also, the architecture of the English medieval church involved a long chancel, divided choirs, and a rood screen that obscured the view of the altar from the congregants in the nave. Devotional materials such as the *Prymer* and the *Lay Folk’s Mass Book* allowed congregants to

1. Haigh, *English Reformations*, 14.

2. EngBCP1549 and EngBCP1552, respectively.

3. EngBCP1559.

4. Haigh, *English Reformations*, 28; and Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*.

5. Cuming, *History of Anglican Liturgy*, 15; and Dickens, *English Reformation*.

6. Cuming, *History of Anglican Liturgy*, 88.

7. Haigh, *English Reformations*, 14.

follow along with the liturgy, but they required not only a degree of literacy not widely attained but also the financial means to possess copies of them.⁸

Another important element of the medieval liturgy was its propitiatory nature. By the early sixteenth century, eucharistic doctrine in the West emphasized the sacrifice of Christ above all other images. While official church doctrine has never taught the repetition of Christ's sacrifice at each mass, popular understanding saw things differently. Reception of communion had dwindled to an annual affair at Easter. The teaching that votive masses could alleviate the pains of purgatory led to their proliferation such that private masses without a congregation far outnumbered public masses with a congregation. As Cumming describes it,

The purpose of hearing Mass was the propitiation of a stern Deity. Repetition of the sacrifice of Calvary effected forgiveness of the worshipper's sins. This doctrine led to a belief in the distinct propitiatory value of each single mass: to mitigate the pains of purgatory, ten masses were ten times as effective as one. Hence the multiplication of masses for the dead and of votive masses, said to secure a particular end. These were just as effective when said by a priest on his own; there was no need for the presence of a congregation.⁹

How the propitiation of this "stern Deity" occurred was through oblation. The church offered sacrifices to God with the desire to please God. The offertory rite became the locus of this theology such that Martin Luther decried it vehemently: "That utter abomination follows which forces all that precedes in the mass into its service and is, therefore, called the offertory. From here on almost everything smacks and savors of sacrifice."¹⁰

Although Parliament in 1531 authorized King Henry VIII to remove the church in England from the authority of the pope and thus established the Church of England, both parliament and the monarch would institute few changes that would affect the liturgical lives of the average congregant. Most of the liturgy continued in Latin with only the *Prymer* and Litany being translated into English.¹¹ However, the devotional life of the average congregant would be affected significantly with the dissolution of the monasteries

8. Cumming, *History of English Liturgy*, 4–5.

9. Cumming, *History of Anglican Liturgy*, 5–6.

10. "Sequitur, tota illa abominatio, cui servire coactum est, quicquid in missâ præcessit, vnde et offertorium vocatur. Et ab hinc omnia ferè sonant ac olent oblationem." Luther, "Martin Luthers Von Ordnung Gottesdienstes," 15; translation from Spinks, *Do This in Remembrance of Me*, 251.

11. Cumming, *History of Anglican Liturgy*, 38.

as pilgrimage sites and the banning of the use of relics and other devotions related to the cult of saints.¹²

When Henry's son, Edward VI, took the throne in January 1547, local parishes knew then that change had occurred. By July 31, the Book of Homilies was promulgated along with injunctions instructing that they were to be read in every parish church. Additionally, the Gospel and Epistle were to be read in English, and the Litany was to be said kneeling rather than in procession. Images often found in the rood screen, and their accompanying lights were to be removed as a type of iconoclasm. Parliament authorized *The Order of the Communion* that following December and published it by March 1548.¹³

The desire to reform the entire liturgy grew such that a committee was appointed consisting mostly of bishops favoring the "New Learning." No records exist regarding the exact deliberations of that committee. However, the rapidity of their process leads to the suggestion that Archbishop Thomas Cranmer had a draft ready to propose. On January 21, 1549, Parliament authorized *The Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments and Other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church, after the Use of the Church of England*. The accompanying Act of Uniformity prescribed its use, and no other, by Whitsunday, 1549.¹⁴

This act marked the first time in Western ecclesial history that only a single liturgy received official authorization. Penalties were enjoined for clergy who failed to comply and for laity who attacked the Book of Common Prayer or forced clergy to use services outside of it. Even the stiff penalties were not enough to gain an enthusiastic welcome for the 1549 Book of Common Prayer. In some places, open rebellion ensued in which dissatisfaction over the new prayer book played a significant role.¹⁵

In the end, the 1549 Book of Common Prayer did not please anyone, and in 1552 Parliament replaced it. This edition involved significant changes including the editing of all the major rites, a new structure for the Eucharist, the banishment of the old vestments, the restriction of singing, and the use of regular bread instead of wafers.¹⁶ Even before the 1552 revision, evangelical bishops had begun to enforce architectural changes, such as the removal of images from roods and the exchange of altars with communion

12. Crook, *English Medieval Shrines*, 289–308.

13. Cuming, *History of Anglican Liturgy*, 39.

14. Cuming, *History of Anglican Liturgy*, 47.

15. Cuming, *History of Anglican Liturgy*, 70. For more detail, see also Dugmore, Mass; Rose-Troup, *Western Rebellion*; and Caraman, *Western Rising*.

16. Haigh, *English Reformations*, 179–80.

tables.¹⁷ These changes would have a dramatic impact on lay people in the congregation.

King Edward VI's untimely death at age sixteen in 1553 permitted his half sister Mary to take the throne and to attempt to restore traditional religion, an effort that received wide popular support in many parishes within the kingdom.¹⁸ Of course, leaders within the Evangelical movement considered her royal accession to be a major setback for their plans to further Protestant reform in England.

Mary's death in 1558 brought about another upheaval, both politically and liturgically. Her half sister, Elizabeth I, took the throne on November 17, 1558, and immediately issued a proclamation restoring the use of the English Litany and allowing the Gospels, Epistles, Creed, Lord's Prayer, and Ten Commandments to be read in English. By March 18, 1559, a bill passed through Parliament permitting the restoration of Edwardian religious practices. Then, Parliament passed the Act of Uniformity by the end of April, authorizing a new edition of the Book of Common Prayer.

This edition removed the polemical references to the bishop of Rome, combined the Words of Administration from the 1549 and 1552 editions, dropped the "Black Rubric" requiring kneeling at communion, and introduced a new rubric requiring the use of "such ornaments in the church as were in use by authority of Parliament in the second year of the reign of King Edward the Sixth." Cummings recognized that the imprecise wording of this last rubric would perpetuate conflict within the Church of England for the next four hundred years.¹⁹

Other contextual changes greatly affected the ethos of worship in Elizabethan England. The *Book of Homilies* was expanded by adding a second book of twenty more sermons. Additional forms of prayers and thanksgivings were often attached to Morning Prayer. The *Injunctions* of 1559 prescribed the preaching or reading of a homily once per month, the reading of the Lords Prayer, Creed, and Ten Commandments on holy days, and instruction in the Catechism every second Sunday. Vestments and church furnishings, such as the rood screen, also received attention. A series of *Primers* and other devotional aids accompanied these changes. Doctrinally, *The Forty-Two Articles* of 1553 were reissued. Then, they were reduced

17. Haigh, *English Reformations*, 176–77.

18. See Haigh, *English Reformations*, 214; Hutton, "Local Impact," 156; and Litzenberger, *English Reformation*, 98.

19. Cuming, *History of Anglican Liturgy*, 91.

to thirty-eight in 1563 and then finally to the more familiar thirty-nine in 1571.²⁰

Thus, Haigh is correct to state that England did not experience a singular Reformation but rather a series of reformations. These reformations not only changed the political landscape of the country but also changed its religious landscape. Not just the liturgy, but also architecture, furniture, vestments, and liturgical objects all succumbed to the vagaries of reform, counter-reform, and further reform.

TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

The Sarum Use

Thomas Cranmer, the widely regarded principal architect of the first Book of Common Prayer, suggested a plethora of local uses of the Roman missal with these words: “And where heretofore, there hath been great diuersitie in saying and synging in churches within this realme: some folowyng Salisbury use, some Herford use, some the use of Bangor, some of Yorke, and some of Lincolne: Now from hēcefurth, all the whole realme shall haue but one use.”²¹ However, historical evidence suggests a different conclusion. While the York Use is likely the oldest use, it does not appear to have extended beyond the diocese except possibly for the suffragan diocese of Galloway.²² The Hereford Use began as a distinct use but eventually copied a great deal of material from the Sarum Use.²³ The Bangor Use and Lincoln Use made even less of an impact on the realm as even fewer dioceses employed these uses than the York and Hereford. No printed copy of Bangor exists.²⁴ As for the Lincoln Use, it has been dismissed as inconsequential.²⁵ Thus, this leaves only one local use of substantial interest, the Sarum Use.

Because the Sarum Use had predominance by the sixteenth century, particularly around London, the textual analysis will focus on it rather than the other uses. F. M. Dickinson’s edition of the *Missale ad Usus Insignis et Præclaræ Ecclesiæ Sarum* represents the one closest to the publication of the

20. Cuming, *History of Anglican Liturgy*, 96–98.

21. EngBCP1549, 4.

22. King, *Liturgies of the Past*, 329–30.

23. King, *Liturgies of the Past*, 351.

24. Maskell, *Ancient Liturgy*, lxxix.

25. Bishop, *Liturgica Historica*, 277.

first Book of Common Prayer in 1549 and most closely approximates what would have been in sixteenth-century usage.²⁶

In addition to the Sarum Missal, the Consuetudinary and Customary of Sarum add important liturgical data.²⁷ The Consuetudinary is the code of customs used by the Church of Salisbury and considered to be the principal authority. The Customary draws on the Consuetudinary but also expands on it at times.²⁸ Walter Howard Frere, a nineteenth-century liturgical scholar, based his version of the Consuetudinary on manuscripts from the early part of the thirteenth century and his accompanying Customary on manuscripts from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.²⁹

The offertory rite of both the *Missale Romanum* 1474 and the 1526 version of the Sarum Missal begins after the Creed, or after the gospel when the Creed is not said, and it ends with the *secreta*, just before the preface dialogue.³⁰ The offertory itself, or *offertorium*, was an antiphon and a portion of the Psalter, often just a single verse in Sarum and usually sung by the choir or said by the priest.³¹ Because the *offertoria* coincide with the season or feast being celebrated, they provide little data of theological interest regarding the offertory rite as a whole and will not be a part of this analysis.

The rubrics of the Sarum Missal, Consuetudinary and Customary illustrate the elaborate ceremonial associated with the offertory. For example, the rubric which comes next in the Sarum Missal provides detail on how the priest is to receive the elements: "After the Offertory the deacon shall present the chalice with the paten and the sacrifice, to the priest, kissing his hand each time. And the priest receiving the chalice from him, shall carefully place it in its proper place in the midst of the altar, and with an inclination shall raise it slightly with both hands, offering the sacrifice to the lord, and saying this Prayer."³² This rubric refers twice to the bread and

26. *Missale Ad Usum*, xvii–xviii. For manuscripts of the Sarum Missal dating as far back as 1264, see Legg, *Sarum Missal*. For the complexity of establishing a text, see Salisbury, "Establishing," 93–106.

27. For more detailed information on these sources, see Baxter, *Sarum Use*; and Pfaff, *The Liturgy in Medieval*.

28. Frere, *Sarum Customs*, xi–xii. See also Sarum Customary Online, <http://www.sarumcustomary.org.uk/>.

29. Frere, *Sarum Customs*, xlv–lii and lvi–lviii, respectively.

30. "Missale Romanum Mediolani, 1474," 200.

31. "Dum offerenda canitur [emphasis mine]," *Consuetudinary*, XXXIX.23 (Frere, *Use of Sarum*, 1:75).

32. Warren, *Sarum Missal in English*, 30. "Post Offertorium vero porrigat diaconus sacerdoti calicem cum patena et sacrificio, et osculetur manum ejus utraque vice. Ipse vero accipiens ab eo calicem, diligenter ponat in loco suo debito super medium altare; et inclinato parumper elevet calicem utraque manu, offerens sacrificium Domino, dicendo hanc Orationem." *Missale Ad Usum*, 593.

wine being offered as a “sacrifice” or “sacrificium” in Latin. Frere’s version of the Consuetudinary and Customary used at the Sarum Church provide a much more detailed description of this liturgical action.³³

What is important to note is that these rubrics do not involve the actual preparation of the gifts. That action has already occurred before the reading of the epistle and then during the *Alleluia*, tract, and sequence before the reading of the Gospel.³⁴ Thus, these rubrics indicate the offering of the gifts as a separate liturgical action from their preparation. This distinction will be important when we discuss the reforms of the 1549 and 1552 English Books of Common Prayer below.

After the gifts have been accepted by the priest, prayed over, and properly arranged on the corporal, the censing begins. The Sarum Missal and Customary go into exacting detail on the precise order of censing the “*calix et sacrificium*,” the ministers, and the choir under certain circumstances. They also include a short prayer, “Let my prayer be set forth, O Lord, in thy sight as the incense,” which is a quotation from Ps 141:2 (140:2 in the Vulgate).³⁵

The rubrics now indicate that the priest is to wash his hands. The Sarum Missal offers a short prayer for the priest, “Cleanse me, O Lord, from all pollution of mind and body, that being cleansed I may be able to perform the holy work of the Lord.”³⁶ The prayer is based on Ps 51:2 (Vulgate, Ps 50:4) but elaborates on it by having the priest ask to be cleansed from all

33. “Hiis peractis acolito ministrante subdiacono ipsi diacono—[Ad offerendam dicendam diaconus et subdiaconus ad sacerdotem accedant, diaconus a dextris, subdiaconus a sinistris. Similiter fiat ad *Sanctus* et ad *Agnus dei* et ad communionem dicendam: et hoc semper ad missam obseruetur. Dum offerenda conitur,] sacerdos prius hostiam super patenam [imponat] deinde calicem de manu diaconi accipiat, deinde diacono manum ipsius sacerdotis utraque uice deosculante.” *Consuetudinary*, XXXIX.23 (Frere, *Use of Sarum*, 1:75); and “Deinde porrigat sacerdoti calicem cum patena et sacrificio et osculetur manum eius utraque uice: ipse uero accipiens ab eo calicem diligenter et ponat in loco debito super medium altaris, et inclinato parum eleuet calicem utraque manu offerens domino sacrificium, et dicat cum deuotione hanc oracionem *Suscipe sancta trinitas hanc oblacionem &c.* : qua dicta reponat calicem, et cooperiat cum corporalibus, ponatque panem super corporalia decenter ante calicem uinum et aquam continentem, et osculetur patenam et reponat eam a dextris super altare sub corporalibus parum cooperiendo.” *Customary*, 66.23 (Frere, *Use of Sarum*, 1:75).

34. *Consuetudinary*, XXXIX.13 and 14 (Frere, *Use of Sarum*, 1:69 and 71); and *Customary*, 66.12 and 17–18 (Frere, *Use of Sarum*, 1:69 and 71).

35. Warren, *Sarum Missal in English*, 31. “Dirigatur Domine ad te oratio mea, sicut incensum in conspectu tuo.” *Missale Ad Usum*, 593–94, and *Customary*, 66.24 (Frere, *Use of Sarum*, 1:76–77).

36. Warren, *Sarum Missal in English*, 32. “Munda me Domine ab omni inquinamento mentis et corporis: ut possim mundatus implere opus sanctum Domini.” *Missale Ad Usum*, 594.