The Hidden Work of the "Bloody" Queen: Innovation and Reform during England's Counter-Reformation

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Introduction

In August 1553 a new queen arrived in London to assume her throne, to the cheers of ten thousand supporters. Foreign visitors were awed by the queen's popularity, reporting that many in the crowd wept "tears for joy" and that they were "filled with hope," the likes of which "was never seen before."[1] Placards lining the queen's route declared "*Vox populi, vox Dei*" – the voice of the people is the voice of God.[2]

The eyes of Europe were upon this new queen, and much was expected of her. She was the thirty-seven-year-old daughter of King Henry VIII, a friend of many of Europe's greatest humanists, and one of the most highly educated women in Christendom. Her accession was welcomed as a miracle, particularly by English Catholics. She had promised to restore "trewe religion" to the realm of England and put all back "in godly order and quietness" – and after two decades of political and religious upheaval, her offer was attractive to many.[3] This queen was Mary I, although she is often recognized for no accomplishment but earning her unfortunate nickname, "Bloody Mary."

If her reign is remembered at all, it is generally linked to a set of very gruesome pictures: Protestants tied to stakes, burning pyres, crowds engulfed in smoke, and the horrors of martyrdom, which seem quite unfathomable from this side of the Enlightenment. Whether they consciously recognize it or not, most people have been handed down these images straight from the pages of John Foxe's *Actes and Monumentes*, which documented the persecution of Protestants under Mary's reign to rally the Protestant cause. This book was placed alongside the

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1 Anna Whitelock, *Mary Tudor: Princess, Bastard, Queen* (New York: Random House, 2009), 192.
2 Ibid.
3 David M. Loades, "The Personal Religion of Mary Tudor," in *The Church of Mary Tudor*, ed. Eamon Duffy and David Loades (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006), 15.

Bible in every English cathedral beginning in 1570, and it has been doing irreparable harm to the memory of Mary's reign ever since.[4]

Historians have hardly been kinder to the Marian Counter-Reformation than John Foxe himself. Accusations that the regime was uncommonly brutal for its time saturate traditional analyses; Albert Pollard wrote that Mary's reforms "stirred not a breath of spiritual fervor" and Geoffrey Dickens famously insisted that her church "failed to discover the Counter-Reformation," which set the tone for many works to follow.[5] Along with condemning the burnings, historians claim that the Marian regime was incompetent and old-fashioned in its approach to religious reform. In his biography of Reginald Pole, Thomas Mayer describes the Marian reformers as "confused" and "refus[ing] to think about the future" while the historians Baskerville and Pettegree blame the regime for failing to discover the power of the printing press, which they claim Protestants used much more effectively to garner support.[6] Altogether, the picture most historians paint of the Marian church is bleak: one can only imagine a church that blindly clung to tradition, executed every opponent it encountered – to the scandal of other European kingdoms – and attempted to impose a thirty-year-old church in a decade that was no longer suited to it. The Marian Counter-Reformation was supposedly a failed moment in English history, which withered on the vine with no success and no legacy.

New scholarship from historians like Eamon Duffy and Lucy Wooding, however, has cast doubt on this interpretation and ranked the Marian Counter-Reformation among the most progressive religious movements of its era. They claim that far from being an outdated church,

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4 Richard C. McCoy, "Redefining the Sacred in Early Modern England: John Foxe (1516-1587)," Folger University, accessed 2/1/2014, http://www.folger.edu/html/folger_institute/sacred/image11.html.

5 Albert Pollard, *The History of England from the Accession of Edward VI to the Death of Elizabeth (1547-1603)*, quoted in Philip Hughes, *Rome and the Counter-Reformation in England* (London: Burns Oates & Washbourne Ltd., 1942), 113.

6 Thomas Mayer, *Reginald Pole: Prince and Prophet* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 253.

the Marian church was remarkably swift to adapt to the realities of the 1550s, and even served as an experimental "laboratory" where new Counter-Reformation ideas were first conceived and tested.[7] They argue that the Marian regime's approach was both reformist and effective, an idea that for over 450 years was hardly ever considered in academic writing.

This thesis will support and expand upon the work begun by pioneers like Duffy and Wooding. It will attempt to dispel the many exaggerations of the "medieval" approach associated with Mary's church, and instead bring to light the many successes that are often hidden behind its bloody reputation. It will demonstrate that contrary to many historians' claims, the Marian regime embraced the new technology of the printing press with enthusiasm and used every opportunity to use print to advance its Counter-Reformation. Published Catholic works from the 1550s will be examined for content, quantity, and audience, as well as contrasted against the style of Protestant works.

Furthermore, it will be shown that the building of the Marian church cannot be seen as the return of "traditional" Catholicism, as it included many reforms that fell on the progressive or even "radical" end of 1550s Catholicism. A combination of letters and speeches delivered by the Marian leaders, decrees of the Marian church, and writings of English Catholic authors will be compared against the beliefs of conservative Catholics in Rome to demonstrate this.

Finally, the Marian burnings will be placed into historical context and judged with the rationality that they deserve, free from the political purposes in Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*. Data of Protestant executions throughout Europe will be compared against that of Marian England, demonstrating that the Marian persecution certainly did not exceed the "brutality" standards of

7 Eamon Duffy, *Fires of Faith: Catholic England Under Mary Tudor* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 8.

the rest of Europe. Rather than being viewed as a particularly bloodthirsty regime, Mary's government must be recognized for doing no more than bringing approved European methods to England. The many opportunities for conversion, pardon, and reprieve for suspected Protestants must also be considered, as seen in government documents and trial records. In many ways the Marian church was more lenient than other European churches of its time, despite its reputation.

Before delving too deeply into an analysis of the Marian Counter-Reformation, one must first understand the turbulent time and place in which it occurred. The reforms did not develop in a vacuum, but were influenced by forces in continental Europe as well as by England's own history. The Protestant Reformation had stretched far larger than the objections of one obscure German monk, Martin Luther; by 1550s it had spread throughout Europe and sparked an immense tide of religious violence. The attitude of many Catholic authorities toward Protestantism turned unforgiving. The Religious Wars in France ultimately claimed the lives of thousands of Protestants, while the Habsburgs executed well over one thousand Protestants in the Netherlands during a series of uprisings between 1530 and 1574. Even in Spain and Italy, comparatively secure bastions of Catholicism, authorities revived inquisitions to root out suspected heretics from their midst.[8] Switzerland was home to the Protestant capital, Geneva – which many Protestant Reformers called the "New Jerusalem"– and Protestant teachings had successfully reached millions through smuggled publications.

Across the Alps, in Italy, the first session of the Council of Trent had just opened in 1545. Catholic bishops and cardinals gathered there to answer their Protestant challengers and, where needed, to reform Catholicism where Protestants had exposed genuine concerns. These critical

8 William Monter, "Heresy Executions in Reformation Europe, 1520-1565" in *Tolerance and Intolerance in the European Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 48.

sessions at Trent are generally considered by historians to be the dawn of the Counter-Reformation. By the 1570s, the Counter-Reformation would sweep across Europe with attempts to reinforce papal authority and increase the laity's understanding of the faith. In the 1550s, however, England was one of the first kingdoms to wade into untested reformist depths, and many of the strategies that the Marian regime developed were imitated by others later in the movement. While the strategies of the Marian church appear standard when studying the history of the Counter-Reformation, one must keep in mind that at this time, the Counter-Reformation was only in its infant stages. Much of what the Marian church attempted was an experiment with theoretical reforms. Its progress was watched with interest by other governments in Europe, many of whom were also struggling with the question of how best to subdue the Protestants.

England's own history also played a large role in shaping the Marian Counter-Reformation. In 1534, via the Act of Supremacy, Henry VIII had severed England's obedience to the pope in Rome. He declared himself to be the head of the English church, and although he preserved many outward aspects of Catholic worship, he sacked the religious houses of England and established royal authority as supreme over ecclesiastical authority. By the 1550s, although many people felt an attachment to Catholic traditions like the Mass, obedience to the pope was often not considered a normal or even necessary component of the "traditional" faith. English religion under Henry VIII greatly affected the standard of Catholicism that Mary's government sought to establish, as well as what was accepted and implemented in practice in the new Catholic church. While the Marian church might have seemed much like any other "false" papist churches to the eyes of Protestants, it appeared nothing short of radical by the measure of other Catholics in Europe. Similarly, Henry VIII had been a patron and friend of many humanist

reformers, many of whose ideas were incorporated into Queen Mary's earliest education. The proposed reforms of men like Sir Thomas More and Desiderius Erasmus, many of which anticipated the goals of the Counter-Reformation, became central to the style and plans of Mary's church. Had it existed longer than its brief span of five years, evidence suggests that it would have been an undeniably humanist church with scriptures in English and discouragement of saint worship. Many strategies had already been put into motion to realize these ideas, and only by regarding Mary's efforts through a humanist lens can one see the full extent to which a reformist spirit lay at the heart of her church.

The primary sources used in support of this thesis are original sixteenth-century publications, many of which are available in digital form in databases such as Early English Books Online. Excerpts from primary sources appear here in their original sixteenth-century spellings where possible, with occasional clarification of words in modern spellings in brackets. Where access to an original document was not possible, due to its storage in archives abroad or because it was originally printed in a foreign language, segments of the text were drawn from other historians' works and may appear in modern spellings. Such works will be directly analyzed in this thesis and tied to the historiography that has been built upon them in the past and present.

Therefore, in 1553 with the arrival of a new queen, the curtain rises on the Marian Counter-Reformation. Queen Mary I's reputation has been blackened over nearly five centuries, but this thesis will endeavor to examine her short time on the throne in a positive light. It will highlight not just the failures of her grand reforms, but their successes; it will attempt to pierce the smoke of the executions to understand the modern, bold, and reformist elements of her

church that were once the pride of Catholic Europe, which have since been lost to time.

The Catholics Modernize: Persuasion and the Marian Printing Press

One of the traditional criticisms of the English Counter-Reformation is that the Marian regime failed to grasp the power of printed propaganda, which by the 1550s had become a widespread and popular weapon of reform. Although "propaganda" is typically understood to mean a work that manipulates or distorts the facts, for the purposes of this analysis, propaganda is defined as any printed work that helps to disseminate an idea – which could include prayer books and primers as well as argumentative pamphlets. Many historians claim that Protestants advanced their cause through more published materials, from serious theological treatises to vulgar ballads abusing the pope. As far as the regime of Queen Mary I was concerned, historians have extended only criticism or at best a "one-handed clap."[9] The majority of historical analyses conclude that the Marian regime produced works in small amounts and dull styles – focusing too much on instructional texts – and thus did not try to win enough converts through persuasion. Such an interpretation, if correct, supports the popular image of the regime as a backward and uncommonly repressive one.

However, such an interpretation also examines the Marian publicity campaign through a Protestant lens; it assumes that the goals of Catholics and Protestants were the same and counts any differences in style as indicative of a lack of Catholic talent. When one adopts a more fully rounded view and considers the 1550s from the perspective of Catholics, it becomes clear that their propaganda fit the needs of the regime and reinforced Catholic belief in a multi-pronged campaign not open to Protestants. For instance, Protestant publications in the 1550s tended to be

9 Duffy, *Fires of Faith*, 57.

more provocative because they needed to convince Englishmen to abandon an enforced, officially sanctioned religion, and Protestants had no way to reach the public except through illegal print.[10] Catholics of the Counter-Reformation, however, had full control of England's 10,000 pulpits, where every subject – literate or illiterate – was compelled to hear sermons regularly.[11] Thus, the Marian regime decided the most effective way to publicize and reinforce Catholic belief was through the parish churches and clergymen; this meant the works of highest value were printed sermons, homilies, and devotional works for priests, many of which could be read aloud to the masses several times per year. Thus, while Protestant propaganda was printed in greater quantity during the 1550s, it achieved only small circulation per publication and was accessible only to the literate. The Marian regime, meanwhile, printed works meant to spread Catholicism among the many thousands of subjects who could not read or had little religious education.

This difference in Catholic and Protestant tactics has led to some misevaluation of the evidence: for instance, if one counts a single publication of Edmund Bonner's *Homilies* as only a single book, it appears to be only a trivial achievement. However, when one considers that these *Homilies* were sent directly to parish churches, the potential impact grows exponentially. For instance, consider that a single copy of the *Homilies* purchased by Sir Christopher Trychay – a priest in Morebath, in a remote region near Devon – was read aloud to a congregation of 150 people approximately four times per year.[12] Morebath was also a small village; congregations in Norwich and London were several times larger.[13] By such methods, the Marian regime was able

10 David Loades, "The Theory and Practice of Censorship in Sixteenth-century England," in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 5, no. 24 (1974), 142.

11 Ibid.

12 Eamon Duffy, *The Voices of Morebath: Reformation and Rebellion in an English Village* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001), 167-8.

13 Ibid., 168.

to use the new medium of the printing press to touch even illiterate audiences. This strategy – which, unlike the Protestants', did not need to spread its message by individual readership alone – relied more on circulation by parishes than raw numbers of publications, and it has thus been misjudged by later centuries.

Devotional Works

As one might expect, the Marian regime's entwining of print and preaching led to a special emphasis on sermons and liturgical works. The Marian Counter-Reformation leaders did not merely attempt to quash Protestantism by writing against it themselves, but also by sharing their arguments with local parish priests, so that even poorly-educated clergymen in rural dioceses would be able to fend off Protestant challengers. One need only examine examples of these works to understand their propaganda value to the regime. One devotional Catholic work was *A bouclier of the catholike fayth of Christes church*, printed in late 1554 to support the Catholic position on "divers matters now of late called into controversy, by the newe gospellers."[14]In it, Richard Smith – an Oxford-trained theologian – offered his own expertise to fortify Catholic doctrine against attack. He provided scriptural evidence for Purgatory, defended the baptism of children against the Anabaptists, and criticized the marriage of priests, using the writings of church fathers like Saint Jerome ("he which marrieth a none [nun], committeth aduoltrie agaynst Christ.")[15] Works like the *Bouclier* were not merely textbooks, as some historians believed, but were meant to be weapons for less trained clergymen. Evidence of this intent is seen throughout the *Bouclier*: Smith focused on doctrines most attacked by the

14 Richard Smith, *A Bouclier of the catholike fayth of Christes church, conteynyng divers matters now of late called into controversy, by the newe gospellers* (London: Richard Tottel, 1554), 50.

15 Ibid., 167.

Protestants – devoting over one hundred pages to refute the "miserable alteration of Christes holye religion" – and often rewrote Latin passages in English.[16] This suggests that Smith did not anticipate an audience of highly-educated scholars, but a modestly educated public or clergymen who struggled with Latin. At the start of the Counter-Reformation, many priests did not have sufficient education or knowledge of Latin to refute Protestants unaided, and this was a reality well recognized by the regime. In *A Traictise Declaryng and plainly provyng, that the pretensed marriage of Priestes ... is no mariage*, another "instructional" work, this pattern is seen again: its author, Thomas Martin, provided records from the early church in which married priests were condemned as heretics.[17] He provided the judgment in its original Latin, then immediately summarized it in English, as with a judgment from Tours, France: "that it should be permitted to none of the Clergy … by the determination of the Canons … to tary wyth their wives."[18] He provided evidence from the writings of Saint Jerome and Saint Austen in the same style, first offering Latin, then English translation. He cited Saint Jerome's words "So harde a thing it is for an heretike to love chastitee," then challenged readers to imagine what Saint Jerome would write about the Protestants' views of married priests: "would not he [Saint Jerome] have aswel dressed the Captain of this doctrine Martin Luther that lewde frier, as he did Jovinian that grosse Monke?"[19] Even a literate layman with no knowledge of Latin – and certainly most priests – would be able to follow the argument when the Latin and theological terms were deconstructed into plain English. While such works certainly did instruct parish priests, they were not simply meant to be textbooks; such works allowed priests to defend Catholic teachings against

16 Ibid., 158.
17 Thomas Martin, *A traictise declaryng and plainly prouyng, that the pretensed marriage of priestes, and professed persones, is no mariage, but altogether vnlawful, and in all ages, and in al countreies of Christendome, bothe forbidden, and also punyshed* (London, 1554), f.Aiiiisig.r.
18 Ibid., f.Aiiiisig.v.
19 Ibid., f.Aiiiisig.r.

Protestants, with ample scriptural evidence at hand, and share convincing arguments in return. Catholic propaganda both publicized the Counter-Reformation on its own, in print – much like Protestants' – but also aimed to improve the preaching of the clergy so that the regime would not need to battle the Protestants entirely on its own.

When considering traditional analyses, it is important to note that devotional works are dismissed as less valuable, or not even counted as propaganda at all. Older compilations of 1550s propaganda like Edward Baskerville's *Chronological Bibliography of Propaganda and Polemic* omitted many such Catholic works altogether, on the grounds that they were purely "instructional" and did not follow the same propaganda style of, for instance, argumentative Protestant pamphlets.[20] However, devotional works offered a way to reach vast audiences – either directly or indirectly – and their "dense" style merely reflected the need to strengthen the theological knowledge of priests. The production of these works was enormous: the official Marian Breviary for the clergy ran was printed in eight editions, the Processional in eight editions, and the primer of the laity in an astounding thirty-four editions.[21] If all such printings are not counted in the traditional narrative, it is a small wonder that the regime ostensibly "failed" in using print: the data without Catholic devotional works stands at 103 Protestant works against just 72 Catholic ones.[22] With devotional works factored back into the analysis, the gap between Catholic and Protestant print narrows: Protestant works amount to 114 while Catholic works reach 93, and that is before considering extra circulation achieved through parishes.[23] It is critical to recognize the propaganda value of such instructional works; by reinforcing the theological knowledge of the clergy against Protestants, and by promoting correct preaching to

20 Edward Baskervillle, *A Chronological Bibliography*, 12.
21 Reserved Short Title Catalogue, The British Library, 16244-50; 16151-6; 16058-16086.
22 Eamon Duffy, *Fires of Faith*, 58.
23 Ibid.

the illiterate, they represented one of the regime's most useful propaganda forms.

Sermons

Printed sermons also proved a useful tool for the Marian regime, and were also widely published during the 1550s. Sermons by counter-Reformation leaders like Cardinal Reginald Pole or Stephen Gardiner provided examples of solid preaching to poorly trained clergymen, but also ensured that the preaching in rural dioceses stayed on-point and consistent with the Catholic theology of the Marian church. Thomas Watson, the bishop of Lincoln, published a particularly popular book of sermons titled *Holsome and catholyke doctryne;* each sermon was relatively short, generally ten to fifteen pages, and each used very simple terms to explain the Catholic sacraments using passages of scripture. He explained transubstantiation with Christ's words "take and eate, this is my body," to support the literal transformation of the bread into Christ's body, and "drink all you of this, for this is my bloud" for the transformation of the wine.[24] It also offered an explanation as to why parishioners did not see the bread change in physical form. Watson argued that the "inwarde substaunce of this sacrament" was what transformed during the mass, while the apparent "quantitie and qualities" and the appearance of bread and wine "styll remayn[ed] unchaunged."[25] According to Watson, the holy bread and wine had two essences; men could not perceive the transformation of the inner essence with "corporall eyes," but only with "the eye of his soule, whiche is faith."[26] The regime judged this an effective sermon, since it answered a common Protestant accusation – the lack of any apparent change in the bread and

24 Thomas Watson, *Holsome and catholyke doctryne concerninge the seuen sacraments of Chrystes church, expedient to be knowen of all men, set forth in manner of shorte sermons to bee made to the people, by the reuerend father in God Thomas byshop of Lincolne* (London: Robert Caly, 1558), 48.

25 Ibid., 49

26 Ibid., 50

wine – with a doctrinal explanation approved by the Marian church. *Holesome and catholyke doctryne* was thus widely circulated and encouraged in parishes during the final year of Mary's reign, understandably because it served as a prewritten, approved script for priests to use when discussing delicate matters of doctrine. The Marian regime felt it was critical to present a consistent set of beliefs, the same in local parishes as in royal chapels. Each time priests read government-published sermons, they spoke directly with the voice of the regime. *Holesome and catholyke doctrine* was only one example among many published sermons: pamphlets of sermons made at St. Paul's Cross by were frequently published, particularly those by James Brooks and John Fisher, as well as three editions of *Twoo notable Sermons ... concerninge the reall presence of Christes body and bloude in the blessed Sacrament*, made before the Queen in 1554.[27] Sermons were perhaps the most direct way the regime had to control the words and beliefs expressed in local parishes, and so were understandably also a large part of the propaganda effort.

"Serious" Works and the Catholic Message

Historians often interpret the differences in writing style between Catholics and Protestants as evidence that Catholics did not understand the true power of propaganda to persuade. It is true that under Mary, the printing presses were more often busy producing serious religious works rather than the works of "cutting wit and humor" favored by Protestant authors like John Bale.[28] It has long been thought that this indicates a lack of imagination and talent in

27 Reserved Short Title Catalogue, The British Library, second edition [25115.3]; third edition [25115.5].

28 David Loades, *Mary Tudor: A Life* (Malden: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 1992), 190.

Marian propaganda, and it is viewed as a leading cause of the "failure" of the Marian regime.[29]

However, such an interpretation fails to take into account that a difference between Catholic and Protestant publications was deliberate: Catholic propagandists seized upon bawdy Protestant works to link Protestantism to social upheaval and rebellion, an alarming possibility in the sixteenth century that is not apparent to modern readers. This theme appears frequently in Marian propaganda, but will be here discussed through only some of the most prominent examples. One popular Catholic publication was Edmund Bonner's *A Profitable and Necessarye Doctrine*, which Cardinal Reginald Pole ordered to be read aloud in every parish church in England in 1556..[30] Its author, Bishop Edmund Bonner, laid out the most dangerous sins of the Protestants: he claimed they were "drowned in sensualitie and malyce, and armed with unshamefast boldnes, presumption and arrogance."[31] But rather than simply concluding that Protestants themselves were damned, he claimed that their "noughtiness" and unruliness incited "great insolency, disorder, and contention" and that they were "onely bent to destroye all good rule and order."[32] Such an accusation presents a clear Catholic answer to Protestant propaganda without resorting to the same "lewd" style: they claimed Protestants were irreverent and a danger to the entire social order. Catholics' propaganda style, described as "tedious" and "too solemn" by many historians, served to reinforce the difference between themselves and the dangerously anarchical Protestants. It cannot be viewed as ineffective in this light, and indeed its promise of restoring social order is too often overlooked.

As one might expect, this link between Protestantism and rebellion was particularly

29 Edward Baskerville, *A Chronological Bibliography of Propaganda and Polemic Printed in English between 1553 and 1558: from the Death of Edward VI to the Death of Mary I*, (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1979), 11.
30 Duffy, *Fires of Faith*, 59.
31 Edmund Bonner, *A Profitable and Necessarye Doctrine*, (London: 1555), f.4.sig.r.
32 Ibid, f.5sig.v.

stressed by Catholic propagandists in times of upheaval. Their willingness to present Protestants as discontents is seen in one of the most devastating of all works of Catholic propaganda: the scaffold speech of John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, a radical Protestant reformer under King Edward VI. In addition to being a Protestant, he had been condemned for treason after attempting a coup to deny Mary's accession to the throne. In his scaffold speech, he warned that Protestantism was the sole cause for the political turmoil that had consumed England. He begged Mary's forgiveness for his crimes and warned others to learn from the example of Germany, "whiche synce it is falled into this scysme of division from the unitie of the catholike church, is by continuall dissention and discorde, brought almoost to utter ruyne and decaye."[33] He then warned, "Therefore, leste an utter ruyne come amonge you … be not ashamed to returne home agayne … to the rest of christen realmes."[34] This speech was widely circulated by the Marian regime, and even several Protestant observers admitted that many had abandoned the Protestant faith as a result.[35] The same theme was reiterated in a propaganda surge shortly after Wyatt's Rebellion, in works like *Exhortation of All Menne to Take Hede...of Rebellion* by John Christopherson; he claimed the "abominable songes" and "wicked blasphemye" of the Protestants was responsible for the uprising, that they inspired "devilish discord ...[until] no neighbor could love another."[36] Such works illustrate the extent to which the regime attempted to capitalize on its central propaganda theme: Protestantism was the religion of rebels and dangerous deviants.

The "too serious" and "dignified" approach seen in Catholic propaganda, then, must not

33 John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, *The saying of John late Duke of Northumberlande uppon the scaffolde, at the tyme of his execution*, (London: 1553), 5.
34 Ibid., 8.
35 Loades, "The Theory and Practice of Censorship in Sixteenth-century England," 144.
36 John Christopherson, *Exhortation of All Menne to Take Hede...of Rebellion*, (London: 1554), 72.

be viewed as evidence that shows a lack of wit, but a deliberate strategy that highlighted the differences between Protestant disorder – which Catholics claimed included vulgarity, irreverence, and sexual liberty – and Catholic order.[37] Each religion held popular appeal in different ways, and historians must remember that the Catholic message would have been deeply undermined had they resorted to the same "lewd," provocative satire written by many English Protestants. Such a style represented the very contempt for tradition and order that Catholics felt was so dangerous. It does not mean that Catholics were ignorant of the proper use of propaganda, but rather chose to reinforce their message by their propaganda style.

International Propaganda

Traditional studies of Marian propaganda also typically focus on publications in England while downplaying – or disregarding – the surge of Marian propaganda in continental Europe. However, this international effort was a key part of the regime's strategy and helped one of the major goals of its Counter-Reformation: the re-integration of England into Catholic Europe. It was imperative that England appeared stable and obedient to its Catholic allies, particularly the papal see, and serve as an example for other countries struggling to repress Protestantism. A large portion of Marian propaganda was not printed in England, nor even in English, and historians must consider this body of work before accusing the Marian regime of neglecting the press.

Before examining the amount and spread of Marian foreign propaganda, it is first important to realize that its message differed from that of its domestic works. Domestic propaganda typically instructed readers in Catholic doctrine, discussed the evils of Protestantism

37 Baskerville, *A Chronological Bibliography*, 12.

and offered rebuttals to Protestant arguments, as discussed earlier.[38] In Marian communications to publishers overseas, there was no need to clarify Catholic doctrine; most of the major recipients of its propaganda were other Catholic powers. Rather, Marian foreign works described England's return to Rome as a smooth, popular transition, while hiding internal dissent.[39] Such an image reaffirmed that Mary had control of the country, increased Rome's confidence in England's cooperation, and prevented England from appearing vulnerable. Much of the propaganda revolved around three main political events, all seen as victories for the regime: Pole's first oration in parliament on 28 November 1553; parliament's supplication to "our majesties," in which they requested reconciliation with Rome; and the Latin ceremony in which Pole officially absolved England.[40] As one might expect, foreign propaganda left out the difficulties the regime experienced implementing its plan on the ground. It did not mention that the same parliament that seemed so eager to return to Rome in its "supplication" also issued demands for "a dispensation for the holders of secularized church property," or that legal complications dragged out England's return to papal obedience until January 1555.[41] Such details would hardly impress foreign audiences, and in withholding them the regime made clear what it wished European observers to see.

who published these works? what connections w/ Mary + her ministers?

Evidence from foreign presses suggests that their message certainly reached a wide audience. When one English pamphlet announced England's reconciliation with Rome in November 1554, for example, it was followed by eight publications in Italian, seven in Latin,

38 Duffy, *Fires of Faith*, 58.
39 Jennifer Loach, "The Marian Establishment and the Printing Press," *The English Historical Review* 101, no. 398 (1986): 147.
40 Corinna Streckfuss, "England's Reconciliation with Rome: A News Event in Early Modern Europe," *Historical Research* 82, no. 215 (2009): 65.
41 Ibid., 4.

five in Spanish, two in Dutch and one in German.[42] The sheer number of languages, and the fact that demand was high enough to justify reprints in several locations across Europe, testifies to its popularity. Popularity is also suggested by the style of the publications themselves, which were designed to appeal to large audiences: they were relatively short, generally one to forty-eight folios in length, and often consisted of official documents or letters from London – sources readers were more likely to see as credible.[43] Many of the speeches and documents featured in these works had to be obtained from the Marian government itself – for instance, Pole's oration to parliament, or the sermon in which Stephen Gardiner denounced the Henrician supremacy.[44] The fact that such documents appeared in the same form across Europe indicates that the Marian regime played a very active role in disseminating its official works to publishers.

The consistency of propaganda on the continent also suggests that the Marian regime provided approved, translated copies in each language, which were conveyed to the major publishing centers of Europe: namely Rome, Milan, Venice, Toledo, Louvain, and Dillingen.[45] While the Marian regime could not personally operate all of the presses overseas, it had a direct hand in making official sources widely available, translating the first round of copies, and editing the works to portray England in the best light.

The regime did have help in circulating its works, however. As historians like Corinna Streckfuss point out, not all credit for the whirlwind of pro-Marian propaganda can be given to the Marian regime alone: other Catholic rulers also spread Marian propaganda out of self-interest.[46] The story of England's return to Rome promoted obedience, religious unity, and the

42 Loach, "The Marian Establishment," 146.
43 Streckfuss, "England's Reconciliation," 5.
44 Ibid., 6.
45 Loach, "The Marian Establishment," 146.
46 Streckfuss, "England's Reconciliation," 7.

supremacy of Catholicism, which was valuable to rulers like Charles V, whose empire still included Lutheran and Calvinist provinces. It is also true that the propaganda emphasized different heroes wherever it was published: works published in Habsburg lands portrayed King Philip II as the key figure responsible for negotiations with Rome, while papal publications tended to stress the "eternal fame" gained by the victory of Julius III.[47] Both of these, of course, differ from the English versions that emphasized Mary as "a paragon of virtue" and were careful not to aggravate anti-Habsburg feelings at home.[48] These different versions indicate that while the Marian regime was the starting node and distributor of the original material, its propaganda was adapted and used by other powers as well – and not all of it, therefore, can be included in the analysis of the Marian regime's efforts.

The evidence suggests a moderate success for the Marian regime in circulating propaganda internationally. It cannot be said that the Marian regime was directly responsible for the full amount of publications abroad, since it did receive assistance from local rulers. However, one only needs to consider the number of translations and availability of government documents to realize that the Marian regime did make an immense effort to promote itself in Europe, and that many traditional historians' criticisms do not apply.

Conclusions:

When one steps back to consider Marian propaganda in its appropriate context – recognizing that the regime controlled English parishes, and that it had larger international goals than English Protestants – it is clear that printed propaganda made much of the Counter-

47 Ibid.
48 Duffy, *Fires of Faith*, 61.

Reformation possible. Printed works not only promoted Queen Mary and her reforms, but served practical political purposes: by some measures, it might even be said that the Catholic regime's approach to propaganda surpassed the Protestants' in the 1550s, despite it being an age of celebrated Protestant works. The "dry" theological texts so preferred by the Marian regime did not indicate a lack of creativity, but rather a deliberate focus on parishes and priests, who could spread Catholic doctrine among the illiterate masses in a way that smuggled Protestant publications could not. The lack of "cutting" and humorous Catholic satire on religion represents the regime's wish to appear dignified, orderly, and respectful of tradition, as opposed to the image it presented of dangerous Protestant rebels. Finally, analyses must appropriately consider the vast amount of Marian propaganda elsewhere in Europe, which offers an international perspective on the regime's goals. The English Counter-Reformation was not backward-looking, or hopelessly trapped in an earlier decade while Protestants modernized with print; to argue so is to overlook thousands of publications and the help of propaganda in every major step of the way.

The "New" Old Church: the Reinvention of Catholicism in England

The Marian Counter-Reformation is remembered as Mary Tudor's grand attempt to wind the clock back half a century, and to resurrect to the same Catholic church that she had known in her childhood in the 1520s without change or compromise. The campaign of burnings tends to obscure many historical realities, as it suggests certain ideas of medievalism and dogged

adherence to tradition. It is easy to assume that in a time so remembered for "medieval" means of law enforcement, the regime also attempted to revive a medieval version of Catholicism. However, one need only examine the practices of the Marian church – and the even greater plans it had begun to enact, but did not complete by 1558 – to understand that the true character of the Marian Counter-Reformation was as experimental as it was traditional. Catholicism in the mid-sixteenth century was no longer a monolithic, orthodox faith, but a range of beliefs that often disagreed with medieval norms. When one discards the old-fashioned label of "Catholic," and instead situates the Marian church in the complex Catholic spectrum of the 1550s, it becomes evident that the Marian church was among the most progressive and reformist Catholic churches of its day.

The Marian church was founded upon the ideas of the *spirituali*, a reformist group that included Cardinal Pole and was largely defeated in the first sessions of the Council of Trent. They were known to support a form of *sola fide* – justification by faith alone – although they felt good works should be encouraged as a product of justification.[49] They also advocated a personalized faith based on reading of Scripture, and even a conciliatory solution to the conflicts between Catholics and Protestants.[50] Such an idea seems strange to associate with the Marian church, remembered by history only for its brutality, but these conciliatory attitudes did have a noticeable impact in the church. This will be discussed further in a later section.

Above all, the Marian church was conceived and shaped by two figures: Queen Mary herself and Cardinal Reginald Pole. Through patronage, appointments, and direct administration, Mary and Pole were able to create a church based on their own reformist understandings of

49 John W. O'Malley, *Trent: What Happened at the Council*, (Cambridge, MA and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2013), 107.
50 Ibid.

Catholicism. It is therefore necessary to step aside for a moment and understand the personal faiths of these two founders, and what they wished to achieve in their great experiment.

The Conscience of the Cardinal

Cardinal Pole was a cousin of Henry VIII, a descendant of the Plantagenet bloodline and the Archbishop of Canterbury during the Marian religious reforms. As papal legate and a long-time friend and correspondent of Queen Mary herself, Pole was irrefutably a Catholic, but evidence throughout his career reveals that he held certain reservations about traditional Catholicism. He did not believe that the pope's authority was unchallengeable, for instance, and like many *spirituali* cardinals he harbored doubts about the role of good works in justification that bordered on the heretical.

The first session of the Council of Trent in 1545 offers a convenient window into Pole's faith, for here Pole's views were aired in direct contrast to conservatives,' just eight years before Mary's ascent to the throne. Although he was frequently ill and only present at Trent for a short time, several of his speeches delivered there reveal the dramatic ways in which his beliefs departed from others' in Rome.

Many of Pole's more radical ideas appeared in his infamous opening speech *De Concilio,* in which he stressed the importance of "reconciling the German people, who are called Lutherans" as a goal of the council, and used scriptural evidence to remind the council that they had the authority to oppose the pope in their decisions.[51] *De Concilio* courted Lutherans by its very design, since Pole carefully drew all of his evidence from the Bible and the history of the martyrs. He deliberately left out the writings of earlier popes and church fathers, which were

51 Mayer, *Reginald Pole*, 144.

commonplace in Catholic theological writing but which many Protestants thought untrustworthy.[52] In this speech Pole insisted that the council was based upon the Council of Jerusalem, and that the pope had no power to overrule its verdicts.[53] Rather, he agreed with Erasmus's reading of scripture on papal authority. He twice identified the church's power not with Peter himself, considered to be the first pope, but with the "*petra*" (rock), the first stone that Peter laid in the Catholic church: "the stone of faith, that Peter, as the first stone placed in the church, professed."[54] By this interpretation, Christ had guaranteed that the Catholic faith was infallible, not necessarily Peter. Furthermore, Pole argued that the pope could be disobeyed if he strayed from the true faith. The pope was needed only as a "visible sign" to rally the faithful in the physical world, much like the Catholic sacraments like eucharist.[55] Pole believed that the council, as a church body appointed to review and purify the faith of any inaccuracies, had the power to define Catholicism even in defiance of the pope. This belief in papal fallibility became critical in the days of the Marian Counter-Reformation, in days when tension with Pope Paul IV reached alarming heights.

Pole showed more radical colors still when the council turned to the question of justification in June 1545. Opinions were varied and the discussion was heated, since the Catholic belief in justification by faith and works was flatly rejected by Protestants. Catholic doctrine at that time held that human beings could enter heaven though a combination of faith in God and the completion of good works. The Lutheran concept of *sola fide*, in contrast, held that humans were so deeply tainted by original sin that they had no hope of earning salvation themselves, and they had to cast themselves entirely on God's mercy – rendering good deeds and

52 Ibid.
53 Ibid., 145.
54 Reginald Pole, "De Concilio," quoted in Mayer, *Reginald Pole*, 145.
55 Mayer, *Reginald Pole*, 146.

customs like monastic vows utterly useless. Several of Pole's written opinions from this time carry a distinct Lutheran slant; the historian Thomas Mayer even goes so far as to point out that some letters are "indistinguishable from Luther's."[56] Pole's comments, speech, and abrupt departure from the council – as described by several of his fellow cardinals – all support the idea that Pole was aware that his views on justification fell far from Catholic orthodoxy. His remarks in *De Concilio* reveal that he did not entirely agree with the Protestant side, since he warned that those who openly preached *sola fide* "detract from pious actions of charity" and "give occasion and license to the lazy of doing nothing, and to the active of doing badly."[57] However, it is clear that Pole stressed faith *over* works as the key to justification. He believed that all men were irredeemably sinful, that they had an "evil inclination" and that original sin "means death for us, inherited from Adam."[58] He was adamant on this point, and even intervened to ensure that no one could interpret the council's decree to mean that baptism removed the potential to sin.[59] Pole felt that only Christ's sacrifice could redeem humans, and so the path to justification lay in faith rather than human deeds.

The way in which Pole set the tone of the discussion also provides insight into his private beliefs. In Pole's opening statement at the justification session, he ordered the council to read Lutheran works as well as Catholic ones, reminding them that "Heretics be not in all things heretics" and not to judge with the assumption "Luther said that, therefore it is false."[60] Rather, he urged them to read everything "in a fair spirit, by whomever written and whomever published, and keep that which is good."[61] He warned the council to "hold to a middle course, lest in

56 Mayer, *Reginald Pole*, 146.
57 Pole, "De Concilio," quoted in Mayer, *Reginald Pole,* 146.
58 Pole, "De Concilio," quoted in Mayer, *Reginald Pole,* 152.
59 Mayer, *Reginald Pole*, 152
60 Roberto Pancheri, ed., *Il Concilio a Trento: I Luoghi e la Memoria* (2009), quoted in O'Malley, *Trent,* 108.
61 Ibid., 146

refuting an error it fall into the opposite extreme."[62]

It quickly became evident that the *spirituali* was about to suffer a defeat in the matter, and on June 28 Pole claimed illness and suddenly left the council. The causes and even reality of his illness has later been questioned by some historians, who found several letters by Pole's *spirituali* allies – namely Cardinals Carneseecchi, Colonna, Priuli, and Flaminio – that said that Pole left to avoid having to approve to the council's decision.[63] While evidence exists that Pole consulted physicians during this time, suggestive of real illness, he also went to extraordinary lengths to avoid giving his approval to the justification decision. He moved to Treville and then to Padua despite orders to return, and even tried to send an agent to Rome to avoid commenting personally on the draft decree. He pleaded that the session on justification continue, on the grounds that the matter had not been raised in 1,500 years, and that the decision would only fuel conflict with the Protestants.[64] Finally however, Pole was forced to deliver his opinion, and in it he flatly criticized the council's decision. He insisted that "of ourselves we are always evil, they [our works] can never be good such that they will justify us in the presence of God".[65] When one combines his written opinion with the strange, avoidant patterns of the summer of 1545, one finds compelling evidence that Pole truly did believe in justification by faith and had throughout the council. Like other *spirituali* reformers, in this matter he identified more with the Protestant side than with the conservative Catholics.

When seeking to understand the beliefs Cardinal Pole, one must never forget he was a Catholic; to some, this makes him appear old-fashioned. But to other Catholics of Europe, Pole was a bold and groundbreaking reformer, and any description of him seeking to turn back the

62 Ibid.
63 Mayer, *Reginald Pole*, 153.
64 Ibid., 154.
65 Ibid., 157

clock to previous traditions would have seemed baffling. His beliefs in justification by faith over works and the fallibility of the pope – that popes could be disobeyed to uphold the true faith – influenced the Marian Counter-Reformation and provided a model on which to build the English church. When the Marian church materialized, it resembled the church envisioned by Pole and the *spirituali* far more than a copy of Rome.

The Humanist Queen

Like Pole, Mary Tudor was a Catholic, and in that identity she shared certain beliefs with even the most conservative cardinals in Rome. She believed in all seven sacraments, clerical celibacy, the importance of charity, and even the need for papal power to unite the church – although she only obeyed papal orders so long as they did not conflict with her conscience. Mary Tudor was also utterly devoted to the Mass, something agreed upon by her contemporaries and modern historians alike. However, one must also recognize that Mary Tudor was raised from her earliest days in a court brimming with humanist ideas of reform. In Henry VIII's England Sir Thomas More wrote his famous work *Utopia*, John Fisher ardently defended the "new learning" at Cambridge, and Henry VIII himself even proved his scholarly aptitude with his publication of *Assertio Septem Sacramentorum* in 1521.[66] In the way of religious reforms, many humanists urged reading of the scriptures, greater clerical education, and the translation of religious texts into the vernacular. Mary herself embraced many of these ideas, and when she was granted the opportunity to "reinvent" a Catholic Church in England, she made certain that it stood on the cutting edge of reform.

One must first acknowledge the ways in which Queen Mary was a traditional Catholic.

66 John Edwards, *Mary I: England's Catholic Queen* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2011), 8.

The core of her personal faith appears to have been based in the traditional Catholic Mass, to which she demonstrated her commitment throughout her life, even at great personal risk. This commitment became clear during her infamous clashes with the Protestant Reformation leaders between 1547 and 1553, when she openly defied the regency government of her brother King Edward VI. When the Mass was banned and the First Prayer Book officially introduced in 1549, Mary celebrated Mass "with especial pomp" in her own chapel at Kennington Hall, and persisted in practicing the illegal rite in her household, despite the threats of the Protestant authorities.[67] In June 1549, the royal council pointed out the criminality of her actions. They ordered her to "be conformable and obedient to the observation of his Majesty's laws" and "give order that mass should no more be used in her house."[68] Mary tartly responded that she had violated no law, except those "of your owne making for the altering of matters of Religion, whiche in my conscience is not worthy to have the name of a Lawe."[69] Throughout Edward VI's reign Mary refused to adopt the new Protestant liturgy and continued to hear Mass up to four times each day, according to one account.[70] Throughout her queenship she displayed evidence of the same devotion.

It is important to take note here of Mary's particular attachment to the sacrament of the altar, as it had very real implications for the priorities of her church – and later, the burnings. One of her first acts upon gaining the throne was to deprive all priests who had married under the Edwardian government; this resulted directly from her belief that priests assisted in a sacred

67 Loades, "The Personal Religion of Mary Tudor" in *The Church of Mary Tudor*, 16.
68 The council to Mary (1549), quoted in Loades, "The Personal Religion of Mary Tudor" in *The Church of Mary Tudor*, 16.
69 Mary I, "To my Lorde Protectour and the rest of the kings Maiesties Counsaile" (1549), quoted in Foxe, *Actes and Monumentes* (London, 1583), 1356.
70 Van der Delft to the emperor (1547), quoted in Loades, "The Personal Religion of Mary Tudor" in *The Church of Mary Tudor*, 15.

miracle in the Mass, and thus they needed to be held to holier standards of celibacy.[71] It was also the issue of transubstantiation that sent Protestants to the stake in overwhelming numbers, far more than other Protestant doctrines like justification by faith or clerical marriage. In trials, suspected Protestants were most often asked, "after the words of consecration spoken, what remaineth in the bread and wine?"[72] This question was considered to be the simplest and most concrete way to separate Catholics from "Protestants" of any persuasion, and so was used as the common test in Marian trials.

With regard to the Mass, Mary Tudor can be described as a perfectly orthodox Catholic. On many other matters of Catholic reform, she demonstrated the beliefs that one would expect of a humanist princess. She did not revive the influence of saints in her church, but emphasized a Christ-centered faith; she instituted sweeping educational reforms for the clergy, the model of which would become the inspiration of Europe and the Counter-Reformation; finally, she maintained the legality of English scriptures in her church, including the English Bible. Such ideas show a marked similarity to the writings of humanists like More and Erasmus, whose names so defined the intellectual culture she had known in Henry VIII's court.

The Problem of the Pope

Restoring England to papal obedience was one of the most arduous tasks that the Marian regime faced, and England's obedience never truly became more than a formality in the Marian church. By 1553 the English people had been subjected to some twenty years of anti-papal propaganda, originating Henry VIII's break with Rome in 1534, and since then even Catholics in

71 Loades, "The Personal Religion of Mary Tudor" in *The Church of Mary Tudor*, 20.
72 Ibid., 29.

England had developed a certain distaste for the "Bishop of Rome."[73] Mary and Pole saw the need for a pope as a unifying figurehead, but the general attitude held by Marian leaders appeared to be in line with Pole's comments in *De Concilio,* which associated the infallibility of Catholicism with the faith itself rather than Peter's descendants. Marian international policy favored England's needs over the orders of the papal see, and Mary in particular proved her willingness to openly defy Pope Paul IV as she had once defied the Edwardian councillors if she felt the need. Before accusing Mary's church of being blindly conservative in its approach, one must not forget England's icy relations with the pope that lasted for the second half of her reign.

Part of the problem was the particular pope who took office in 1555, Pope Paul IV. He was a notorious persecutor of heretics who had revived the Roman Inquisition, and he was highly unpopular throughout Europe. Paul IV did not merely direct his efforts against Protestants, but against the "heresy" he felt was rampant in the ranks of the Roman Catholic church. On the eve of the broader Counter-Reformation, Catholics had split into many opposing factions like those that had appeared at the first sessions of Trent, and many reformers like Pole found themselves under threat of trial and incarceration. Paul IV's intentions were clear with regard to Pole and the *spirituali*; he ended the pension of Michelangelo, a known *spirituali* member, and imprisoned Pole's close ally Cardinal Giovanni Morone on the charge that he was a hidden Protestant.[74] He also expressed his disapproval of scriptures in the vernacular, as he banned all Italian and German translations of the Bible in his "Index of Prohibited Books."[75] Paul IV's deep suspicion of the *sprituali*, of which Cardinal Pole was a well-known member, and his deep hatred of Habsburgs like Mary's husband, set Marian England and Rome on a collision course not two

73 Lucy Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism in Reformation England* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 2000), 122.
74 O'Malley, *Trent*, 160.
75 Ibid., 159.

years after they had reconciled.

Tension with Rome appeared at all levels in England, both in the church leadership and on the ground among the English people. Two great divisive events best demonstrate the attitude of the Marian leaders toward the pope, and in both of them Queen Mary herself took a hard stance against papal orders. In the first incident, as Paul IVs wrath turned against the *spirituali* reformers, the pope ordered Cardinal Pole to be recalled from England to stand trial. In the breve he laid a list of eighteen charges against Pole, including the preaching of heresy, his association with the heretic ex-Cardinal Flaminio, and reading the banned work *Beneficio de Christo,* which had appeared on Paul IV's Index of Forbidden Books.[76] The radical Italian text defended justification by faith using evidence from Jean Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion,* and was considered dangerous by many conservative cardinals. It was also almost certainly read by Pole, as it was known to be a core text of the *spirituali*.[77]

Mary refused to admit the papal messenger into England with the breve against Pole, and she refused to acknowledge the pope's appointment of Pole's replacement, William Peto. Pole's response to Paul IV also worsened tensions; although he agreed to return to Rome if ordered, he sent a strongly-worded document called the Apologia in August of 1557 which asserted the right to defy a pope in defense of the faith.[78] While Pole offered to relinquish his post as legate, he claimed that he could not accept the way the pope had treated him. He claimed cardinals could resist a pope "when they see anything against Christ's honour," and insisted that cardinals even had a duty to resist. They "must first admonish him [the pope] with all humility, and spell out the

76 John Jeffries Martin, *Venice's Hidden Enemies: Italian Heretics in a Renaissance City* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, California: University of California Press, 1993), 86.
77 "Paul IV," *Encyclopaedia Britannica Online*, accessed February 04, 2014, http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/44691/Paul-IV.
78 Reginald Pole, "Apologia," quoted in Mayer, in *Reginald Pole*, 319.

matter in open words. If he persists, they should criticize him more freely, nor should they agree on such a matter… but resist him to his face."[79] Reminiscent of Pole's speeches at Trent, the Apologia again exposed Pole's reformist tendencies and declared that papal power was not absolute. Paul IV never again recognized Pole as legate, although Pole continued to lead the Marian church as Archbishop of Canterbury. Mary's and Pole's opposition to Rome suggests that at least among Marian leadership, papal obedience was more of a formality than a binding spiritual duty.

Queen Mary also clashed with the pope when he and her Habsburg husband, Philip II, went to war in 1556. Aggravated by Pope Paul IV's anti-Spanish hostility, Philip II openly declared war against Pope Paul IV and temporarily seized possession of territory in the Papal States. He claimed to be acting as "the protector of the Apolstolic See," claiming that he intended only "to wrest the knife from this madman's hand and make him return to a sense of his dignity."[80] Pope Paul IV was forced to offer peace terms after one of Philip's commanders, the Duke of Alba, led his troops all the way to the walls of Rome in August 1557 and prepared to flush out the modest papal army by force.[81] Paul IV was ultimately not deposed in this attack, but Mary was deeply alienated from the papal see by offering her assistance to her husband instead of the pope. She proved to be willing to risk excommunication to uphold her temporal responsibilities to her husband and a fellow king, and even after her death Paul IV referred to her as his "undutiful daughter."[82]

Leaders of the Marian church like Mary and Pole do not necessarily reflect the teachings of the Marian church as a whole, so the question remains: what message was conveyed to the

79 Ibid.
80 Edwards, "Spanish Influence in Marian England" in *The Church of Mary Tudor*, 220.
81 Ibid., 222.
82 Ibid.

public about the power of Rome? Was papal supremacy upheld by Marian books and sermons as a central and unquestioned part of the church, as later Counter-Reformation leaders would assert, or was the pope approached in a more complex way? How often was he written of at all, and to what extent can one claim that papal supremacy was a characteristic of the Marian church?

Based on an examination of works published at the time, it appears that most English subjects only reluctantly accepted the papacy. Indeed, based on their innumerable descriptions of Henry VIII as a model "Catholike Prince" – the same man who had broken England's ties to Rome – many Catholics did not appear to feel the need for a pope at all in English Catholicism.[83] In one 1557 sermon, for instance, Roger Edgeworth praised "the kinges maiestie, and all the catholike clerkes in the realme" for their efforts to "extinguishe" heretics.[84]Similarly, John Proctor praised Mary for returning "trewe light and knowledge" to England, which "from the death of that noble prince her father Henry the viii was here in this realme extincte, and vtterly abolished."[85] Proctor thus identified heretical religion only with the government that succeeded Henry, not with Henry himself. Many Marian authors repeatedly dated the "heresy" not to the schism in 1534, but to Henry VIII's death in 1547.[86] Such language indicates that after twenty years Henrician Catholicism had become normative, and that most English subjects expected a return to Catholic traditions like the Mass but did not necessarily feel any affinity for the pope. What emerged in the Marian church was not a renewal of Catholicism before Henry VIII's schism, but a faith in which traditional obedience to Rome was deeply undermined.[87] Mary and Pole supported papal authority as a way to unite the church on earth under a single "vicar," and

83 Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism*, 122.
84 Roger Edgeworth, *Sermons very fruitfull*, 120.
85 John Proctor, *The waie home to Christ and truth leadinge from Antichrist and errour* (London,1554), sig.Aiiir.
86 Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism*, 120.
87 Ibid.

while writers of the Marian church agreed on this same need for unity, they tended to speak about it in an abstract fashion while avoiding references to the pope himself. John Proctor's *The Waie Home to Christe* was published in 1554 and reissued in 1556, and while the work stressed the importance of the "unity of Holy Mother Church," it did not mention the pope once in either edition.[88] In Bishop Brokke's Injunctions for the Gloucester diocese (1556), the pope did not appear at all in any of the seventeen articles addressed to the laity, and in clergy articles he appeared only once, when priests were ordered to restore the pope's name to the intercessions.[89]

If the English people found their "vicar" in anyone at all, the literature of the time indicates that it was in Queen Mary. She did, after all, fit the role left vacant by Henry VIII as a legitimate monarch and a religious reformer.[90] While many Marian authors ignored the pope's name in their written discourse, they often praised "the Queen's Godly proceedings" and dedicated their works to her, calling her "the bright sterre [star] of Evangelike lite" and thanking her for restoring the true religion.[91]

Marian Catholicism was in many respects more similar to Henrician religion than a conservative "revival" of 1520s Catholicism. Catholic writers reveal that despite the legal restoration of papal supremacy, it was often ignored and stayed only a peripheral idea in the Marian church. The Marian leaders' willingness to act against the pope, like Mary's Habsburg alliance and Pole's conflict with Paul IV, demonstrates that the supremacy they acknowledged was far from unconditional. If England's return to Rome can be seen as a "conservative" move, as argued by historians like William Wizeman and Andrew Pettegree, the rulers' attitudes and

88 David Loades, "The Piety of the Catholic Restoration in England, 1553-1558," in *Humanism and Reform: The Church in Europe, England, and Scotland, 1400-1643*, ed. James Kirk (Oxford and Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell Ltd, 1991), 294.
89 David Loades, "The Catholic Restoration in England" in *Humanism and Reform*, 294.
90 David Loades, "The Catholic Restoration in England" in *Humanism and Reform*, 294.
91 Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism*, 119.

Marian church writings indicate that it was heavily qualified at best.

The Fading of the Saints

Had Catherine of Aragon survived to see her daughter's church in the 1550s, she likely would have found many aspects of its lay piety strange. The church that Queen Catherine knew followed the style of English Catholicism in the 1520s, in which shrines, pilgrimages, and the reverence of saints had been central to religious devotion. She was often praised for her patronage to local shrines, which she visited while her husband left on hunting trips.[92] It is certainly significant that her daughter never made a single pilgrimage as queen, and demonstrated a noticeable lack of patronage to the traditional saint sites.[93]

Mary was an unusual monarch in that she did not appear to follow any particular saints. Even her devotion to her namesake, the Virgin Mary, was described as "very slight" and many of the great shrines destroyed in the 1530s were never restored during the English Counter-Reformation.[94] The shrine of Saint Edward the Confessor was restored at Westminster, yet this project was undertaken entirely by local monks and had no attachment to the royal government.[95] Several colleges were established during her reign, but not a single chantry or other institution meant solely for the praying of souls; Mary herself seems to have harbored some doubts about these practices. Henry VIII rejected the doctrine of purgatory, yet in his will he still made the traditional request that 30,000 masses be said for his soul.[96] Mary's will is remarkable in that it requests none, a significant break from custom that suggests the lack of patronage to chantries

92 Edwards, *Mary I,* 15.
93 David Loades, "The Catholic Restoration in England" in *Humanism and Reform*, 298.
94 Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism*, 300.
95 Ibid.
96 Ibid.

was quite deliberate.[97]

It is true that the regime suffered from financial troubles, particularly with the outbreak of war, and one could argue the regime simply did not have had the means to restore such sites. However, this shift away from the saints is still clear in the way the regime apportioned the patronage it did distribute. When Queen Mary granted funds, they were overwhelmingly for the founding of hospitals or educational institutions rather than to the revival of the saints.[98] In the same years that the shrines of the Virgin Mary and other saints lay vacant, generous royal funds flowed to the founding of Manchester College and the Hospital of Savoy.[99] Financial troubles explain a lack of restoration overall, but certainly does not account for the extremely low priority that the regime accorded such restorations, judging by the actual percentage of the budget. Even in her will, Queen Mary bequeathed 500 pounds to both Oxford and Cambridge "to be distributed and geven amongste the . . . pore Scolers" and 400 pounds to the founding of a new hospital in London, but virtually no funds to any saintly institution.[100] Attempts to restore saints' images to churches were few and half-hearted; a few images of St Thomas of Canterbury reappeared – only to be promptly vandalized by Protestants – but the accompanying shrines were never funded or ordered to be rebuilt.[101] This shift in piety was apparent throughout the English laity as well, as reflected in book sales during the 1550s. Only a handful of works offering accounts of saints' lives were published during Mary's reign, and even the 1520s bestseller *Legenda Aurea* disappeared from publishers entirely.[102] Among the fifty-seven books listed in the will of one Catholic layman, Richard Brereton of Middlewich, one finds no work at all

97 Ibid.
98 Loades, "The Catholic Restoration in England" in *Humanism and Reform*, 299.
99 Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism*, 130.
100 Mary I, will (1558), quoted in Jean Mary Stone *Mary I: Queen of England*, (London: Sands & Co., 1901), 510.
101 Loades, "The Catholic Restoration in England" in *Humanism and Reform*, 300.
102 Ibid.

specifically addressing the saints. Instead, his books reflect the increasingly Christ- and scripture-focused Catholicism that had developed in Marian England: he owned many traditional litrugical works, a version of *Imitatio Christi* published in English in 1556, and several English Bibles.[103] This lack of interest in saints and emphasis on English, Christ-centered works can be observed in several wills of the time, including Sir William More of Loseley's will in 1556. It is important to recognize that the religious culture of the 1550s had fundamentally shifted since the 1520s, and the Catholic experience of laymen was altered by decisions of royal patronage. Mary's humanist attitudes thus were not simply debated in her court, but realized in the church on a level that redefined Catholicism.

Opening Scripture in "the Englishe tonge"

The opening of the scripture to the laity in vernacular languages was hotly debated, not only with the opening of the Trent sessions in 1545 but stretching all the way back to the humanist proposals in the 1520s. Perhaps in response to humanist emphasis on correct translations of ancient languages, or perhaps due to Protestant challengers willing to quote the scripture in English, Catholic writers in England began to produce both Latin and English translations of a work together.[104] The English primers provide an interesting example of this: out of the thirty-five primers printed in Mary's reign, eighteen were in traditional Latin, twelve were in both Latin and English, and five were written in English alone.[105] Catholic theological treatises published in the 1550s follow a similar pattern, as seen in an earlier section, including Bonner's *Homilies* and Pole's *Justification*; authors provided passages of scripture in Latin

103 Ibid., 301.
104 Duffy, *Fires of Faith*, 27.
105 Ibid., 28.

indicate the church's longing to return to the exclusivity of Latin scriptures, but rather a reluctance to circulate suspect Protestant texts. On the question of religious texts in English – provided such texts were appropriately *Catholic* – the Marian church took the line expected of its humanist queen. Had the Marian church survived until the production of the English New Testament commissioned in 1557, its reputation would likely be very different today, and it might instead be known as a model of reform in sixteenth-century Catholicism.

Piercing the Smoke of Smithfield: Context and Reprieve in the Marian Executions

Descriptions of trials and burnings in John Foxe's *Actes and Monumentes* have defined the popular perception of Mary's reign from the sixteenth century until the modern day. However much the regime might be lauded for its propaganda efforts and elements of Catholic reform, the slew of fiery Protestant executions has brought the regime a stubborn reputation for brutality and intolerance. Historians have criticized the judicial methods of the Marian church for many years; historian Andrew Pettegree wrote that the Marian church was brutal and outdated by the standards of other European kingdoms, while historian Gina Alexander insists that Mary's government was using "the wrong weapons … in a fight it could not win."[110]

Much of the historiography and popular memory of the Counter-Reformation has been deeply influenced by the *Actes and Monumentes*, and therefore it bears some examination here. John Foxe compiled this work abroad during the years of the Marian persecution, in order to defend the validity of the Protestant faith and to document the lives and deaths of many of the martyrs executed in England. Foxe studiously compiled accounts of the trials and executions of the victims, and although historians continue to be cautious of his Protestant biases when reading the work, much evidence has been found to corroborate the details in his accounts.[111] On the whole, it can be said that Foxe was himself a careful historian.

It is critical to recognize, however, that while Foxe's book told a true story of the regime's victims, it cannot be taken as a depiction of the entire Marian Counter-Reformation. Foxe's objective as a martyrologist was not to point out instances where Catholics deserved praise, but

110 Gina Alexander, "Bonner and the Marian Persecutions," in C. Haigh (ed), *The English Reformation Revised* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 175.

111 Ross Bartlett, "John Foxe as Hagiographer: The Question Revisited" in *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 26, no. 4 (Winter 1995): 771.

to reaffirm the Protestant faith and unite those who had braved the fire of persecution. One must also note that instances where Protestants recanted and were pardoned by the regime were unlikely to appear in Foxe's work, simply because it was devoted to martyrs who stood by the Protestant cause and not to those who, in his view, had forsaken it.

Emerging scholarship by historians such as Eamon Duffy and William Monter has taken all of this into account and attempted to judge the Marian persecution by the standards of its time. Mary's government can not be viewed as outdated if, in fact, it was keeping with the most current and encouraged methods of the era. In Rome, Pope Paul IV revived the Roman Inquisition and imprisoned cardinals for any slight deviation from his own notion of orthodoxy; in the Spanish Netherlands in the 1560s, the Habsburgs unleashed a campaign of persecution that resulted in the greatest number of burnings in Europe; in France, the government waged war on Protestant Huguenots and popular anger erupted in savage massacres, such as the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre in 1572, which claimed 2,000 victims in the streets of Paris alone.[112] On the whole, many Catholics by the mid-sixteenth century had come to an agreement to extinguish Protestantism "by the sword," where it was necessary. Protestantism in England had flourished with the support of the Edwardian regency, and the Mary's regime attempted to reverse it by applying the methods used in other Catholic kingdoms.

When the Marian persecution is placed in context and compared against judicial practices elsewhere in Europe, one finds that it was only one example of a great rise in religious violence that peaked in the late sixteenth-century, and formed "an ominous statistical mountain on the legal landscape of late-Renaissance Christendom."[113] There is also a tendency to place blame for

112 William Monter, "Heresy Executions in Reformation Europe, 1520-1565," in *Tolerance and Intolerance in the European Reformation,* ed. Ole Peter Grell, Bob Scribner, and Robert W. Scribner (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 62.

113 Ibid.

the vast numbers of executions only on the shoulders of the leaders, coining the nickname "Bloody Mary" and the regime's overall supposed zeal for killing. But historical evidence suggests that no royal government had the infrastructure to enact its own policies on the ground in every community. Instead, it was local officials and informers from local communities that presented the vast number of suspected Protestants for examination. The ferocity of the executions varied by region, depending on the cooperativeness of the inhabitants; one cannot forget that as much as the executions were enabled from above, in the high reaches of government, the unusually large number of executions was only achieved by cooperation at the grassroots. The name "Bloody Mary" and the murderous reputation gained by her bishops is, therefore, simplistic and inappropriate.

source?

Finally, one must recognize the opportunities for education and reprieve that the Marian church did extend to its subjects, and even to known Protestants. Since Mary's regime allowed Protestants to be tried in ecclesiastical courts, suspects could be pardoned at virtually any stage of their trial simply by a recantation and a light penance. One must recognize that for the most part, those who died during the Marian persecution were only the most committed of the Protestant core in England; far more Protestants were pardoned than executed, particularly those who blamed their sins on "heretical teachers" of the Edwardian government. In some ways, by comparison to the Protestant persecution elsewhere in Europe, the Marian church was known among reformers as being admirably lenient.

The Plight of European Protestants

By the mid-sixteenth century, Protestantism had grown into a threat formidable enough to

draw the eyes of European governments, particularly those in northern Europe. Before he was elected pope, Paul IV (known then as Gian Pietro Carafa) had once famously boasted that he would "bring faggots [wood] to burn his own mother" if she were proven a heretic.[114] While Pope Paul IV's aggression against deviants within the Catholic church earned him much unpopularity, his sentiments on the execution of Protestants were shared by many European leaders. The widest gulf between the Marian regime and other European regimes was not that the Marian government executed Protestants, but simply that they did so for the crime of heresy, while other European governments generally hid their persecution behind secular charges. A direct contrast of "heresy" executions, therefore, makes the Marian regime's violence seem unusually high with a total of 283, as compared to 46 in Italy and 26 in France.[115] When one includes the more common charges used to execute Protestants in Europe – such as iconoclasm, sedition, and conspiracy – one finds that the scene in Reformation Europe was far bloodier than even martyrologists claimed. Protestant martyrologists, for example, often did not include records of Protestants convicted on baser charges like iconoclasm, as the crime was controversial and was less likely to attract sympathy for their cause.[116] If the Marian regime can be considered outdated at all, it is only because it continued to apply the label of "heretic" to its Protestant targets, while other European governments tried Protestants in secular courts.

The greatest amount of violent persecution did not occur in England, but in the Spanish Netherlands in the late 1560s. By comparison, the Marian executions appear mild. The Duke of Alva imposed his "Council of Troubles" and executed approximately 1,100 Protestants between 1567 and 1574, only a handful of which were specifically condemned for heresy.[117] The 283

114 William Montner, "Heresy Executions in Reformation Europe, 1520-1565" in *Tolerance and Intolerance*, 56.
115 Duffy, *Fires of Faith*, 82.
116 Monter, "Heresy Executions in Reformation Europe, 1520-1565," in *Tolerance and Intolerance*, 59.
117 Ibid.

Marian executions were dwarfed by the Protestant executions in the provinces of Flanders and Brabant alone, which totaled 300 each.[118] The province of Tournaisis followed behind with 180, and Holland with 170 in a slightly earlier period between 1530 to 1554.[119] In France, the numbers also become alarming once one includes Protestants executed on secular charges. An average of 20 Protestants per year were ostensibly executed for "heresy" between 1560 and 1564, but this does not include in the 200 deaths on charges of "rebellion" and "sedition" during the first War of Religion.[120] After a failed coup in Mary 1562 by the Huguenots of France, for instance, the Parlement of Toulouse summarily executed 120 Protestants in one sweep, an episode of horrific violence that in itself could account for nearly half the Marian executions in England.[121] Elizabeth I would later adopt this broader European strategy in England; she had more than 200 Catholics "strangled, disembowelled and dismembered" for alleged crimes against the state, although she burned none for heresy.[122]

This secularization resulted from pressure by the Habsburgs and King Francis I to try "Lutherans" in royal courts.[123] Protestantism and crimes against the government had blurred together by the mid-sixteenth century, and rulers felt they needed to answer Protestantism in quicker and harsher manner to maintain order. The revolt of Dutch Protestants against the Catholic Habsburgs in the 1560s and the outbreak of the French Wars of Religion in 1562, for example, both posed very real and secular threats. Heresy was traditionally dealt with by ecclesiastical officials and papal Inquisitors, and the emphasis had been placed more on

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118 Ibid., 55.
119 Ibid.
120 Ibid., 49.
121 Ibid., 59.
122 Duffy, *Fires of Faith*, 82.
123 Monter, "Heresy Executions in Reformation Europe, 1520-1565" in *Tolerance and Intolerance*, 60.

converting suspects back to the church than executing them, which was generally a last resort.[124] Secular trials could hand out death sentences more easily, with no attempt at correction before the sentence was carried out, and no chance for the accused to be spared by conversion.[125] The traditional fires associated with heretics were exchanged for gallows in most of Europe, but this only signaled the continuation of the persecution in its most effective form. The rest of Europe was no more "enlightened" than the Marian regime in its reluctance to execute heretics, but they simply chose to adopt strategies quicker than ecclesiastical trials to cope with the Protestant danger. If one can make the statement that the Marian church was old-fashioned in its approach, it can only be said that it kept "old-fashioned" appearances while following a very contemporary trend.

"Promote" Thy Neighbor: the Persecution in Communities

It is difficult to determine exactly where the greatest zeal for the persecution originated: did it begin high in the government and press down, in the style of an Inquisition, or were heretics turned in by their own neighbors? Popular opinion in the sixteenth century was sparingly documented – and in some cases, little cared about – but enough documentation exists from the Marian judicial system to suggest that the campaign against Protestants only reached its true "brutal" potential in communities that cooperated. The executions were licensed and not actively stopped by figures like Mary and Pole – and to this extent, it is sound to argue that they were culpable – but the ferocity of the persecution was fueled less by leaders' personal involvement than by the attitudes of Catholic magistrates at local levels. Evidence reveals little personal

124 MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer*, 534.
125 Ibid., 335.

encouragement from the famous "bloody" leaders, and even examples of surprising restraint when it came to cases of "simple" and "unlearned" laypeople. Evidence rather suggests that lay victims were more often pursued by zealous local officials than the high echelons of church government, and that the Marian leaders largely confined themselves to pursuing Protestant teachers, and even urged leniency for laymen. The bloodiness of the Marian period, then, should not simply be attributed to the murderous attitude of a single queen, but also understood as a broader result of the culture of 1550s England. The leaders cannot be exonerated entirely – as they offered a form of sanction by permission and silence – but widespread cultural shifts at the grassroots were equally significant, and fanned the spark of the heresy laws into a very notorious flame.

The community was given immense power over the persecution by the very structure of the Marian judicial system. Although high-level clergymen supported the right to execute heretics and wrote treatises in its defense, it must be noted that the "most enthusiastic participants" were [local secular commissioners] outside of the church.[126] A letter from Queen Mary herself to the justices of the peace in Norfolk revealed that communities wielded tremendous control over enforcement of the heresy laws. In March, 1555 she ordered local magistrates to assist priests "to preach Catholic doctrine to the people" in their county, and to report any who showed religious dissent. In addition, they were to choose a handful of "the most honest and catholick" laymen of each parish, who were then "secretly instructed" to act as informers.[127] It is also interesting to note that John Foxe's book also tended to point to the local magistrates as the greatest villains of the persecution, with a few exceptions. He described many

126 Duffy, *Fires of Faith*, 95.
127 Ibid.

zealous magistrates, like Robert Caly – whom Foxe bitterly immortalized as "Papist Robin the promoter" – and Edmund Turrell of Essex, who conducted a devastating sweep through Essex in 1556 and was eager to "heape vp more coales to this furious flame of persecution."[128] Constables and magistrates organized raids by night upon the houses of suspected Protestants, and reported any behavior that seemed to deviate from the Catholic norm. These offenses could be as simple as withdrawing from the church choir, or as serious as avoiding church services altogether – a crime known as recusancy.[129] In one infamous story, an official nicknamed "Mr Justice Nine Holes" allegedly drilled holes in a parish screen to take note of any who fell asleep during the sermon or did not show sufficient reverence during the Mass.[130]

It can be concluded that the majority of the blame for the persecution lay with the magistrates, but trial records indicate that there was also a role played by average community members. This was reported only sparingly by Foxe, since English people turning in Protestant neighbors made the Protestants appear unpopular, which hardly suited Foxe's needs. The story of Alice Benden provides a powerful example of community involvement; she was "promoted" by her own husband and was burned at Canterbury in June 1557, but not before her own father sent her to prison with a bent shilling of Philip and Mary to show his shame in her treachery.[131] Other such tales scatter the records of the Marian persecution: when the suspected Protestant laywoman Thomasine Asshenton was arrested for failing to join a procession, for instance, her neighbor Richard Baker allegedly watched her arrest. He said only, "Well, Asshendens wife, thow was an heretique before that thow camest hither, and will be an heretike still … you would have been

128 Foxe, *Book of Actes and Monuments* (London: 1583), 1683.
129 Patrick Collinson, "The Persecution in Kent," in *The Church of Mary Tudor*, 322.
130 Foxe, *Book of Actes and Monuments* (1583), 2111-2112.
131 Colinson, "Kent," in *The Church of Mary Tudor*, 326.

burnt for your heresye vii [seven] yeres agoon.[132] The town of Ispwich is perhaps the greatest example, as it took the persecution entirely into its own hands. Local residents produced a list of thirty-nine Protestants who had fled persecution, twenty-three who had refused to accept the Sacrament, and ten who acted irreverently during ceremonies.[133] Additionally, they accused the local curate of neglecting to report Protestants "by corruption of money" and reported him to royal commissioners.[134] Varying degrees of local support were as responsible for the intensity of the persecution as any Marian leader. The movement begun by elites was seized upon by local officials and communities, and one must remember that much of the persecution was carried out with little direct involvement from Mary or other high church leaders. One cannot blame a single figure like "Bloody Mary" for the deaths of several hundred Protestants without ignoring the persecutors that existed at all levels of society. One must draw a distinct line between the goals of Mary's regime and the zeal of thousands of local officials to root out heretics on the ground, and keep in mind that Mary's and Pole's involvement in the persecution was far more limited than is often thought.

Preaching, Publicity, and the Persecution from Above

In early 1555, the queen outlined the program that would one day be remembered as a judicial massacre in somewhat surprising terms. She warned that the punishment of all heretics was to be done "without rashness," and defined her targets as those who "by learning would seem to deceive the simple."[135] Whenever possible, the reasons for every execution needed to be explained to the crowd, so that the English people "might well perceive them [the guilty] not to

132 Collinson, "Kent," 322.
133 Ibid., 323.
134 Ibid.
135 Duffy, *Fires of Faith*, 94.

be condemned without just occasion," and each execution was to be accompanied by educational preaching to prevent others from falling into error.[136] Although the Marian persecution eventually expanded to claim nearly 300 victims, many of them women and lay people, the goals of the government itself appeared to fall very much in line with Mary's controlled vision of the campaign.

Local officials tended to pursue local targets, the sort of Protestants who discreetly spat out the communion bread or feigned illness to avoid Catholic services. Many of these lay targets were not confrontational, but attempted to cling to their beliefs in a quiet fashion and made no attempt to spread them. When the regime opened the curtain on the persecution in 1555, nearly all of the initial targets – and indeed, the ones Marian leadership took special interest in throughout the reign – were not "unlearned" laymen, but priests.[137] The first four victims sent to the fire were not simple lay people like Alice Benden, but high-profile Protestant clergymen.[138] The regime also devoted much of its attention to the examination of these Protestant preachers, as Foxe's work can also attest. The Marian trials were often conducted in very public arenas – for the most high-profile cases, at Oxford or Cambridge – where Catholic examiners held a formal debate with the Protestants. Although these were academic events and usually conducted in Latin, large portions of the discussions were translated into English and later published, so that the English people might be persuaded out of their own Protestant ideas by the arguments of expert Catholic theologians.[139] Mary's government attempted first and foremost to use the persecution as an event of "political theater," and saw trials as opportunities to convert others to

136 Ibid.
137 Thomas Mayer, *A Reluctant Author: Cardinal Pole and his Manuscripts* (Philadelphia: Americal Philosophical Society, 1999), 8.
138 Duffy, *Fires of Faith,*
139 Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer: A Life* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996), 561.

Catholicism by education and example.[140] High-profile Protestants made the most logical targets for the government, since their conversions could most demoralize Protestant resistance in England.

Cardinal Pole offers a striking example of leniency in the Marian church. Although he is well remembered for his involvement in the trial of Thomas Cranmer, the ex-Archbishop of Canterbury, his *spirituali* sympathies often led him to pardon to all but the most notorious Protestants, and he was praised highly by many reformers for this practice.[141] He extended mercy even to many "heinous" offenders, such as John Cheke, tutor to King Edward VI and Cambridge professor, and Edward Crome, a famous Protestant preacher.[142] In particular, he often pardoned those who blamed their Protestant practices on false "fathers" of the church and heretical authorities, as he felt that obedience should be encouraged among the common people. Pole was "lenient to the maximum degree" with suspects who blamed their Protestant practices on bishops or figures like Cranmer, and instructed his heresy commissioners to do likewise.[143] It is even estimated that despite his considerable jurisdiction as the Archbishop of Canterbury – and head of the English church, excepting the pope – that only ten percent of the Marian heresy executions took place under his authority.[144]

The case of Pole illustrates the Marian leadership's attitude toward burnings. It did not, contrary to popular belief, relish the burning of Protestants as a form of revenge; they viewed each execution as a defeat.[145] The purpose of ecclesiastical trials was not merely to humiliate, but

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140 Ibid.
141 Mayer, *A Reluctant Author: Cardinal Pole and his Manuscripts* (Philadelphia: Americal Philosophical Society, 1999), 8.
142 Ibid.
143 Ibid.
144 Ibid., 9
145 MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer*, 562.

to persuade and to draw the accused back into the fold.[146] The Protestant ex-Archbishop Thomas Cranmer, for instance, was held under arrest by the Marian regime for three years, subjected to near-constant pressure by Catholic examiners to recant until he finally offered his submission in 1556. While heresy trials in smaller communities did not afford such prolonged attention to any one suspect – they simply presented suspects with a set of theological questions and demanded an answer – anyone who recanted was pardoned by canon law.[147] For all the martyrs who died for Protestantism in the pages of John Foxe, many more submitted to the law and accepted either penance or a full pardon from church authorities.[148] In this respect, it must be observed that by trying Protestants in ecclesiastical trials, the Marian church offered them far more opportunities for reprieve than did other Catholic kingdoms. As has been discussed, other kingdoms like France and the Holy Roman Empire increasingly tried Protestants in secular courts for secular crimes, in which it was virtually impossible to escape one's sentence.

Those who died in the Marian persecution represented only the staunchest Protestant core in England, and one should not overlook the immense numbers of Protestants who were also spared by Mary's regime. Mary's government was quite remarkable in its determination to separate the religious crime of heresy from other secular crimes, and thus offered an escape through religious re-conversion. Above all, this reveals that the motives driving her church were not blindly aggressive so much as determined to find converts. If 283 victims appears to be a high figure, one can only imagine the gristly heights that figure might have reached if the notorious Duke of Alva of the Netherlands had conducted his "Council of Troubles" in England, and systematically executed Protestants as secular criminals. "Bloody Mary's" campaign against

146 Ibid.
147 MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer*, 585.
148 Ibid., 587.

Protestants was in fact far less "bloody" than it might have been, an idea that has been hopelessly obscured by four and a half centuries of retrospect.

The Marian Legacy: Education, Reform, and the New Clergy

Opinions on the English clergy were grim throughout the early sixteenth century. Somewhat late in his life, Cardinal William Allen remarked that the English church in the 1520s had been filled with "the common sort of curates," wanting "in manner even of necessary knowledge," and by the end of the Edwardian government in 1553, many people's views of the clergy bordered on sheer contempt.[149] Catholics and conservatives were disappointed that the clergy had not safeguarded the old traditions, while Protestants were frustrated that they had failed to live up to the educational standards expected of the Protestant Reformation.[150]

There had always been some difficulty in securing the sort of skilled, well-educated clergy sought by reformers. Drawing bright and ambitious men into a life of celibate service was a difficult task; but Masses needed to be said, sacraments administered, and sermons delivered, and where Cambridge graduates could not be found, the "common sort of curates" were needed to fill the ranks. In England the standards for clerical education by the 1550s were highly questionable, if it could even be said that they existed beyond paper.

In the early sixteenth century there were some 12,000 to 15,000 secular clergy, the standards for whom were decided only by the local bishop.[151] In theory bishops took great care in choosing the candidates, but such candidates were often put forward by local patrons who had little no no theological training whatsoever. It was also beneficial for bishops to appoint as many priests as possible, whether or not they could be considered "qualified:" having many priests eased the practice of pluralism, allowing bishops to collect the profits of more than one diocese

149 William Allen, *Letters and memorials of Cardinal Allen*, quoted in David Loades, *The Religious Culture of Marian England* (Brookfield, VT: Pickering & Chatto, 2010), 127.
150 Ibid.
151 Ibid.

without having to actually preach there.[152] A priest was required to be literate, with the ability to read and write in English, and needed to have a sufficient grasp of Latin to read services. Such a requirement could be easily satisfied by two to three years in a grammar school, and beyond this qualification there was, remarkably, no official program of training.[153]

Some priests had once been altar boys, and had learned the priest's expected actions by imitation; others had been apprentices in a sub-diaconate who "learned the ropes" before joining the priesthood themselves.[154] Many in the Catholic church expressed concern about the growing number of uneducated priests long before Mary's reign, and if anything historical evidence indicates that clerical standards only declined further in the 1520s. The Convocation of 1531, for example, was sufficiently worried to pass a few basic regulations: they decreed that no one could be ordained until they were able to explain the Gospel and Epistles used in the Mass satisfactorily to an examiner.[155] Still, the clamor over the ineptitude of the clergy rose to a roar as the decades progressed for various reasons, to be discussed. The clergy that Queen Mary inherited in her English Church was very far from the dreams of reformers on both sides of the Reformation, since both Catholics and Protestants agreed that a skilled clergy was an urgent priority.

Mary's government bestowed vast amounts of patronage to universities, offered incentives for qualified men to join the church, and even established the first blue prints for the seminary, one of the most significant ideas of the European Counter-Reformation. This institution was a long-term approach to solve the problem of unlearned priests, first conceived

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152 Mayer, *Reginald Pole*, 258.
153 Loades, *The Religious Culture of Marian England*, 127.
154 Ibid.
155 Ibid.

during the Marian Counter-Reformation by Pole and decreed by the Synod in 1557.[156] The Synod issued orders to establish a youth training center in every cathedral of England, where promising young men could be taught the subjects and skills needed for the priesthood. While seminary graduates would not rival the theological experts produced by Oxford and Cambridge, this system ensured that even the far-flung parishes of England could receive competent religious instruction, and it was the first system of its kind in Europe. Clerical education is perhaps the greatest success of the Marian Counter-Reformation, and no evaluation of Mary's reign can be made without affording this achievement its proper spotlight.

The Decline of the Clergy: The Quest for Protestants and the "Chanting Proletariat"

The English clergy that Mary inherited in 1553 had been declining in education for a half century, and held the distinction of disappointing both Catholics and Protestants at the same time. The start of their decline can be attributed to the vast inflation of the priesthood that resulted from chantries in fifteenth-century English piety, which performed Masses to relieve the suffering of souls in purgatory. People often dedicated large sums of money to chantries in their wills to have priests perform Masses for their soul, believing that the length of time a soul spent suffering in purgatory would decrease with each Mass. By the 1540s such institutions had become so popular that some 2,100 chantries had been etsablished in England, and many rulers and major peers typically requested post-mortem Masses in the thousands.[157] Such a high demand for masses precipitated a dramatic inflation of the priesthood – church authorities hastily ordained an army of "priests," who had virtually no pastoral duties except performing the Masses

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156 Mayer, *Reginald Pole*, 263.
157 Loades, *The Religious Culture of Marian England*, 128.

for the dead. They were not charged with teaching in schools, preaching to parishioners, or called to answer the challenges of well-informed Protestant heretics.[158] A grammar school education alone was sufficient for these priests, who joined the church in overwhelming numbers.

This "chanting proletariat" – to borrow the phrase of David Loades – represented the nightmare of many reformers of the 1520s and 1530s, as an overpopulation in the clergy led to sloppiness in their education and training.[159] The Protestant William Tyndale deplored the ignorance and arrogance of this growing body of "massing priests," and even the Catholic Sir Thomas More admitted that too many bishops had been "more concerned to have a numerous priesthood than to have a high quality one."[160] When chantries were shut down quite abruptly between 1545 and 1547, thousands of ill-trained chantry priests were left without employment. Some attempted to become schoolmasters, but the majority attempted to adopt the roles of parish priests. With insufficient training and only feeble literacy in Latin, this generation of displaced "massing priests" drew much criticism.[161]

Clerical standards dropped still lower during the Protestant government, ironically, although clerical education had been one of the highest priorities of Protestant reformers. In a religion based so heavily on the Word of God, the clergy needed at the very least to be able to understand and communicate that Word effectively, rather than simply being able to memorize a Latin script. Cranmer made some attempt to improve education through visits to Oxford and Cambridge in 1549, but his efforts were frustrated by other complications.[162] Protestantism was not enthusiastically received in all parts of England – particularly in the north and west – and

158 Ibid., 132.
159 Ibid.
160 Thomas More, *A Dialogue concerning Heresies*, quoted in Loades, *The Religious Culture of Marian England*, 131.
161 Loades, *The Religious Culture of Marian England*, 132.
162 Ibid.

there bishops struggled to find enough educated Protestants to fill parish vacancies.[163] Pragmatism and the need for priests made it impossible for the Edwardian government to achieve its idealistic standards of education for clergy, and for the most part the same methods continued to employ priests in quantity over quality.[164] One notorious example, Bishop Hooper's visitation of the Gloucester diocese in 1551, demonstrates the staggering rates of poor clerical education just two years before Mary's reign. Out of 331 clergymen examined, only ninety-one were considered "satisfactory;" eight were deemed "utterly ignorant" and 212 failed to answer one or more of Hooper's list of simple theological questions.[165] It is also unlikely that Gloucester was unique in such figures. On the whole, approximately eighty percent of priests had never graduated from a college, and no scheme was even proposed to train non-graduates for the ministry.[166] Promising candidates were often ordained straightaway and encouraged to learn their roles "on the job" as a curate alongside a more experienced vicar.[167] Such continuing low standards discouraged many Protestants, who had hoped that their vision of a capable clergy might be realized during Edward's reign. By 1553, the new queen faced an uphill battle against a clergy who had earned the ire of Catholic and Protestant subjects alike.

The Great Universities

Mary's ambitious reforms began at the top with the English universities. In the 1550s, Oxford and Cambridge were the only two institutions in England capable of producing scholars fit for positions high in church government; of her own administrators, Bishop Edmund Bonner

163 Ibid., 133.
164 Ibid.
165 James Brooks, *Injunctions for Gloucester Diocese,* quoted in Walter Howard Frere, *Visitation Articles and Injunctions (*London: Longman's Publishing, 1910), 85.
166 Loades, *The Religious Culture of Marian England*, 133.
167 Ibid, 128.

had graduated from Oxford, while Thomas Watson and the Lord Chancellor Stephen Gardiner had graduated from Cambridge. To produce more exceptional academics to run the church, she felt the expansion of the universities was essential. It was also shrewd in the long-term, since many of Mary's own church administrators – Reginald Pole, Stephen Gardiner, and many of her bishops – were advanced in years and were often chosen for their Catholic loyalties during the reign of Henry VIII.[168] England needed to groom a new generation of bishops and archbishops to ensure the survival of the Marian church. This need was not lost on the queen: Mary turned her attention to these universities almost immediately in August 1553, less than one month after gaining her throne. She sent letters to Cambridge and Oxford, declaring her intention that religious reform

> "may first begin in our universities where young men and all sorts of students . . . may by their doings [and] by their preachings instruct and confirm the rest of our subjects both in the knowledge and fear of Almighty God, in the due obedience toward us"[169]

To begin, Mary followed the time-tested strategy of installing professors who supported her own ideas of orthodoxy. This was hardly a new practice, and it was commonplace for rulers to influence university opinion. Under the Edwardian government, for instance, the Catholic Richard Smith was deposed from his Oxford chair in favor of the Protestant Peter Martyr, a government favorite.[170] Mary's own first goal was to sweep Protestants out of power at the universities, to ensure that the next generation of priests was taught by qualified Catholics. She first imprisoned all university faculty who had supported the Duke of Northumberland in his

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168 David Loades, "The Marian Episcopate" in *The Church of Mary Tudor*, 55.

169 J.Lamb, ed. *A Collection of Letters, Statutes, and Other Documents, from the Ms. Library of Corpus Christi College Cambridge ... during the period of the Reformation, from AD. MD to AD. MDLXXII* (London: 1838), 165-6.

170 Claire Cross, "The English Universities, 1553-1558" in *The Church of Mary Tudor*, 60.

attempt to deny her the throne in favor of "Queen" Jane Gray; this unseated several Protestants like Edwin Sandys, who was persuaded to preach in favor of Jane Gray at Cambridge.[171] Many also fled the universities in the following year, leaving a clean road for Mary's plans. Oxford and Cambridge were greatly emptied as waves of Protestants fled England, fearing persecution by the new Catholic order. It is estimated that somewhere between fifty and sixty of the Protestants who fled early in Mary's reign were graduates of Oxford, and some seventy-six were graduates of Cambridge, including twenty-three resident fellows.[172]

With so many vacancies among the faculty, Mary was free to appoint her own favorites to assume control of the universities. Stephen Gardiner became chancellor of Cambridge, and the famous preacher Thomas Watson was appointed Master of Saint John's College. At the start of Mary's reign Cambridge had been a difficult Protestant nut to crack, but within six months of her accession, these replacements were so effective that all but three of the colleges were under new leadership that supported her reforms.[173] Upon Cardinal Reginald Pole's arrival in England, he was elected chancellor of both Oxford and Cambridge and controlled these universities personally.

Most notable of all was Mary's patronage to these two universities, which was generous by any standard. Mary felt that supporting education was a sacred part of her "royal office," and she saw "rais[ing] up the academy" as a necessary part of restoring Catholicism. Mary seemed to take this duty quite seriously and placed a high priority on university support. Shortly after three Protestant ex-bishops were examined at Oxford in April 1554, she gifted the university new rectories in Cornwall, Leicestershire, and Cumberland, thereby tripling the university's income.[174]

171 Ibid.
172 Ibid., 64.
173 Ibid.
174 Ibid., 66.

The impact of her gift was considerable, as seen in a letter that the Oxford university council sent in reply. He explained that they had utilized the money to expand their curriculum in "ancient discipline," and reassured her that "once again the pure doctrine and good letters" were being taught to the next generation.[175] The queen's generosity extended to Cambridge as well, including a substantial sum paid in the summer of 1554 to Trinity College, Cambridge, to support twenty scholars, ten choristers, four chaplains, and thirteen impoverished students.[176]There were also significant amounts left to each institution in her will, as was discussed in an earlier section; where the Marian church wished to discourage an element of medieval Catholic practice, like the chantries, funds for those institutions were diverted to universities instead. The Marian regime cultivated and enriched the English universities to become the great training centers for future Marian reformers.[177] The English Catholic church did not outlive Mary herself, but her ambitious expansion of the universities endured for centuries.

Tempting the Talented

As early as 1317, Pope John XXII decreed that no priest could hold more than one benefice on pain of losing all his preferments.[178] This decree was rarely enforced, but it was meant to ban a much-disputed church practice known as pluralism. An uncomfortable reality among the episcopate was that not all benefices were of equal value; some bishops could afford to build sumptuous palaces on the income of one benefice, say that of London or Canterbury, while a priest in a rural benefice might be forced into relative poverty. Where there were not

175 I.G. Philip, "Queen Mary Tudor's Benefaction to the University" in Cross, "The English Universities, 1553-1558," in *The Church of Mary Tudor*, 66.
176 David Loades, *The Reign of Mary Tudor: Politics, Government, and Religion in England 1553-8* (New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 1979), 159.
177 Cross, "The English Universities," in *The Church of Mary Tudor*, 67.
178 Loades, "The Training of Clergy" in *The Religious Culture of Marian England*, 97.

enough rich livings to go around, the church sometimes gave one clergyman several different benefices, thus raising his income and offering a more enticing reason to join the church.[179] Some regulation had been passed in England regulating pluralism in the past; in 1529, Parliament had declared that any clergymen holding a second benefice could have his first benefice invalidated. This Act, however, was "full of loopholes" and enforced according to the discretion of the Archbishop of Canterbury.[180] Thomas Cranmer, Reginald Pole's Protestant predecessor, appears to have followed the letter of the law rather carefully. Many reformers wished to ban pluralism to ensure that qualified clergymen actually performed their religious duties themselves, in person, rather than drifting away and allowing lesser priests to carry out their work.

In his emphasis on swiftly improving the level of education in the church, Reginald Pole chose to revive the practice of pluralism. Combining benefices and offering better incomes for the clergy was a strategy to attract university talent – the highest tier possible – to fill posts in the church.[181] Like Thomas Cranmer before him, Reginald Pole faced the challenge of replacing many parish priests and bishops who had been dismissed by Mary for crimes like clerical marriage or heresy. Large numbers of posts were left empty and Pole wished to draw skilled priests to fill them, rather than settling for the poorly qualified "massing priests" who sought positions.[182] University graduates had many more lucrative opportunities open to them, and less restricting ones, than becoming ordained; pluralism, however controversial, represents Pole's fresh approach to bringing talented men into the priesthood. This practice did not appear reformist on the surface – for it violated the classic reformist idea that each priest should run one benefice each – but it served a very reformist function. The Marian Counter-Reformation

179 Ibid.
180 Ibid., 98.
181 Loades, *The Religious Culture of Marian England*, 114.
182 Ibid., 115

depended heavily on its priesthood to combat heresy, and Pole judged clerical education to be the higher priority.

Pole also implemented a revolutionary program to equalize the incomes of benefices as much as possible, in an attempt to remove the fear of being assigned a "poor" benefice. He ordered every diocese to sent its revenue directly to the government in London, where it was pooled and reapportioned so that no benefice was left destitute.[183] If one benefice experienced a hard year and lost income, the loss could then be compensated for by drawing out of richer benefices, and every priest was assured a reasonably comfortable living. This also offered a way to lure educated priests into less wealthy dioceses, and ensure that even parishioners in remote regions of England could access quality preaching.

The Vision of the Seminary

If the educational reforms can be viewed as the best success of the Marian regime, then the invention of the seminary might be seen as its crowning jewel. The decrees of the English Legatine Synod of November 1556 provided a model for training clergy throughout Europe for decades, and were even eventually adopted at Trent, although Pole did not live to see it. Many European churches in the 1550s struggled to improve clergy education, and the seminary answered an obvious problem: since it was not possible to fill every post with a graduate, how could a government ensure that all clergy were at least *competent*?

The Synodal decrees themselves reveal the plans laid out by the Marian reformers. They first established the moral standards to be imposed on the clergy, that they would live "soberly, chastely and piously" and not indulge in fashionable clothing and expensive foods. They were

183 Ibid.

also to dismiss all superfluous servants and donate any surplus income to the poor.[184] The sixth decree addressed the seriously lacking clerical standards pointed out by men like Thomas More, and warned ordinaries to be strict in their examinations of all possible candidates. Finally, it proposed its grand solution: falling educational standards could be fixed by "forming and preserving in cathedral churches a sort of nursery, or seminary of ministers."[185] It required that "all metropolitan and cathedral churches of this realm be obliged to bring up a certain number of youths" according to their respective incomes and size of their dioceses.[186] Boys who were at least eleven or twelve years old, literate in English, and who had a basic grammar school education could be specially prepared for the priesthood. They were taught the scriptures, clerical discipline, and were eventually passed on to a minor order for an apprenticeship. Even more remarkably, the cathedrals themselves would fund the boys' education, thus extending the opportunity to any child whose parents could afford grammar school.[187] The Synod further established strict standards for seminary teachers, decreeing that "no one be appointed master in any school in any place whatsoever … unless he has first been carefully examined and approved by the local ordinary," as well as having special credentials in "improving the morals of youth."[188] The seminary represented the first attempt in England – and indeed, in most of Europe – to create an official scheme of training for its clergy and standardize the qualifications.

Unfortunately, the Synod adjourned in February 1557; Pole and Mary died the following year and there was simply not enough time for this grand decree to be set into motion in

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184 Reginald Pole, "The Sixth Decree" in *The Reform of England, by the Decrees of Cardinal Pole, Legate of the Apostolic See: Promulgated in the Year of Grace 1556* trans. Henry Raikes (Chester, UK: R.B. Spence, 1838), 38.
185 Pole, "The Eleventh Decree" in *The Reform of England, by the Decrees of Cardinal Pole*, 50.
186 Ibid.
187 Ibid., 52.
188 Ibid., 53-54.

England. A projection of the numbers, however, offers a glimpse of what the impact might have been. In 1557 there were over thirty cathedrals in England and Wales, and when given a seminary, there would have been approximately 1,000 boys in training for the priesthood at any given time.[189] Approximately 300 would have been ordained each year, filling the ranks of the church with well-trained clergymen.[190] Although seminary graduates would not have been equal to the theologians who graduated from the likes of Oxford and Cambridge, they would have been given specific instruction for the responsibilities of parish priesthood, well educated enough that Pole was confident that they could "do battle with well-informed heretics."[191]

It is worth noting that in his seminary plan, Reginald Pole – one of the greatest leaders of the Marian Counter-Reformation – proved his opposition to the sort of "mindless ritualism' that was so often criticized in late medieval Catholicism. He and his clergy could have simply enforced Catholicism on the surface level, demanding lists of people who refused to attend church services or honor the Mass, and forced compliance. What drove the efforts to educate the clergy was a very optimistic, intellectual determination, the idea that the Catholic faith should be well-understood, well-explained, and through good preaching used to turn heretics away from sin. Higher education was one of the primary goals of reformers since the time of Henry VIII, and Queen Mary and Cardinal Pole embraced these reforms to the fullest. By their willingness to experiment, innovate, and improve, these two leaders laid the first stones in the Counter-Reformation church twenty years ahead of its time.

189 Loades, *The Religious Culture of Marian England*, 117.
190 Ibid.
191 Ibid.

Conclusions: The Marian Spark and the European Counter-Reformation

Mary's grand Counter-Reformation tends to be viewed as nothing more than a "lost" five years of English history, which only delayed the rise of Protestantism under Queen Elizabeth I and helped forge a coherent English Protestant identity through a shared memory of persecution. In a sense, looking no further than the pages of English history, it could be said that the Marian church did not succeed. England did not remain Catholic. In 1571 Parliament and convocation approved the Thirty-Nine Articles and grounded the English church firmly in Protestantism – thus officially dissolving Mary's church.[192] Many of the revolutionary plans set forth by Mary and her advisors crumbled to dust, and by the end of Elizabeth's reign Catholic priests were hung, drawn, and quartered before Protestant crowds. Within only a few decades, one might never have guessed that a Catholic revival had ever occurred in England.

A driving point of this thesis is that a movement only "failed" if it had no later descendants and no legacy. Although the Marian reformers lost ground quickly in England after Mary's death, forced into submission by a young Protestant queen, one finds that many Marian ideas spread through Europe like wildfire and became some of the defining features of the European Counter-Reformation. England itself was lost, but it was a small island nation, and Marian influence inspired other Catholic reformers outside of England's small corner of the European stage. Their example was the inspiration, the precedent, and the rough draft for many churches that followed. The Marian church did not shrivel into submission, but merely passed on its ideas like a torch to the next generation of reformers and allowed them to perfect their ideas on the continent.

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192 Whitelock, *Mary Tudor*, 220.

Several of the most influential works written on Counter-Reformation piety were first authored by Catholics in Mary's church and then enthusiastically embraced elsewhere. The interiorized, sacramental nature of Catholicism after the Council of Trent was captured early on in William Peryn's 1557 *Spirituall Exercyses and Goostly Meditacions*, which was among the first publications to reflect the new piety proposed in Ignatius Loyola's Spiritual Exercises.[193] Loyola's militant religious order, the Jesuits, became influential commanders at the forefront the European Counter-Reformation and helped stiffen resistance among Catholics recusants in Elizabethan England. More influential still was the work *Imitation of Christ* by William Peto, who had been a reformer and close friend of Cardinal Pole. *Imitation of Christ* was intended to combat the influence of heretical books that had "seduce[d] the simple people" and brought them "into perverse and abominable errours," and has been described as the most popular of all Catholic devotional books in Europe.[194] It was reprinted multiple times in every major European language, and was second in popularity only to the Spiritual Exercises by Loyola himself. By 1558 Jesuit leaders expected virtually every man in their order to own a copy of Peto's work.[195]

Many Marian Catholics also dispersed throughout the continent to carry their ideas in person rather than through print. Over one hundred prominent Catholics – many of them young university graduates who had been trained at Marian Oxford and Cambridge – went abroad to universities in France and Flanders in the 1560s.[196] This generation of English Catholics wielded tremendous influence in the Counter-Reformation, and by 1600 their impact was felt everywhere from Poland to Rome. Thomas Stapleton, still a young man at Mary's death, fled England to become a renowned European controversialist and published over 140 Catholic works by 1640.

193 Duffy, *Fires of Faith*, 190.
194 Ibid.
195 Ibid., 191.
196 O'Malley, *Trent*, 85.

Pope Gregory XIII was sufficiently impressed to order his favorite work, Stapleton's *Antidotus Tridentina*, read aloud for him to hear during meals.[197] Owen Lewis, another Marian Catholic, carved out a distinguished episcopal position in Italy, and even served four years as vicar-general in Milan under Cardinal Borromeo.[198] Borromeo was eventually canonized for his attacks on corrupt religious orders and improving the education of the clergy {following the seminary plan first proposed in Marian England} and he maintained a close company of English and Welsh advisors. Borromeo's first Synod in Milan in 1565 displays his respect for the Marian reformers quite clearly, as his chapter on pastoral visitation includes Pole's decree on the subject word for word.[199] Others found success at the heart of the Counter-Reformation at Trent: the Marian university student Nicholas Sander became a theologian for Cardinal Hosius in the final sessions at Trent, and helped put the Council's decrees into effect in Germany and Poland.[200] He also produced a definitive history of the English Reformation (*De Origine ac Progressu Schismatic Anglicani*), which became a central text of the Counter-Reformation and which some historians claim remained popular and influential well into the eighteenth century.[201]

Pole's own voice continued to be an inspiring force in European Catholicism, preserved in his writings even long after his death in 1558. His *spirituali* ally Cardinal Giovanni Morone felt that the Marian church exemplified reforms that were badly needed in the larger Catholic church, and he took pains to publicize them as broadly as possible. He compiled a selection of Pole's best-known writings in a "reform manifesto," in which an entire section was devoted to an elaborated list of the acts set forward by Pole's Legatine Synod.[202] He sent 220 copies directly to

197 Duffy, *Fires of Faith*, 191.
198 Ibid
199 Margaret Yeo, *Reformer, Saint Charles Borromeo* (New York: Kessinger Publishing, 2011), 12
200 Duffy, *Fires of Faith*, 201
201 Ibid., 202
202 Ibid., 202

Trent in 1562, to be read by the Council fathers shortly before the final sessions were due to commence.[203] Pole's posthumous "manifesto" offered a practical method to implement *spirituali* ideals in practice, and as few people realize, the model of the Marian church was much admired by the bishops and cardinals at Trent.

As it was, one of the greatest Tridentine decrees owes its very existence to Cardinal Pole and Mary's "failed" Counter-Reformation. In the official list of decrees finally released in 1563, after years of debate, the Marian church's seminary plan was enshrined as a new European standard: "the holy Synod ordains, that all cathedral, metropolitan, and other churches greater than these, shall be bound, each according to its means … to educate religiously, and to train in ecclesiastical discipline, a certain number of youths of their city and diocese."[204] The conditions of the seminaries bore striking resemblances to the plans of the Marian church in 1557. The boys were to be taken in at twelve years old, divided in classes, and required to learn "sacred Scripture; ecclesiastical works" and "the homilies of the saints," as well as specific duties required of an average parish priest, such as Catholic rites and hearing confessions.[205] This idea was not independently suggested at Trent, but borrowed directly from the plans written in Pole's manifesto – the plans already engineered in the Marian church. Although separated by fifteen years and the width of a continent, the Marian Counter-Reformation architects continued their work in the decisions at Trent. For a failed regime, it cast quite a long shadow.

Queen Mary I and her trusted circle of reformers lost their battle in many ways. Elizabeth and monarchs after her stripped English parishes of any Catholic memorabilia and planted

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203 Ibid.

204 Council of Trent Session 23, "Method of establishing Seminaries for Clerics, and of educating the same therein" in *Decree on reform, especially concerning the obligation of residence, the conferring of holy orders, and the erection of seminaries* (Rome, 1563), 752.

205 Ibid.

instead copies of Protestant texts, like the *Book of Martyrs* and the *Book of Common Prayer;* Mary's precious Catholic church dissolved without royal support; and she and her advisors certainly lost the battle for their reputations, since today they are known as little more than failures and violent zealots. But in their time they were once the admiration of Europe, and left a unique trace in history that endured centuries after Mary's queenship ended. This legacy has been lost for far too long and is worthy of remembrance.

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