

“Synne and Sedition”: Peter Martyr Vermigli’s “Sermon concernynge the tyme of rebellion” in the Parker Library

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An autograph sermon by Peter Martyr Vermigli with Matthew Parker’s annotation “Sermo Petri Martir manu propria scripta in seditionem Devonensium” is included among the Reformation manuscripts in the Parker Library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. Preached at St. Paul’s (although not by Vermigli himself), the sermon constitutes a response to the popular uprising in Devon and other parts of the realm precipitated by the promulgation of the first Edwardine Act of Uniformity of 1549 with its prescription of the new vernacular liturgy of the Book of Common Prayer. Vermigli offers a measured response to the actions of both the rebels and the governing authorities based upon an appeal to the principles of an Augustinian political theology. All parties to the conflict—government, gentry, and commons—are found to be at fault and Vermigli proposes penance all round as the “remedie of all our plags.”

ON 21 JULY 1549, THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY according to the ecclesiastical calendar, and in the midst of a year of almost unprecedented civil disorder, Archbishop Thomas Cranmer entered St. Paul’s Cathedral accompanied by the lord mayor and aldermen of London. In the choir Cranmer preached a sermon dissecting the causes of, and proposed certain remedies for, the civil disorder which had gripped the realm since the promulgation of the new liturgy of the Book of Common Prayer.¹ The Privy Council had proclaimed martial law just three days previously in the face of open rebellion against the government in Norfolk, Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, and in parts of the West Country.² There had been

¹This event is described by Sir Charles Wriothesley in *A Chronicle of England during the reigns of the Tudors, from A.D. 1485 to 1559*, ed. W. D. Hamilton, from a transcript made early in the seventeenth century for the third Earl of Southampton (Westminster: Camden Society, 1875–77), 16–18. For another contemporary account, see *Chronicle of the Greyfriars of London*, ed. John Gough Nichols (London: Camden Society, 1852), 60: “the xxj day of the same monyth, the whyche was sonday, the byshoppe of Caunterbury came sodenly to Powlles, and there shoyd and made a narracyon of thoyys that dyd rysse in dyvers places within the realme, and what rebellyous they were and wolde take apone them to reforme thynges befor the lawe, and to take the kynges powre in honde.” The first Edwardine Book of Common Prayer was approved on 21 January 1549 with the passage by Parliament under King Edward VI: Act for Uniformity of Service and Administration of the Sacraments throughout the Realm, 2 & 3 Edward VI, cap. 1, *Statutes of the Realm*, c. 4:37–39.

²For a succinct description of the 1549 rebellions, see Anthony Fletcher and Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Tudor Rebellions* (Harlow: Longmans, 2004) and esp. 52–64 on the western rebellion. See also Francis Rose-Troup, *The Western Rebellion of 1549: An Account of the Insurrections in Devonshire and Cornwall against Religious Innovations in the Reign of Edward VI* (London: Smith, Elder, 1913), and Barrett L. Beer, *Rebellion and Riot: Popular Disorder in England during the reign of Edward VI* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1982).

various insurrections and disturbances in the west since the accession of Edward VI, notably in response to the unpopularity of William Body, lay archdeacon of Cornwall, formerly a close associate of Thomas Cromwell, and now agent of Protector Somerset's policy of religious reform.³ The passage of the Act of Uniformity early in 1549 heralded a decisive turning point in the course of the English Reformation.⁴ The act required that "after the feast of Pentecost next coming"—that is, 9 June 1549—the offices and sacraments of the Church of England be conducted according to the new vernacular rites in replacement of the old Latin liturgies and "in such order and form as is mentioned in the said book, and none other or otherwise."⁵ This profound alteration of public worship was not widely popular, and it aroused resentment particularly in Cornwall and parts of Devon where many of the people spoke little or no English. Enforcement of the new liturgy depended on the first Edwardine Act of Uniformity of 1549. "All and singular ministers in any cathedral or parish church or other place within this realm of England, Wales, Calais, and the marches of the same, or other the king's dominions, shall, from and after the feast of Pentecost next coming, be bound to say and use the Matins, Evensong, celebration of the Lord's Supper, commonly called the Mass, and administration of each of the sacraments, and all their common and open prayer, in such order and form as is mentioned in the same book, and none other or otherwise."⁶ On Whitmonday 1549, the day following the authorized change in the liturgy, the parishioners of Sampford Courtenay in Devon convinced the local priest to revert to the old ways: "we wil not receyve the newe servyce because it is but lyke a Christmas game."⁷ Justices arrived at the next service to enforce the change. An altercation at the service led to a proponent of the change (a William Hellyons) being run through with a pitchfork on the church steps. Gathering thousands of supporters, these religious traditionalists marched to Crediton and proceeded thence to lay siege to the city of Exeter to further their demands.

While economic oppression of the people by the gentry owing to the enclosure of the commons was of general and considerable concern, the formal demands of the rebels of Devon and Cornwall presented in a supplication to the king leave no doubt that the government's sweeping religious reforms played the primary role in fomenting the uprising.⁸ In direct opposition to the newly

³See I. Arthurson, "Fear and Loathing in West Cornwall: Seven New Letters on the 1548 Rising," *Journal of the Royal Institute of Cornwall*, n.s. 2, nos. 3.3 & 4 (2000): 68–96, esp. 70.

⁴Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, c. 1400–c. 1580* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992, 2005), 463–67.

⁵For a full account of the Edwardine religious reforms see Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Tudor Church Militant: Edward VI and the Protestant Reformation* (London: Allen Lane, Penguin, 1999).

⁶2 & 3 Edward VI, cap. 1, printed in *Documents of the English Reformation*, ed. Gerald Bray (Cambridge: J. Clarke, 1994).

⁷Only three copies of the western rebels' demands are known to have survived. See "The Articles of Us the Commoners of Devonshyre and Cornwall in Divers Campes by East and West of Excetor," in a rare tract titled *A Cope of a Letter*, in Rose-Troup, *Western Rebellion of 1549*, 222–23 and appendix K, 492–94.

⁸See "A Sermon concernynge the tyme of rebellion," Corpus Christi College, Cambridge (hereafter CCC), MS 102, no. 29, fols. 427, 453, 459. On the western rebellion, see Fletcher and MacCulloch, *Tudor Rebellions*, 52–64.

imposed religious settlement, the rebels insisted upon restoration of "the masse in Latten, as was before, and celebrated by the Pryest wythoute any man or woman communycatyng wyth hym" (art. 3); the hanging of the reserved sacrament "over the hyeghe aluter, and there to be worshypped as it was wount to be" (art. 4); communion "in one kynde" (art. 5); and "Images to be set up again in every church, and all other auncient olde Ceremonies used heretofore." Not until the final articles do the demands turn to more mundane concerns, for example, "that no Gentyelman shall have anye mo servantes then one to wayte upon hym excepte he maye dispende on hundreth marke land" (art. 13), or the restoration of abbey and chantry lands and endowments to the support of monastic communities (art. 14). In the face of open insurrection and the spilling of blood—the city of Exeter had been under siege since 2 July, and as many as four thousand are said to have died by the time the insurrection ceased—Thomas Cranmer composed a detailed written response to the western rebels' demands.⁹ He chose to launch his appeal for the restoration of order with a high-profile public sermon preached at St. Paul's in mid-July at the very height of the confrontation between government and people.¹⁰

Most significantly, the sermon was not of Cranmer's own composition. It was rather the work of his close associate and theological mentor Peter Martyr Vermigli, recently appointed Regius Professor of Divinity in the University of Oxford and canon of Christ Church.¹¹ Cranmer had recently invited Vermigli to take up this prestigious royal appointment at the handsome annual salary of 40 marks. At the time of the West Country Rebellion Vermigli was already embroiled in a heated disputation on the sacrament of the Eucharist as a consequence of his inau-

⁹Thomas Cranmer's response to these articles is found in CCCC, MS 102, no. 28, fol. 337, reprinted in *The Remains of Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury*, ed. Henry Jenkins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1833), 202–44. For a contemporary account of the siege of Exeter see *The description of the cittie of Excester, collected and gathered by John Vowel alias Hooker, gentelman and chamberlain of the same cittie* (London: John Alde, 1575), fols. 51v–52r. John Hooker was Member of Parliament for Exeter and was uncle to Richard Hooker the divine.

¹⁰Charles Wriothesley draws attention to the solemnity of the occasion. See *Chronicle of England*, ed. Hamilton, 16: "The one and twentieth daie of Julie, the sixth daie after Trinitie soundaie, the Archbischopp of Canterburie came to Poules, and their in the quire after mattens in a cope with an aulbe under it, and his crosse borne afore him with two priestes of Poules for deakin and sub-deacon with aulbles and tuniceles, the deane of Poules followinge him in his surples, came into the quire, my lord Maior with most part of the aldermen sitting there with him. And after certaine assembly of people gathered into the quire the said Bischopp made a certaine exhortation to the people to pray to almighty God for his grace and mercy to be shewed unto us."

¹¹Vermigli succeeded Richard Smith as Regius Professor of Divinity in March 1548. Mark Taplin, "Pietro Martire Vermigli," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (hereafter ODNB). See Philip M. J. McNair, "Peter Martyr in England," in *Peter Martyr Vermigli and Italian Reform*, ed. Joseph C. McLelland (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1980), 85–105, and William M. Jones, "Uses of Foreigners in the Church of Edward VI," *Numen* 6, no. 2 (1959): 142–53. A crucial result of this controversy was the publication of his celebrated treatise on eucharistic theology which was to become the theological foundation for the revision of the liturgy in the Second Prayer Book of 1552. See Peter Martyr Vermigli, *Tractatio de sacramento eucharistiae* (London: Ad Aeneum Serpentem, 1549).

gural lectures in the Oxford Divinity School on Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians; and, on the basis of his thoroughly evangelical formulation of eucharistic doctrine, he was soon to be engaged in advising Cranmer on a revision of the liturgy of 1549 in a more thoroughly reformed direction.¹² One of the chief fruits of these lectures would be the revised Book of Common Prayer of 1552.¹³ Josiah Simler relates that "not long after this disputation the Commons of Devonshire and Oxfordshire raised a Commotion, wherein death was threatened unto many, but namelie unto Martyr. When he could not nowe teache no nor remaine without daunger in the Citie [of Oxford], he by the assistance of his friendes was safelie conducted to London" and there resided with Cranmer at Lambeth Palace.¹⁴ Thus, Vermigli was actually dwelling under Cranmer's roof at the very time the sermon in question was preached at St. Paul's.

According to Charles Wriothesley's brief account of the event in his *Chronicle of England*, the sermon likened the insurrection of 1549 to a

great plague of God reigning ouer us . . . for our great sins and neglecting his worde and commandments, which plage is the commotion of the people in most parts of this realme now raigning among us specially against Godes commandente and the true obedience to our most Christen King Edward the sixt, naturall, christian [i.e. by natural and divine law] and supream head of this realme of Englande and other his domynions, which plage of sedition and divicion among ourselues is the greatest plage, and not like heard of since the passion of Christ.¹⁵

Cranmer proceeds to exhort his audience that the plague of sedition was instigated "by the Devill for our miserable sinnes and trespasses in that we have shewed us to be the professors and diligent hearers of his worde by his true preachers and our lives not amended," and concludes with a solemn admonition that the situation could be remedied and order restored only through penitential acts of fasting and prayer.¹⁶ Although brief, Wriothesley's description of Cranmer's public preaching on the rebellion at St. Paul's is sufficiently specific with respect to both theme and

¹²Jennifer Loach, "Reformation Controversies," in *The History of the University of Oxford*, vol. 3, *The Collegiate University*, ed. James McConica (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 368–75. See the introduction to Peter Martyr Vermigli, *The Oxford Treatise and Disputation on the Eucharist 1549*, ed. and trans. Joseph C. McLelland (Kirkville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2000).

¹³On Vermigli's collaboration with Cranmer on the revision of the doctrine of the Eucharist and the liturgy of the Prayer Book, see J. C. McLelland, "The Second Book of Common Prayer," in his *The Visible Words of God: An Exposition of the Sacramental Theology of Peter Martyr Vermigli* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1957), 28–40.

¹⁴Josiah Simler, *An Oration of the life and death of that worthe man and excellent Divine d. Peter Martyr Vermillius, professor of Diuinitie in the schoole of Zuricke*, in *Vermigli's Common Places* (London: John Day, 1583), sig. 2Q2v.

¹⁵Wriothesley, *Chronicle of England*, ed. Hamilton, 17–18.

¹⁶For example, compare Wriothesley's report that "we have shewed ourselves . . . diligent hearers of his word . . . our lives not amended" (*Chronicle*, 17) with the text of the sermon itself: "The generall cause of these commotions is synne, and under christian profession unchristian lving" (CCCC, MS 102, no. 29, fol. 415).

argument to allow virtually certain identification with a manuscript in the collection of the Parker Library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.¹⁷ The text of the manuscript sermon follows the same tripartite structure: it compares the insurrection to a "plag," attributes its cause to "synne" and "unchristian lyvyng," and proposes finally that "the remedie of al our plags is onely penaunce."¹⁸ Gilbert Burnet was the first historian of the Reformation to make the connection between Cranmer's public preaching on the Rebellion and the Parker Library manuscript; he alleges, moreover, to have seen the sermon in Cranmer's own hand in the library of Corpus Christi.¹⁹ This proves to have been something of an exaggerated claim. While several marginal headings of the main divisions of the argument, as well as some emendations to the text together with a lengthy prayer appended to the manuscript, are in Cranmer's own distinctive script, the bulk of the manuscript is in an unknown secretary hand.

In another reference to the same sermon, John Strype maintains that Cranmer appointed a solemn day of fasting consequent to the outbreak of civil insurrection. Furthermore, the archbishop directed that officially sanctioned homilies be written and read in church by curates in order "to preserve [the people] in their obedience, and to set out the evil and mischief of the present disturbances."²⁰ Strype proposes that the manuscript of "A sermon concernynge the tyme of Rebellion" itself may have been composed for such general public use although there is no evidence of the work's having been employed in this way.²¹

Following Burnet's and Strype's lead, Henry Jenkyns included the sermon in the second volume of his edition of Cranmer's works, published in 1833.²² Jenkyns expresses doubt about the authenticity of Cranmer's authorship. In particular, he draws attention to a fact hitherto (and quite astonishingly) ignored, that is, Matthew Parker's epigraph "hic sermo prius descriptus Latine a Petro Martyre."²³ The epigraph links the sermon to another Latin manuscript in the collection identified by Parker as Vermigli's autograph. Nonetheless, Jenkyns asserts that "far

¹⁷A manuscript translated from the Latin of Peter Martyr in the collection of the Parker Library, CCCC, MS 102, no. 29, fols. 411–99. The title of MS is on fol. 409; text begins on fol. 411. See Montague Rhodes James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1912), vol. 1, no. 102.

¹⁸"A Sermon concernynge the tyme of rebellion," fols. 418, 424, 485.

¹⁹*The History of the Reformation in England*, ed. E. Nares (London: Dove, 1830), 2:244.

²⁰*Memorials of the most reverend father in God Thomas Cranmer, sometime lord archbishop of Canterbury* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1812), 187.

²¹It is perhaps remotely possible that Strype may have confused this sermon with "A homily against strife and contention," *Certaine sermons, or Homelies: Appoynted by the Kynges Maiestie, to bee declared and redde, by all persons, vicars, or curates, euery Sondaye in their churches, where they haue cure* (London: R. Grafton, 1547), STC 13675, sermon 12.

²²*Remains of Thomas Cranmer*, ed. Jenkyns, 248–73.

²³The Latin sermon with Parker's annotation "Sermo Petri Martir manu propria scripta in seditionem Devonensium" (fol. 73) is part of the same collection, MS 340, no. 4, fols. 73–95. See James, *Descriptive Catalogue*, vol. 2, no. 340. Referring to English version, Jenkyns remarks, "although this sermon has been placed among Cranmer's works, his claim to it is not indisputable." *Cranmer*, ed. Jenkyns, 248.

from being only a translation of the Latin Sermon," the manuscript of "A sermon concernynge the tyme of rebellion" is only loosely based upon the manuscript of the Latin sermon in Vermigli's hand to which the epigraph refers. Thus according to Jenkyns, Cranmer composed an English sermon roughly "based on materials in Latin" prepared by Vermigli.²⁴ Following Jenkyns, Edmund Cox, editor of the Parker Society edition of Cranmer's *Works*, defends Cranmer's authorship of the sermon and observes by way of confirmation that the piece follows a series of topics and various scriptural and historical examples of sedition roughly sketched out by Cranmer in another set of autograph notes.²⁵ Cox repeats Jenkyns's remarks about the addition of significant new material in the English version of the sermon, and he concludes by taking the question of Cranmer's substantive authorship of the sermon as settled.²⁶

On close inspection of the Latin sermon bearing Parker's epigraph "Sermo Petri Martir manu propria scripta in seditionem Devonensium"—also in the collection of the Parker Library—and comparing it with other examples of Vermigli's autograph, there can be no doubt that this manuscript is indeed Vermigli's own.²⁷ Matthew Parker may have made some egregious errors in the identification and dating of some of the early manuscripts in his vast collection, but he is certainly reliable when it comes to his own contemporaries.²⁸ Moreover, careful collation of the Latin and English versions of the sermon shows that the nineteenth-century editors of Cranmer's works (Jenkyns and Cox) were mistaken in their insistence (based on Burnet's original claim) that the English sermon is substantively Cranmer's own composition.²⁹ The English text is a close line-by-line translation of Vermigli's original and indeed renders the text of the Latin sermon faithfully and in its entirety. There are approximately four and half folios of the expansive secretary hand in the translation for each folio of Vermigli's much more compact italic Latin. While the English version of the sermon has a small amount of interpolated material, this is largely confined to the addition of short phrases and minor aesthetic revisions to the translation, the occasional reworking of the syntax (doubtless principally for rhetorical effect), with the addition of a concluding collect and

²⁴Jenkyns states, "In some parts long passages are omitted, in others much new matter is added.... It may be observed also, that both the Latin and the English Sermons contain the same topics and examples as the rough Notes by the Archbishop which are printed above. Perhaps therefore it may be reasonably conjectured, that Cranmer placed these brief notes in the hands of P. Martyr, to be expanded into a regular homily; and that afterwards, from the materials thus prepared in Latin, he drew up the English Sermon which follows." *Cranmer*, ed. Jenkyns, 248.

²⁵"Heads of a discourse against rebellion," CCCC, MS 102, no. 34, fols. 530–32.

²⁶*The Works of Thomas Cranmer*, ed. John Edmund Cox, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1844–46), 2:190.

²⁷For a published facsimile of Vermigli's hand matching the hand of the Latin text of the sermon see Johannes Ficker, *Handschriftenproben des sechzehnten Jahrhunderts nach Strassburger Originalen* (Strassburg: Karl J. Trübner, 1906), plate 28A.

²⁸Christopher de Hamel, "Archbishop Matthew Parker and His Imaginary Library of Archbishop Theodore of Canturbury," *Annual Report of the Executive Committee of the Friends of Lambeth Palace Library* (2002).

²⁹*Cranmer*, ed. Jenkyns, 248.

marginal headings, both in Cranmer's own hand. It would thus seem plausible to infer that these emendations to the text of the sermon and the prayer in Cranmer's autograph had misled Gilbert Burnet to assert Cranmer's authorship in the first instance, and that Jenkyns and Cox followed Burnet's lead in this reading of the evidence. Taken together, however, the additions in Cranmer's hand are quite negligible when compared to the overall length of the text.³⁰ In short, the public sermon preached by Cranmer at St. Paul's on 21 July 1549 proves to be substantively a close translation of Vermigli's autograph Latin text, exactly as Matthew Parker suggests in his epigraphs to the two manuscripts.

Nonetheless, received opinion continues to ascribe authorship of the sermon to Thomas Cranmer. G. E. Duffield reiterates this view of the matter in his 1964 Sutton Courtney edition of selected writings of the archbishop.³¹ Although the full text of the sermon is not included among his printed selections, Duffield discusses the manuscript and includes Cranmer's autograph, "Heads of a discourse against Rebellion," as evidence of his authorship.³² In his brief introduction to Cranmer's autograph "Notes on Rebellion, 1549," Duffield remarks, "Cranmer was much troubled by the revolts in 1549, and often preached against them. We know he used sermons by Peter Martyr and Martin Bucer in his own preparation."³³ In this manner, Duffield perpetuates the earlier view that Cranmer employed Vermigli's text as a resource of materials for the composition of his own homily rather than preaching a substantive translation of the Florentine's sermon. Since Cranmer's autograph "Heads of discourse against Rebellion" cover some of the principal topics included in the English sermon, at first glance they would appear to lend some support to the case for Cranmer's authorship. A recent biography of Vermigli in the new *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* reinforces the same view.³⁴

To add further intricacy to the question of attribution, there is yet another manuscript in the Parker collection containing another series of notes in Latin, in Vermigli's hand and bearing Matthew Parker's epigraph "Cogitationes Petri Martyris contra seditionem."³⁵ Like Cranmer's jottings, Vermigli's "cogitationes" also cover the main heads and examples set out in the sermon. The vexed question of whether Cranmer based his notes on Vermigli's, or vice versa, is difficult to determine. Cranmer's notes are somewhat more detailed than Vermigli's, and this fact may lend support to the view that Cranmer may well have been working from Vermigli's notes and expanding on them. Regardless of which set of notes may have preceded the other, it can be asserted with reasonable plausibility that the sermon Wriothesley describes Cranmer's having preached at St. Paul's in July 1549 was the

³⁰In the text of the sermon following, the additions of text in another hand and departures from the Latin original are given in square brackets.

³¹G. E. Duffield, *The Work of Thomas Cranmer* (Appleford, UK: Sutton Courtenay, 1964), 221.

³²CCCC, MS 102, no. 34, fols. 530–32. Matthew Parker's epigraph reads "Heads of a discourse against Rebellion." Duffield reprints "Heads" in *Work of Cranmer*, 241–44.

³³Duffield, *Work of Cranmer*, 221.

³⁴See Mark Taplin's recent biography of "Pietro Martire Vermigli, evangelical reformer" in the ODNB.

³⁵CCCC, MS 102, no. 31, fols. 509–11.

result of close collaboration with Peter Martyr, an inference reinforced by Simler's report that Vermigli was residing at Lambeth Palace at the time in question.³⁶ Indeed, this was neither the first nor the last time that Cranmer and Vermigli worked in partnership in matters of both high theological and political concern. Cranmer had already begun to work closely with Vermigli in the revision of his eucharistic theology, and the consequent revision of the 1549 liturgy which would culminate in the revised Book of Common Prayer of 1552 was also a joint endeavor.³⁷ Vermigli later contributed substantially to the work of the Royal Commission for the reformation of the canon law (*Reformatio legum ecclesiasticarum*).³⁸ So indeed it would appear quite natural that Cranmer should enlist Vermigli to contribute to the official pulpit campaign of response to the uprisings and thus to assist in the restoration of order within the commonwealth at large. The precise nature of the cooperation between Cranmer and Vermigli with respect to the "Sermon concernynge the tyme of rebellion," however, is in need of some reformulation. Received opinion emphasizes the significance of Vermigli's "Cogitationes" and maintains that Cranmer drew upon them as an ancillary resource for a sermon largely of his own composition. The textual evidence clearly shows, however, that the English version of the sermon is a complete line-for-line translation of Vermigli's Latin composition, with such minor alterations as the addition of a concluding prayer and topic headings. To conclude, then, while the existence of parallel sets of preparatory notes suggests a close collaboration between the two divines, Vermigli's Latin sermon can by no means be relegated to the status of a lumber room of materials made use of by Cranmer as has long been asserted. Rather, a full recognition of Vermigli's primary authorship of this highly significant political sermon is long overdue. The lack of such recognition is arguably symptomatic of a long-standing tendency of English Reformation historiography to downplay the central role played by continental reformers—such as Vermigli, Martin Bucer, and Heinrich Bullinger—in defining the religious settlement under Edward VI. As the author of the sermon, Vermigli played a decisive part as a political theologian in the dramatic public response to the 1549 rebellion, and in a manner consistent with his leading role in the revision of the eucharistic theology of the second Edwardine Book of Common Prayer (1552) and the reform of the canon law.

³⁶Josiah Simler, *Oration*, sig. 2Q2v.

³⁷J. C. McLelland, "The Second Book of Common Prayer," in *Visible Words of God*, 28–40.

³⁸*Reformatio legum ecclesiasticarum ex autoritate primum Regis Henrici. 8. inchoata: Deinde per Regem Edouardum 6. prouecta, adauctaq[ue] in hunc modum, atq[ue] nunc ad pleniorē ipsarum reformationem in lucem ædita* (London: John Day, 1571). For a critical edition, see Gerald Bray, ed., *Tudor Church Reform: The Henrician Canons of 1535 and the Reformatio legum ecclesiasticarum* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press for the Church of England Record Society, 2000). For a historical introduction to the work of the Royal Commission authorized to reform the canon law of England, see Bray, *Tudor Church Reform*, xli–cxvi.

ARGUMENT OF THE SERMON

Vermigli opens his sermon by comparing "the commen sorrow of this present tyme" to the example of Job "when he came to his extreme misery, lyving upon a dong hill."³⁹ Throughout, the sermon builds upon the trope of the "body politic" wherein Job personifies the body of the realm of England upon whom the rebellion as "the plague of God" is visited.⁴⁰ The anguish of this body/realm is "now so troubled, so vexed, so tossed, and deformed, and that by sedition among our selves, of such as be membres of the same, that nothing is lefte unattempted to the utter ruine and subversion therof."⁴¹ The grief moreover is such as can be bewailed "with teares rather than with wourdes" (fol. 411). The preacher thus invites those who would contemplate the "extreme mysery" of a kingdom racked by sedition to put themselves in the place of Job's three friends, Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite.⁴² In this fashion, the discourse aims to raise consideration of England's civil discord to the more universal level of theodicy: a divine justice is at work in these immediate political and social events, and the main task of the preacher of the divine word is to explain the ways of God to men.⁴³ Such an approach opens up a very distinctive vantage point—that of the political theologian. Vermigli proclaims as his chief goal that "out of holy scripture I may playnely sett out before your eyes the princypal causes of al these tumults and seditions" (fol. 415), and thereby to determine what personal, religious, and political remedies may be necessary. The structure of the sermon's argument thus follows an uncomplicated homiletical order: the general and primary cause of the rebellion is considered first, followed by an analysis of specific secondary causes related chiefly to the distinct interests of the principal antagonists, and concluding with a concerted proposal for the restoration of order in the commonwealth.

The summary heading of the first cause of the sedition currently "plaguing" the body politic comes, at least initially, as something of a surprise. Vermigli does not begin by criticizing the rebels as might have been expected of the official voice of the establishment, but rather draws attention to the "remisseness of correction in governours."⁴⁴ The sermon nonetheless refers habitually to the governors in the first person—and here the name of Protector Somerset looms large, though unspoken, while Vermigli and Cranmer, author and preacher, clearly identify themselves with the establishment—"We have been to[o] remise in ponysshing

³⁹A *Sermon concernynge the tyme of rebellion*, CCCC, MS 102, no. 34, fol. 411.

⁴⁰See David George Hale, *The Body Politic: A Political Metaphor in Renaissance English Literature* (The Hague: Mouton, 1971), and Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1957).

⁴¹*Tyme of rebellion*, fols. 412–13.

⁴²Job 2:11–13.

⁴³*Tyme of rebellion*, fol. 413: "the eternall punyshment of god threatenith sore to come upon us for thies seditions and without faile will fall ammonge us, except wee cease in tyme from our discorde, and amende the same by godlye concorde and godly repentaunce, so that wee be constrynd day and night to bewayle the decaye not only of a worldely kingdom, and moost noble realme, but also the eternall damnation of innumerable soules."

⁴⁴*Tyme of rebellion*, fol. 416.

offenders.”⁴⁵ Cranmer, of course, is a leading member of the Privy Council and, after the lord protector, the most influential public personage in the realm. Scripture—and predictably the first text appealed to here is the classical locus of Reformation political theology, Romans 13—makes plain that governors and rulers are “ordyened of god for the intent and purpose that they should be goddes officers and to punyshe and converte those that be evill.”⁴⁶ Government has signally failed in this purpose. Thus, the sermon is blunt in attributing the “prima causa” of rebellion to excessive leniency, a failure of the governors to fulfill their essential, divinely mandated role of punishing and converting the evil:

either thinking this clemency for the tyme expedient for the common wealthe, or els not duely waying how grevouse those offences [be in the sight of God] were and how much they offended god. And whilst wee lacked this right iudgement of goddes wrathe againste synne, loo, sodenly cometh upon us this scourge of sedition, the rodde of goddes wrathe, to teache us how sore god hateth all wickedness [and is displeased with his ministers that wynke thereat].⁴⁷

This unexpectedly frank criticism from a pillar of the establishment strikes at the very heart of Somerset's strategy and reveals something of the intricate dynamic of interplay among the rulers themselves as well as between rulers and the ruled.⁴⁸ Just as Job refuses to blame his sufferings on either external circumstance or divine injustice, but eventually comes to acknowledge his own finitude and shortcomings, so Vermigli aims not to mince words here, but to attribute civil disorder first and foremost (prima causa) to the government's own failure to fulfill its scripturally mandated function. In the current disorder of rebellion, the rulers should first recognize the cause in themselves, and not in the “other,” and that they are consequently recipients of a divine judgment upon their own inadequacy.

As it turns out, criticism of the policy and conduct of the head of the “body politic” was not an uncommon analysis of the situation among several prominent members of the governing establishment, and so Vermigli's diagnosis of the ills need not be interpreted as being quite so daring as may initially appear. In the aftermath of the rebellion, just two months after the preaching of this sermon, the lord protector fell from power, but not at the hands of the rebels. In October, the Privy Council accused Somerset of colluding with the rebels. They charged that he had “failed in speed repressing of them,” and “in time of rebellion he said that he

⁴⁵In the MS (fol. 417) Cranmer substitutes “remise” for the translator's “slacke.”

⁴⁶See Vermigli's *Epistolae S. Pauli Apostoli ad Romanos ... Commentarii* (Basel: P. Perna, 1558). See also W. J. Torrance Kirby, “The Civil Magistrate: Peter Martyr Vermigli's Commentary on Romans 13,” in *The Peter Martyr Reader*, ed. J. P. Donnelly, Frank James III, and Joseph C. McLelland (Kirkville, MO: Truman State University Press, 1999): 221–37.

⁴⁷*Tyme of rebellion*, fols. 417–18.

⁴⁸On the debate among historians concerning Edward Seymour's strategy in government, see Ethan H. Shagan, “Protector Somerset and the 1549 Rebellions: New Sources and New Perspectives,” *English Historical Review* 114, no. 455 (Feb. 1999): 34–63. See also M. L. Bush, *The Government Policy of Protector Somerset* (Montreal: McGill–Queen's University Press, 1975).

liked well the actions of the rebels, and that the avarice of gentlemen gave occasion for the people to rise, and that it was better for them to die than to perish for want."⁴⁹ In very conspicuous ways, the regime of Protector Somerset had announced its support for the rebels' claims. According to Ethan Shagan, "the protector's strategy involved an elaborate courting of public opinion and a stunning willingness to commit the regime to fundamental changes in policy at the initiation of the commons." Consequently, "we can see in Somerset's policy a novel mode of popularity-politics in the process of invention."⁵⁰ Briefly, the strategy of the protector was to foster an alliance between government and people by superseding the interests of the landed gentry. Vermigli calls into question precisely this strategy in the opening paragraphs of his sermon; thus he casts himself, together with Cranmer, in the prophetic role of speaking truth to power.

In a letter to Somerset dated 7 July 1549, exactly two weeks in advance of Cranmer's sermon, Sir William Paget had also taken direct aim at the protector's policy of clemency towards the rebels:

Mary, the King's subjects owt of all discipline, owt of obedience, caryng neither for Protectour nor Kings, and much lesse for any other meane officer. And what is the cause? Your owne levytie, your softnes, your opinion to be good to the pore. . . . Yt is pitie that your so muche gentlenes shuld be an occasion of so great an evell as ys now chaunced in England by these rebelles. . . . Consider, I beseeche youe most humbly, with all my harte, that societie in a realme dothe consiste, and ys maynteyned by meane of religion and law.⁵¹

It would appear from the argument of the sermon, then, that Vermigli and Cranmer, as author and preacher respectively, were party to a closing of ranks by the ruling elite, a maneuver leading to the exclusion of the king's uncle from power and resulting ultimately in his execution. In "lacking this right iudgement of goddes wrathe againste synne" Somerset had failed singularly in the foremost task of God's vicegerent, which Cranmer so cogently summarized in the recently promulgated liturgy of the Book of Common Prayer, namely, "truely and indifferently [to] minister justice, to the punishment of wickednes and vice, and to the mayntenance of God's true religion and vertue."⁵² On this point Cranmer, Vermigli, Paget, and ultimately the majority of the Privy Council could all agree. Nonetheless, Vermigli was to write a sympathetic and public letter of consolation to the

⁴⁹Gilbert Burnet, *History of the Reformation of the Church of England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1865), 5:284.

⁵⁰Shagan, "Protector Somerset and the 1549 Rebellions," 47.

⁵¹PRO, SP 10/8/4 (*Calendar of State Papers Domestic, Edward VI*, rev. ed., no. 301); Fletcher and MacCulloch, *Tudor Rebellions*, 160. Barrett L. Beer, ed., "A Critique of the Protectorate: An Unpublished Letter of Sir William Paget to the Duke of Somerset," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 34 (1971): 277-83.

⁵²*The First and Second Prayer Books of King Edward VI* (London: Dent, 1913; repr., 1999), 382.

duke subsequent to his fall from power.⁵³ Vermigli, however, goes more deeply into the matter and interprets the protector's fatal policy of leniency in the light of theodicy in the tradition of Aurelius Augustine.⁵⁴ Since the governance of subjects is "mediated" by the "powres ordeyned of god," the coercive power of governors and rulers also serves as the "remedium peccati" for ordinary sinners, while the coercive hand of the divine power alone acting in history serves as the divine remedy for the failure of princes.⁵⁵ God alone can take offense at the slackness of rulers and correct those who, according to scripture, are "immediately" under his divine appointment. It is therefore foremost owing to the sin of the appointed rulers, Vermigli argues, that "we suffer worthily this plague of god."⁵⁶ In this passage the "we" is somewhat ambivalent. On the one hand, it can represent the entire body politic, for whatever the head inflicts through its shortcomings the whole body suffers. On the other hand, the "we" might refer more exclusively to those few directly involved in government. Far from being able to cast the blame solely upon the rebels themselves, and thus self-righteously to see the government as the mere object of the plague of sedition, the rulers themselves, following the example of Job, must endeavor to shoulder blame in the case. "There is none righteous, no, not one" (Rom. 3:10).

Vermigli proceeds to confirm this theodicy of the rebellion by appealing to some biblical examples from the history of Israel, specifically to the sufferings of Eli and David for their failure to chastise their children, and the destruction of the tribe of Benjamin:

Consider I praye you by this example, how certayne and present destruction cometh to comon weales, because offendours against god are unponysshed. And whensoever the magistrates be slacke in doing their office herein, let them loke for none other but that the plague of god shall fall in their necks for the same, whiche thinge not only the foresaide examples, but also experiences with our selves dothe playnely teache us, for whensoever any member of our body is diseased or sore, yf wee suffer it long to contynue and fester, doo wee not see that at length it dothe infecte the whole body, and in processe of tyme utterly corrupteth the same.⁵⁷

The magistrates' defiance of the divine mandate to uphold justice by punishing violators of the law is the cause of plagues suffered both individually by the

⁵³ *An epistle vnto the right honorable and christian prince, the Duke of Somerset written vnto him in Latin, awhile after hys deliuerance out of trouble, by the famous clearke Doctour Peter Martyr, and translated into Englyshe by Thomas Norton* (Londo[n]: [N. Hill] for Gualter Lynne, 1550). On Vermigli's warm personal rapport with Somerset, see Bush, *Government Policy of Somerset*, 109–12.

⁵⁴ Augustine *De civitate Dei* 11.9; 12.6; 19.6

⁵⁵ See *Common Places*, trans. Anthony Marten (London: John Day, 1583), 4.17, fol. 282 (hereafter CP). For Augustine, war is frequently the "remedy for sin" in human history. *De civitate Dei* 19.12, 27.

⁵⁶ *Tyme of rebellion*, fol. 420.

⁵⁷ *Tyme of rebellion*, fols. 421–22.

"head" and collectively by the whole "body" of the realm. The magistrates, however, cannot be the sole scapegoats in this account of the sufferings of the body politic. In the current insurrection, the subordinate members as well as the head "have offended god, both hieghe and lowe."⁵⁸ The sermon makes clear that there are not just two principal antagonists involved in this drama, that is, government and people, but rather three: the Crown, the landed nobility and gentry, and the rebellious commons, together with a large body of innocent bystanders to be taken into account, not to mention menacing foreign powers.⁵⁹ Citing the example of Daniel in the time of Israel's exile and captivity in Babylon, Vermigli invites every man to search his own conscience: "let everyman confesse, and bewayle aswell his owne synnes, as the synnes of the heddes and rulers" (Dan. 9:1–19). He then makes his transition to a consideration of the principal secondary cause (*secunda causa*) of the rebellion which he takes to be the sin of covetousness (*avaritia*) on the part of both commons and gentry, "both hieghe and lowe." He classifies "synne" into distinct political and socioeconomic categories. Whereas the primary cause of the plague of rebellion is "synne," committed both by the ruling powers themselves and by those openly resisting their authority. Sin is thus interpreted in the political sense of disobedience towards the order ordained by God; the secondary cause concerns primarily social and economic considerations motivated by sin interpreted as "greedy desire, and as it were wourshipping of riches" on the part of the two main social classes. In the case of both the primary and the secondary causes, a divinely appointed order is disrupted—"bothe the highe and lowe parte being so much blynded have bronge our Realme to this poynte." The pursuit of private interests by both classes as well as failure of both in the proper exercise of their respective public duties (whether these be ruling or obeying) are the main causes of the disorder. Both the primary (political) and the secondary (economic) causes constitute disregard and disobedience towards a divinely constituted order and thus both are ultimately attributable to the condition of original sin, the universal cause.⁶⁰

Vermigli makes the traditional Tudor political theologian's appeal to the concepts of hierarchy, order, and degree: "every manne shulde be content with that state place and degree, that god the author of all good thinges, hath called hym unto."⁶¹ The argument for submission to authority has its prime exemplar in Christ's deference to the jurisdiction of Cæsar.⁶² Vermigli's critique is applied evenhandedly to both commons and gentry—on the one hand, to those who "muster them selves in unlawfull assemblies, and tumultes to the disorder and disquietness of the whole realme" and, on the other hand, to those "whiche through covetuousness of ioyning land to lande, and enclosures to enclosures have

⁵⁸*Tyme of rebellion*, fol. 423.

⁵⁹See *Tyme of rebellion*, fols. 434, 456.

⁶⁰*Tyme of rebellion*, fol. 424.

⁶¹*Tyme of rebellion*, fol. 426. Stephen Alford, *Kingship and Politics in the Reign of Edward VI* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 40–41.

⁶²See CP, 4.21, 328–31, "Of the enduring of Tyrannie by godlie men."

wronged and oppressed a great multitude of the kinges faithfull subiectes.”⁶³ Both classes narrowly pursue their own interests to the detriment of the health of the whole body of the realm, and yet both are in some fashion justified in their actions and in their rejection of the behavior of the other. Vermigli here attempts a subtle, dialectical analysis from the assumed standpoint of a divine justice transcending the finite, determinate interests of all the antagonists. On the foundation of a scripturally oriented theodicy, Vermigli attributes fault all round and addresses the entire suffering body politic like the voice of God to Job from the whirlwind: “where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth?” (Job 38:4). Since human nature is universally corrupted owing to the fall, justice cannot be found in the behavior of any of the estates. None can lay claim to righteous conduct. All display ignorance of godly religion; consequently, the actions of both gentry and commons are addressed in tandem because, as Vermigli puts it, “bothe of them be diseased with a like seekness.”⁶⁴ From the perspective of a reformed soteriology, all political and social order must first assume original sin on the part of all the agents: indeed the only safe assumption of the political theologian regarding the motivation of all classes is the radical and universal depravity of the fallen human condition.

According to Vermigli there is a demonic power at work in the stirring up of sedition and this is particularly evident in the “confusion” of interests and motivations on the part of the principal antagonists. The avaricious impulse of both commons and gentry stems from the common failure to recognize the essential finitude of human existence in the world, and hence of the inherent limitations of both duties towards and claims upon the body politic. Comparable to the case of the utopian Anabaptists in Leiden and Münster, there is evidence all round of a perverse desire to confound heaven and earth, “to confounde all thinges upsy downe with sediciouse uprores and unquieteness. . . .”⁶⁵ Adhering to his usual Augustinian emphasis, Vermigli argues the theological necessity for a clear distinction between the claims of the earthly and the heavenly cities—between “thinges that be so transitorie” and “everlasting life.” Demonic influence is apparent in the ignoring of this distinction between what is properly to be “used” with what is to be “enjoyed,” in the conflation of the temporal with the eternal, in the seeking of happiness and rest in things which of themselves are mere instruments: “Wee see by daily experience, that menne be so madde when they ones geve them selves to covetuousness, that they lesse esteeme the losse of their honnesty, common welth, liberty, religion, yea of god hym self and everlasting life, than the losse of their riches.” The covetousness of both commons and gentry is an expres-

⁶³*Tyme of rebellion*, fol. 427. On the common people’s objection to the enclosures, see for example the first article of “Kett’s demands being in Rebellion” of 1549: “We pray your grace that where it is enacted for inclosyng that it be not hurtfull to suche as have enclosed saffren groundes for they gretely chargeablye to them, and that frome hensforth noman shall enclose eny more.” British Library, Harleian MS 304, fol. 75; Fletcher and Fletcher and Fletcher and MacCulloch, *Tudor Rebellions*, 156.

⁶⁴*Tyme of rebellion*, fol. 427.

⁶⁵*Tyme of rebellion*, fol. 429.

sion of the *libido dominandi*, the lust of domination. Hugh Latimer was to reiterate this very analysis of the dangers of avarice in a well-known sermon on "Covetousness" preached before Edward VI in Lent the following year.⁶⁶

Having torn a strip off the gentry for their contribution to provoking the "commotions" through their avaricious enclosures of the commons, Vermigli redirects his critical attention to the rebels. The human condition being what it is, there can be no monopoly on depravity among the well born and the well heeled. While the injustice of the rich towards the poor is real enough, this can offer no justification for rebellious resistance.⁶⁷ In a classic appeal to the doctrines of passive obedience and the integrity of the "corpus politicum," Vermigli observes that scripture requires obedience, even to tyrants: "And in what case soever the gentylmen be in, yet who gave subiects auctority to levye armyes in a kings Realme without his leave and consent?" A note in the margin in Cranmer's hand summarizes the first dictum of Tudor political theology: "subditis non licet accipere gladium."⁶⁸ It is not permissible for subjects to take up the sword; God has delivered the sword into the hands of princes and magistrates.⁶⁹ Vermigli continues his analysis with this observation concerning the body politic: "Who did ever see the feete and legges devide themselves from the hedd, and other superior partes? Dothe it than become the lower sorte of the people to flocke to gither, against their heades and rulers?"⁷⁰ He points out that the unity of the body politic is especially vulnerable at the time of the king's minority; thus, the members have an even stronger duty to maintain the integrity of the whole body, especially in view of both internal and external enemies of the realm "outward with Scottes and frenchemenne, and amonge our selves with subtill papistes, who have persuaded the symple and ignoraunt Devonshire menne under pretense and cullour of religion to withstand all godly reformatione."⁷¹

The demands of the Devonshire rebels focus chiefly on the perceived shortcomings of the vernacular liturgy of the new Book of Common Prayer and give special weight to appeals for the restoration of the old religion.⁷² The Articles of

⁶⁶27 sermons preached by the ryght Reuerende father in God and constant matir [sic] of Iesus Christe, Maister Hugh Latimer (London: John Day, 1562), fol. 110v [misprinted 109].

⁶⁷Cf. "Of Troubles and Sedition: Further of the Suffering of Tyrannie," CP 4.21, fols. 319–24.

⁶⁸John Cheke, *The Hurt of Sedicion howe greueous it is to a commune welth* (London: John Day and William Seres, 1549), sig. A4v. Alford, *Kingship and Politics*, 189–90.

⁶⁹Cf. "Whether it be lavvful for subiectes to rise against their Prince," CP 4.21, fols. 324–25.

⁷⁰*Tyme of rebellion*, fol. 433. Cf. e.g., Richard Morison, *A remedy for sedition: wherin are conteyned many thynges, concernynge the true and loyall obeysance, that comme[n]s owe vnto their prince and soueraygne lorde the Kynge* (London: Thomæ Berthelet, 1536), sig. B3v: "A comune welthe is lyke a body, and soo lyke, that it can be resembled to nothyng so convenient, as unto that. Nowe, were it not by your faythe, a madde herynge, if the fote shuld say, I wyl weare a cappe, with an ouche, as the heade dothe? If the knees shulde say, we woll carie the eyes, an other whyle: if the shulders shulde clayme eche of them an eare: if the heles wold nowe go before, and the toes behind . . . what a monstereous body shuld this be? God sende them suche a one, that shall at any tyme go about to make as evil a comune welth, as this is a gody. It is not mete, every man to do, that he thyneketh best." Fletcher and MacCulloch, *Tudor Rebellions*, 150.

⁷¹*Tyme of rebellion*, fols. 433–34.

⁷²*Copy of a Letter*, in Fletcher and MacCulloch, *Tudor Rebellions*, 151–53.

the western rebels demand specifically the restoration of the doctrine and ceremonies established under the 1539 Statute of Six Articles of Henry VIII until Edward should reach the age of majority.⁷³ A response sent by the Council to the rebels on 8 July addresses the question of the king's minority by means of an appeal to the distinction between the king's "body natural" and "body politic":

If ye would suspende and hang our doynge in doubt untill our full age, ye muste firste knowe as a kyng, wee haue no difference of yeres, nor tyme, but as a naturall man, and creature of God, wee haue youthe and by his sufferance, shall have age: we are your rightfull kyng, your liege lorde, your kyng anoynted, your kyng Crouned, the souereigne kyng of England, not by our age, but by Gods ordinaunce, not onely when we shalbe xxi. Of yeres, but when we wer of x. yeres: wee possesse our Croune, not by yeres, but by ye bloud and descent, from our father kyng Henry theight. You are our subiectes because wee bee your kyng, and rule wee will, because God hath willed: it is as greate a faulte in us not to rule, as in a subiect not to obeye.⁷⁴

Divine ordinance and anointing constitute the king as head of the "corpus politicum," and since this body "never dies," it cannot be subject to the limitations imposed by time on the "corpus naturale."⁷⁵ A clear distinction in political theory between the king's numinous and phenomenal identities dovetails neatly with the newly embraced reformed theology, that is, with respect to the evangelical distinction between grace and nature, faith and works, the gospel and the law. That the rebels would insist upon the limitation of the king's authority until he reaches the age of majority reflects an assumption concerning these soteriological distinctions rooted more in the old religion than in the new. To confuse the king's political and constitutional identity with his natural and human identity is tantamount to conflating the orders of grace and nature. It is in such an interpretation of kingly power, its derivation and the extent of its sway, that one is able to discern the intersection between the political and the theological levels of discourse.

If the gentry have indeed injured the commons through their acquisitiveness, is it not within the commons' right to seek redress of these wrongs committed against them? Vermigli asks rhetorically. Is resistance not justifiable? "Is it the office of subiectes to take upon them reformation of the common wealth without the comaundement of comen aucturity?" His negative response to this question is hardly surprising.⁷⁶ Vermigli argues the standard Tudor case for passive obedience, even in the face of tyranny. It is necessary to "tarry for the magistrate" as the

⁷³ Henry VIII, cap. 14. After the accession of Edward in 1547, Parliament repealed the conservative Henrician Act of Six Articles. See Fletcher and MacCulloch, *Tudor Rebellions*, 55.

⁷⁴ *A message sent by the kynges Majestie, to certain of his people, assembled in Devonshire* (London: Richard Grafton, printer to the Kynges Maiestie, 1549), STC 7506, sig. B1v.

⁷⁵ Kantorowicz, *King's Two Bodies*, 314–36.

⁷⁶ See Vermigli's scholium "Of the induring of Tyrannie by godlie men," CP 4.21, fols. 328–31.

Israelites tarried until Joshua divided the spoils of the conquest of Canaan.⁷⁷ Poverty is "no sufficient cause of their disobedience." Indeed far from providing a remedy for poverty, sedition serves only to increase the material suffering. According to one contemporary observer, the Devonshire rebels

do in the meantime neglect your husbandry, whereby ye must live: your substance and catall is not only spoiled and spent upon unthriftes, who but for this your outrage know no mean nor way to be fedde: your houses falle in ruin, your wives are ravished, your daughters defloured before your own faces, your goods that ye have many long years laboured for lost in an hour and spent upon vagabonds and idle loiterers. Your meat is unpleasant, your drink unsavoury, your sleep never sound, never quiet, never in any safety....⁷⁸

The leaders of the insurrection, are dismissed by Vermigli as "ruffians, and sturdy idill fellows" who "pretende that they meane nothing els, but a reformation of thinges that be amisse" and "excuse their owne outragious presumption by charging the gentlemenne." It is possible to interpret such an attempt by the rebels at self-justification as a clear case of seeking to pull out the mote in a brother's eye while failing to behold the beam in one's own—depravity is universal, and neither commons nor gentry can lay any claim to justice on their part. In this approach, Vermigli can be seen to link his analysis of the political frictions of 1549 to the doctrinal critique of Demi-Pelagianism, which becomes a central soteriological theme in the Forty-Two Articles of Religion whose very formulation was then in progress under the direction of Thomas Cranmer.⁷⁹

Despite the radical equality of all humanity in the "fault and corruption" of original sin, good governance requires extensive experience on the part of the governors, just as an apprentice must serve for seven years before he can become qualified as a tradesman. While all may be considered equal in "the following of Adam," all are by no means equal in the acquisition of the capacity to rule. In short, it is necessary to distinguish between "corrupt nature" and "nature," that is, between the condition of the will in the "inner man" and the acquisition of virtue through habit in the capacities of the "outer man." Such a distinction is crucial to Luther's theological critique of the motivation underpinning the Peasants' Rebellion in Germany in 1525 and to other magisterial reformers' attacks on the utopian

⁷⁷*Tyme of rebellion*, fol. 438.

⁷⁸See Philip Nichols, "Answer to the Commoners of Devonshire and Cornwall" (1549), British Library, Royal MS 18, B xi, fol. 1; MacCulloch, *Tudor Rebellions*, 154–55.

⁷⁹Based on the second article of the Augsburg Confession (1530) and Cranmer's Thirteen Articles (1538), art. 8 reads, "Originall sinne standeth not in the following of Adam (as the Pelagians do vaynely talke) [which also the Anabaptists do nowadays renew] but it is the fault and corruption of the nature of euery man, that naturally is engendered of the ofspring of Adam, whereby man is very farre gone from [his former] originall ryghteousness [which he had at his creation] and is of his owne nature [given] enclined to euyll, so that the fleshe [desireth] lusteth alwayes contrary to the spirite; and therefore in euery person borne into this worlde, it deserueth Gods wrath and damnation." See MacCulloch, *Tudor Church Militant*, 99, 101.

political excesses of the Anabaptists.⁸⁰ Following in this tradition of political theology Vermigli asserts that the accumulated experience of governance translates into a natural distinction between ruler and ruled: "it is a comen, and a true saying, that auctoritie shewith what every manne is, and a gentilmanne wille ever shew hymself a gentilmanne, and a vilayne a vilayne."⁸¹ "For take away gentilmenne and rulers, and straite way alle order fallithe clerely away, and followeth barbaricalle confusione."⁸² The critique leveled by Vermigli at both classes is complicated by the necessary theological assumption originating in Reformed soteriology of their simultaneous equality and inequality. They are equal in their common inheritance of original sin in the "inner man," but unequal in their respective functions in the body politic through the "outer man." The failure of both classes to recognize and observe the proper bounds of this distinction underlies the confusion of the uprising itself. In short, for Vermigli the political and social turmoil of 1549 is ultimately traceable to a deeper, underlying theological confusion.

Thus the antagonists in the insurrection find themselves caught in manifest self-contradiction. The rebels opposed to the enclosure of common lands invoke the Old Testament example of Ahab's tyrannical seizure of Naboth's vineyard, yet refuse to imitate the patient example of the latter "who woulde rather lose his vyne yarde, than he would make any commotion or tumult among the people. They charge the riche men that they inhaunce the prices, but in this unsemely commotion, they take from the riche men what they liste without any price." A faulty hermeneutics of scripture and lack of theological discernment can lead to dire political consequences. Vermigli offers the traditional magisterial reformer's solution, namely for the "vilayne" to acknowledge and submit to the authority of the "gentilmanne." Gospel liberty cannot be an excuse for "disobedience, sedition, and carnall liberality, and the destruction of those policies, kyngdomes, and common weales where it is receyved."⁸³ Obedience to the ruling authorities is explicitly commanded by scripture—as in Romans 13 and 1 Peter 2—and is also mandated by the example of Christ and the apostles. The rebels' employment of force, violence, and sedition in the attempt to resist the ruling authority is animated by a spirit Vermigli describes as "of the devill," an intrinsically pagan spirit such as "among the romaynes, Catelyne, Cathagus and Manlius were inspired withall."⁸⁴ By comparing English rebel leaders Jack Straw, Jack Cade, and Robert Aske to these ancient pagan exemplars of sedition, Vermigli perhaps reveals again the deep influence of Augustine's political theology. For Augustine, the diabolical character

⁸⁰ Martin Luther, *Wider die Mordischen vn[d] Reubischen Rotten der Bawren* (Wittenberg: [Augsburg: Heinrich Stayner], 1525).

⁸¹ *Tyme of rebellion*, fol. 447.

⁸² *Tyme of rebellion*, fol. 456. Cf. Shakespeare, *Troilus and Cressida* 1.3.101–11: Take but degree away, untune that string, / And hark what discord follows! each thing meets / In mere oppugnancy.

⁸³ *Tyme of rebellion*, fol. 449.

⁸⁴ *Tyme of rebellion*, fol. 451. A likely source for this reference by Vermigli is Sallust's account of an oration in the Roman Senate by Marcus Porcius Cato Uticensis (Cato the Younger), "On the punishment of the Catiline conspirators," in *Catiline*, ed. A.T. Davis (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), chap. 51.

of the pagan Roman state was manifest preeminently in its assertion of the divinity and immortality of the *civitas terrena*, as if it were possible to realize peace itself under the aspect of temporality and history. The Roman attempt to eternalize the temporal and to temporalize the eternal was, for Augustine, founded on a deep confusion of fundamental categories, of immanent and transcendent goods and ends, which were in turn metaphysically epitomized (that is, hypostatized) by the demons who were "miserable like mortals yet eternal like the gods."⁸⁵ As Catiline promised the plebs abolition of debts and the proscription of wealthy citizens if they would support him in his attempt to seize power, so the English rebels sought to dispossess the nobility of their enclosures by force. Such sedition, whether ancient or modern, issues from a diabolical confusion of immanent and transcendent goods and ends. And so, for Vermigli, it is no excess of zeal on the part of the prophet Isaiah to threaten such disorder with "everlasting woo, and the curse of god except thei repent and amende their lives in tyme . . . what other reward canne I promise to them, than the angre, and vengeance of god, whiche they shall feele bothe in this life, and in the life to come bothe so[o]ner and sorer than they loke for except they acknouledge their faultes and amend by tyme."

This threat of damnation is evenly leveled against both gentry and commons, the "covetuous men" and "thies mutyners." Both in their injustice towards the other presume to "take the kinges power upon them." This confusion of the estates is crucial to Vermigli's analysis of the situation. *Both* the enclosure of the common land by the gentry *and* the attempt by the rebels to be "hearers, iudges, and reformers, of their owne causes" are unjust precisely because both encroach upon the rightful jurisdiction of the crown; both by their actions seek to make their own proper, private good into an absolute, unlimited, and universal good. Such a confusion of social and constitutional ends is the undoing of both human and divine order. "Which," Vermigli asks, "is the more intollerable robbery? Which is the more pernicious confusione? . . . Thefte is not amended with spoyle and ravine. Neither is the common wealth stayed or made stronge by the breache of lawes ordres and states."⁸⁶ The only solution is for both "gentillemene" and "vilaynes" to don sackcloth and repent of their idolatrous covetousness, the very "roote of all evils." The turmoil plaguing political and social life rests upon a confusion concerning the right distinction and relation between the public and the private goods. Such turmoil is foremost the result of confusion within the soul, a discernment clouded by sin, and thus the remedy also to be sought within. If sin is the root source of sedition and disorder, then repentance is the key to the recovery of constitutional and social harmony.

⁸⁵ Augustine *De civitate Dei* 9.13, and *Confessions* bk. 2.

⁸⁶ *Tyme of rebellion*, fol. 454. See also fol. 459: "by thies seditions the maiestie of a mooste hiegh and godly king is hurte, and wronged, forsomuche as thei take upon them his office, and as it were pullithe the sworde out of his handes, for he is ordeyned of god to have the hearing and decision of suche [460] causes, and to have the administration and distribution of thies worldely goodes. But thei in their rage doo in a maner pull hym out of his throne and chayre of estate, and cast hym downe to the ground, who is here in erthe goddes vicar and chief minister, and of whome only next unto god dependith all the welthe of and felicity of this Realme."

The confusion of sin extends to turning upside down the proper function of the three estates. Whereas the king's public aspect is, according to Solomon, to be "like the roling of a lyon" and the commons properly "to be as gentill and meke as lambs" in their obedience, the Rebellion has brought about an inversion of this natural order. The protector's misplaced lamblike "gentilness in suffering and pardonyng" is appropriately answered by the rebels' "outcryngs like most cruell lyons."⁸⁷

Vermigli traces this confusion to a "practical" rejection of the evangelical teaching, to the holding of the truth in unrighteousness: "we have receyved the wourde of god and yet our conversation is contrary and ungodly."⁸⁸ As Vermigli sees it, setting straight this confusion requires a reintegration of the will and the understanding. Sin (*hamartia*) is a turning away from God, and results in a fracturing of the divine *imago*; repentance (*metanoia*) is a returning to God, and reconstitutes human identity through a reordering of the faculties.⁸⁹ Action must reflect knowledge, and the knowledge of ultimate significance in the question is the knowledge of faith revealed in the scriptures. If our words approve and our conscience receives the gospel "as a thing most earnest and godly," then, Vermigli claims, it cannot be rejected in action. And here his use of the first person is altogether inclusive; "our" words are the words of the whole realm, the complete "body politic." And indeed such a use of language is consistent with the logic of "Common Prayer" where the whole realm prays, offers praise, makes intercession, confesses, and is blessed in a single common, collective identity.⁹⁰

Further evidence of the necessity of repentance to what Augustine called "the tranquillity of order"⁹¹ can be discerned in the sacred history of Israel at the time of the Babylonian Captivity.⁹² It is possible to witness the same in the consequences of the Peasants' Rebellion in Germany.⁹³ For Vermigli, both scripture and recent historical experience unite in testifying to the key claim of his political theodicy: "all thies seditions and troubles which wee now suffer, to be the veray plague of god, for the reiecting and ungodly abusing of his moost hollye wourde."⁹⁴ Repentance is to receive the gospel and to follow it. Without penitence, the plague of god will follow inexorably. The plague of sedition, in short, is the outward political manifestation of inwardly fragmented human identity, both individually and collectively. Only repentance can heal the fragmentation of souls, and thus only repentance can restore the original political harmony. Vermigli concludes this proposition with a list of biblical and historical examples of sedition, all of which

⁸⁷ *Tyme of rebellion*, fol. 461.

⁸⁸ A reference to Rom. 1:18. *Tyme of rebellion*, fol. 468.

⁸⁹ *Tyme of rebellion*, fol. 486.

⁹⁰ Ramie Targoff, *Common Prayer: The Language of Public Devotion in Early Modern England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).

⁹¹ Augustine *De civitate Dei* 19.13.

⁹² *Tyme of rebellion*, fol. 473.

⁹³ *Tyme of rebellion*, fol. 475. Peter Blickle and Wilhelm Abel, *Bauer, Reich und Reformation: Festschrift für Günther Franz* (Stuttgart: Ulmer, 1982).

⁹⁴ *Tyme of rebellion*, fol. 485.

give rise to divine punishment: the children of Israel in the wilderness persishing before reaching Canaan; the deaths of Corah, Dathan, and Abiron; Miriam's leprosy; the deaths of David's sons Absalon and Adonias; and several others.⁹⁵ Then there follows a brief concluding prayer which invokes the divine gift of "hartes that we may understande," and then asks that the superior powers be granted "hartes to revenge goddes cause, and to convert all offendours against goddes holly wound." For Vermigli, the role of the godly magistrate is to act "in erthe as goddes chief vicar and minister"⁹⁶ in a twofold manner. First by outward and coercive means, by the power of the sword, to suppress sedition and maintain the peace; and secondly, by inward and religious means, through the preaching of the word and administration of the sacraments, to foster and nourish the spiritual integrity of his subjects. The health of the living "body politic" depends upon the right exercise of both powers. By the coordinated operation of these coercive and spiritual means, Vermigli prays that avarice may be moderated and order restored. As sedition proceeds from sin, so ought good order to proceed from penitence.

The sermon concludes with an extended exhortation to general repentance without delay. There is also a warning to his hearers not to fall into the blasphemy of Job's wife or of his three "comforters" by accusing God of sending the plague of suffering upon the realm out of cruelty or a lack of mercy. Suffering brought on by the insurrection and disorder is to be interpreted in this theodicy as the very means whereby God chooses to demonstrate mercy. In this final claim, Vermigli returns to his point of departure, namely, the theodicy of the book of Job.

CONCLUSION

Peter Martyr Vermigli's autograph sermon composed at the time of widespread rebellion in 1549 and publicly preached at St. Paul's by Thomas Cranmer at the very height of the unrest, speaks volumes concerning Vermigli's privileged place in the Edwardine establishment. Not only had Cranmer invited him in the previous year to fill the Regius Chair in Divinity at Oxford; in the relatively short period since he had clearly become a close advisor and confidant of the archbishop. Such was the level of trust confided by Cranmer in the Florentine reformer that Vermigli became a pivotal player in the extraordinary political and social upheavals of the early part of Edward's reign. Within a few months of his arrival in Oxford Vermigli found himself at the epicenter of a seismic shift in sacramental hermeneutics owing to his lectures on the first epistle to the Corinthians, and consequently a key advisor to Cranmer in the momentous revision of the liturgy resulting in the Second Edwardine Prayer Book in 1552. Given that the rebellion was instigated, at least in part, by popular reaction against the introduction of the more conservative vernacular liturgy of the Book of Common Prayer of 1549, Vermigli's role as author of this highly profiled, official public response is indicative of the eminent role he so swiftly assumed in the task of reforming the Church of England.

⁹⁵*Tyme of rebellion*, fols. 477-80.

⁹⁶*Tyme of rebellion*, fol. 460.

Perhaps even more noteworthy is the subtlety (both theological and political) of Vermigli's carefully formulated response to the crisis. By framing his sermon in the universal categories of theodicy, Vermigli was able to rise above the petty (and not so petty!) irritants of mid-Tudor social stratification. All three of the principal parties—government, gentry, and commons—receive some fairly sharp criticism in the sermon. Vermigli's highly respected international stature as a theologian and biblical scholar combined with his close association with Cranmer enable him to speak truth to power in a prophetic spirit. So well ensconced is Vermigli in the Edwardine establishment that he can give utterance (plainly in concert with Cranmer) to sharp criticism of Protector Somerset's policy of leniency towards the rebels. At the same time, he levels an equally strong critique against both the greed and rapacity of the gentry as well as the sedition and violence of the commons. By Vermigli's account, none of the members of the body politic has behaved well. Theologically this analysis highlights the doctrine of a universal sinfulness, the hallmark of the Reformed anthropology.⁹⁷ Since all "the offspring of Adam . . . deserueth Gods wrath and damnation," there is no good theological reason to let anyone off the hook. On a political level, the argument of the sermon concerning universal depravity serves to emphasize the unity of the body politic. It is evident that Vermigli sees these theological and political angles as interlocking. His assertion of the necessary subjection of all members of the body politic—protector, Privy Counsellors, nobles, commons—to the unique political identity of the simple and undivided will of the sovereign resonates with the radical subordination of all "the offspring of Adam" before the power of the heavenly king. The political unification of the realm owes something—possibly everything in Vermigli's view—to the assumptions of the reformers' theological anthropology. The intensified unification of the powers of the soul implied by the reformers' account of the radical sinfulness of humanity has a corollary in the hypostatic unification of the estates such that all are culpable in the disorder afflicting the body politic. Vermigli finds all the parties to the conflict to be at fault—affirming, thereby, a sort of universal political depravity—and the proposed solution to public disorder, as with the sinful individual, is penitence all round, "the remedie of al our plags." Just as no faculty of the soul can be exempt from fault owing to the radical disorder of human sinfulness, so also no estate of the realm can be exempt from blame when the turmoil of sedition afflicts the body politic. There is nothing particularly original in this political theology at the core. It represents an appeal to the principles of political Augustinianism characteristic of so many of the leading sixteenth-century Protestant reformers. Nonetheless, Vermigli applies these principles in his "Sermon concernynge the tyme of rebellion" with a concerted attempt at a healing, irenic touch.

⁹⁷ According to art. 8 of the Forty-Two Articles of Religion of 1553 it is "the fault and corruption of the nature of euery man, that naturally is engendered of the ofspring of Adam, whereby man is very farre gone from his former ryghteousness, which he had at his creation and is of his owne nature given to euyll, so that the fleshe desireth alwayes contrary to the spirite; and therefore in euery person borne into this worlde, it deserueth Gods wrath and damnation."



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