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Article abstract

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“Joye without ending”: Paul Bush’s *The Extripacion of Ignorancy*— An Early Case for Caesaropapism

ANDREW CHIBI

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Paul Bush’s poem, The Extripacion of Ignorancy (1526), is a little known or regarded work that mixes Chaucer’s poetic tradition, orthodox theology, and obedience polemic into an advisory piece with Christian social ethics at the heart of a caesaropapism argument at least three years prior to Tyndale’s much more famous Obedience of a Christian Man. In rhyme royal, Bush explored sacred history, Scripture, and literary references to counter the harm of the Amicable Grant tax revolts and explore the value of a Crown-dominated system based on 1 Peter 2:17. By so doing, he sought to disseminate the ways and means of solving contemporary socio-political and religious tensions. The suggestion here is that Bush anticipated the arguments of the Tudor obedience polemicists of the 1530s. This article is an evaluation of the poem as a work of poetry, theology, and obedience polemic.

Le poème The Extripacion of Ignorancy (1526) de Paul Bush est une œuvre méconnue ou peu considérée qui mêle, dans une pièce à visée délibérative, la tradition poétique chaucérienne, la théologie orthodoxe et la polémique sur la question de l’obéissance, avec l’éthique sociale chrétienne, au cœur d’un débat sur le césaropapisme, au moins trois ans avant l’Obediance of a Christian Man de Tyndale, beaucoup plus célèbre. Bush explore en rimes royales les références à l’histoire sacrée, aux Écritures et à la littérature pour contrer les effets néfastes des révoltes fiscales de l’Amicable Grant et examiner la valeur d’un système dominé par la couronne basé sur 1 Pierre 2 : 17. Ce faisant, il a cherché à diffuser les voies et les moyens de résolution des tensions sociopolitiques et religieuses contemporaines. Nous suggérons ici que Bush a devancé les arguments des polémistes des années 1530 soutenant les Tudor. Cet article considère le poème en tant qu’œuvre de poésie, de théologie et de polémique sur l’obéissance.

By any measure, the early to mid-1520s were not pleasant years for Henry VIII or England. The king and his government faced substantial backlash to excessive taxation in support of successive and unprofitable invasions of France. This included forced loans in 1522 and 1523 (not yet fully collected mid-decade), exacerbated by a non-parliamentary tax of 1525 known as the Amicable Grant.¹ This was technically a benevolence and had been calculated on between a sixth and a tenth of lay property values and a third of clerical property values. Taxation commissions criss-crossing each other in an already

1. Goring, “General Proscription of 1522.” Edward Hall called the sums expected “impossible” (Hall, *Hall’s Chronicle*, 700). See also MacCulloch and Fletcher, *Tudor Rebellions*, 24–25.

coin-poor realm led to a rebellion. Cardinal Wolsey's failure to garner financial support for the "Great Enterprise" also led to a humiliating political and diplomatic climb-down. These setbacks were aggravated by the king's rising suspicions against the nature of his marriage and what he perceived as a resultant divine curse.²

Domestically, the Tudor dynasty was threatened by social, economic, and political upheavals particularly (but not exclusively) in the east and southeast, while, internationally, Henry's erstwhile allies in the Holy Roman Empire, in Spain and in Burgundy, abandoned him when, in 1525, the English distraction was no longer needed (post-Pavia).³ Added to this were Lutheran messages (and even more radical ideas) seeping into domestic beliefs, doctrines, and sermons, augmenting a pre-existing Lollard tradition of anticlericalism, itself supplemented by a rising lay piety that wanted more from it than the Church seemed able to provide. On the Continent, 1525 also witnessed a peasants' revolt, triggering further political, economic, and social turmoil. No one seemed to know exactly where they stood in the new world order, only that the order had been turned upside down.

Given the socio-economic tenure of the times, and with the prospect of a public relations disaster staring him in the face, few options were available to the king to keep a lid on the rising tensions in England. The dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk had been dispatched to deal with the most pressing revolts, while the taxpayers were warned that, should they fail to make their contributions, the dishonour to the king would be devastating and the consequences for the realm disastrous.⁴ Ethan Shagan has called this an appeal to "popular politics"—that is, resorting to shaming the people into obedience.⁵

This is demonstrated by the levying instruction for the Amicable Grant: "And synnes Almighty God hath thus largely doon his parte, offering greate occasion unto the realme of Englonde" (i.e., the removal of Francis I from the political scene), it was imperative that the people do theirs, that is, be "redy to joyne and concurre with the kings highnes for recovery of the said realme

2. Bernard and Hoyle, "Instructions," 191. See also Bernard, *War, Taxation, and Rebellion* for what is considered the definitive work on the Amicable Grant.

3. The king of France, Francis I, was captured by Imperial forces fighting for Charles V during the Battle of Pavia.

4. Bernard and Hoyle, "Instructions," 193.

5. Shagan, *Popular Politics*, 18.

of Fraunce."⁶ The king's honour and the realm's reputation both depended upon a successful invasion. Furthermore, it was a righteous cause: "from the most inwarde panes of his most noble harte and mynde as that thing which as highly concernith the honour of his highnes and this his realme as ever dyd anything in tyme of mannes memory."⁷ The king's honour was tied to success in France; success would restore his rightful place on the French throne and bring peace and prosperity to both realms (i.e., the world would be set right again). The Crown dispatched agents armed with these instructions to encourage compliance. The shame of failure was almost inconceivable:

[B]y the contrary this realme canne neyther prosper ne florish in richesse, honour ne welth, but is like to remayn in continual reproch, hostile and warre to thempechement of marchaundise and entercourse, wherof shal ensue the lak of al outwarde commodites or utteraunce of such as growe in this realme with continual depopulation, derth, decrease, povertie and yerely paymentes for defense and garding of the see and lande, besides the losse of estimation, honour and reputation for ever [...] for the conservation of the honour of this his realme and to estabilish the same and his said subgettes in assured welthines, reste, quiete, increase and tranquillite.⁸

The king needed a distraction, and the realm needed a stable, traditional base of king, church, and government rather than violence and insubordination. This gives us the through line for Paul Bush's polemic poem, *The Extripacion of Ignorancy*, which was published in 1526.⁹

For Bush, the work was a personal success. It was published by the king's printer of official documents and English language works (i.e., Richard Pynson), and it brought him to national attention. His career blossomed as a result (discussed below). Given his background, one suspects that Bush—a

6. Quoted in Bernard and Holye, "Instructions," 196.

7. Quoted in Bernard and Holye, "Instructions," 201.

8. Quoted in Bernard and Holye, "Instructions," 197.

9. The title in full reads, *Here begynneth a lytell treatyse in Englysshe, called the Extripacion of ignorancy*. There are two extant copies at Cambridge University Library and Huntington Library. A copy can also be found online at <https://www.otago.ac.nz/english-linguistics/tudor/ignorancy4186.html> for quick reference. All citations refer to signature and line numbers and are given in parentheses in text.

scholar, a poet, a theologian, and a man of medicine—thought he could cure the realm of its current malaise through positive propaganda, part and parcel of new government initiatives elsewhere.

Wolsey, for example, stirred the government into a *volte-face* diplomatically (allying with France) and addressed finances in a way that was meant to evince the king's new dedication to fiscal responsibility—the Eltham Ordinance—so the taxed could see that austerity was the new order of the day.¹⁰ To new foreign policy and economic reforms was added a distancing between the king and his “greedy ministers” (the perceived cause of excessive taxation demands), and enclosure practices were officially proscribed as damaging to agriculture (which was at the heart of current inflation and consequent unemployment problems). Bush would bring something new to the table, however: he would give the public a new holy duty and thus transfer their negative energy of self-righteous discontent and anger into a positive, selfless, and satisfying spiritual revival meant to underpin social stability. He supplied the king with a refreshed theoretical platform—later known as caesaropapism (which would be expanded dramatically in the 1530s)—based on undisputable and respectable sources (e.g., the Bible, Plato, and Erasmus). *Extripacion* offered an orthodox theological framework (no Luther-isms or Lollardy) structured in the popular rhyme royal of the Chaucer poetic tradition.

This article presents a brief overview of Bush's career and an examination of contemporary thinking on the question of magisterial authority. This is followed by an appraisal of the basic principles of Henrician obedience polemics (using the Amicable Grant proscription as a guide) and, finally, demonstrates how Bush anticipated those principles to steer public opinion in the desired, moral direction.

Both poem and poet are known quantities, if not particularly famous ones.¹¹ Bush's place in history was assured, however, by the fact that he was made the first bishop of Bristol on 25 June 1542. Bristol was a new English diocese created by Henry VIII only a few weeks earlier on 4 June.¹² This alone tells us quite a lot about Bush, the man, since historians have quite a firm knowledge of Henrician expectations of the episcopal bench; the king's standards

10. Guy, “Thomas Wolsey,” 41, 45, 47. See also Gwyn, *King's Cardinal*, 368, 401.

11. Lerer, “Paul Bush”; Bettey, “Paul Bush”; Chibi, “Paul Bush's *Exhortation*.”

12. *Letters and Papers* (hereafter *L&P*) vol. 17, no. 443 (9); Horn, *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae*, 3–6; Pocock, “Bull of Paul IV,” 303. See also Bettey, “Dissolution,” 119.

were high and demanding. He explained to Wolsey that the reward of episcopal promotion was not merely political expediency but "some other great qualities (as profound learning) annexed unto the same."¹³ Douglas Bush has interpreted this as the king's desire for men who could bring something of value to public business and its conduct—a certain political astuteness augmented by intellectual, scholastic, business, or diplomatic achievements.¹⁴ Paul Bush met the criteria well.

Besides administrative competence, Bush served his order as provost, corrector, deputy head, and rector (i.e., prior) of Edington (an Augustinian house of the Bonhommes, or sometimes Bones-homes, or the Society of Blue Friars), and as prebend of Bishopston in Salisbury—and it is also clear that he had a first-class mind. As a student at St. Mary's College at Oxford (the Augustinian college then under Hugh Whitwick)—modern day Wadham College—he earned a BA in 1518 and subsequent BTh and DTh degrees.¹⁵ He was highly reputed as a theologian and as a student of medicine—a "wise and grave man well versed both in divinity and physic, and not only a grave orator but a good poet."¹⁶ Having distinguished himself at university, he sought further recognition outside the monastery to which he had returned.

In 1525 he produced at least three religious tracts—*A Lyttel Treatise in Englyshe Called the Exposycyon of Miserere mei Deus*; *Notes on the Psalms*; and *Dialogus inter Christum et Mariam*—attracting the patronage of Walter Hungerford, one of the king's household officers. Through Hungerford, Bush came to the attention first of Thomas Cromwell in the mid-1530s, and then to the king himself through direct service as a royal chaplain (involving him in ecclesiastical and secular matters at the king's discretion).¹⁷

After college and Bush's return to Edington in 1525, however, the immediate problem for the newly minted priest seeking patronage was that the king and his ministers, bishops, senior diplomats, and courtiers already had their choice of thrusting young clerics looking for positions and a step up the career

13. Quoted in Ellis, *Original Letters*, 3rd series, no. 1, 184.

14. Bush, "Tudor Humanism." For discussions about Henry VIII's vision of the episcopal bench, see Chibi, "Re-evaluation"; "Career Path."

15. Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses*, 1:269–73. For the Edington Priory, see "House of Bonhommes: Edington."

16. "Paul Bush, the Last Rector," 98. For St. Mary's College, see "Houses of Augustinian Canons."

17. *L&P* vol. 8, nos. 391, 541, 635, 1064; *L&P* vol. 15, no. 543; *L&P* vol. 16, nos. 461–62. See also Gross, "Regionalism and Revision," 12.

ladder. To attract the eye of powerful figures at court, it was not enough for a man to be reputed as educated and talented; he had to display his qualities in a way much more tangible (i.e., serviceable). With this in mind, Bush published *The Extripacion of Ignorancy* in 1526 and dedicated it to Princess Mary. Such a dedication was more than a signal of loyalty or a plea for patronage, however (although it was both of these things as well). As Valerie Schutte has noted, a dedication signalled the motivation behind a work as well as how the text came to be published (e.g., via the royal printer).¹⁸ But mainly it signalled why the work was relevant in the contemporary socio-political climate: *Extripacion* had been written to offer valuable counsel. Moreover, such a dedication gave the work additional *gravitas* in the wider realm.¹⁹ To dedicate the work to the princess rather than to the king was unusual, but it worked in this case because the implication was counsel of obedience to the ruler rather than advice offered to the ruler on how to govern (although the latter is implied throughout the poem). These words from the prologue illustrate this point:

Thus doying your grace shal me straitly bynde
 With hert and service to do what lyeth in me
 You magnificence to extol or els I were unkynde
 Accordyng to your parentes whole welth & dignite
 Christ conserve and also dayly augment
 With honor & worship congrue to you power exellent. (A2v, ll. 15–20)

Here was a promise of loyalty and a pledge to maintain the dignity of the Crown. *Extripacion* thereafter offered two reflective themes: the world turned upside down (i.e., the current situation and how this came about); and how to return to the world righted (i.e., through the humbly offered counsel).

To give his words credibility and avoid the taint of the corrupted world, Bush first had to separate himself from said world. As an outsider looking in, he could both see the big picture and identify the internal problems:

And as I walked alone in mynde thus musyng
 I thought to endyte what thyng were necessary
 And by long delyberacion I coniectred most fitting

18. Schutte, *Mary I*.

19. Schutte, *Mary I*, 40–41.

Somwhat to write of mans ingratitude & folly
And to persecute his demeanor all croked & contrary
To god his maker by lyving nat commendable
Subdued by vyce and suche maters semblable.

And no great marveyle ne wonder certayne
Though suche inconvenience enschewe us amonge
For wilfully is broken the bridell and the rayne
Whiche shulde governe man in every thronge
As first drede is expelled by audacite stronge
And sensualityte ruleth as govern our principall
So that Christ is nat dradde ne feared at all.

Also perfyte love which shulde devout myndes
Sette on fyre in loving god omnipotent
Is subpeditate by enorytes of sondrye kyndes
Wherfore I thought it semyng and most convenynt
As touching my purpose for this tyme present
Of these two maters and their circumstaunce chefely
Somwhat to write to mittygate suche folly. (A3, ll. 8–28)

Ingratitude and folly, crooked and contrary demeanorers, broken bridles and reins, audacity, sensuality ruling over reason—all resulted in a realm in turmoil.

In his "solitude," Bush sought solutions in "Hystoris autentycall of the testament olde / And some presyidentes of the new necessary to beholde" (A2v, ll. 6–7), and through such unquestionable sources he found the answer: "Some treatise to endyte to the comferte and solace / Of people desirous virtuously to be occupied / to se god lauded and his hye name magnified" (A3, ll. 5–7), that is, to see the world righted again.

Bush's proof text is 1 Peter 2:17, and what followed was simplified hermeneutics. The message was clear, however, in that Christians had forgotten themselves and their commitments. Bush would lead them back and remind them of who they are. The text was written in English so the message could be widely understood, although allusions to many recent Latin works are also made, giving the poem additional base stability and appeal to the literate, who would see to its dissemination.

Although this was not directly the cause of the world turned upside down, the clash between clerical and temporal power was a potent source of tension all across Christendom. There was no question of the king's temporal power, but there were many competing themes on the relationship between Church and Crown at the time.²⁰ Simply put, the traditional Roman Catholic position was that there could be no temporal government without the Church. This was based on the doctrine of the two swords (as taken from Luke 22:38). One sword was carried by the priest (as Peter carried one), and the other was *lent* to the magistrate to be used at the discretion of the priest. This became the basis of the papal bull *Unam Sanctam* (which emphasized both papal leadership of the Church and the Church's supremacy over the temporal orders) and augmented Thomas Aquinas's discussion of the four laws—eternal, divine, natural, and human positive (by which society is ordered)—in his *Summa Theologiae*.²¹ For Aquinas, the spiritual laws were clearly and necessarily superior to the human, so a clerical authority taking a role in temporal matters was only natural and right (e.g., bishops and abbots sitting in Parliament). In theory, the reverse could not be right (e.g., members of Parliament and lords did not sit in convocation), but in reality, of course, there was no uniform observation of the two-sword principle, and temporal authorities interfered in Church matters all the time. Long before reformers like Luther and Zwingli focused attention on the underlying Scriptures and claims of spiritual authority, however, rival theories of temporal supremacy existed.

For example, Marsilius of Padua's *Defensor Pacis* (1324), a key text for later Henrician polemicists, argued that, far from a papal supremacy over temporal matters, clerical authority depended upon the superior civil power, itself contingent on the willingness of the people to be ruled through the application of agreed laws. For Marsilius, the spiritual authority had no intrinsic jurisdiction in its own right; the Church had confused spiritual and temporal authorities and attempted to enforce a kind of hegemony of its own making over temporal society in support of its own agenda.²² Marsilius held that power was ultimately invested in the people as a corporate body, which delegated rule to someone

20. On the question of spheres of influence, see Chibi, *Fear God, Honor the King*.

21. Lane, *Constitutions*, 26.

22. Reardon, *Religious Thought*, 3; Haight, *Christian Community*, 362. For select readings from *Defensor Pacis*, see <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/marsiglio4.html>.

responsible to meet its material and spiritual needs—i.e., a king. Luther (c. 1520) echoed this by reframing the two-sword doctrine into a two-kingdoms doctrine, placing both on an equal footing under the supreme authority of God delegated through the emperor and, through him, to all spiritual and temporal subordinate magistrates. Luther’s solution to the tensions in the German realms was the imperial and princely authorities taking back all non-spiritual powers from the clergy.

In his treatise *To the Christian Nobility* (1520), Luther developed the priesthood of all believers theme, which made no distinction between members of the Church save in terms of function, giving each “priest” both temporal and religious duties (using as a proof text 1 Corinthians 12:12).²³ Expanding on this, he noted that Christians were one body of one all-encompassing spiritual class and that each member had a function to fulfil.²⁴ The king’s duty is to defend the Church and to restore order by whatever secular means possible. The clergy, according to their function, are those priests who administer the Word of God and the sacraments, while the magistrates, according to their function, are those priests who bear the sword, punish the evil, protect the good, and create the conditions within which the clergy can effectively carry out their function. Everyone else, be they cobbler or farmer, has their own function (i.e., work beneficial to the bodily and spiritual welfare of the community).²⁵ It is the common duty of all Christians, therefore, to cooperate with civil authorities (e.g., pay taxes, swear oaths). Christians cannot live without the power of the state—they are constantly confronted by sin, moral choices, ethical dilemmas, evil, and the needs of their neighbours.²⁶ Luther’s doctrine of the two kingdoms thereby expressed the idea that God ruled the world in two ways. In the earthly kingdom this was through secular government (using law, sword, and compulsion), and in the heavenly kingdom through the gospel. The role of secular government was to rule over externals—property, life, social relationships, and the punishment of crime. Luther recognized the two kingdoms but separated them in a way that Catholic orthodoxy did not.

23. Luther, *Christian Nobility*, 92–96.

24. Luther, *Babylonian Captivity*, 127.

25. Marius, *Martin Luther*, 237.

26. Luther, *Commentary*, trans. Mueller, 179–92. See also Lausten, “*Lutherus*,” 56.

Another Continental reformer known in England was the covenant theologian Ulrich Zwingli, who did not separate the two kingdoms but instead made the case for closer clerical/magisterial cooperation. The covenantal theologians, who would have considerable influence in the mid-Tudor period, developed a theology encompassing a complex relationship between civil authorities and the Church, ultimately under the sovereign rule of God. Zwingli took what Peter Stephens has called a “theocratic view of society,” in which both priest and politician were servants of the sovereign rule of God in cooperation.²⁷ The community was both Church and State, and preacher and politician served both—one by preaching and the other by ruling—both acting in accordance with the gospel and on the advice of the other. In his *Sixty-Seven Articles* (1523), Zwingli explored a contrast between the assumed traditional powers of priests and bishops and the natural rule of magistrates (hereditary or elected). Predicated upon, and legitimized by, adherence to the gospel, the work of magistrates encompassed all judicial powers, and magistrates could expect obedience from all Christians (including clergymen) based partially on 1 Peter 2:13–17, provided “they do not command anything which is opposed to God.”²⁸ Social controls and discipline were in the hands of the magistrates. Where Luther emphasized function, Zwingli emphasized duality (although the role of the king *seems* contradictory).

The king, as a good Christian, treats his neighbours as he would himself wish to be treated (the central message of Matthew 7:12), but to rule effectively he obviously must be obeyed and be treated differently from his neighbours. Zwingli got around this paradox by observing public and private obligations: the king acts according to his office *in public*—he rules, judges others, and makes laws—and as an ordinary Christian otherwise following these rules *in private*. The princely office is therefore established mainly against the wicked (i.e., those who cannot conform even to human righteousness) as the protector of the directly or indirectly oppressed. Magistrates take upon themselves the determination of all external matters, whether religious or secular, taking the place of the entire Church (i.e., the entirety of the community or fellowship) by virtue of delegated representation (supported with reference to Acts 15).

Through the filtering lens of William Tyndale, this covenantal view came to dominate aspects of pro-supremacy polemic in the 1530s, but Bush

27. Stephens, *Theology of Huldrych Zwingli*, 286.

28. Zwingli, *Sixty-Seven Articles*, ed. Jackson, 111–17; *Exposition*, 246 (using Luke 9:1–11 and 10:1–16).

anticipated the polemicists by half a decade. In his polemic poem, he equated good citizenry with true belief, and Christian morality, and the righteousness of regulating society for the good of all by a singular authority representing all. The caesaropapism theme would occupy Henry VIII's polemicists in the 1530s; Bush was advocating for it in 1526.

In truth, Henry VIII gained doctrinal authority as well as disciplinary and administrative controls over the English Church to service a dynastic political agenda rather than English spiritual needs.²⁹ He was recognized by both Parliament and convocation as Supreme Head of the Church in England and as the source of all spiritual and temporal jurisdiction. He took into his hands control of the institutional apparatus—its judicial and financial offices, supervision, and the determination of correct doctrine—very much as ruling magistrates had throughout Germany and Switzerland, based on rational scriptural interpretations. Supremacy polemics and legislation in the 1530s therefore had the dual purpose of acknowledging existing English tradition while also establishing a firm basis in authentic source materials. The argument was that the king was not acting in an irrational manner; he was not aligning England with radicalism, nor was he being scripturally incorrect. Like the later English polemicists and the earlier Continental reformers, Bush would make obedience (submission) based on Scripture, sacred history, and other authentic sources the starting point to the recovery of genuine Christian society, as noted ("Hystoris autentycall of the testament olde / And some presydenes of the new necessary to beholde").

There can be no doubt whatsoever that as a result of close spiritual arrangements with the papacy, informal controls over meetings of convocation, legislative blocks (e.g., *Praemunire*) against foreign authorities, or through just plain friendly relations, the kings of England had massive influence, *de facto* if not *de iure*, over the particular Church long before the mid-1530s, and that, in many ways, Henry VIII simply carried on where his predecessors left off.³⁰ "By the ordinance and sufferance of God, we are king of England, and kings of England in time past have never had any superior but God only."³¹ This is the most famous expression of Henry's position on royal sovereignty, and it neatly

29. Elton, *Reformation Europe*, 226–50.

30. Eppley, *Defending Royal Supremacy*, 5.

31. Quoted in Ogle, *Tragedy*, 152–53.

sums up the reality of his situation. The example of the captured French city of Tournai allows us to see theory being put into practice.

When English forces occupied Tournai in 1513, Henry isolated the clergy from French ecclesiastical patronage networks:

[W]e having the supreme power as lord and king in the regalie of Tournai without recognition of any superior owe of right to have the homage fealty and oath of fidelity as well of the said pretended bishop by reason of his temporalities which he holdeth of us as of other within the precincts of the same territory.³²

Henry recognized no superior authorities in any of his territories save God, and he expected to be obeyed by all his subjects, lay or clerical, foreign or domestic, based on his God-given authority over the institutions of both Church and State. As a result of rising tensions in the wake of the divorce campaign as well as increasing religious radicalism, obedience arguments based on authentic sources were seen as a means of reassuring the literate public and of capping a potentially explosive situation.

Tyndale's *The Obedience of a Christian Man* (1528) has been used as a kind of starting point to the Henrician effort, and not without good reason.³³ Royal scholars extracted out of it what was useful and discarded what was deemed too radical for English ears. Jack Scarisbrick has noted that as a "thorough-going apologia of Caesaropapism" it was greatly influential,³⁴ and, indeed, the king was so pleased with what he read that he famously declared it to be "a book for me and for all kings to read."³⁵ Scarisbrick noted that, for Henry, Tyndale's work was a "sweeping assertion of the rights and duties of princes and their claim to the undivided allegiance, body and soul, of their subjects,"³⁶ but the king rejected a range of subsequent evangelical theologies (including *sola*

32. Public Records Office, State Papers 1/13, fol. 127v; British Library, Cottonian MSS. Vit. B iii, fol. 122v, quoted in Mayer, "On the Road to 1534," 21.

33. For a copy of Tyndale's text, see <http://www.godrules.net/library/tyndale/19tyndale7.htm>.

34. Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII*, 247.

35. Quoted in Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials*, 1:172.

36. Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII*, 287.

fideism) advocated in the same book.³⁷ The emphasis was obedience based on Scripture—the Fourth Commandment of the Decalogue, for instance, extends the honouring of parents to all authority figures—or Paul's exhortation at Romans 13:1.

In essence, kings were placed by God into positions of authority and given the temporal sword for a reason—to protect the good and punish the wicked—but where Luther or Zwingli reasoned that government was necessary due to the Fall (as not everyone could act in a genuinely Christian fashion), Tyndale reasoned that government had been constituted before the Fall in the natural hierarchical structure of the intended family unit. The father sees to the health and prosperity of the whole while counting on the obedience of subordinate members. Tyndale expanded the terms outward and upward from this, providing what the king was already convinced of by scriptural proof.³⁸ In his *Extripacion of Ignorancy*, Bush simply balanced obedience with a royal duty to safeguard subjects:

O what treasour it is and synguler aveyle
Whan princes be gyven to vertue and goodnesse
Their owne fautes to beholde & them to bewayle
Their soules to redeme out of wrethednesse
Thys poynt most chefely belongeth doutlesse
To every good prince endles paynes revolvyng
Wherfore attende my wordes & pondre my sayeng.

Regem honorificate.

The next poynt also that a prince valyaunt
Ought to bere in mynde bothe in welthe & distresse
Is to be alwayes lyberall and in his dedes constaunt
His pore commens to love and them never to oppresse
Except necessite do instant his noble worthynesse
Ayde to requyre for his just tytles defendyng
Wherfore attende my wordes & pondre my sayeng.

Regem honorificate. (D1v, ll. 547–60)

37. See, for example, Elton, *Reform and Reformation*, 126; Haas, "Martin Luther's 'Divine Right' Kingship."

38. See Tyndale, *Obedience*, ed. Russell, 208–9, 212, 214.

From about 1531, the major policy initiative of the Henrician government was the spread of obedience doctrine—the king’s sovereign authority and the obedience due to the ruler based on God’s law (e.g., the Fourth Commandment). The king’s duty was to bring peace and prosperity to his realm. We have already noted the king’s efforts earlier. Drumming the divine precept of due obedience into the hearts and minds of the literate public was therefore deemed the most fruitful approach to solving the divorce dilemma and to dismantling papal authority in England. Domestic treatises of the period highlighted these issues—obedience to the king above all else was seen as a divine commandment.

In his *Supplication* of 1531 (later expanded), for instance, Robert Barnes employed Pauline and Petrine epistles to characterize temporal power as the basis of good order, as if without “kings, dukes, earls, lords, barons, judges, mayors and reeves” social order would simply disintegrate into chaos.³⁹ Thomas Swinnerton, in *A Litel Treatise ageynste the mutterynge of some papistis in corners* (1534), would marshal the same scriptural evidence, equating obedience to the king with the fulfilment of divine law.⁴⁰ What a crime it would be, he warned, to deny God’s law now that we are fully aware of it and turn away from the king (who was for Swinnerton no less than a godsend, a saviour sent to restore the realm to good order and ensure Christian liberty).⁴¹ Thomas Starkey, in his *An Exhortation to the People Instructing Them to Unity and Obedience* (c. September 1535), built upon earlier themes and asserted that the temporal sword must be respected as, without it, the masses would suffer both social and moral confusion. For him, obedience was both a political and a spiritual duty.⁴² As we shall see, Bush employed this theme a decade earlier. In the same year as Starkey, in his *De vera obedientia* (Oration of true obedience), Stephen Gardiner, the Bishop of Winchester and a future opponent of Bush’s, called obedience the highest necessary good work (giving good works salvific value). Again, here is what Bush wrote a decade earlier:

Whan these worthy governors armed with prudence
Had governed thus the worlde a long tyme & date

39. Barnes, *Supplication*, ed. Parker, 629.

40. Here I have used the version of Swinnerton’s *Litel Treatise* found in Nicholas Pocock’s *Records of the Reformation*, 2:539–52.

41. Pocock, *Records of the Reformation*, 2:550–51. See also Rück, “Patriotic Tendencies,” 6–7.

42. For additional Tyndale-related material, see Greaves, “Concepts of Political Obedience,” 24.

It was thought more convenyent for the commens defence
One heed and ruler to governe and the principate
Therefore as people discrete in one mynde confederat
They chose them a ruler and name hym a kyng
Wherefore attende my wordes & pondre my sayeng.

Regem honorificate

This kyng our soverayne we ought to honour
And have in reputacion as the myrrour of chivalry
In whole magnanimite resteth our trust & tresour
All tymes and seasons to suffult our bale & misery
As a capten valeaunt rulyng by wytte and policy
His subjectes transgressours straitly punisshyng
Wherefore attende my wordes & pondre my sayeng.

Regem honorificate. (C4, ll. 463–76)

Gardiner further interpreted obedience as akin to keeping the Ten Commandments and assigned it a place of central importance in the spiritual lives of Christians. Therefore,

to obey truly is nothing else but to obey unto the truth. And God is the truth (as scripture records) [...] and in so doing [...] shall also bring forth the fruits of true obedience. [...] For albeit God in the old law, when he had determined in slain sacrifices and offerings to shadow and signify his own sincere and pure service and honour (which the true worshippers should do now in spirit and truth) and for that cause gave strict commandment that those slain sacrifices and oblations should be had in high honour and devotion to show how much more clearly he esteemed obedience, he had manifestly declared in many places of the scriptures that he sets more by obedience than by all oblations and sacrifices.⁴³

These are simply pleas for obedience as pleasing to God. For Gardiner, that was the very point Paul was making when he explained to the Romans that faith required obedience. Obedience to God, to the laws of God, was the highest service to be rendered, but

43. Gardiner, *Oration of True Obedience*, ed. and trans. Janelle, 73–75.

to obey both him and all them whom God commanded him to obey for his sake [...] substantial men who being put in authority as his vicegerents should require obedience which we must do unto them with no less fruit for God's sake than we should do it (whatever honour soever it were) immediately unto God himself.⁴⁴

Obedience was the key to safeguarding the realm in the mid-1530s, just as it had been the key for Bush to righting the realm after the disturbances of the mid-1520s.

What turned the world upside down? Of all the possible explanations for the contemporary upheaval, Bush singled out bad leadership from the aristocrats, clergy, and all other influencers. When considering who or what had riled up the tax rebels, for example, the answer was those who "Thinke no workes good except they in special / Smacke of Uenus lustes filthy and brutall" (D4, ll. 34–35). These include the "wandring mynstrell," the "rusty coke," the "iester," the "rayler," and the "barbaryke rurall / Or of any suche other knowyng no letter in boke / The trouthe to say nat an A from a fysshe-hoke / And after myne opinyon it is greatly vnsyttyng / That suche shulde haue suche maters in handling" (A4v, ll. 93–98). These are the "villayns" who have no shame; they "Dispyce all pastymes honest and morall / Unclenly thoughtes dothe them so enflame" (D3v, ll. 22–24). Such rascals have led the people into "ignorance and blynde ingrattyte" (B6, l. 264). Bush saw the rebels acting with "ingrattyte and folly," their "demeaner all croked and contrary," having been seduced by "vyce" (A3, ll. 11–14). And, so seduced, good order was thrust aside:

Manyfolde presyidentes reduce we may to memory
 Cotidially shewed of mannes vnstable dotage
 Waueryng as the wynde laboring right busely
 For honour and worship as one of hye lineage
 Clyming so hye that forgotten is their parentage
 Ye god and his prince and hym-selfe also
 Whiche after subuerteth his state to sorowe and wo. (A4, ll. 64–70)

Sensuality ("brutall sensualityte") had replaced sensibility and had turned "vertue to vice" (3Bv, ll. 129–30).

44. Gardiner, *Oration of True Obedience*, 87–88, 105.

One of the greatest problems, however, linked with the suggestion of radical religious change, was that “Christ is nat dradde ne feared at all [...] Sette on fyre” (A3, ll. 21, 23). The malcontents discounted royal government as “vnworthy and vnable” (B3v, l. 128). All this had led to an inversion of the natural order:

If our prince were nat order were there none
For euery man wolde rule and play the lorde
And than shulde the pore man bothe grudge and grone
Kept vnder bondage as dogge vnder
Where is no soueraine there reigneth inconuenyence
As fraude gyle and extorcion with many other offence
So that all-togiders ronneth to the deuyll hedlyng.
Wherfore attende my wordes & pondre my sayeng.
Regem honorificate. (C4v, ll. 491–97)

This echoes the Amicable Grant proclamation in that if nothing can be counted on, there can be no surety.

Beholde what inconvenience commenly dothe ensue
Where reigneth inobedience debate and discencion
Beholde also agayne where people be untrue
Nowe their offspringes be put under subjection
To day a lorde and a man of great possession
And to morowe scant worthe a poore sely fardyng
Wherfore attende my wordes & pondre my sayeng.
Regem honorificate. (D2v, ll. 610–16)

In other words, a mere illusion of nobility has been planted, augmented by the clergies’ inability to shepherd the wayward flock effectively. The result was there for all to see in contemporary Germany:

Lykewise beholde what utterly distruction
Hath comen of rebellyon and wylfull conspiracy
Is it nat plainly lefte in discription
Nowe by suche meanes monasteries right worthy

Hath ben destroyed and contaminate uncomely
 Yet doutlesse: it appereth playne in writyng
 Wherefore attende my wordes & pondre my sayeng.

Also howe many noble cyties castels & townes
 Hath ben subverted and made wayes playne
 By violent force and marciall showres
 The goodes dispoyled the governours slayne
 Their wyves and doughters defloured certayne
 This for rebellion hath ben sene without fayning
 Wherefore attende my wordes & pondre my sayeng.
 Regem honorificate. (D2r–D3, ll. 617–30)

Bush challenged the clergy and nobility to sort out their houses, support the grant, and recognize the king as a bulwark for the people against abusive practices:

Wolde our maisters trowe ye bothe spirituall & temporall
 Feare as they do: their lyves to contamynate
 With maners uncomely by suggestions infernall
 Hyndring their honour and hurtyng their estate
 Were it nat for their prince to whom they be subjugate
 Doutlesse no: The more pytie without fayning
 Wherefore attende my wordes & pondre my sayeng.
 Regem honorificate.

Reason wolde be so blinded by ambicion verily
 Were it nat for drede of our prince and soverayne
 That be simony execrable holy churches patrimont
 Shulde be bought & solde as it is knowen playne
 More common than the oxe vyle and mundayne
 Whiche is solde in markettes for great wyning
 Wherefore attende my wordes & pondre my sayeng.
 Regem honorificate. (D1, ll. 519–32)

Anticlericalism was a great source of social and spiritual tension in early modern Europe, and the poet singled out the selling of offices (i.e., simony) as

a principal cause of the loss of respect for the Church. With no dominant ruler safeguarding the Church, wanton secularization of Church property led to the destruction of social norms and to the breakdown of political authority. As a result, the world had been turned upside down. The solution to the problem lay in the poet's proof text, 1 Peter 2:17 (together with Romans 13, providing him a treatise on civic duty). The body of the poem, and ultimately the solution to the plethora of contemporary problems, was structured on its three commands: fear God, obey God, honour the king.

The poet now takes on the guise of teacher. Written in the margin before sig. B1v is "Venite filij audite me, timorem domini docebo [u]os. Psalmo xxxiiij" (Come, listen to me my children, and I will teach you the fear of God. Psalm 34). To drive the message home, "Deum timete" (fear God) is written between every stanza in this portion of the poem (although once the wording is "Deum timete et diligite" [fear and love God]). This small phrase has a world of understood meanings, from carefully nuanced emotions such as fear, terror, anguish, and horror to loyalty and reverence to God, obedience to His laws, respect for the covenant, necessary chastisement, and the resisting of evil. Fear and dread become positive responses leading to peace, contentment, and delight, strengthening general good, social justice, longevity, security, righteousness, and the prevention of sin. In the absence of fear or dread (as appears to be the case in the mid-1520s) one finds war, idolatry, clerical abuses, and impious living. Bush demonstrated the point with illustrations of cause and consequence to enlighten and reinforce the points made in the Amicable Grant proclamation.

He contrasted, for example, the prophet Elisha, who feared God, with King Nebuchadnezzar, who did not (at least not initially). Bush asks, "why was Eliseus the prophet endued with such virtue" (B3v, l. 113) and "what caused Nabugodonosor a kyng of gret fame / to fall from his regall state to lead a life brutall?" (B3v, ll. 120–21). Elisha had such faith "as to restore the deed to lyfe agayne" (B3v, l. 114). Details of his miraculous works can be found throughout 2 Kings 4:1–13:20, and the list is impressive. Because of his great virtue and moral life, he had the power not only to increase the volume of life-giving oil, appeal to God to bless a barren woman with a child, resurrect the dead, purify food, and spread the faith, but he could also befuddle and blind soldiers, know the intent of messengers, cure disease, and persuade the abandonment of rival gods.

By way of contrast, Nebuchadnezzar was brought low—"to fall from his regall state to lede a lyfe brutall / Lyveng by hey & grasse in wofull misery & shame" (B3v, ll. 121–22)—through his arrogance and unwillingness to acknowledge and fear God. The scriptural details (in the Book of Daniel) showcase the destroyer of Jerusalem and disperser of the Jews of Judah brought low through fatal flaws in his character. Although he treated temple relics with respect, despite repeated warnings from Daniel (e.g., Daniel 2 or 4:10–17), Nebuchadnezzar's pride, arrogance, blasphemy, gluttony, and sexual misconduct led to insanity, exile, and a life of bestiality. Such humiliations, however, did finally bring about genuine penitence and restoration. This cautionary tale would be familiar to scholars through the works of Chaucer (in "The Monk's Tale" and "The Parson's Tale") and the *Confessio Amantis* (Lover's confession) of John Gower.⁴⁵ But Bush went further, stacking illustration upon illustration—Adam, Noah, Abraham, Gideon, David, and Solomon, to name but a few—so the point could not be missed.⁴⁶

In a work dedicated to a princess, references to Ruth made for a particularly fine illustration of the theme and purpose of the poem:

O holy Ruth a woman though thou were
 And made of nature frayle as all women be
 Yet example arte thou as plainly dothe appere
 To all me for thy mekenesse and hye humylite
 For in the raigned no suche mutabylite
 But vertue and goodnesse god alwayes fearyng
 Wherefore attende my wordes & pondre my sayeng.
 Deum timete. (B2v, ll. 78–84)

Ruth, the great-grandmother of David and therefore a distance ancestor of Joseph (the husband of Mary and the nominal father of Jesus), was a model Christian (predating Christendom), appropriately meek and humble but with great reserves of inner strength. Her mindset was always external, looking to the welfare of others. The hand of God can be seen at work through her; Ruth was clearly brought into the community to serve providence. She became a microcosm of ethical, moral behaviour, and, because she had these virtues, the

45. See Martin, "Nebuchadnezzar," 92; Jeffrey, *Dictionary*, 544.

46. Bush, *Extripacion*, B1v l. 22–B5 l. 199.

community itself benefitted greatly. But the story of Ruth is also one of God providing for the needs of His people. They needed new leadership—that is, the Davidic dynasty—and God would eventually bring this to pass. The people around Ruth held on to their faith; they upheld the covenant even without evidence (e.g., Psalms) of the divine in their lives; no miracles were performed by Ruth, she had no visions, and she heard no voices. She simply reacted to the situation (e.g., Naomi's need for an heir to her deceased husband) and did the right thing for no other reason than that it was the right thing. The life of Ruth is therefore an ideal model for Bush as an illustration of royal motivations: God is involved in all aspects of life, from the great to the mundane, but it is up to the people to uphold their obligations and duties and live accordingly.⁴⁷

This was hardly an exhaustive recounting of Old Testament cases, but Bush also wanted to bring in perhaps better-known citations from the New Testament:

Many thousandes mo there be without dout
In the olde testment as we rede which devoutly
Lyved under godly feare who lyst to seke them out
Whole names and actes I purpose to omyt chefly
Bycause I entende to write now consequently
Of our newe patrons the merites also praysing
Wherefore attende my wordes & pondre my sayeng.
Deum timete. (B5, ll. 211–17)

The poet pursued the theme of spiritual vs. material existence, alluding chiefly to contemporary anticlerical criticism using Paul as a role model, praising his faith, labours, preaching, and writings as inspiration but without lapsing into hagiography. Paul became a useful baseline in that he despised worldly honours, wealth, and "pleasurs corporall" (B5, l. 220), maintaining no firm ties to any person or institution other than revelation. Following Paul is a brief litany of famous martyrs, confessors, and virgins. Many of these samples could have been taken verbatim out of the *Golden Legend* (or *Legenda aurea*), which was a well-known depository of saints' stories first printed in England by

47. See Sakenfeld, *Ruth*, 1–2; Hubbard, *Book of Ruth*, 1–2.

William Caxton in 1483, and which would have a ninth edition by 1527.⁴⁸ So, for example, Saints Stephen and Lawrence, Vincent of Saragossa, Pope Urban I (r. 222–230 CE), and Quiricus and Julietta (“Cyrike” and “Julyta” here) were all referenced for their perseverance in the face of prosecution (B5v, ll. 239–45), besides whom were untold hundreds of “holy confessors,” flagellants, and “perfyte virgyns pure and immaculate” (B5v-6, ll. 246, 251–54) to whom Bush could also have referenced were he not trying to be brief.

It was as obvious to early modern readers as it is to modern-day historians and theologians that “dreading God” is reactive (cause and effect). Leaving aside material concerns for the general good of the nation, however, is easy in theory but quite difficult in practice. Twenty-five stanzas (the second part of the polemic poem) take up a proactive approach. To love God (“Deum diligite” now appears between the stanzas)—including piety, obedience, and promotion of the common good—becomes the focus. Dread and love are both necessary:

But yet god thus to drede and nothing to love
 It were but labour tedious & scant merytorious
 For he that a place wyll purchase above
 Eternally to raigne in state most prosperous
 Must combyne drede with love ardent & amorous
 As two thynges necessary to one belongyng
 Wherefore attende my wordes & pondre my sayeng.

Deum viligite.

This love is so noble so hye and so excellent
 If it be pure voluntary fre and spontayne
 That to all vertues it is a spectacle evydent
 For nother drede nor yet obedience certayne
 May be acceptable unto god this is playne
 Except love be the origynall and the well spring.
 Wherefore attende my wordes & pondre my sayeng.

Deum viligite. (B6v, ll. 267–80)

Bush is here referencing cooperative grace, the theory of the *via moderna* school of thought that God looked so favourably upon those “doing what is in them to do” that He would reach down to pull their souls up to appropriate levels

48. Blake, *William Caxton*, 105, 108; Penninger, *William Caxton*, 135.

of righteousness.⁴⁹ As noted, Lutheran ideas were augmenting native English Lollard doctrines at the time, one of which was *sola fideism* (the idea that faith alone justifies the sinner). Contemporary figures such as Thomas More, Erasmus, and the king himself associated *sola fideism* with antinomianism. In essence, if the faithful are no longer bound by moral law, faith is stripped of a proactive element—the human element. It is important to Bush's position (and royal propaganda then and a decade later) that the proactive element be retained but here stripped of material concerns:

This love must be pure tangled with no welth mundain
But fixe on hym onely which of nought made all
Or els inordinate is our lawe this is playne
For what love is wrapped with affection carnall
It is nat good nor godly but beestly and brutall
And to people reasonable greatly discordyng
Wherefore attende my wordes & pondre my sayeng. (C1v, ll. 344–50)

Historians will note Bush's borrowings from Erasmus's *Handbook of the Christian Soldier* (1503). Erasmus held that contemporary religious practice (e.g., the Sacraments) was too focused on its material elements—the physical, sensual, external, and transitory aspects—rather than on the spiritual, interior, and mystical aspects that he personally favoured. He called for a reformation of all Church practices to eliminate the materialism. To be genuinely Christian, he thought, men need to think less of their material lives and more about genuine (i.e., altruistic) charity, after the example of Christ as the perfect moral standard. Bush reflected this and ascribed no real value to material rewards:

It is greatly uncomely unto us people mortall
To set our hertes on that whiche can nat remayne
For he that is prudent to mynde ofte wyll call
That suche faynt follyes shulde nat hym constraine
His maker to forget for thynges abjecte & vayne
But labour he shulde busely for his soule providing
Wherefore attende my wordes & pondre my sayeng.
Deum viligite.

49. McGrath, *Iustitia Dei*, 23.

What can the worlde promyse to the perpetually
 Sithe nothyng it hath that is perdurable
 But fraite with vanitees cowarde under pall
 Thy mynde to envolve with thoughtes damnable
 And thy soule to put to paynes intermynable
 This ever eschewyng thy lyfe mysghovernyng
 Wherefore attende my wordes & pondre my sayeng.
 Deum viligite. (C2, ll. 358–71)

This same message can be found in More's *Utopia* (1551) and in Erasmus's *Praise of Folly* (1549), both quite popular works at the time of Bush's writing but, of course, written in Latin. Such references suggest that Bush's intended audience was educated influencers.

As illustration of the claim that to be genuinely Christian, men need to think less of their material lives, Bush writes, "Whan people be enflamed with blindeambiciosite / Couetyng hye gouernage vnworthy and vnable / Than ruleth wyll and brutall sensuallite / So that vertue to vice must be seruysable" (B3v, ll. 127–30). Moreover, "If ye wyll optayne the euerlastyng beatitude / Beware of ignorance and blynde ingratitude" (B6, ll. 263–64), and "This endlesse blysse certayne is of suche valour / That it is impreciable no man can it bye / With golde ne syluer riches nor yet treasure" (C2v, ll. 400–402). The message is clear: if a man can put aside material concerns, paradise awaits him.

The poet repeatedly asks his readers to imagine this paradise, keeping the world to come before their eyes rather than focusing on the world that is. What is this paradise? It is eternal ("In this court angelicall reigneth no mortalityte") rather than transitory; there is no want ("No nede nor indigence but plente and habundaunce"); there is no imperfection ("No age decrepite infecte with infyrmyte"); there is perfect fellowship ("But helth welthe and peace without perturbatione / No bonde ne servitude"); it is beyond the description of the wisest men ("Salomans sapience that surmounted so hye"); and it is beyond mortal conceptions of beauty ("Nor Absalons beautie ut was prayseed in especiall"; C3, ll. 414–22). According to Bush, England could be such a paradise. This brings us to the all-important theme of righting the world again through submission to the king's rightful authority.

As Bush has it, paradise awaits those who react righteously to God's demands and proactively accept the burdens—"Vice utterly to repell & gostly

fortitude to renew" (B1, l. 126)—and the only way to achieve this is through submission. Submission was not widespread in contemporary England; the world was in uproar, turned upside down, and people were rioting in the streets against good order. The poet now takes up the final command of 1 Peter 2:17, "Honour the king" ("Regem honorificate" now sits between the stanzas), with Romans 13:1, "Omnis anima potestatibus sublimioribus subdita sit, quia non est potestas nisi a deo" (Let every soul be subject to the higher powers, because there is no power except from God), written in the margin and providing additional support for the conception of required duty—subject to king and king to subject. Obedience and submission on the one hand are met by discipline, shepherding, and guardianship on the other (as spelled out in the Amicable Grant proclamation). The subtext is the sheer weight of responsibility that sat on the king's shoulders and how his actions consequently determined the welfare of his nation. He is father figure, teacher, protector, and overlord, but he answers to God alone. His power is God's power, and his authority is thereby divine and irrefutable.

This message had been disseminated throughout the earlier portions of the poem alongside relevant history and morality lessons. For example, Bush claims that God established temporal powers not only to rule the world but to order it as well—"To people rude vertuous examples gyveng" (C3v, l. 454)—until such a time as one ruler could shoulder the burden of rule:

Whan these worthy governors armed with prudence
Had governed thus the worlde a long tyme & date
It was thought more convenyent for the commens defence
One heed and ruler to governe and the principate
Therefore as people discrete in one mynde confederat
They chose them a ruler and name hym a kyng
Wherfore attende my wordes & pondre my sayeng.
Regem honorificate. (C4, ll. 463–69)

The king, the sole ruler, is the exemplar of many ideals, and his burdens are extensive. Rulers "punissheth the felon who correcteth murder," they concern themselves with the affairs of the world, and they "kepeth our noble realme in peace and rest" (C4, ll. 479–80). Justice, equity, indeed the very order of God's

creation rests in the king's hands: "If our prince were nat order were there none / For every man wolde rule and play the lorde" (C4v, ll. 491–92).

For these and other reasons, the ancients wrote that it is the common duty of all Christians to fully cooperate with royal government:

Where is no heed the body deformed is
Farre out of shappe as wele by experyence
So in caselike thou canst nat contrary this
Where is no sovaine there reigneth inconvenyence
As fraude gyle & extorcion with many other offence
So that all togiders ronnet to the devyll hedlyng
Wherfore attende my wordes & pondre my sayeng.
Regem honorificate. (C4v, ll. 498–504)

This last stanza references Plato's famous body analogy from *Timaeus*.⁵⁰ Plato explained the universe as a body with the supreme creator as its head. In a similar fashion, a society, like an individual, must be hierarchical (with each part having a function) and ruled by reason (which only the head can provide).⁵¹ Erasmus also used this theme in his *Handbook of the Christian Soldier*. There, a king is portrayed as the heart of the body, as the father figure of the realm and the shepherd of the masses; he is the sun that illuminates, the eye that sees, the mind that reasons, and the "living portrayal of God."⁵² Following Plato and Erasmus, Bush's point is that without the unifying and governing influence of the ruler, order falls apart.

Bush also had an additional use in challenging the clergy to fall in line. The English clergymen had been grudgingly supportive of the Amicable Grant. Bush wants them to embrace it enthusiastically to set a good example. He reminds them that the king is a bulwark for the people against abusive practices:

Reason wolde be so blinded by ambicion verily
Were it nat for drede of our prince and soverayne
That be simony execrable holy churches patrimont

50. An English translation of this text can be found online at <http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/timaeus.html>.

51. Honohan, "Metaphors," 74.

52. Erasmus, *Adages*, trans. Phillips, 71. See also Dickens and Jones, *Erasmus the Reformer*, 66.

Shulde be bought & solde as it is knowen playne
More common than the oxe vyle and mundayne
Whiche is solde in markettes for great wyning
Wherfore attende my wordes & pondre my sayeng.
Regem honorificate. (D1, ll. 526–32)

The Church is not without blame in the present circumstance; anticlericalism was a clear, negative social phenomenon. Bush references simony (the selling of offices) specifically as an underlying problem. The clergy run the risk of losing the Church's patrimony. The secularization of church property was a growing trend at the time, thanks largely to recent events in Germany where the breakdown of authority had led to rampant, violently forced secularizations by the peasant mobs or "frontall enormytes" (D1, l. 536). Bush even warned of the wanton destruction of monasteries (see D1, ll. 519–20). The implication is that the clergy need to consider their positions very carefully and look to the king for protection and leadership.

Perhaps aimed at flattering Henry VIII's chivalric self-image, Bush employed the common trope of king as, at once, both Christian brother (fellow true believer) and superior lawgiver. Ideally where the king is both "than in their realmes most comunly do raigne / peace unyte and concorde without disdayne / so that every many joyeth of others well lyveng" (D1v, ll. 543–45). And, as the very model of such a ruler, Henry is a "treasour [...] gyven to vertue and goodnesse" (D1v, ll. 547–48), and he is "a prince valyaunt [...] lyberall [...] his dedes constaunt" (D1v, ll. 554–56). Of especial note is that "his pore comens to love and them never to oppresse / *Except necessite do instant his noble worthynesse / Ayde to requyre for his just tytles defending*" (D1, ll. 557–59; *emphasis*).⁵³

The poet expresses the notion that the prince is the impartial steward of the wealth of the realm and guarantor of the properties of his subjects, and, as such, he has the right to deploy that wealth and seize those properties as he sees fit and as circumstance warrants ("necessite" above).⁵⁴ Bush hammered home the message that Scripture is on the side of the good prince and obedience was the fulfilment of duty towards royal government. Good Christians pay taxes, "as Mathewe dothe us tell" (e.g., Matthew 17:27), subject themselves to the

53. The message here is that sometimes harsh measures are required.

54. Freyfogle, *Lands We Share*, 107; Burg, *World History*, 155.

By violent force and marciall showres
The goodes dispoyled the governours slayne
Their wyves and doughters defloured certayne
This for rebellion hath ben sene without fayning
Wherefore attende my wordes & pondre my sayeng.
Regem honorificate. (D2v–D3, ll. 610–30)

The rebellion took place abroad, but the lessons applied equally at home: "O noble Englande O worthy realme of fame [...] note well these presydenes & beare them in mynde" (D3, ll. 638–39). The English should bear witness to the madness of the German mob and recognize the unnatural state of current rebellion given England's own history: "And be true to thy prince contynuing thy good name / For in cronycles yet coude I never finde / That to thy worthy soverayn thou were unkynde / Whiche to the is great laude & also to god praying" (D3, ll. 640–43). The implication is that the king stands between order and chaos, and between the good and the wicked, protecting the former and punishing the latter, safeguarding both the laity and the Church, and that it was the subjects' (both laity and clergy) duty to recognize that their obedience, submission even, was an important bulwark against ruin. Indeed, the rewards, according to Bush, far outweigh the burdens:

I purpose by goodes grace and to lengar to tary
Repeting these foresaid wordes togider as they be
Feare you god love you god and also finally:
Honour your prince myrrour of all chivalry
And so shall ye purchase joye without endyng
The whiche god graunt us all at our departyng
Amen. (D3, ll. 646–51; my emphasis)

Bush made a compelling argument for what came to be known as caesaropapism. The thesis was at once traditional (biblical and philosophical) and innovative. He employed proven literary motifs and hooked on to them contemporary understandings of sacred history, political theory, and social reality. He deployed traditional religious doctrines, filtered through a particularly English lens, and drew upon royal policy (i.e., the Amicable Grant proclamation). Once it was clear that obedience/submission to the king was both

a divine duty and a guarantee of social stability, he was sure that the tensions of contemporary society—from the fraction-ridden court, to riotous peasants, to religious squabbles—would calm down and the world turned upside down would appropriately realign.

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