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TO WHAT EXTENT DOES THE DEBATE OVER VESTMENTS REPRESENT
THE WIDER TENSIONS IN THE ELIZABETHAN ERA REGARDING THE
NATURE OF REFORMED RELIGION?

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A thesis submitted to the University of Huddersfield in partial
fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of MA by Research,

History

University of Huddersfield

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Abstract

Vestments have been the centre of fierce debate throughout the Reformation. Whilst the debate over vestments is generally regarded as an isolated event confined to the 1570s, this thesis will demonstrate that the conflict over clerical dress in fact extended over several decades and was undoubtedly linked with the wider conflicts within reformed religion. Having undergone numerous changes in form through ecclesiastical law over several decades, the evolution of vestments presents them not only as functional objects, but as symbols of wider issues. With this in mind, this thesis seeks to uncover these issues in order to establish the role of vestments within the reformed Church. By approaching the question from both the Protestant and Catholic perspective, this study will uncover how the role of vestments within the Elizabethan Church was interpreted by Protestants in their desire for further reform, and how the preservation and continual use of vestments can shed light upon the survival and adaptation of the Catholic community during the Elizabethan period. Through the combination of written, visual and material evidence, this thesis will determine the importance of vestments as characterisations of the wider issues surrounding the move towards reform in England and the extent to which they represented an overlap with the Catholic past.

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Introduction

‘As well as being commodities of utility and economic value, garments enjoyed a rich discursive life, participating in moral, religious and political debates. There were few, if any, areas of sixteenth and seventeenth century life in which concerns were not voiced about appearances.’¹ This statement made by Susan Vincent indicates the significance of clothing to the study of the state of religion in the early modern period. In particular, the role of garments in stirring up religious debate is a predominant theme of this thesis. By looking past the functional role of vestments and delving deeper into the theology surrounding them, their significance within reformed religion will be established.

Clerical vestments are the ceremonial garments worn by the clergy when conducting a church service in order to distinguish them from the laity. Through numerous ecclesiastical legislations passed over several decades, the form, use and purpose of vestments has undergone significant changes over time. As Sarah Bailey points out ‘looking at clerical vesture is akin to looking at living history...progression can easily be seen and understood.’² This evolution of vestments presents them not only as functional objects, but as symbols of wider issues. This thesis will explore these wider issues including the preservation and alteration of vestments for continual use at local level, as well as the use of vestments as indicators of authority at a higher level of society. In doing so, this thesis will seek to establish the role of vestments within the reformed Church. By approaching the question from the perspective of both Protestants and Catholics, this study will uncover how the role of vestments within the Elizabethan Church was interpreted by Protestants in their desire for further reform, and how the modification and continual use of vestments can shed light upon the survival and adaptation of the Catholic community during the Elizabethan period. As a result, noticeable

¹ Vincent, S. (2003). *Dressing the Elite: Clothes in Early Modern England*. Oxford: Berg. P5

² Bailey, S. (2013). *Clerical Vestments: Ceremonial Dress of the Church*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing. P8

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similarities will be drawn between the way in which vestments were used by both Protestants and Catholics in their incorporation of both old and new methods.

Whilst a wealth of attention from historians has been concentrated upon the reactions of both Protestants and Catholics to the Elizabethan settlement; little attention has been paid to the theological disputes over liturgy and the role that specific objects played in the overall reform of the English Church. Whilst a number of historians have formed the conclusion that the debate over vestments was largely at an end by the 1570s, the evidence put forward in this thesis will demonstrate that in fact the debate over clerical dress extended over several decades and was inextricably linked with the wider issues over reformed religion. By focussing on the debate over vestments, this study will shed light upon the theological conflicts that were being established on the continent and the effect this had upon reform in England. Similarly, the historiography surrounding Catholicism in the Elizabethan period has largely ignored the material evidence in its indication of Catholic survival, with a number of historians having dismissed the surviving material as remnants of a medieval Catholic faith. Once again, this thesis will use the state of the surviving material combined with written texts in order to demonstrate the role of vestments at local level and how the preservation and adaptation of certain garments reflects the resilience of Catholicism in Elizabethan England.

My methodology is predominantly material culture; however, this will be further supported with written evidence. Whilst material culture is imperative to this study, the limitations of this approach must be considered. As Anne Gerritsen and Giorgio Riello point out, one limitation derives from the fact that 'we might have the object but we have often lost the context that made the object meaningful.'³ This thesis will therefore use written primary evidence in order to provide context surrounding the material, and in doing so, will deliver a clearer sense of the use and purpose of each piece. Moreover, whilst material culture is vital to understanding the use and preservation of

³ Gerritsen, A. & Riello, G. (2015). *Writing material culture history*. London: Bloomsbury Academic. P9

objects, particularly at local level, and the messages they convey within society; the written evidence is key to understanding the reactions to certain objects. In this thesis, the written evidence will indicate the divergences in theology that surrounded vestments, and church court records will be used in conjunction with the material to shed light upon the continual use of Catholic vestments in the Elizabethan period. Furthermore, material evidence faces conceptual limitations. One of which being that 'unlike people and ideas, artefacts survive sometimes centuries and millennia... they are therefore complex entities whose nature and life story can only partially be understood and recovered.'⁴ As a result, material culture often raises 'a series of question marks for researchers about their origin, use, value in the past and in the present.'⁵ Both Gerritsen and Riello point out the importance of objects needing to be 'integrated with other sources – visual and documentary – to produce better historical scholarship and to better understand the very material artefacts.'⁶ This thesis combines the use of material culture, written material and visual evidence in order to formulate a solid conclusion. Finally, the practical limitations of material culture is a well-known challenge, as access to objects is 'often restricted.'⁷ Although the availability of material evidence is clearly lacking more than written or visual material, the lack of certain objects or indeed the survival and preservation of particular objects is an indication in itself of their original meaning or function. The conservation of materials in museums and archive collections makes access to materials much easier than ever before; the vestment collection at Stonyhurst college has therefore been of incredible use to this study.

With regards to the outline of this thesis, after revising the historiography surrounding my main research topics, chapter two will look further into the material culture of the period and after considering the importance of material culture for historical studies on the whole, the importance of

⁴ IBID. P9⁵ IBID. P9⁶ IBID. P9⁷ IBID. P9

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clothing as material culture will then be considered. By establishing the role of clothing in the early modern period and the messages it conveyed; this will lead on to an analysis of vestments themselves as the main focus of this thesis. In order to gain an understanding of the background surrounding clerical vestments and the reasons behind their importance within religious reform, the evolution of vestments throughout the Reformation will be illustrated, incorporating explanations of each garment that made up a priest's mass clothes. The numerous changes that were made to vesture through ecclesiastical law spanning over several decades, including the addition and removal of certain garments will then be uncovered, with one of the main examples being the 1549 Edwardian Book of Common Prayer.⁸ These acts form the basis of the issues that arose and provide reasoning behind why vestments ultimately became a matter of such controversy. By demonstrating the changes made to vesture throughout the process of reform in England, it will be demonstrated how this varied substantially from reformed theology that was establishing itself on the continent, including the debate surrounding 'adiaphora'. By highlighting these issues as the basis for conflict amongst reformers, this will set up the issue that will be addressed in the following chapter.

Chapter three of this thesis will provide an analysis into the conflicts that arose in the 1550s amongst Protestant exiles and the role vestments played within these conflicts. By first looking into the theology surrounding vestments put forward by Protestant theologians, using John Calvin's Ecclesiastical Ordinances as a leading example, the divergences in Protestant theology that emerged across different exile communities will thus be demonstrated.⁹ The documented 'Troubles at Frankfurt', published in 1579, will be used to shed further light upon these disagreements amongst different exile communities that were spread across the continent.¹⁰ By uncovering the diverging

⁸ Church of England, . (2011). Book of the Common Prayer and administration of the sacraments and other rites and ceremonies of the Church: according to the use of the Church of England . In B. Cummings (Ed.) *The Book of Common Prayer: The Texts of 1549, 1559, and 1662* (pp. 19-99). Oxford: OUP Oxford.

⁹ Calvin, J. (2000). Ecclesiastical Ordinances 1541. In J . K . S. Reid (Ed.) *Calvin: Theological Treatises* (pp. 56-73). London: S.C.M.Press.

¹⁰ Whittingham, W. (1907). A brief discourse of the troubles at Frankfurt, 1544-1558 A. D. In E. Arber (Ed.) *A Christian Library: A popular series of religious literature*. London: Priv.print.

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interpretations of Protestant theology that emerged throughout the experience of continental exile, it will be proven that these conflicts were pre-emptive of the crisis that was faced by the exiles upon their return to England under Elizabeth I. A large number of Elizabeth's bishops who were expected to enforce reform in England had spent the last few years in exile. Therefore, their experience of reform and events that were unfolding on the continent will provide vital background for the following chapter.

After uncovering the process of Protestant reform that was emerging on the continent, chapter four of this thesis will reveal the dilemma faced by Elizabeth's bishops upon their return to England from exile. After laying out Elizabeth I's main policies regarding the continual use of Catholic vesture as an indication of authority, it will be demonstrated that her religious policy diverged significantly from the ethics of her bishops and therefore placed them in the midst of an ethical crisis. Elizabeth's stance regarding vestments as a reflection of authority will be further revealed through the analysis of the Archbishop portraits.¹¹ It will thus be demonstrated that the belief of the bishops was that a successful reformation should be carried out through a hierarchical church system and that the authority of the monarch was absolute. Therefore, despite their initial reluctance, they retained the form of vesture enforced by Elizabeth and Protestant reform was essentially carried out through the framework of a medieval Catholic hierarchical system. As a result of this conformity, the backlash that bishops faced from the more radical Protestants will also be addressed. The ongoing correspondence between the bishops and Protestant reformer Heinrich Bullinger, known as the 'Zurich letters' will be analysed and used to demonstrate the re-emergence of conflict within reformed Protestantism as well as the differences in the interpretation of theology regarding matters such as 'adiaphora' and the government of the church.¹²

¹¹ The Archbishop of Canterbury. (2017). *Archbishop of Canterbury Portraits*. Retrieved from <http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/gallery.php/5001/archbishop-of-canterbury-portraits..>

¹² Robinson, H. (1845). *The Zurich letters: comprising the correspondence of several English bishops and others, with some of the Helvetian reformers, during the early part of the reign of Queen Elizabeth*. Translated from

After considering the use of vestments as indicators of authority at a higher level in society and the use of a Catholic framework in order to enforce conformity to the Church of England, the final chapter of this thesis will demonstrate how the same framework was being applied by Catholics in their combination of old and new methods in order to adapt and survive within a new religious settlement. With predominant use of the vestment collection at Stonyhurst College in Lancashire, the individual material evidence will shed light upon the survival, preservation and continual use of Catholic vestments at local level in Elizabethan England in order to reflect the extent of Catholic survival.¹³ The evidence will be used in support of the point that medieval vestments were still in use and therefore illustrates a form of continuity with medieval Catholic practices; but also that the evident reshaping and restructuring of the vestments is indicative of a community that was adapting with the times and coming up with new methods in order to ensure its own survival. After analysing the materials, the written evidence will then be consulted. Whilst the material evidence will shed light upon the significance of gentry families in the preservation of Catholic materials and the continuation of the Catholic faith; the written evidence will also be referred to in its demonstration of Catholic survival at parish level. By adopting both approaches, the evidence will conclude that the Elizabethan Catholic community was not one that was stuck in a medieval past, nor was it one that had entirely abandoned the medieval faith, but was one that was moving with the times and incorporating new methods in order to live within a reformed England.

By using vestments as the central point of this thesis combined with the analysis of Protestant and Catholic writings and the support of material evidence; this thesis will reach the conclusion that the changes made to vestments via Edwardian legislation was the instigator of a wider debate that subsequently erupted amongst Protestant exiles during the 1550s. The published communications between the groups of exiles residing on the continent reflect these theological disputes and were

the authenticated copies of the autographs preserved in the archives of Zurich, and edited for the Parker society (2nd ed.). Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers.

¹³ By permission of the Governors of Stonyhurst College

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the initiator of what was to follow in England under Elizabeth. By analysing Elizabethan legislation alongside visual evidence, the role of vestments in the Elizabethan period as indicators of authority and the links to a medieval system of government will be established. By combining this with the writings of Elizabeth's bishops, it will be demonstrated that the disputes that once again rose amongst reformers surrounding issues of church government and varying interpretations of the reformed Church resulted in the ethical crisis faced by Elizabeth's bishops. Material evidence will provide further substance to the argument that vestments served as a reminder of the Catholic past and characterised the overlap of new and old methods by both Protestants and Catholics within reformed England.

Chapter 1: Historiography

This study will seek to establish the role of vestments within the reformed Church; how the role of vestments within the Elizabethan settlement was interpreted by Protestants in their desire for further reform, and how the survival of vestments can shed light upon the extent of Catholic survival during the Elizabethan period. Whilst considerable attention has been paid to the experiences and reactions of both Protestants and Catholics to the Elizabethan religious settlement; less attention has been concentrated upon the disputes over liturgy and how specific objects had such a diverse effect upon the progress of reform in England. With regards to the Protestant perspective, a number of historians put forward the premise that the influx of Marian exiles who went on to become bishops during Elizabeth's reign brought with them ideas from the continent and expected to introduce this method of reform into England. The conflicting approach suggests that Elizabeth's bishops in fact rejected these continental ideas, particularly those established in the Protestant haven of Geneva, and sought to establish a separate English Church in order to implement reform. As for the disagreements that followed in England amongst Protestants; the majority of historians imply that the dispute over clerical dress reflected issues over doctrine and was largely at an end by the 1570s. The dispute over church hierarchy and episcopal government then erupted as a separate issue fuelled by the rise of the Presbyterian platform in England. After taking these arguments into account, it will be concluded that whilst exiles who became bishops were indeed influenced by continental ideas, upon their return to England they faced an ethical challenge when faced with the Queen's temperamental attitude towards reform. The role adopted by Elizabeth's bishops during this period led to hostility from Protestants who expected a more rapid reform and saw the wearing of clerical dress by bishops to be a reflection of their 'popish' elements, manipulation of power and their failure to drive forward Protestant reform.

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With regards to the nature of Catholicism during the Elizabethan period, two central arguments have emerged. One approach suggests that Catholicism in this period was a continuation of a medieval faith, whereas the conflicting approach states that this period witnessed the death of medieval Catholicism and saw the emergence of a vibrant new Catholic religion. In reference to Catholic survival, historians have largely been split. Whilst one stance implies that Catholics in this period were successfully repressed and were obedient to royal and episcopal authority; the conflicting approach insists that this period witnessed a rise in recusant activity and the evident continuation of Catholic practices. After considering the predominant arguments, it will be concluded with the support of material evidence that Catholicism in this period cannot be defined as a medieval continuation, nor an entirely new faith, but a mix of traditional aspects combined with the influx of new ideas in order to establish a resilient community. Whilst Catholics were not merely weak and feeble subjects of repression, they were also not an outwardly defiant community. The surviving material reflects an outwardly conforming community and the rise of Catholicism as a household religion.

General Reformation Historiography

General Reformation history has witnessed extensive changes in interpretation over the last few decades. The slightly dated Whig interpretation has perceived the Reformation as a rapid, widespread process of reform initiated by the spread of Protestantism from below. The conflicting approach put forward by Revisionists has characterised the reformation as a slow and reluctant process of several reformations spanning over a number of decades from the reigns of Henry VIII through to Elizabeth I. More recently, post-revisionism has begun to take hold, putting forward the idea that there was a general willingness to conform to royal authority on matters of religious policy and whilst the Reformation was not a voluntary process, the national identity by the end of the 16th

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century was indeed Protestantism. The Whig approach, assertively put forward by A.G. Dickens, claims that the Reformation was undoubtedly a process of Protestantism among the English people; a process of mass exertion of influences upon ordinary people and one that was not always favoured by the State.¹⁴ Dickens puts forward the theory that Protestantism was a representation of national self-assertion of a people 'fighting for its place in a new European order.'¹⁵ In his statement that Protestantism remained a process of the people, Dickens argues that the Crown did not need to 'whip up anti clerical feeling.'¹⁶ Instead, its task became to canalise, even to restrain such feeling.¹⁷ In support of this approach, Susan Brigden's focus on the youth of England portrays the Reformation as a 'revolutionary movement' of which young converts were the 'prime movers in its passage, activists in spreading the heresy, and had an impact quite out of proportion to the influence they otherwise had in society.'¹⁸ Brigden goes on to state that the Protestant doctrine of a priesthood of all believers appealed to young people 'seeking independence and spiritual liberation.'¹⁹ It was this liberation from 'oppressive authority', spiritual or secular that were, according to Brigden, the reasons for the turn away from Catholicism.²⁰ Brigden's theory that Protestant reform was a product of ordinary people lies in her statement that 'even before the Reformation, many in the church and in secular society were growing impatient with those who had the power to reform but never did.'²¹

The revisionist approach takes an entirely opposite standpoint with historians such as Jack Scarisbrick arguing that in fact ordinary English men and women 'did not want the Reformation' and were 'slow to accept it when it came.'²² Scarisbrick bases his evidence upon wills written by English

¹⁴ Dickens, A.G. (1967). *The English Reformation*. London: Fontana. P325

¹⁵ IBID. P325

¹⁶ IBID. P326

¹⁷ IBID. P326

¹⁸ Brigden, S. (1982). Youth and the English Reformation. *Past and Present*, 95 (1), 37-67. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/650732>. P58

¹⁹ IBID. P38

²⁰ IBID. P51

²¹ IBID. P51

²² Scarisbrick, J.J. (1984). *The Reformation and the English people*. Oxford: Blackwell. P1

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men and women in the first half of the sixteenth which 'show a society committed to the old religion until the moment when it was supplanted.'²³ As a result, the argument that has emerged is that Catholicism remained deeply rooted in society and therefore the 'Protestantisation' of England was in fact a 'consequence, not a cause of the Reformation.'²⁴ Consequently, the Reformation that the English people had to endure was a 'slow and painful process.'²⁵ Christopher Haigh's contribution to this argument is widely recognised, particularly in his response to Dickens in which he opposes the suggestion that England experienced just one Reformation and instead stated that 'such events did not come in swift and orderly sequence of a pre-planned programme.' Rather 'they came and went again as the accidents of everyday politics and the consequences of power struggles.'²⁶ Haigh's characterisation of the Reformation process instead portrayed three separate political Reformations: 'a Henrician political Reformation between 1530 and 1538, much of it reversed between 1538 and 1546; and Edwardian political Reformation between 1547 and 1553, almost completely reversed between 1553 and 1558; and an Elizabethan political Reformation between 1559 and 1563 – which was not reversed.'²⁷ Whilst historians such as Rosemary O'Day have accused Haigh of over simplifying the process of Reformation, they remain in agreement that the spread of Protestantism was slow. Rosemary O'Day highlights the fact that no scholar has yet claimed that England was 'Protestant prior to 1558' and therefore clearly, the 'institutional machinery of the church and the personnel of that church simply were not geared to perpetrate a wholesale reformation before the middle of Elizabeth's reign.'²⁸ Whilst O'Day does recognise that Protestantism took root early in some places, she reiterates that 'the cause of the Reformation was not yet won...although England

²³ IBID. P3

²⁴ IBID. P4

²⁵ IBID. P4

²⁶ Haigh, C. (1993). *English reformations: religion, politics, and society under the Tudors*. Oxford: Clarendon Press. P13

²⁷ IBID. P14

²⁸ O'Day, R. (1986). *The debate on the English Reformation*. London: Methuen. P153

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might be described as Protestant in that she had protested against the Pope's authority and had sloughed it off', doctrinally she remained 'predominantly Catholic.'²⁹

Revisionist history has, however, also been split as to whether the Reformation was a process implemented from the top or whether it was a process that, although slowly, ultimately spread from below. Geoffrey Elton has maintained that this age of Reformation 'came from the top, from the minister'.³⁰ According to Elton, his reputation 'attracted the men of ideas until a fruitful interchange of thought and labour emerged in the second half of the decade.'³¹ Conversely, W.J. Sheils takes a more rational approach in his claim that whilst the English people were indeed slow to accept the Reformation when it came, at the same time in some areas Protestant views did manage to take an 'early hold on people' particularly in the early years.³² Whilst Sheils acknowledges that the people made a contribution to the growth of Protestantism, he reiterates that these changes made 'little impact on the great majority of the population.'³³ Similarly, Diarmaid MacCulloch's work has further concentrated focus upon the spread of Protestantism from below. He acknowledges that the Catholic Church was 'not as corrupt and ineffective as Protestant have tended to portray it' and that it 'generally satisfied the spiritual needs of late medieval people' and that the reformers were by no means 'attacking a moribound church than was an easy target, ripe for change.'³⁴ But despite this, MacCulloch maintains that the Protestant message could 'still seize the imaginations of enough people to overcome the power and success of the old church structures.'³⁵

In more recent studies, post-revisionism has become the main approach taken by a number of leading historians in which the idea of conformism has become more widely recognised. In particular, Alec Ryrie's recent work maintains that whilst Protestantism was indeed 'a religious force

²⁹ IBID. P153

³⁰ Elton, G. R. (1977). *Reform and reformation: England, 1509-1558*. London: Edward Arnold. P173

³¹ IBID. P173

³² Sheils, W.J. (1989). *The English Reformation: 1530-1570*. Harlow: Longman. P74

³³ IBID. P75

³⁴ MacCulloch, D. (2004). *The Reformation*. New York; London: Viking. P21

³⁵ IBID. P21

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of astonishing power which reshaped early modern Britain', it was not merely a 'disembodied set of doctrines.' Therefore, England consisted of people who had found a way of building their daily lives around it.³⁶ Ethan Shagan adds to this argument further by putting forward the premise that early modern religion was 'not only about formal beliefs and practices, but also about the ways those beliefs and practices were glossed.'³⁷ Consequently, Shagan states that whilst 'some toleration for Catholicism clearly existed in every English community', when this toleration collapsed in the years 1588, 1623 and 1642, it was not because of changes in people's beliefs, but 'because of changes in the public discourse of confessional identity.'³⁸ Shagan's main line of argument emphasises that the English Reformation was 'not done to people, it was done with them in a dynamic process of engagement between government and people' and focussing upon people's responses to a reformation perceived as an act of state demonstrates that the Reformation was 'negotiated between government and people.'³⁹ It was this approach, according to Shagan, that answers the dilemma of how the English Reformation succeeded 'despite the inherent conservatism of the English people.'⁴⁰ Importantly, Shagan raises the noteworthy point that religion itself was 'not a rigid or self-contained sphere' but rather was 'structured through its interactions with the culture in which it was embedded.'⁴¹ Alexandra Walsham's work also adopts the post-revisionist stance in her recognition of conformism throughout the duration of the Reformation and her reference to an 'overlap with the Catholic past.'⁴² Walsham puts forward the idea that a large number of the English people failed to see any conflict between 'theological adherence to the Church of Rome and the

³⁶ Ryrie, A. (2015). *Being Protestant in Reformation Britain*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, OUP Oxford, Oxford Scholarship Online. P2

³⁷ Shagan, E. (2005). English Catholic history in context. In E. Shagan (Ed.) *Catholics and the 'protestant nation': religious politics and identity in early modern England* (pp. 1-22). Manchester: Manchester University Press. P13

³⁸ IBID. P12

³⁹ Shagan, E. (2003). *Popular Politics and the English Reformation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. P1

⁴⁰ IBID. P1

⁴¹ IBID. P2

⁴² Walsham, A. (1993). *Church Papists: Catholicism, conformity and confessional polemic in early modern England*. Suffolk: Boydell Press. P17

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exercise of political responsibility for the preservation of civil law and order.⁴³ Walsham's stance importantly draws upon the complexity of the Reformation process and wider issues surrounding the Reformation as something bigger than just religious belief.

Historiography surrounding Protestants and vestments

As for Elizabeth I's bishops, the argument has emerged that those bishops who had experienced Marian exile were influenced by the process of continental reform which was radically Protestant in nature, and that they wished to implement these methods upon their return to England. Kenneth Carleton thoroughly supports this view and explains that the process of reform in England was enriched by enforced exile of future bishops who subsequently returned with personal experience of reform on the continent.⁴⁴ Upon their return, having being 'finely honed' in the school of continental reform, according to Carleton, their influence upon the shape of the English Church was imperative and their influence on the progress of reform in England 'should not be underestimated'.⁴⁵ Carleton highlights that bishops such as Thomas Thirlby and Nicholas West in particular had personal experience of continental reform movements 'both before and after their appointment to episcopal office'.⁴⁶ It is worth noting that Carleton does highlight the fact that the desire of bishops for rapid and radical reform of the Church of England upon their return 'was not shared by many of their co-religionists, particularly their Queen and Supreme Governor' which is fundamental in understanding the position that bishops were to find themselves in as subjects of the Queen's authority.⁴⁷ Scott Wenig pursues this argument further by reiterating that of the twenty three bishops appointed by

⁴³ IBID. P82

⁴⁴ Carleton, K. (2001). *Bishops and Reform in the English Church, 1520-1559*. Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer. P183

⁴⁵ IBID P184

⁴⁶ IBID P184

⁴⁷ IBID P184

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1562, fourteen of these were returned exiles.⁴⁸ Wenig argues that this is a clear reflection of the government's reliance on them to enforce the new settlement based on their continental experiences.⁴⁹ He goes on to say that the bishops in fact drew much of their view of episcopal leadership from the continental reformers and followed Calvin's view of bishops serving as 'pastors'.⁵⁰ According to Wenig, bishops used this view in an attempt to tackle the divisions that were emerging in England and to change the 'negative perceptions' being formed regarding the church hierarchy.⁵¹

Contradictory to the stance taken by Kenneth Carleton and Scott Wenig, other historians put forward the argument that upon their return to England, Elizabeth's bishops in fact united with Elizabeth in rejecting continental ideas due to their association with exiles and instead championed the new model of the English church. Jane Dawson in particular pursues this viewpoint by stating that those who were based in Geneva began to develop a 'sense of pessimism' and alienation from the re-emerging Church of England which was the main factor in providing 'fertile soil for the growth of the puritan movement.'⁵² According to Dawson, what further fuelled this alienation was the lack of personal contact between the Elizabethan hierarchy and the Genevan reformers whose contacts were instead focussed upon Scotland, the Netherlands and France.⁵³ As a result of this increasing separation Dawson argues that the 'example of Geneva' was identified as a threat to the religious settlement and to the Queen's authority, allowing the English church model to flourish.⁵⁴ As opposed to the willingness to receive continental ideas at the very beginning of Elizabeth's reign, Dawson reiterates that by the final decades the increasing satisfaction towards the English model of

⁴⁸ Wenig, S. (2000). *Straightening the altars: the ecclesiastical vision and pastoral achievements of the progressive bishops under Elizabeth I, 1559-1579*. Oxford: P.Lang. P23

⁴⁹ IBID P23

⁵⁰ IBID P73

⁵¹ IBID P73

⁵² Dawson, J.E.A. (2010). John Knox, Christopher Goodman and the 'Example of Geneva'. In P. Ha & P. Collinson (Eds.) *The reception of continental reformation in Britain* (pp. 107-135). Oxford: Oxford University Press. P111

⁵³ IBID P112

⁵⁴ IBID P134

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ecclesiology including the Royal Supremacy, the Prayer Book and the episcopal government, meant that suspicion and rejection of foreign models began to take hold.⁵⁵ Expanding on this claim, Susan Doran contributes further by putting forward the idea that the rejection of continental ideas is most evident in the ecclesiastical government of the Elizabethan Church which was 'even more distant from the model of Geneva as it retained its 'bishops, archdeacons, cathedrals and diocese' and found no official place for 'Calvin's four fold ministry of pastors, elders, doctors and deacons'.⁵⁶ Doran suggests that rather than taking influence from the continent, the Elizabethan Church was greatly influenced by 'pragmatic political considerations as a result of serious tensions between the queen and her divines'.⁵⁷ Whilst Doran rightly identifies this source of tension, she significantly misinterprets the nature of the Elizabethan Church as essentially retaining a Catholic Church 'though without the Pope and Cardinals'.⁵⁸

Although Susan Doran overstates that the Elizabethan Church was essentially a Catholic ecclesiastical model without the Pope and cardinals; in reference to the Elizabethan episcopal government some scholars have correctly identified that whilst this was certainly not a Catholic church, Protestant reform was largely being conducted through the machinery of a Catholic hierarchical system. Scott Wenig advocates this approach and explains that the threefold divisions of bishop, priest and deacon was still very much relied upon by the Elizabethan church courts, resulting in a traditionally Catholic ecclesiastical structure being led by a Protestant episcopate.⁵⁹ Diarmaid MacCulloch also addresses this theory by describing the Elizabethan Church settlement as a 'cuckoo in a nest'; 'a Protestant theological system and a Protestant programme for national salvation

⁵⁵ IBID P134

⁵⁶ Doran, S. (1994). *Elizabeth I and religion, 1558-1603*. New York, London: Routledge, Routledge Ltd, Taylor & Francis. P21

⁵⁷ IBID P21

⁵⁸ IBID P21

⁵⁹ Wenig, S. (2000). *Straightening the altars: the ecclesiastical vision and pastoral achievements of the progressive bishops under Elizabeth I, 1559-1579*. Oxford: P.Lang. P34

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sheltering within a largely pre-reformation Catholic Church structure'.⁶⁰ The conflict that arose regarding the issue of the Elizabethan episcopal government is one that has scarcely been addressed in detail, however Scott Wenig does draw upon this 'intense controversy' that emerged in the 1570s over the nature and form of church government.⁶¹ Wenig puts forward the argument that this period saw a surge in young Presbyterians inspired by Geneva who viewed the Genevan model of ecclesiastical administration as an ideal model for the English Church and that the observations of these younger radicals of places such as Geneva had demonstrated to them that compared to the reformed churches on the continent, the English Church 'left much to be desired' despite a decade of Protestant episcopal rule.⁶² Wenig rightly argues that Elizabeth's bishops were regarded as failing the process of reform which saw the new group of puritans argue for the 'total eradication of episcopacy' and its replacement with a Presbyterian system.⁶³

Regarding the disputes surrounding clerical dress in the Elizabethan period, the vestiarian controversy has often been marked as an isolated event of the 1560s which was largely overcome by the beginning of the 1570s. What has emerged from the historiography is that to the majority of Protestants, the retaining of vestments in the Elizabethan church was viewed as a 'revelant of popery' which marked out the 'insufficiency of the reforms of the English Church.'⁶⁴ Marcus Harnes argues that the instilment of vestments tended only to confusion, making the English Church and its bishops seem 'popish' and 'unreformed'.⁶⁵ Patrick Collinson also draws upon this debate in his work in which he describes Elizabethan Protestants regarding the surplice as 'the uniform of an oppressive class' who were ruled by a ministry which was still 'saddled with some portions of the pope's

⁶⁰ MacCulloch, D. (1990). *The later Reformation in England 1547-1603*. Basingstoke: MacMillan. P94

⁶¹ Wenig, S. (2000). *Straightening the altars: the ecclesiastical vision and pastoral achievements of the progressive bishops under Elizabeth I, 1559-1579*. Oxford: P.Lang. P118

⁶² IBID. P118

⁶³ IBID. P118

⁶⁴ Harnes, M. (2014). Caps, Shrouds, Lawn and Tackle: English Bishops and their Dress from the Sixteenth Century to the Restoration. *Journal of the Costume Society*, 48 (1), 3-20. doi: 10.1179/0590887613Z.00000000036. P1

⁶⁵ IBID. P9

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attire.⁶⁶ As a result of this controversy, the argument has emerged that the dispute over vestments was in fact a reflection of the bigger issue concerning different interpretations of Protestant theology. Daniel Eppley is a particular advocate of this theory. He claims that the vestarian controversy is about the different interpretations of scripture and of what the Bible requires of Christians.⁶⁷ By acknowledging these varying interpretations Eppley uses the example of Thomas Cartwright, who reads scripture as an essential requirement of a true church, against John Whitgift who interprets the Bible as 'leaving matters of polity within the realm of adiaphora.'⁶⁸ Furthermore, Diarmaid MacCulloch correctly highlights that established Protestantism in this period 'could not agree on what it was supposed to be.'⁶⁹ Although MacCulloch is correct in his statement that genuine issues of principle and approach lay behind the conflicts between puritanism and the conformists, he dismisses the suggestion that the disputes were over anything other than genuine issues of doctrine. Whilst MacCulloch is entirely correct in this statement, it is important not to ignore the interconnection between the wearing of vestments and their role within the Elizabethan episcopal government, as both of these issues were significant elements of reformed Protestantism and had a substantial effect on the progression of Protestantism during the Elizabethan period.⁷⁰

The extent of Catholic survival during the reign of Elizabeth I

With a large amount of focus having already been conducted upon the continuation of Catholicism throughout the Elizabethan period, several varying conclusions have been reached. One approach being that Catholicism in this period can be defined as a continuation of the medieval faith. J C H Aveling is a particular advocate of this approach. Whilst Aveling's confessional identity must be

⁶⁶ MacCulloch, D. (1990). *The later Reformation in England 1547-1603*. Basingstoke: Macmillan. P83

⁶⁷ Eppley, D. (2007). *Defending royal supremacy and discerning God's will in Tudor England*. Aldershot: Ashgate, Ashgate Publishing Ltd, Routledge, Taylor and Francis. P150

⁶⁸ IBID. P150

⁶⁹ MacCulloch, D. (1990). *The later Reformation in England 1547-1603*. Basingstoke: Macmillan. P63

⁷⁰ IBID. P83

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taken into consideration when observing his work, he maintains that the vast majority of English people were 'tricked' and 'eventually brainwashed' out of their traditional Catholic faith, but that it was so deeply rooted that it remained the 'only real religion' in many parts of the country.⁷¹ Aveling refers to model Catholic gentry households in Yorkshire, Harewell and Hemingborough or in Newcastle on Tyne that continued to 'run like well conducted monasteries.'⁷² In sum, Aveling argues that, whilst gradually losing their force, the great mass of men were still trying to live in terms of 'ancient Catholic habits of mind and gesture' as new ways and institutions proved to be ineffective.⁷³ Supporting this premise further is John Bossy who categorically states that Elizabethan Catholicism must be described as the 'old religion'; a social sentiment which could only persist where there was a social institution to support it.⁷⁴ Bossy categorises Elizabethan Catholicism as an old, isolated community that largely operated separately from the rest of society.

Operating from an entirely different standpoint, Christopher Haigh's argument unfittingly labels medieval Catholicism as a 'spineless, moribund, hierarchical and monopolistic Church' that had 'succumbed to a fast and easy Reformation and had dragged the Catholic faith down with it.'⁷⁵ Furthermore, he suggests that the medieval Church had been entirely replaced by a 'vibrant new Catholicism of a devoted minority.'⁷⁶ Consequently, Catholicism had become a 'small and distinctively structured minority... merely the residue of a process of failure and decline.'⁷⁷ Haigh concludes that over time, the memory of the old church faded over generations resulting in

⁷¹ Aveling, J.C.H. (1976). *The handle and the axe: The Catholic recusants in England from Reformation to emancipation*. London: Blond and Briggs. P23

⁷² IBID P68

⁷³ Aveling, J.C.H. (1966). *Northern Catholics: The Catholic recusants of the North Riding of Yorkshire 1558 - 1790*. London: Geoffrey Chapman Ltd. P49

⁷⁴ Bossy, J. (1962). The character of Elizabethan Catholicism. *Past and Present*, 21 (1), 39-59. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1093/past/21.1.39>. P39

⁷⁵ Haigh, C. (1981). From Monopoly to Minority: Catholicism in Early Modern England. *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 31, 129-147. Doi: 10.2307/3679049. P129

⁷⁶ IBID P129

⁷⁷ IBID P133

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survivalist Catholicism being entirely diluted by conformity.⁷⁸ Whilst he possesses the opinion that medieval Catholicism had immediately surrendered to the reformation, Eamon Duffy concurs that the reformation had succeeded in achieving conformity but argues that this was 'not a result of a mass spread of Protestantism' but was instead overtaken by royal conformity; as 'whatever the crown commanded, the people, for the most part did.'⁷⁹ Duffy states that despite the echoes of a ritual past still 'vividly present in the minds of the compilers', the inventories were the 'devastating record of the abrupt and effective suppression of Catholic cultus.'⁸⁰ He refers to church wardens' accounts of the Edwardian period which witnessed a wholesale removal of vestments and whilst he suggests that in the capital in particular this was evidence of true iconoclasm being undertaken driven by true Protestant conviction; he maintains that most of it was merely a 'grudging fulfilment of the will of the crown and sometimes an attempt to anticipate the crown's action in order to save something from the wreckage.'⁸¹ Although Duffy acknowledges that the move towards Protestantism was a slow and reluctant process, he insists that the destruction of a world of symbols was both understood and controlled by the first Elizabethan adult generation.⁸² Duffy sums up his approach with the statement that whilst the people of Tudor England were no saints, they were 'certainly no reformers.'⁸³

Adopting a conflicting approach, Peter Marshall rightly argues that the controversy over vestments only sharpened the existence of religious divide. In particular, the 'seesaw of policy' under Edward

⁷⁸ Haigh, C. (1993). *English reformations: religion, politics, and society under the Tudors*. Oxford: Clarendon Press. P252

⁷⁹ Duffy, E. (1992). *The stripping of the altars: traditional religion in England, c.1400-c.1580*. London, New Haven: Yale University Press. P478

⁸⁰ Duffy, E. (2012). *Saints, sacrilege and sedition: religion and conflict in the Tudor reformations*. London: Bloomsbury. P121

⁸¹ Duffy, E. (1992). *The stripping of the altars: traditional religion in England, c.1400-c.1580*. London, New Haven: Yale University Press. P480

⁸² IBID P592

⁸³ IBID P592

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and Mary widened existing divisions.⁸⁴ Consequently, Elizabeth inherited a nation in which sharp religious difference was already embedded, and in Marshall's eyes her regime 'lacked both the coercive power and the unity of purpose to either eliminate Catholicism or bring Protestant dissidents firmly to heel.'⁸⁵ As opposed to the suggestion that these frequent shifts in government religious policy confused people as to whether they were supposed to be Protestant or Catholic, Marshall argues that there is a strong possibility that these in fact had the opposite effect – that the orders to remove or restore vestments and other church objects 'only encouraged people to think about their meanings more intensely than they had done before' and as a result created a new self-awareness of religious belonging.⁸⁶ In direct contrast to Eamon Duffy's approach, Marshall rejects the idea that English parishioners were 'passive consumers of the officially prescribed diet.'⁸⁷ He refers to parishes in Edwardian London removing their altars before they were required to do so by law, and numerous parishes across the country celebrating the Latin mass again at the start of Mary's reign, even when it was still technically illegal so to do.⁸⁸ Marshall acknowledges that during Elizabeth's reign, more than any other, Elizabethan bishops faced a great difficulty in getting parishes to obey official mandates about the removal or destruction of forbidden cultic objects. It was this very process, according to Marshall, that provided a greater sense of clarity amongst ordinary English people about the religious issues at stake and it was through this process that new religious identity was forming.⁸⁹

As a result of these theories, the concept of Catholic conformism in recent studies has become eminent. In Peter Marshall and J.Morgan's 2016 article addressing clerical conformity, they argue that the line separating 'conformity' from 'non conformity' was 'permeable and sometimes paper

⁸⁴ Marshall, P. (2009). Redefining the English Reformation. *Journal of British Studies*, 48 (3), 564-586. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1086/600128>. P585

⁸⁵ IBID P585

⁸⁶ IBID P585

⁸⁷ IBID P586

⁸⁸ IBID P586

⁸⁹ IBID P583

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thin.⁹⁰ Elaborating on this issue of conformism, Alexandra Walsham identifies the emergence of a different mechanism of Catholic survival in the Elizabethan period, to which she refers as 'church papists.' In Walsham's view, the discovery of the phrase 'church papist' signifies the emergence of concern surrounding conformity in late sixteenth century society.⁹¹ She defines church papists as people who had either thus far 'complied with the regulations or had yet to be formally convicted of infringing them.'⁹² According to Walsham, at local level the Elizabethan period witnessed a significant rise in the number of Catholics who 'failed to see any conflict between theological adherence to the Church of Rome and the exercise of political responsibility for the preservation of civil law and order.'⁹³ As an example, Walsham refers to 'otherwise model dissenting gentry households' who were now even resorting to occasional conformity.⁹⁴ Alexandra Walsham's perception of Catholicism in the Elizabethan period characterises the Catholic faith as one that was facing moral dilemma, and church papistry was the 'scrupulous as well as pragmatic answer to the problem of proscription.'⁹⁵ In support of this stance, Alec Ryrie reiterates that during the reign of Elizabeth I, there were Catholics, whether unabashed or wearing thin veil of conformity, at every level of English society and in every corner of the realm.⁹⁶ Ryrie re-emphasises that the emergence of Church Papists and the change in tactics to which the Catholic community adopted in order to survive, was illustrative of a community who felt that it was better to 'find a way of coexisting with the regime.'⁹⁷

⁹⁰ Marshall, P. & Morgan, J. (2016). Clerical Conformity and the Elizabethan Settlement Revisited. *The Historical Journal*, 59 (1), 1-22. doi: 10.1017/S0018246X15000199. P18

⁹¹ Walsham, A. (1993). *Church Papists: Catholicism, conformity and confessional polemic in early modern England*. Suffolk: Boydell Press. P10

⁹² IBID P10

⁹³ IBID P82

⁹⁴ IBID P77

⁹⁵ IBID P95

⁹⁶ Ryrie, A. (2009). *The age of Reformation: the Tudor and Stewart realms 1485 - 1603*. Harlow: Pearson Longman. P245

⁹⁷ IBID. P250

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To conclude, the historiographical debates that have been examined throughout this chapter reflect the intense controversy and the variety of theories surrounding both Protestant and Catholic reactions to the Elizabethan religious settlement. It has been made clear that the role of vestments within the reformed Church and the comparative reactions to the use of vestments from both the Catholic and Protestant perspective has seldom been addressed. The issues that have been explored with regards to Protestant reactions comprise of the examination of Elizabethan bishops as implementers of Protestant reform and the issues surrounding the Episcopal Church system; the initial reaction to the retention of vestments in the Elizabethan Church and how this reflects the wider disputes within the Protestant faith. Whilst historians such as Kenneth Carleton and Scott Wenig rightly argue that Elizabeth's bishops did indeed take much inspiration from their experience of continental reform during the reign of Mary I, they largely undermine the situation in which they found themselves upon their return to England. Whereas the ideal outcome of Elizabeth's bishops was to implement the same continental reform in England, Jane Dawson and Susan Doran correctly identify the English model of ecclesiology which incorporated the Royal Supremacy, the Prayer Book and the Episcopal government. These elements are what kept the bishops in their position of authority and influence upon the Queen and therefore must not be undervalued. This position and the issues surrounding the episcopal system have been rightly elaborated upon by Scott Wenig. With reference to Protestant reactions to the role of vestments within the Elizabethan Church, Marcus Harmes and Patrick Collinson both correctly describe the backlash amongst Protestants who viewed vestments as popish remnants of the Catholic Church. Daniel Eppley and Diarmaid MacCulloch both expand on this issue by rightly arguing that the controversy over vestments was largely representative of the wider issues amongst Protestants over doctrine. However, both Eppley and MacCulloch wrongly depict the issues over vestments as being nothing more than issues of doctrine and fail to identify the connection of vestments with the role of bishops and the issues this instigated between bishops and the laity.

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When interpreting the survival of Catholicism during the Elizabethan period, conclusions have varied substantially. Whilst J C H Aveling and John Bossy both wrongly depict the Catholic community as the remnants of an entirely medieval faith; Christopher Haigh goes too far in his portrayal of a Catholic faith that was entirely replaced by a vibrant new form of Catholicism. Furthermore, Eamon Duffy underestimates the resilience of the Catholic community and portrays a situation of Catholic suppression through obedience to royal authority. Peter Marshall correctly dismisses this theory of immediate passive obedience to authority and convincingly puts forward the argument that the difficulty in getting parishes to obey official mandates resulted in a greater sense of religious belonging. Overall the argument put forward by Alexandra Walsham holds the most substance by addressing both the practice of Catholicism combined with the rise in outward conformity to the settlement. By demonstrating the emergence of a new method of Catholic practice, Walsham grasps the nature of Catholicism in the Elizabethan period most accurately.

Chapter 2: Early Modern Material Culture

‘Church dress was meant to be sober and dignified. English clergy were meant to wear black gowns, caps and surplices, and bishops their rochets and chimères. These items were intended by religious authority to promote order, dignity and gravity, but in actual fact the vestments were a site of disorder.’⁹⁸ This definition of church dress put forward by Marcus Harmes characterises the issues that arose as a result of the evolution of clerical vestments and the changing theology that surrounded them throughout the early modern period. In order to obtain a better understanding of these issues, it is necessary to explore the evolution of vestments from their original purpose through to their changing form throughout the 16th and 17th centuries. By first establishing the significance of clothing as material culture, this chapter will explore the role of vestments within the church and society. By analysing each item that makes up a priest’s mass attire, the purpose of vestments within the church will be demonstrated. With the use of ecclesiastical legislation, the changing form of vestments will then be explored and the issues that subsequently arose within Protestant theology will be determined.

The importance of material culture in historical study has gained prominence in recent years. Whilst material culture has often been used in conjunction with written evidence, the value of material evidence itself is becoming more prominent in academic studies. Material culture is key to enhancing our understanding of individuals and society particularly at a local level. As Tara Hamling states, knowing about people’s possessions is ‘crucial to understanding their experiences of daily life, the way they saw themselves in relation to their peers and their responses to and interaction with the social, cultural and economic structures and processes which made up the societies in

⁹⁸ Harmes, M. (2014). Caps, Shrouds, Lawn and Tackle: English Bishops and their Dress from the Sixteenth Century to the Restoration. *Journal of the Costume Society*, 48 (1), 3-20. doi: 10.1179/0590887613Z.00000000036. P17

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which they lived.⁹⁹ Objects provide access to the way shared cultures were distinguished through their material practices.¹⁰⁰ As Anne Gerritsen and Giorgio Riello point out, 'material culture is based on meaning as much as on materiality.'¹⁰¹ Perhaps more clearly than written evidence, material culture provides an insight into religious change over time. As opposed to written material, an object might 'lose or gain meanings through changes in form, use and location' and its original purpose altered.¹⁰² Furthermore, the maintenance and repair of objects indicates their continued functional use or symbolic power while the visible evidence of repair transforms their meanings.¹⁰³ This method of approach is imperative to this study in exploring the preservation and continual use of vestments at local level as well as the use of vestments as indicators of authority at a higher level in society. Marcus Harmes expands upon this subject by stating that vesture contained 'semiotic significance of external signs and symbols.'¹⁰⁴ Harmes goes on to use vesture as a reflection of social hierarchy, as 'what clothing people wore and other aspects of appearance in early modern England was key to their power.'¹⁰⁵ Not only the clothing people wore, but also the absence or the addition of certain garments provides further insight into the use of clothing not only as a religious symbol but one of authority which will be explored in further detail in the subsequent chapters. Harmes draws upon this theme with the statement that 'clothing was performative in that it communicated messages...but what clergymen wore carried an extra layer of significance that no other garb in England carried.'¹⁰⁶

⁹⁹ Hamling, T. & Richardson, C. (2010). *Everyday objects: medieval and early modern material culture and its meanings*. Farnham: Ashgate. P1

¹⁰⁰ IBID. P4

¹⁰¹ Gerritsen, A. & Riello, G. (2015). *Writing material culture history*. London: Bloomsbury Academic. P9

¹⁰² Hamling, T. & Richardson, C. (2010). *Everyday objects: medieval and early modern material culture and its meanings*. Farnham: Ashgate. P14

¹⁰³ IBID. P14

¹⁰⁴ Harmes, M. (2014). Caps, Shrouds, Lawn and Tackle: English Bishops and their Dress from the Sixteenth Century to the Restoration. *Journal of the Costume Society*, 48 (1), 3-20. doi: 10.1179/0590887613Z.00000000036 P7

¹⁰⁵ IBID. P7

¹⁰⁶ Harmes, M. (2014). Caps, Shrouds, Lawn and Tackle: English Bishops and their Dress from the Sixteenth Century to the Restoration. *Journal of the Costume Society*, 48 (1), 3-20. doi: 10.1179/0590887613Z.00000000036 P7

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The Evolution of Vestments



(h) Priest in Amice



(i) Priest in Alb



(j) Priest adjusting the Cincture



(k) Priest putting Maniple on left arm



(l) Priest with the Stole



(m) Priest in Chasuble is now completely Vested

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This study will be focussed upon vestments worn by the clergy. It is therefore crucial to be aware of what it was that the clergy wore and the purpose behind their attire. The displaying of clerical vesture has been a key feature of the church for centuries, as it has been recognised that 'even in

¹⁰⁷ Calefactory.org. *Vestments worn at Mass*. Retrieved from <http://www.calefactory.org/lit-altar.htm>.

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the earliest books of the Bible, God directed that his ministers wear specific apparel.¹⁰⁸ The preliminary purpose of a medieval vestment was to distinguish the clergy from ordinary civilians and was to be worn whilst carrying out church services. As Sarah Bailey correctly summarises, 'clerical vestments inform a congregation about the leader of their worship. The chasuble or cope can help to focus attention.... they serve a useful purpose in identifying the officiant whilst lessening their individuality – the priest being a representative of the people.'¹⁰⁹ Bailey rightly defines vestments as reflecting the role of the priest as an 'intercessor, one who prays on behalf of the congregation.'¹¹⁰ The image above clearly portrays a priest dressing for Mass. First, an amice is worn, a rectangular piece of linen which is worn on the shoulders of the priest during Mass.¹¹¹ Secondly, the alb, a vestment of white linen reaching to the feet.¹¹² Following this, the alb is bound with a cincture, a symbol of chastity, usually white and made of linen or wool.¹¹³ Next, the maniple is placed on the left arm by the minister at Mass followed by the stole, a long narrow vestment worn by the priest during the administration of the sacraments.¹¹⁴ Lastly, the chasuble is the outer and chief vestment worn by the priest at Mass. This garment normally contains a cross embroidered onto it on either the front or the back.¹¹⁵ The Chasuble, being the chief outer garment of the priest, is the most elaborately decorated with its embroidery often consisting of a crucifix. It is this particular garment that is of particular focus in this thesis as it is the one that underwent the most changes, both through changes in ecclesiastical law at a higher level of society, and through alterations made to the garments that were discovered at local level.

¹⁰⁸ Baumgarten, B.D. (2002). *Vestments for All Seasons*. Harrisburg: Morehouse Publishing. P3

¹⁰⁹ Bailey, S. (2013). *Clerical Vestments: Ceremonial Dress of the Church*. London: Shire publications. P5

¹¹⁰ IBID. P5

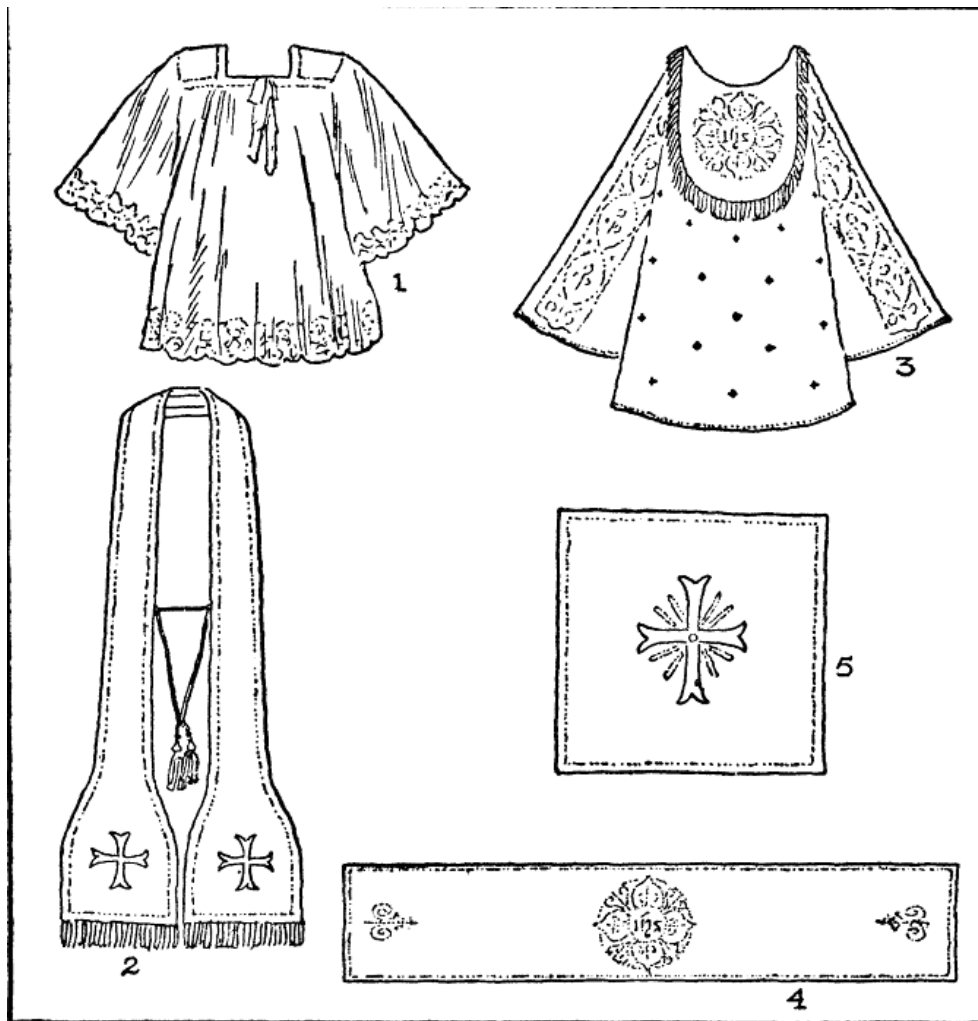
¹¹¹ Calefactory.org. *Altar, Sacred Vessels, and Vestments*. Retrieved from <http://www.calefactory.org/lit-altar.htm>.

¹¹² Calefactory.org. *Altar, Sacred Vessels, and Vestments*. Retrieved from <http://www.calefactory.org/lit-altar.htm>.

¹¹³ IBID

¹¹⁴ IBID

¹¹⁵ IBID



1. Surplice. 2. Preacher's Stole. 3. Cope. 4. Mass and Benediction Veil. 5. Benediction Burse.

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It must be recognised that vesture changed over time. Robert Alexander Macalister highlights this process by explaining that as time went on, small differences would spring into existence between everyday dress and the dress of the worshiper, and these differences would 'increase as the process went on, until the two styles of costume became sharply distinguished from one another.'¹¹⁷ This is most evident in the distinguished dress of bishops from ordinary clergy. Herbert Norris nicely sums

¹¹⁶ Rev. O'Brien, W.A. *The Vestments - their nature and care*. Retrieved from <http://www.sanctamissa.org/en/sacristy/handbook-for-sacristan/handbook-for-sacristan-02.html>.

¹¹⁷ Macalister, R.A.S. (1896). *Ecclesiastical vestments: their development and history*. London: London: E. Stock. P22

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up that whilst all ranks wore the alb, subdeacons were distinguished by the tunicle, deacons by the dalmatic and both the tunicle and the dalmatic were added to the outfit of the bishop.¹¹⁸ In addition to this, the bishop would wear a rochet, a half tunic of linen with long sleeves and a form of headdress known as a mitre would be worn upon the head of the bishop as a symbol of office.

The evolution of vestments was initiated by the changes made to clerical dress under Edward VI in the Prayer Book of 1549, subsequently revised and amended with the introduction of the Prayer Book of 1552. The 1549 Prayer Book retained the use of medieval vestments but introduced the option of wearing a cope over a plain white alb. It also required bishops to continue to wear a rochet, a surplice or an alb, and a cope or chasuble.

Upon the daie and at the tyme appointed for the ministracion of the holy Communion, the Priest that shal execute the holy ministry, shall put upon hym the vesture appointed for that ministracion, that is to saye: a white Albe plain, with a vestment or Cope. And where there be many Priestes or Decons, there so many shalbe ready to helpe the Priest, in the ministracion, as shalbee requisite: And shall have upon them likewise the vestures appointed for their ministry, that is to saye, Albes, with tunicles.¹¹⁹

This did not, however, satisfy the more radical Protestant theologians at a time where disputes regarding Protestant theology began to materialise. As Roger Bowers points out, there was still much in the 1549 Prayer Book that 'might appeal to a certain non-radical and non-combative species of Edwardian Protestantism; it was reformed, yet tempered austerity with ceremony and didacticism with mystery, and it leant toward the latitudinarian in preference to the confrontational.'¹²⁰

Therefore, after revision and amendment, the 1552 Prayer Book was introduced which instructed

¹¹⁸ Norris, H. (2017). *Church Vestments: Their Origin and Development*. New York: Dover Publications. P8

¹¹⁹ Church of England. (2011). Book of the Common Prayer and administration of the sacraments and other rites and ceremonies of the Church: according to the use of the Church of England. In B. Cummings (Ed.) *The Book of Common Prayer: The Texts of 1549, 1559, and 1662* (pp. 19-99). Oxford: OUP Oxford.

¹²⁰ Bowers, R. (2000). The Chapel Royal, The first Edwardian Prayer Book and Elizabeth's settlement of religion, 1559. *The Historical Journal*, 43 (2), 317-344. Retrieved from https://www.cambridge-org.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/464C2212E2194D365E03B804EDF5D1DF/S0018246X99001107a.pdf/chapel_royal_the_first_edwardian_prayer_book_and_elizabeths_settlement_of_religion_1559.pdf. P2

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that a plain surplice only was to be worn during all church services. Bishops, however, were to retain their dress.

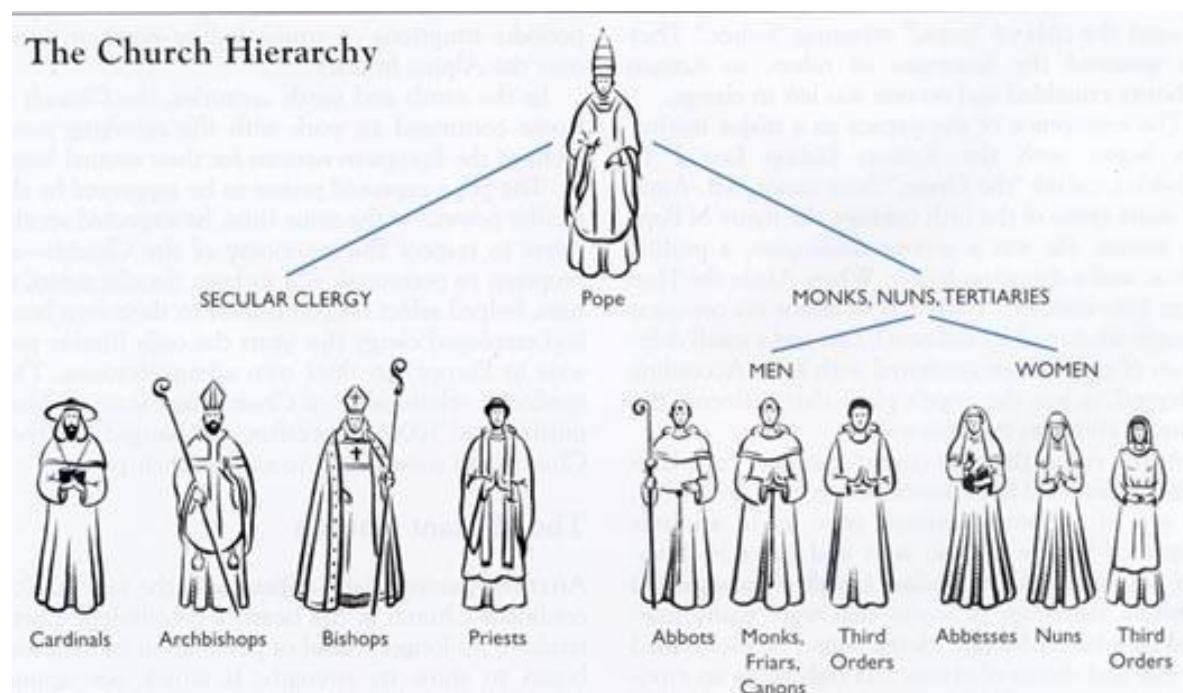
The mornynge and evenynge prayer shalbe used and sayed...and here is to be noted, that the minister at the tyme of the communion and all other tymes in his ministracion, shall use neither albe, vestment, nor cope: but being archbishop or bishop, he shall have and wear a rochet; and being a priest or deacon, he shall have and wear a surplice only...rente your heartes, and not your garmentes, and turne to the lord your God.¹²¹

As Marcus Harmes points out, the rochet and chimère in particular proclaimed the status and power of bishops as they were of a different design to that of an ordinary clergyman.¹²² With the evolution of vestments, greater differences appeared between what the clergy were expected to wear and what bishops were expected to wear and thus a hierarchical distinction began to make itself more apparent. This is reiterated by Barbara Baumgarten in her statement that 'as the church and its hierarchy became more established, the tendency to make distinct garments for the ministers grew.'¹²³ These differences in vesture with regards to hierarchy are perhaps most clearly portrayed in the image below.

¹²¹ Church of England. (1964). The Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments and other rites and ceremonies in the Church of England. In E . C . S. Gibson (Ed.) *The first and second prayer books of Edward VI* (pp. 320-448). London: Dent

¹²² Harmes, M. (2014). Caps, Shrouds, Lawn and Tackle: English Bishops and their Dress from the Sixteenth Century to the Restoration. *Journal of the Costume Society*, 48 (1), 3-20. doi: 10.1179/0590887613Z.00000000036. P8

¹²³ Baumgarten, B.D. (2002). *Vestments for All Seasons*. Harrisburg: Morehouse Publishing. P3



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Whilst these methods of distinction were increasing in England, this was not the case in reformed theology that was establishing itself in certain areas on the Continent. Marcus Harmes correctly states that whilst across Europe the vesture adopted by reformed clergy was intended to convey their identity as a sober preacher, the English Church regarded external objects as signifiers of the episcopate.¹²⁵ These differences in theology surrounding the role and use of vestments were characterised by the rising debate concerning 'adiaphora' or 'things indifferent.' The term 'adiaphora' or 'things indifferent' refers to something that 'is an important element of religious observance but is not an article of faith and therefore not critical to personal salvation or subject to a rule of the church.'¹²⁶ With regards to vestments, the argument emerged from some reformers that these were items that had no 'scriptural basis' and were therefore 'neither required nor prohibited' by doctrine.¹²⁷ Correctly summed up by John Wagner and Susan Schmid, the idea of

¹²⁴ Massachusetts History and Social Science Curriculum Framework. *The Church Hierarchy*. Retrieved from <https://sites.google.com/a/ashland.k12.ma.us/curriculum/the-rise-of-europe>.

¹²⁵ Harmes, M. (2014). Caps, Shrouds, Lawn and Tackle: English Bishops and their Dress from the Sixteenth Century to the Restoration. *Journal of the Costume Society*, 48 (1), 3-20. doi: 10.1179/0590887613Z.00000000036. P7

¹²⁶ Wagner, J.A. & Walters Schmid, S. (2012). *Encyclopedia of Tudor England*. Oxford: ABC - CLIO. P2

¹²⁷ IBID. P2

adiaphora took on much greater importance during the reformation as 'reformist thinkers struggled to define doctrine and practice.'¹²⁸ Leading reformers such as Martin Luther in particular drew a critical distinction between 'necessary and immutable things and things indifferent.'¹²⁹

To conclude, this chapter has sought to convey the importance of material culture and its value to this thesis. Clothing as material culture is crucial to understanding the reactions of individuals and localities to the wider religious settlement. Furthermore, the preservation of these garments and the condition in which they are discovered will provide further insight into the state of religion in the Elizabethan period. In addition to this, it has been established that vestments can also be used as indicators of authority at a higher level in society. Further to just the clothing people wore, the absence or the addition of certain garments will be analysed and used in order to explore the wider issues not only surrounding religion, but surrounding the issue of authority. As well as the materials themselves, written sources will be used in order to explore attitudes towards specific garments. Varying outlooks such as the disagreement over vestments as 'adiaphora' will be used to interpret the ongoing conflict within Protestantism and the effect this had upon state of religion in England.

¹²⁸ IBID. P2¹²⁹ IBID. P2

Chapter 3: The experiences of exile and internal conflict within Protestantism

In order to understand the controversies surrounding vestments that occurred during Elizabeth I's reign, it is important to recognise the role vestments played in the conflicts that arose in the 1550s. By first exploring the theology surrounding the use of vestments put forward by leading Protestant theologians, this chapter will then go on to explore the divergences in Protestant theology that emerged on the continent amongst the exile community. A large number of Elizabeth's bishops who were tasked with leading and enforcing reform in Elizabethan England had spent the previous years as Marian exiles. Their experience of continental reform is therefore imperative to understanding the struggles that subsequently arose back in England. By gaining an insight into the struggles of the 1550s, it will establish that the experience of exile and the diverging interpretations of Protestant theology was pre-emptive of the crisis faced by exiles upon their return to England under Elizabeth I.

One of the most influential theologians and the main instigator of the Protestant reformation was Martin Luther. His main points of theology were his insistence on the Bible as God's word being the only source of religious authority; his emphasis on salvation by faith alone and his concept of the Church as a community and a priesthood of all believers, as opposed to a hierarchical structure.¹³⁰ Through his series of pamphlets published between 1519 and 1520, Luther developed his ideas which quickly spread throughout Europe. His 'Freedom of a Christian' published in 1520 was a particular text which 'differentiated between how a Christian ought to behave toward the 'weak in the faith' and toward the 'unyielding, stubborn ceremonialists' when it came to the use of adiaphora.'¹³¹ Luther adamantly put forward the theory that the Christian must take care 'not to offend the weak when exercising Christian liberty' with regards to things indifferent, but when he

¹³⁰ Encyclopædia Britannica. (2017). *Martin Luther*. Retrieved from <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Martin-Luther>.

¹³¹ Gunther, K. (2017). *Reformation unbound: Protestant visions of reform in England, 1525-1590*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. P71

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encountered a 'stubborn ceremonialist' he must 'resist, do the very opposite, and offend them boldly lest by their impious views they drag many with them into error.'¹³² According to Luther, Christians were told to avoid offending the weak but must intentionally offend those who insisted that 'things indifferent' contributed to one's salvation:¹³³

Any man possessing this knowledge may easily keep clear of danger among those innumerable commands and precepts of the Pope, of bishops, of monasteries, of churches, of princes, and of magistrates, which some foolish pastors urge on us as being necessary for justification and salvation, calling them precepts of the Church, when they are not so at all... The Christian must therefore walk in the middle path, and meet these two classes of men before his eyes. He may meet with hardened and obstinate ceremonialists, who, like deaf adders, refuse to listen to the truth of liberty and cry up, enjoying, and urge on us their ceremonies, as if they could justify us without faith...these men we must resist, do just the contrary to what they do, and be bold to give them offence; lest by this impious notion of their they should deceive many along with themselves... Or else we may meet with simple minded and ignorant persons, weak in the faith, as the Apostle calls them, who are as yet unable to apprehend that liberty of faith, even if willing to do so. These must spare, lest they should be offended. We must bear with their infirmity, till they shall be more fully instructed.¹³⁴

Luther's influence was still prominent in the minds of many reformers, but the steady rise of the ideas of John Calvin also began to generate a powerful impact. In 1536, John Calvin published his 'Institutes of the Christian Religion' in which he emphasised the authority of the scriptures and divine predestination. Calvin's influence became increasingly significant when he became the leader of the Geneva Church in 1555 and as a result of his influence created the puritan movement in England. Calvin's teachings looked towards the simplicity of the ancient Church. His 'Ecclesiastical Ordinances' written in 1541 addressed the issue of church order in which it states:

It will be good in this connection to follow the order of the ancient Church, for it is the only practice which is shown us in Scripture... there are four orders of office instituted by our Lord for the government of his Church. First, pastors; then doctors; next elders;

¹³² IBID. P71

¹³³ IBID. P71

¹³⁴ Luther, M. (1883). Concerning Christian Liberty. In H. Wace & C. A. Buchheim (Eds.) *First principles of the Reformation, or, The ninety-five theses and the three primary works of Dr. Martin Luther translated into English*(pp. 101-137). London: J.Murray.

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and fourth deacons. Hence if we will have a Church well-ordered and maintained we ought to observe this form of government.¹³⁵

It recognised four main groups of church government which included pastors to preach the scriptures, elders to administer the church and deacons. Furthermore, it established a council of pastors and elders in order to enforce conformity to God's law. Whilst Luther was more accepting of the role of the government within the administration of the Church, Calvin set himself firmly against any government intervention in Church affairs.¹³⁶

It is evident that the controversies that erupted between Elizabeth's bishops and the more radical Protestants had in fact been developing long before. They were visible in the exile community that resided on the continent in places such as Geneva, Strasbourg and Frankfurt where groups of exiles resided and began to form their own separate communities. Furthermore, the divergences that emerged between those bishops who had experienced Marian exile and those who remained in England during Mary's reign can also be traced back to the pre-Elizabethan era. As Karl Gunther importantly highlights, the 'constant internal squabbling of Protestants' on the continent was an oft-repeated Catholic punchline and the exiles at both Zurich and Strasbourg feared that this critique was working as a 'powerful solvent on the commitment of Protestants remaining in England.'¹³⁷ The root of the disputes amongst Protestants was undoubtedly differences in interpretations of theology, contributed to by the development of Calvin's more radical theological interpretation of Protestantism. The existence of different groups of exiles scattered across the continent fuelled these variations in interpretations and these disagreements were subsequently reignited later in Elizabeth's reign. As Diarmaid MacCulloch points out, 'established Protestantism could not agree on

¹³⁵ Calvin, J. (2000). Ecclesiastical Ordinances 1541. In J. K. S. Reid (Ed.) *Calvin: Theological Treatises* (pp. 56-73). London: S.C.M.Press.

¹³⁶ Tuininga, M.J. (2017). *Calvin's Political Theology and the Public Engagement of the Church*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. P65

¹³⁷ Gunther, K. (2017). *Reformation unbound: Protestant visions of reform in England, 1525-1590*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. P169

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what it was supposed to be... in particular between the theology of Germany and Scandinavia which looked to Martin Luther, and the theology of south Germany and Switzerland which drew its inspiration from the work of Huldrych Zwingli.¹³⁸ Moreover, the arrival of John Calvin in Geneva during the 1540s established Geneva as a haven for Protestant exiles.

Whilst the city of Frankfurt, a sanctuary for Protestant exiles, portrayed itself as an established fully reformed church 'free from all dregs of superstitious ceremonies' and criticised other exiles for not doing enough to drive forward reform, Karl Gunther rightly highlights that these accusations proved to be an offensive criticism to other exile communities. These disagreements, summarised by Gunther, reflected a 'substantially different understanding of what exactly the exiles ought to be doing.'¹³⁹ Whilst the exiles at Zurich and Strasbourg were 'engaged in practical measures for the vindication and perpetuation of the Edwardian achievement'; by contrast, the exiles at Frankfurt believed that their main task was to 'finish the work left undone during Edward's reign and to establish a fully reformed church abroad that would serve as a homing beacon for English exiles.'¹⁴⁰ These divergences came to light during the troubles at Frankfurt in the 1550s. In an open letter sent out to all other exile communities on August 2nd 1554, the exiles situated at Frankfurt portrayed their establishment of the Church as the true Church, free from evil and suspicion.

We doubt not, dearly beloved, but you have heard, as well by Letter as by report, of the excellent graces and mercy which our good GOD and heavenly Father hath shewed unto our little Congregation in this City of Frankfurt... And here yet it is granted in so ample wise: that, (being subject to no blemish, no, nor so much as the evil of suspicion, from the which few Churches are free) we may Preach, Minister, and use Discipline; to the true setting forth of GOD's glory, and good ensample to others.¹⁴¹

¹³⁸ MacCulloch, D. (1990). *The later Reformation in England 1547-1603*. Basingstoke: Macmillan. P65

¹³⁹ Gunther, K. (2017). *Reformation unbound: Protestant visions of reform in England, 1525-1590*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. P170

¹⁴⁰ IBID. P170

¹⁴¹ Whittingham, W. (1907). A brief discourse of the troubles at Frankfurt, 1544-1558 A. D. In E. Arber (Ed.) *A Christian Library: A popular series of religious literature*. London: Priv.print.

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In doing so, the community at Frankfurt urged other exile communities to join them in the effort to form a united exile Church on the continent;

...wherefore, Brethren, seeing you have endured the pain of Persecution with us, we thought it likewise our duties to make you partakers of our consolation; that all together we may give thanks to our loving Father: who is more tender over us than the mother over her children...trusting by GOD's grace, that he will so direct your hearts, that, no respect of commodity there, nor yet fear of burden here, may once move you to shrink from your Vocation: which is, in one Faith, one Ministration, one Tongue, one consent, to serve GOD in his church.¹⁴²

When their calls were unsuccessful, the Frankfurt congregation blamed other exiles for contributing to the 'epidemic of Nicodemism in England' by 'pursuing lives of ease rather than forming a united English exile Church.'¹⁴³ The exiles situated at Frankfurt accused other exiles who were scattered across the continent of 'doing great damage' to the evangelical cause at home.¹⁴⁴ In reaction to these claims, the congregations at both Zurich and Strasbourg accused Frankfurt's actions of causing 'spiritual harm' on the 'weaker brethren remaining in England.'¹⁴⁵ It is these conflicts within Protestant exile communities that sets the scene for the debate that arose during Elizabeth I's reign. This is particularly evident in the debate that arose amongst exile communities concerning liturgy and the matter of 'things indifferent.' The Zurich and Strasbourg congregations did not demand continued use of the Prayer Book on the basis of 'obedience to authority in things indifferent' because they believed that nonconformity 'would do great harm to fellow Protestants remaining in England'.¹⁴⁶ In direct contrast, the congregation at Frankfurt defended their deviation from things indifferent with the statement that 'offense was not genuinely given by their church order, but only wrongly taken'.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴² IBID

¹⁴³ Gunther, K. (2017). *Reformation unbound: Protestant visions of reform in England, 1525-1590*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. P166

¹⁴⁴ IBID. P164

¹⁴⁵ IBID. P173

¹⁴⁶ IBID. P175

¹⁴⁷ IBID. P175

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This growing conflict regarding liturgy reached its peak towards the end of the 1550s and eventually split the exile community in Frankfurt. The exiles saw themselves split into two factions that historians have referred to as the 'Knoxians' who wanted to eliminate certain elements of the 1552 prayer book which they considered to be 'suspicious' and the 'Coxians' who sought to 'have the face of an English Church'.¹⁴⁸ Whilst the Knoxians fought for biblical purity the Coxians were 'unwilling to surrender the perception of a visible Church defined by the mark of loyalty to devotional forms established by law'.¹⁴⁹ This division is most clearly communicated in Knox's own account of banishment from Frankfurt

I do find in the English Book (which they so highly praise and advance above all other Orders) things superstitious, impure, unclean and unperfect (the which I offered myself ready to prove, and to justify, before any man); therefore I could not agree that their Book should be of our Church received... Among many sins that moved God to plague England, I affirmed that slackness to reform Religion, when the time and place was granted, was one; and therefore that it did become us to be circumspect, how we did now lay our foundations and how we went forward. And because that some men nothing ashamed to say and affirm openly, that there was no impediment nor stop in England; but that Religion might go forth and grow to the purity, and that it was already brought to perfection...I reprov'd this opinion as fained and untrue.¹⁵⁰

Karl Gunther rightly points out that it is these troubles that connected the struggles of Edwardian Protestantism with the 'far more explosive' ceremonial debates between puritans and conformists under Elizabeth, which is supported by the fact that the documentation of the Troubles at Frankfurt was published in Elizabeth's reign.¹⁵¹ As the first step towards a fully Protestant reformation, the Edwardian period witnessed the first struggles and conflicts over theology in England. The formation of the 1549 Prayer Book predominantly constructed by Archbishop Thomas Cranmer initially drove

¹⁴⁸ IBID. P159

¹⁴⁹ IBID. P171

¹⁵⁰ Whittingham, W. (1907). A brief discourse of the troubles at Frankfurt, 1544-1558 A. D. In E. Arber (Ed.) *A Christian Library: A popular series of religious literature*. London: Priv.print.

¹⁵¹ Gunther, K. (2017). *Reformation unbound: Protestant visions of reform in England, 1525-1590*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. P171

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forward Protestant practices. However, notably he retained some of the details of the Roman Catholic service, in particular the wearing of vestments during the service.¹⁵²

Upon the daie and at the tyme appointed for the ministracion of the holy Communion, the Priest that shal execute the holy minstery, shall put upon hym the vesture appointed for that ministracion, that is to saye: a white Albe plain, with a vestment or Cope.¹⁵³

Already this was met with hostility from extreme reformers, one of these being Bishop John Hooper who denounced Cranmer's doctrine and refused to wear vestments for service. Despite his obstinate refusal, Hooper eventually conformed after several months spent imprisoned in Lambeth Palace and subsequently in Fleet.¹⁵⁴ Leslie Williams significantly points out that Cranmer's refusal to budge on the vestment issue was due to the questioning of authority and a rise in unrest from radical reformers; an issue that was to be central to the conflict that arose in Elizabeth I's reign.¹⁵⁵

Cranmer's desire to pursue a fully Protestant reformation continued with the construction of the 1552 prayer book, a revised version of the 1549 book, and upon which Elizabeth I largely based her settlement. This version actively sought to address the objections surrounding vestments and made it clear that a cope, alb or vestment was not to be worn, but instead a simple surplice was to be worn during service only. Whilst Diarmaid MacCulloch puts forward the argument that Elizabeth showed signs of having preferred Cranmer's first prayer book of 1549 to his second of 1552, her settlement established a version which was largely based upon the later version but which retained elements of the first. Gunther highlights this association of the Edwardian struggle with the later conflict under Elizabeth. He states that the Frankfurt congregation found themselves in the 'novel

¹⁵² Williams, L.W. (2016). *Emblem of Faith Untouched: A Short Life of Thomas Cranmer*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. P89

¹⁵³ Church of England, . (2011). *Book of the Common Prayer and administration of the sacraments and other rites and ceremonies of the Church: according to the use of the Church of England* . In B. Cummings (Ed.) *The Book of Common Prayer: The Texts of 1549, 1559, and 1662* (pp. 19-99). Oxford: OUP Oxford.

¹⁵⁴ Newcombe, D.G. (2004). *John Hooper*. Retrieved from <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/13706>.

¹⁵⁵ Williams, L.W. (2016). *Emblem of Faith Untouched: A Short Life of Thomas Cranmer*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. P90

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position of being able to defend deviation from the Prayer Book by pleading the need to obey the magistrate.¹⁵⁶ Indeed, it must be recognised that the reason these debates reignited with such ferocity under Elizabeth after making an appearance during Edward's reign was undoubtedly the experience of continental reform and the diverging interpretations of Protestantism that emerged as a result. This has been reaffirmed by Scott Wenig who correctly argues that the troubles at Frankfurt illustrated the freedom of English Protestants to experiment with what was a 'liberal style of worship' and it was these exiles upon whom the Elizabethan government relied upon to enforce the new religious settlement in England.¹⁵⁷

To conclude, after exploring pre-Elizabethan conflict within Protestantism on the continent, this chapter has successfully determined that the existence of numerous groups of exiles scattered across the continent fuelled a surge in differing theological interpretations of Protestantism. As a result, the exile community ultimately created an issue for itself by disagreeing over matters of principle, what Protestantism was supposed to be and what, as exiles, they were supposed to be doing to move forward with reform. It is from these disagreements that the debate over vestments as 'things indifferent' arose, and questions over obedience to royal authority in England began to surface which was to re-emerge with greater zeal under Elizabeth. These disagreements and the backlash from radical Protestants first made an appearance in Edward VI's reign in reaction to Cranmer's 1549 prayer book which set the basis for the Elizabethan religious settlement that was to follow. These disagreements during the Edwardian period subsequently arose once again amongst the exile communities on the continent and this was the link that connected the Edwardian Struggles with the conflict that re-emerged under Elizabeth. Having been able to experiment freely with continental reform in the subsequent years, the exiles' return to England placed them in the midst of

¹⁵⁶ Gunther, K. (2017). *Reformation unbound: Protestant visions of reform in England, 1525-1590*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. P172

¹⁵⁷ Wenig, S. (2000). *Straightening the altars: the ecclesiastical vision and pastoral achievements of the progressive bishops under Elizabeth I, 1559-1579*. Oxford: P.Lang. P23

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a clash of principles. Not only did this see the conflict reignite, but it caused those exiles to be faced with a substantial ethical dilemma.

Chapter 4: The role of Bishops and the debate over vestments in Elizabethan England

‘Many of the exiles who had returned to England on Elizabeth’s accession and had accepted leading positions with the firm intention of creating a thoroughly reformed church had to recognise that the Queen, more than any other single person, stood between them and further reform.’¹⁵⁸ This analysis by Claire Cross signifies the dilemma faced by Elizabeth’s bishops surrounding the religious settlement that was put into place in 1559 and how this dilemma contributed to significant conflict amongst English Protestants. Having uncovered the progress of continental reform in the previous chapter, the experience of continental exile of those who go on to become Elizabeth I’s bishops provides a crucial understanding into their reaction to the English religious settlement to which they returned. This chapter will explore how vestments were used by Elizabeth as a reflection of church hierarchy and as an indication of the authority of her bishops. By analysing the portraits of two of Elizabeth I’s Archbishops, this chapter will explore the way in which the ecclesiastical personnel used their clothes to emphasise their status and how the wearing of vestments and the subject of episcopal authority resulted in the fierce backlash from Protestant radicals. It will thus be demonstrated that Elizabethan bishops faced a significant moral dilemma with regards to their desire for further reform combined with the need to obey the Queen and take action against Protestant radicals. This period witnessed Protestant reform essentially being carried out through a Catholic hierarchical church system. With written evidence from the Zurich Letters, this chapter will go on to establish how Elizabeth’s bishops defended their use of vestments against the rising radical Protestant platform and how they reacted to the controversy surrounding their episcopal positions. The role of bishops is vital in understanding the concept of the Elizabethan religious settlement. As the promoters of further Protestant reform, but also visual harbourers of a continuity with the past,

¹⁵⁸ Cross, C. (1969). *The royal supremacy in the Elizabethan Church*. New York, London: Allen & Unwin. P72

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the situation in which Elizabethan bishops found themselves characterised the temperamental nature of the Elizabethan settlement.¹⁵⁹ Kenneth Carleton puts forward the premise that the office of bishop was a fundamental defining feature of a Church which understood itself as at once 'both Catholic and reformed'.¹⁶⁰ It is this confusing outlook that will be explored in further detail throughout the chapter and how this uncertainty influenced the general population in their reaction to the religious measures that were being implemented. In this period, bishops represented the drivers of Protestant reform and implementers of reformed religious measures; however, their occupation itself reflected a traditional Catholic hierarchical episcopal system. This 'uneasy mixture of tradition and reform' reflected the temperamental character of the Elizabethan settlement and led to the turbulent relationship between Protestants.¹⁶¹

The majority of Elizabeth's bishops were Marian exiles and upon their return to England at Elizabeth's accession, had taken up positions as her bishops. The Queen's ecclesiastical policy had already been established and was not as the new bishops had first expected. With legislation that reversed Mary I's repeal of Edward VI's Act of Uniformity and Administration of the Sacraments, Elizabeth's Act of Uniformity reinstated a large amount of Protestant elements into the Church as had been put forward by the Edwardian Prayer Book of 1552. However, within the Act, Elizabeth referred back to the Edwardian settlement of 1549 which retained several elements of the Catholic Church: 'And be it enacted, that such ornaments of the church, and of the ministers thereof, shall be retained and be in use, as was in the Church of England, by authority of Parliament, in the second year of the reign of King Edward VI.'¹⁶² Consequently, the disputes over theology that emerged in Edwardian England and re-emerged amongst the exile communities on the continent, had now been given further ammunition to rise once again under Elizabeth. The bishops dispirited reaction to the

¹⁵⁹ Usher, B. (2003). *William Cecil and episcopacy, 1559-1577*. Aldershot: Ashgate. P91

¹⁶⁰ Carleton, K. (2001). *Bishops and Reform in the English Church, 1520-1559*. Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer. P186

¹⁶¹ Usher, B. (2003). *William Cecil and episcopacy, 1559-1577*. Aldershot: Ashgate. P91

¹⁶² Elizabeth I. (1896). Elizabeth's Act of Uniformity A.D 1559. In H. Gee & W. J. Hardy (Eds.) *Documents illustrative of English church history* (pp. 458-467). London: Macmillan.

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settlement is most evident in the fact that in 1566, Elizabeth ordered Archbishop Matthew Parker to reinforce her main policies concerning the requirements of her bishops. Elizabeth's main policies underlined that:

All archbishops and bishops do use and continue their accustomed apparel.... all deans of cathedral churches, masters of colleges, all archdeacons, and other dignities in cathedral churches, doctors, bachelors of divinity and law, having any ecclesiastical living, shall wear in their common apparel abroad a side gown with sleeves straight at the hand, without any cuts in the same; and that also without any falling cape; and to wear tippets of sarcenet, as is lawful for them by the Act of Parliament 24 Henry VIII.... that all such persons as have been or be ecclesiastical, and serve not the ministry, or have not accepted, or shall refuse to accept the oath of obedience to the queen's majesty, do from henceforth abroad wear none of the said apparel of the form and fashion aforesaid, but to go as mere laymen, till they be reconciled to obedience; and who shall obstinately refuse to do the same, that they be presented by the ordinary to the commissioners in causes ecclesiastical, and by them to be reformed accordingly.¹⁶³

As advocates for a more rapid Protestant reform, their stance was not one that was shared by Elizabeth which immediately placed them in a challenging position. This divergence increased significantly when the Queen enforced measures towards Protestant non conformity in her Act of Uniformity of 1559 which left bishops 'burdened with the task' of bringing fellow Protestants to heel.¹⁶⁴

Provided always, and be it ordained and enacted by the authority aforesaid, that all and singular archbishops and bishops, and every their chancellors, commissaries, archdeacons, and other ordinaries, having any peculiar ecclesiastical jurisdiction. shall have full power and authority by virtue of this Act, as well to inquire in their visitation, synods, and elsewhere within their jurisdiction at any other time and place, to take occasions and informations of all and every the things above mentioned, done, committed, or perpetrated within the limits of their jurisdictions and authority, and to punish the same by admonition, excommunication, sequestration, or deprivation, and

¹⁶³ Early English Books Online. (1566). *A briefe examination for the tyme, of a certaine declaration, lately put in print in the name and defence of certaine ministers in London, refusyng to weare the apparell prescribed by the lawes and orders of the realme In the ende is reported, the iudgement of two notable learned fathers, M. doctour Bucer, and M. doctour Martir ... translated out of the originals, written by theyr owne handes, purposely debatynge this controuersie..* Retrieved from http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/fulltext?source=configpr.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=D00000998374690000&FILE=../session/1480092566_28358&DISPLAY=AUTHOR&RESULTCLICK=default

¹⁶⁴ MacCulloch, D. (1990). *The later Reformation in England 1547-1603*. Basingstoke: MacMillan. P34

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other censures and processes, in like form as heretofore has been used in like cases by the queen's ecclesiastical laws.¹⁶⁵

As Marian exiles, the influence of continental practices played a crucial part in the outlook of the bishops and how they expected the English Church to operate as a reformed Protestant church. Kenneth Carleton rightly points out that the impact of continental influences on the progress of reform in England should not be underestimated.¹⁶⁶ However, it must also be taken into account that a number of Elizabeth's bishops, such as Matthew Parker, did not have the experience of exile and therefore lacked the experience of continental reform. It is therefore important to note that not only were the bishops who had returned from exile placed at odds with the Queen; but their outlook also differed from the bishops who had remained in England. Whilst the bishops who had returned from exile did indeed expect a more continental style of reform, many of Elizabeth's first bench of bishops took their influence from Zurich rather than the growing radical Protestant haven of Geneva. Particularly at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, reformed Protestantism in England was 'built primarily on the theologies of Zwingli's successor at Zurich, Heinrich Bullinger.'¹⁶⁷ These ties to Zurich remained strong throughout Elizabeth's reign which is particularly evident in the formation of the Zurich letters, in which Elizabeth's bishops corresponded with Heinrich Bullinger in the wake of the vestiarian controversy. The reason they largely took influence from the theology of Zurich was because had Elizabeth's bishops sought to push for further reform following the model of Geneva as a growing centre of more radical Protestant theology; they would essentially be talking themselves out of their episcopal positions which Puritans considered to be popish remnants of the Catholic Church system. William Fulke, leader of a Puritan faction in St John's College, Cambridge, addresses this subject in detail in his 'briefe and plaine declaration' in which he states:

¹⁶⁵ Elizabeth I., (1896). Elizabeth's Act of Uniformity A.D 1559. In H. Gee & W. J. Hardy (Eds.) *Documents illustrative of English church history* (pp. 458-467). London: Macmillan.

¹⁶⁶ Carleton, K. (2001). *Bishops and Reform in the English Church, 1520-1559*. Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer. P184

¹⁶⁷ Wenig, S. (2000). *Straightening the altars: the ecclesiastical vision and pastoral achievements of the progressive bishops under Elizabeth I, 1559-1579*. Oxford: P.Lang. P26

While we search the Scripture, the only rule whereby the church of God ought to be governed, we find that in regiment and governance of the church, the pastor, bishop or elder hath none authority by himself, separated from other. For in the church there ought to be no monarchy or sole absolute government.' But instead, '...There ought to be in every Church a consistory or seignory of elders or governors, which ought to have the hearing, examination and determining of all matters pertaining to discipline and government of that congregation.'¹⁶⁸

Not only would following the Genevan example go against their own positions of authority, but they would set themselves categorically against the Queen's supreme authority as the monarch. Elizabeth identified the example of Geneva as a threat to the Elizabethan religious settlement and its religious leaders, John Calvin and Theodora Beza, as guilty of supporting those radical theories. Efforts had therefore already been made to distance England from all things Genevan.¹⁶⁹ In particular, Elizabeth had witnessed in Mary's reign how religious fervour could lead to political disloyalty to the crown which further fuelled her rejection of the Genevan system.¹⁷⁰ Brett Usher accurately sums up that in William Cecil's view, the way in which to 'combat Catholicism, guarantee the steady advance of Protestantism and at the same time to undermine the Presbyterian platform was to promote to the bench not a clutch of inflexible authoritarians but a more imaginative selection of leading churchmen whose convictions remained firmly wedded to the idea of further reform.'¹⁷¹

It was this stance that put Elizabeth's bishops in such a difficult position with regards to the wearing of vestments. Had they firmly opposed the wearing of vestments they would essentially be fuelling the Presbyterian platform and associating themselves with people such as Knox and Calvin. Given the Queen's hatred of Knox and her rejection of Calvin and Geneva, highlighting these associations

¹⁶⁸ Fulke, W. (1971). A briefe and plaine declaration, concerning the desires of all those faithfull ministers, that haue and do seeke for the discipline and reformation of the Church of Englande which may serue for a iust apologie, against the false accusations and slaunders of their aduersaries.. In L. J. Trinterud (Ed.) *Elizabethan Puritanism: A Library of Protestant Thought* (pp. 239-301). New York: Oxford University Press.

¹⁶⁹ Dawson, J.E.A. (2010). John Knox, Christopher Goodman and the 'Example of Geneva.' In P. Ha & P. Collinson (Eds.) *The reception of continental reformation in Britain* (pp. 107-135). Oxford: Oxford University Press. P134

¹⁷⁰ Usher, B. (2003). *William Cecil and episcopacy, 1559-1577*. Aldershot: Ashgate. P18

¹⁷¹ IBID. P107

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would not help their cause as they appealed to the monarch to pursue further reform.¹⁷²

Furthermore, it is also crucial to note that once again divergences in Protestant theology became apparent back in England. Whilst in exile on the continent, despite Calvin's influence, the bishops who had resided in Strasbourg in particular continued to believe and practice magisterial Protestantism – the principle that a Protestant reform must be carried out through a hierarchical church system.¹⁷³ Not only did they accept there to be a church hierarchy, they also accepted the authority of the state and the monarch as absolute. By accepting royal supremacy and a hierarchical church system, the bishops were once again at odds with the more radical Protestants who were taking increasing influence from Calvin. This is reiterated by Scott Dixon in his assertion that the radical Protestant tradition was such a threat to magisterial Protestantism in its 'relentless search for a pure, apostolic mode of Christianity' in which it was 'constantly prepared to overturn the status quo.'¹⁷⁴ Furthermore, Patrick Collinson importantly notes that there was a legitimate concern of the bishops that to side with the puritans might 'alienate the unpredictable mind of the queen from true religion altogether.'¹⁷⁵ Furthermore, by siding with the more radical Protestant theorists, bishops would essentially be placing themselves against the nature of their own authority, as Calvin's theory of Church government rejected any form of hierarchy and instead consisted of a church run by elders or presbyters:

Concerning the third order which is that of Elders: In the present condition of the Church, it would be good to elect two of the Little Council, four of the Council of Sixty, and six of the Council of Two Hundred, men of good and honest life, without reproach and beyond suspicion and above all fearing God and possessing spiritual prudence.

¹⁷² Gunther, K. (2017). *Reformation unbound: Protestant visions of reform in England, 1525-1590*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. P184

¹⁷³ Dixon, C.S. (2010). *Protestants: A History from Wittenberg to Pennsylvania 1517 - 1740*. Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell. P7

¹⁷⁴ Dixon, S. (2010). *Protestants: A History from Wittenberg to Pennsylvania 1517 - 1740*. Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell. P7

¹⁷⁵ Collinson, P. (1982). *The Elizabethan Puritan movement*. London: Methuen. P74

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These should be so elected that there be some in every quarter of the city, to keep an eye on everybody.¹⁷⁶

By losing their status they would also be losing the power to push for further reform. Consequently, they found themselves caught in an ethical crisis. Whilst Diarmaid MacCulloch argues that the 'debate had moved on since the question of clerical dress in the 1560s' and had now moved on to the 'question of church government', these debates were in fact clearly intertwined with one another.¹⁷⁷ As Susan Vincent importantly highlights, 'the two key axes along which dress operated in a classificatory fashion were rank and gender.'¹⁷⁸ Vincent goes on to state that portraits in particular bear witness to the importance of clothing in recording the choices of self-representation. 'Behind each image were decisions about dress and the meanings that particular garments embodied.'¹⁷⁹ Indeed if we examine two examples of portraits of Elizabeth's bishops (pictured below) their appearance in these portraits is extremely indicative of their roles.

¹⁷⁶ Calvin, J. (2000). Ecclesiastical Ordinances 1541. In J. K. S. Reid (Ed.) *Calvin: Theological Treatises* (pp. 56-73). London: S.C.M. Press.

¹⁷⁷ MacCulloch, D. (1990). *The later Reformation in England 1547-1603*. Basingstoke: MacMillan. P38

¹⁷⁸ Vincent, S. (2003). *Dressing the Elite: Clothes in Early Modern England*. Oxford: Berg. P126

¹⁷⁹ IBID. P7

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Edmund Grindal
Artist: Follower of Dirk Vos
Date: 1576
Oil on canvas
76x63cm

The official portrait of Edmund Grindal, displayed in Lambeth palace, was painted in 1576 upon his appointment as Archbishop of Canterbury.¹⁸¹ Despite being a firm Protestant, Grindal's portrait portrays a distinctive image reflecting clear traditional attire, including the rochet and chimère.

¹⁸⁰ Follower of Dirk Vos, .(1576). Edmund Grindal. [Oil on canvas]. , retrieved from <http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/gallery.php/5001/archbishop-of-canterbury-portraits>.

¹⁸¹ The Archbishop of Canterbury. (2017). *Archbishop of Canterbury Portraits*. Retrieved from <http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/gallery.php/5001/archbishop-of-canterbury-portraits..>

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Whilst not elaborately Catholic, it is not the simplistic attire that the more radical reformers would have liked.



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John Whitgift
Artist: English School
Date: 1583
Oil on panel
56x43cm

¹⁸² English School,. (1583). John Whitgift. (Oil on panel),. Retrieved from <http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/gallery.php/5001/archbishop-of-canterbury-portraits>.

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Subsequently, the portrait of Archbishop Whitgift was painted in 1583, also upon his appointment as Archbishop.¹⁸³ The context of the portrait makes it clear that his appearance has been constructed with the aim of conveying his position and authority. The most distinctive garments on display are once again the rochet and the chimère. What is most intriguing from this portrait is that it portrays very conformist attire which once again reinforces the notion that Elizabeth's bishops complied with the Queen's orders to wear vestments as a representation of their authority within the government of the Church. In examining the collection of Archbishop Portraits, it is not inaccurate to draw noticeable similarities between the messages they convey. Both Grindal and Whitgift's portraits are not dissimilar from that of Thomas Cranmer (much earlier in the era) or even William Warham, a definite Roman Catholic.

It is essential to take into consideration that these portraits were painted with the single purpose of distinguishing and memorialising the role of Archbishop. Marcus Harmes rightly argues that bishops wore specific vesture that set them apart from the lower levels of the clergy for the purpose of reflecting the higher powers they held.¹⁸⁴ Elizabeth particularly favoured the purpose of vestments as a way of distinguishing authority and marking out the office of her bishops and the enforcement of vestments as representations of ecclesiastical authority was a key element of the settlement and one which Elizabeth I felt very strongly about. As Susan Vincent reiterates, 'the regulation of dress was liked to matters of prerogative and constitutional power' one which Elizabeth 'sought personal control over'.¹⁸⁵ Consequently, as previously mentioned, bishops once again found themselves in the midst of an ethical crisis. Whilst many disliked the idea of wearing vestments as it went entirely against their religious principles; to refuse to wear them would play into the hands of the more

¹⁸³ The Archbishop of Canterbury. (2017). *Archbishop of Canterbury Portraits*. Retrieved from <http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/gallery.php/5001/archbishop-of-canterbury-portraits..>

¹⁸⁴ Harmes, M. (2014). Caps, Shrouds, Lawn and Tackle: English Bishops and their Dress from the Sixteenth Century to the Restoration. *Journal of the Costume Society*, 48 (1), 3-20. doi: 10.1179/0590887613Z.00000000036.P1

¹⁸⁵ Vincent, S. (2003). *Dressing the Elite: Clothes in Early Modern England*. Oxford: Berg. P119

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radical Protestants, whose doctrine would deny the authority of bishops altogether. It must be remembered, as D.M.Loades highlights, that the first crisis of authority to afflict the settlement came not from the resistance of the Catholics, but from the zeal of Protestant radicalism.¹⁸⁶ Should bishops lose this authority and advantageous position close to the Queen, they would lose the ability entirely to push for further reform. As a result, what emerged was essentially a Protestant Reformation being carried out by Elizabeth's bishops through a medieval Catholic hierarchical church system. As originally pointed out by Geoffrey Elton, although England was now officially a Protestant country, 'observing a much changed faith, constrained to uniformity of a revolutionary kind' it was 'still served by a church whose political and administrative structure remained unaltered from pre-reformation days.'¹⁸⁷ The formation of bishop, priest and deacon also remained the basis of church government. As Diarmaid MacCulloch more recently stated, although a Protestant theological system was being asserted, it was being sheltered within a largely pre-reformation Catholic Church structure.¹⁸⁸ Scott Wenig captures the nature of the Elizabethan settlement accurately by stating that 'the new bishops effectively used the ecclesiastical machinery of the medieval Catholic system to promote reform.'¹⁸⁹

Evidently, this system of implementing reform was met with substantial hostility from all angles. This is perhaps most tellingly reflected in the writings of two of the Queen's bishops themselves, Edmund Grindal and Robert Horne, both of whom had been Marian exiles. In a letter to Heinrich Bullinger in February 1567, Grindal and Horne wrote;

Lastly, that railing accusation of theirs is equally false, that the whole management of church government is in the hands of the bishops; although we do not deny but that a precedence is allowed them. For ecclesiastical matters of this sort are usually deliberated upon in the convocation which is called together by royal edict, at the same

¹⁸⁶ Loades, D.M. (1974). *Politics and the nation, 1450-1660: obedience, resistance and public order*. London: Fontana. P255

¹⁸⁷ Elton, G.R. (1977). *Reform and Reformation: England, 1509-1558*. London: Edward Arnold. P367

¹⁸⁸ MacCulloch, D. (1990). *The later Reformation in England 1547-1603*. Basingstoke: MacMillan. P94

¹⁸⁹ Wenig, S. (2000). *Straightening the altars: the ecclesiastical vision and pastoral achievements of the progressive bishops under Elizabeth I, 1559-1579*. Oxford: P.Lang. P34

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time as the parliament, as they call it, of the whole kingdom is held. The bishops are present, and also certain of the more learned of the clergy of the whole province, whose number is three times as great as that of the bishops. These deliberate by themselves upon ecclesiastical affairs apart from the bishops, and nothing is determined or decided in convocation without the common consent and approbation of both parties, or at least of a majority. So far are we from not allowing the clergy to give their opinion in ecclesiastical matters of this kind.¹⁹⁰

This period clearly saw growing hostility towards episcopacy and the system of church government that Elizabeth instilled, with authority visibly portrayed through the wearing of vestments. Consequently, this period saw vestments not only being regarded as a 'popish' element of the Church, but also as a reflection of the bishops' ethical dilemma. Elizabeth's bishops - the drivers of further reform and figures who were supposed to be leaders of religious reform, were now wearing what Protestants regarded as unreformed popish attire. This confusion caused bishops' dress to be viewed as a manipulation of their power. As Marcus Harmes importantly points out, religious attire had a 'complex and ambiguous place in the reformed English Church' due to its confusing messages during the Reformation.¹⁹¹ Far from Elizabeth's intention to use vestments as a method of marking authority and promoting order, vestments ended up portraying confusion and a 'sight of disorder.'¹⁹² The hostility felt towards Elizabethan bishops can also be attributed once again to the experiences of exile. Those who had not gone into exile had witnessed the Marian burnings and for them, the wearing of vestments revealed to them that the English ministry was still riddled with popish elements.¹⁹³

¹⁹⁰ Bp. Grindal, E., & Bp. Horne, R. (1567). Letter LXXV: Bishops Grindal and Horn to Henry Bullinger and Rodolph Gualter. In H. Robinson (Ed.) *The Zurich letters: comprising the correspondence of several English bishops and others, with some of the Helvetian reformers, during the early part of the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Translated from the authenticated copies of the autographs preserved in the archives of Zurich, and edited for the Parker society* (2nd ed.) (pp. 175-181). Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers.

¹⁹¹ Harmes, M. (2014). Caps, Shrouds, Lawn and Tackle: English Bishops and their Dress from the Sixteenth Century to the Restoration. *Journal of the Costume Society.*, 48 (1), 3-20. doi: 10.1179/0590887613Z.00000000036. P6

¹⁹² IBID. P17

¹⁹³ Collinson, P. (1982). *The Elizabethan Puritan movement*. London: Methuen. P95

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Moreover, the clamp down on nonconformity carried out by bishops resulted in further resentment. The visible suppression of Protestant ideas resulted in bishops being perceived as disregarding their task of continuing the process of reform and the wearing of vestments contributed to this outlook by serving as a reminder to many of the insufficiency of the reform of the English Church.¹⁹⁴ Daniel Eppley puts forward the premise that in fact the role of bishops themselves in the controversy convinced some Protestants that 'episcopacy itself was a hindrance to the establishment of a truly reformed church.'¹⁹⁵ As a result, the Elizabethan period faced a crisis of episcopal authority as the argument for total eradication of episcopacy was gaining merit.¹⁹⁶

Although the conflict between bishops and the laity has been uncovered in previous studies, the bishops' relationship with the Queen has largely been ignored. It must be taken into account that bishops were indeed granted the power to implement reform and to enforce measures in order to eradicate Catholicism, however, as Claire Cross crucially highlights, it must not be forgotten that the Queen was only content to work through her bishops 'so long as they carried out her orders to the full.'¹⁹⁷ This put them in a delicate position. Although they did possess the power to push forward Protestant reform, they could only carry out specific ideas approved by the Queen and only as instructed. The challenge therefore faced by the bishops is reflected perhaps most accurately in Queen Elizabeth's letter to Archbishop Matthew Parker on 25 January 1564, in which she states:

There is crept and brought into the church by some very few persons an open and manifest disorder...by diversity of opinions and specially in external decent and lawful rites and ceremonies to be used in the churches...Yet we thought, until this present, that by the regard which you would have had hereto according to your office with the assistance of the bishops your brethren...these errors should have stayed and appeased.... We mean not to endure or suffer any longer these evils thus to proceed, spread, and increase in our realm, but have certainly determined to have all such

¹⁹⁴ Harmes, M. (2014). Caps, Shrouds, Lawn and Tackle: English Bishops and their Dress from the Sixteenth Century to the Restoration. *Journal of the Costume Society*, 48 (1), 3-20. doi: 10.1179/0590887613Z.00000000036. P1

¹⁹⁵ Eppley, D. (2007). *Defending royal supremacy and discerning God's will in Tudor England*. Aldershot: Ashgate, Ashgate Publishing Ltd, Routledge, Taylor and Francis. P149

¹⁹⁶ Wenig, S. (2000). *Straightening the altars: the ecclesiastical vision and pastoral achievements of the progressive bishops under Elizabeth I, 1559-1579*. Oxford: P.Lang. P118

¹⁹⁷ Cross, C. (1969). *The royal supremacy in the Elizabethan Church*. New York, London: Allen & Unwin. P75

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diversities, varieties and novelties amongst them of the clergy and our people to be reformed and repressed and brought to one manner of uniformity... And therefore we do straitly charge you to confer with the bishops and brethren....so to proceed by order, injunction or censure....so as uniformity or order may be kept in every church.¹⁹⁸

This letter was composed as a result of the bishops failing to enforce conformity to Elizabeth's satisfaction and it must be taken into account here that bishops were expected to obey the Queen's authority. The result was that they were carrying out measures against Protestant clergymen who largely 'held the same view of reform as they did.'¹⁹⁹ Consequently, due to their commitment to the Queen's right of authority combined with their defence of the hierarchy resulted in them looking far less 'progressive' than they had done at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign.²⁰⁰ As hostility towards bishops and questions about their authority grew, they found themselves caught in a position that is summed up well by Patrick Collinson, who states that whilst Protestant seemed to be in substantial agreement on almost all other matters of religion, they differed on the crucial question of 'whether the Queen was in all circumstances to be obeyed.'²⁰¹ The way in which bishops attempted to deal with the doubt surrounding their authority and the accusations of failing to continue the process of reform, was to preach the notion that vestments were regarded as 'adiaphora' or a 'matter indifferent'; something which the Bible neither mandates nor forbids, with the explanation that as long as they were continuing to preach pure doctrine the wearing of vestments should not remain an issue. This is directly addressed by Bishops Grindal and Horne's letter to Heinrich Bullinger in 1567:

¹⁹⁸ State Papers Online. (25 Jan 1564). *Copy of the Queen's letter to the Abp. of Canterbury; requiring him to confer with the Bishops of his province*. Retrieved from http://go.galegroup.com/mss/retrieve.do?sgHitCountType=None&sort=DA-ASC-SORT&prodId=SPOL&tabId=T001&subjectParam=&resultListType=RESULT_LIST&searchId=R2&searchType=BasicSearchForm&subjectAction=&bucketSubId=&inPS=true&userGroupName=hudduni&sgCurrentPosition=&docId=GALE%7CMC4305080584&contentSet=GALE%7CMC4305080584&xtPosition=7&viewtype=Manuscript.

¹⁹⁹ Wenig, S. (2000). *Straightening the altars: the ecclesiastical vision and pastoral achievements of the progressive bishops under Elizabeth I, 1559-1579*. Oxford: P.Lang. P84

²⁰⁰ Wenig, S. (2000). *Straightening the altars: the ecclesiastical vision and pastoral achievements of the progressive bishops under Elizabeth I, 1559-1579*. Oxford: P.Lang. P84

²⁰¹ Collinson, P. (1982). *The Elizabethan Puritan movement*. London: Methuen. P60

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They contend on the other hand, that these habits are not on any account now to be reckoned among things indifferent, but that they are impious, papistical and idolatrous; and therefore that all pious persons ought rather with one consent to retire from the ministry, than to serve the church with these rags of popery, as they call them; even though we have the most entire liberty of preaching the most pure doctrine, and likewise of exposing, laying open, and condemning, by means of instruction and abuses of every kind, whether as to ceremonies, or doctrine, or the sacraments, or moral duties... we cannot accept this crude advice of theirs, as neither ought we to be passive under the violent appeals by which they are unceasingly in the pulpit disturbing the peace of the church, and bringing the whole of our religion into danger. For by their outcries of this kind, we have alas too severely experienced that the mind of the queen, otherwise inclined to favour religion, has been much irritated; and we know for a certain fact, that the minds of some of the nobility, to say nothing of others, diseased, weak and vacillating, have been wounded, debilitated, and alienated by them.²⁰²

This conflict between bishops and the radicals is most clearly characterised in Bishop Edmund Grindal's condemnation of two nonconformist Protestant leaders, Laurence Humphrey and Thomas Sampson. Despite Grindal holding strong Protestant views, he accuses both Humphrey and Sampson of creating an unnecessary dispute regarding the wearing of vestments. In Grindal's letter to Heinrich Bullinger on August 27th 1566, he states that

There are nevertheless some, among whom are masters Humphrey and Sampson, and others, who still continue in their former opinion. Nothing would be easier than to reconcile them to the queen, if they would but be brought to change their mind; but until they do this, we are unable to effect anything with her majesty, irritated as she is by this controversy. We, who are now bishops, on our first return, and before we entered on our ministry, contended long and earnestly for the removal of those things that have occasioned the present dispute; but as we were unable to prevail, either with the queen or the parliament, we judged it best, after a consultation on the subject, not to desert our churches for the sake of a few ceremonies, and those not unlawful in themselves, especially since the pure doctrine of the gospel remained in all its integrity and freedom; in which, even to this day, (notwithstanding the attempts of many to the contrary) we most fully agree with your churches and with the confession you have lately set forth.²⁰³

²⁰² Bp. Grindal, E., & Bp. Horne, R. (1567). Letter LXXV: Bishops Grindal and Horn to Henry Bullinger and Rodolph Gualter. In H. Robinson (Ed.) *The Zurich letters: comprising the correspondence of several English bishops and others, with some of the Helvetian reformers, during the early part of the reign of Queen Elizabeth*. Translated from the authenticated copies of the autographs preserved in the archives of Zurich, and edited for the Parker society (2nd ed.) (pp. 175-181). Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers.

²⁰³ Bp. Grindal, E. (1566). Letter LXXIII: Bishop Grindal to Henry Bullinger. In H. Robinson (Ed.) *The Zurich letters: comprising the correspondence of several English bishops and others, with some of the Helvetian reformers, during the early part of the reign of Queen Elizabeth*. Translated from the authenticated copies of

The dispute surround the wearing of vestments is the most accurate reflection of the bishops' standpoint during this period. Whilst they largely shared the same theology as Protestant nonconformists, their definition of vestments as 'adiaphora' clearly demonstrates their desire, though reluctantly, to comply with the Queen's authority and to continue to operate within a hierarchical church system in order to retain their position of authority and to use their positions to push forward an absolute Protestant reformation. The danger of disobeying the monarch, as rightly argued by Susan Doran, could pose a threat to the future of English Protestantism.²⁰⁴ As Scott Wenig rightly states, the point had been reached where bishops were forced to choose between 'resigning their offices or submitting to the Crown's desires on clerical apparel.'²⁰⁵ However, Wenig misinterprets the stance that the bishops took and implies a degree of separation from their own faith by arguing that they realised that garments were 'not the substance of a faith'. Whilst this is not the case, it is correct to say that they were prepared to prioritise the more important matter of ensuring widespread Protestant conformity over disputes concerning such specific issues of doctrine.²⁰⁶ This is demonstrated by a statement made by Bishop John Jewel in his letter to Heinrich Bullinger on February 24th 1567 in which he states:

...some of our brethren are contending about this matter, as if the whole of our religion were contained in this single point; so that they choose rather to lay down their functions and leave their churches empty, than to depart one tittle from their own views of the subject.²⁰⁷

the autographs preserved in the archives of Zurich, and edited for the Parker society (2nd ed.) (pp. 168-170). Oregon: Wipf and Stock publishers.

²⁰⁴ Doran, S. (1994). *Elizabeth I and religion, 1558-1603*. New York, London: Routledge, Routledge Ltd, Taylor & Francis. P44

²⁰⁵ Wenig, S. (2000). *Straightening the altars: the ecclesiastical vision and pastoral achievements of the progressive bishops under Elizabeth I, 1559-1579*. Oxford: P.Lang. P113

²⁰⁶ IBID. P113

²⁰⁷ Bp. Jewel, J. (1567). Letter LXXVII: Bishop Jewel to Henry Bullinger . In H. Robinson (Ed.) *The Zurich letters: comprising the correspondence of several English bishops and others, with some of the Helvetian reformers, during the early part of the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Translated from the authenticated copies of the autographs preserved in the archives of Zurich, and edited for the Parker society* (2nd ed.) (pp. 184-187). Oregon: Wipf and Stock publishers.

It must also be remembered that despite the rise of the radical puritan movement posing a threat to the ecclesiastical hierarchy, the primary task of Elizabethan bishops continued to be the suppression of Catholicism which remained their chief enemy. It was crucial to combat Catholicism in order to push forward with Protestant reformation and the only way to do this was to remain in positions of authority in order to successfully 'promote Protestant thought and practice' and to ultimately establish widespread conformity to a Protestant nation.²⁰⁸

To conclude, this chapter has established that the role of vestments in reformed religion was to be used as a reflection of church hierarchy and as an indication of the authority of the Queen's bishops. As a result of this system, it has been made clear that Elizabeth's bishops faced a substantial ethical crisis. Whilst they disliked the idea of having to wear vestments, they were confronted with the realisation that they were to either comply with the Queen's orders in clamping down on nonconformity to the full, or resign their offices and lose their positions of authority. Should they lose these positions, they would be unable to continue to enforce measures towards creating a complete Protestant Reformation. This period therefore witnessed a Protestant reform that was by no means Catholic in nature, but was using certain elements of a Catholic Church system. The fierce backlash of radical Protestants was yet another obstacle faced by Elizabeth's bishops. The radicals accused bishops of failing their duty of driving forward reform and claimed that their compliance with vestment wearing was a manipulation of their power; arguing for the eradication of an episcopal government and introducing a church governed by elders. Whilst it has been made clear throughout this chapter that from a moral standpoint the bishops were in agreement with much of the theology shared with radical Protestants; had they sided with the radicals they would be supporting the eradication of an episcopal government and therefore be talking themselves out of

²⁰⁸ Wenig, S. (2000). *Straightening the altars: the ecclesiastical vision and pastoral achievements of the progressive bishops under Elizabeth I, 1559-1579*. Oxford: P.Lang. P85

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their offices. The support of Heinrich Bullinger in this respect was crucial in reassuring the bishops that they were right in obeying the monarch, as disobeying the Queen would merely jeopardise the future of Protestantism. It has been demonstrated with evidence supported by the Zurich letters that the bishops' main priority continued to be the future of Protestantism and the fight against Catholicism, which resulted in their tactical referral to vestments as 'adiaphora.' By separating themselves from radical Protestant ideas and condemning people such as Humphrey and Sampson for damaging the future of Protestantism, they remained in the Queen's favour and could therefore continue their pursuit for further reform and the establishment of an entirely reformed Protestant nation.

Chapter 5: The survival of Catholic vestments and the continuation of the Catholic faith

Material culture provides a crucial and valuable insight into life at local level in Elizabethan England.

As Claire Richardson rightly states, through objects historians are able to access evidence of attitudes and feelings towards them, therefore their social and cultural meanings and functions.²⁰⁹

The study of vestments in particular provides an alternative route into answering the question of how far Catholicism survived at household level. This chapter will specifically look at the survival of Catholic vestments in England and what this tells us about the continuity of Catholicism at a local level. Firstly, some of the surviving material will be observed and analysed which will subsequently lead on to examining the continuity of Catholic practice. Finally, the reaction and consequences of this practice will be explored in order to assess the extent to which household Catholicism managed to endure throughout the reign of Elizabeth I. It will be demonstrated through the material evidence that whilst medieval Catholic vestments remained in continuous use, the Catholic community were incorporating new methods of religious practice. It is this in particular that provides us with clear evidence of a community that was adapting and accepting new means in order to survive. As part of my research I am looking at vestments as material culture with predominant use of the vestment collection held at Stonyhurst College.²¹⁰ This evidence will relate to and be used in support of my two key points: that the continual use of medieval vestments demonstrate some continuity of medieval Catholic practices, and that the reshaping and restructuring of these vestments illustrates a new purpose with which vestments were being used by a community that was far from being stuck in the past, but was in fact adapting with the times. Whilst the material evidence will demonstrate a state of seigneurial Catholicism in this period, the written evidence cannot be ignored in its

²⁰⁹ Richardson, C. (2015). Written Texts and the Performance of Materiality. In A. Gerritsen & G. Riello (Eds.) *Writing material culture history* (pp. 43-56). London: Bloomsbury Academic.

²¹⁰ By permission of the Governors of Stonyhurst College

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exemplification of Catholic survival at parish level, therefore both approaches will be adopted throughout this chapter.

With regards to the survival of vestments themselves, a substantial amount of medieval Catholic vestments do in fact stand the test of time. However, the majority of these are kept in European churches where they were exported from England after the Reformation. As Nigel Morgan importantly highlights, a large number of English copes were exported to Europe and many examples survive in churches and museums in Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.²¹¹ The survival of vestments in England proves to be more problematic. Whilst material does survive, a great deal was gradually lost through the widespread destruction of the monasteries and locally endowed churches and chapels. As Claire Brown's work demonstrates, the majority of English religious material had been acquired by European Churches or spiritual orders; the rest were 'concealed by English recusant families for the secret continuation of Catholic observance.'²¹² The role of recusant families in concealing and maintaining Catholic vestments was key in maintaining Catholic practices and supporting the Catholic cause during this period. The significance of this will be explored in more detail later in this chapter.

Although the widespread destruction of religious houses is an undeniable cause of much of the loss of religious material, other factors must also be taken into consideration. By Elizabeth's reign there was a clear decline in the quantity of embroidery being produced. Sarah Randles puts this solely down to the Reformation for moving the 'bulk of embroidery production away from the Church.'²¹³

Although this is true, it must also be noted that Elizabeth's reign experienced a surge in the arts,

²¹¹ Morgan, N. (2016). Embroidered textiles in the service of the church'. In C. Brown, G. Davies, & M. A. Michael (Eds.) *English Medieval Embroidery: Opus Anglicanum* (pp. 25-41). New Haven: Yale University Press in association with the Victoria and Albert Museum. P30

²¹² Brown, C., Davies, G., & Michael, M.A. (2016). *English Medieval Embroidery: Opus Anglicanum*. New Haven: Yale University Press in association with the Victoria and Albert Museum. P106

²¹³ Randles, S. (2015). The pattern of all patience: Gender, Agency and Emotions in Embroidery and Pattern books in Early Modern England. In S. Broomhall (Ed.) *Authority, Gender and Emotions in Late Medieval and Early Modern England* (pp. 150-167). Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan. P150

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particularly within households. Sarah Randles rightly points out that amateur embroidery flourished and was promoted as 'an appropriate leisure activity for women of ranks and those who aspired to it.'²¹⁴ This development in social culture is unquestionably significant to the decline in religious embroidery. Mary Eirwen Jones importantly points out that the housewife and female society of Britain used their leisure time to embroider.'²¹⁵ However George Wingfield Digby rightly expands on this by stating that that the Elizabethan embroidress was busy on furnishings of the house; 'whereas in the Middle Ages it was customary to bequeath the finest robes and gowns to the Church to be converted into vestments, in the sixteenth century, after the Reformation, it was the rich silk and velvet vestments from the monastic foundations which returned to the private houses to be used as hangings and to cover chairs.'²¹⁶

The Concealment of Catholic vestments and the development of household Catholicism

At face value the gradual shift of embroidery production away from the church appears to denote a gradual move away from a medieval faith. However, it is important not to ignore the surviving material that was concealed and used by a community that had adopted a more passive form of resistance. Contrary to the interpretation put forward by A.G. Dickens and Susan Brigden of a nation that was naturally moving away from the Catholic faith, there remains considerable and clear-cut evidence indicating that a number of medieval Catholic vestments were being concealed within Catholic households. The evident changing form of these materials invalidate Eamon Duffy's claim that surviving materials were merely being treasured as memorials of the pre-reformation church. The surviving materials that will be presented throughout this thesis demonstrate that most have been cut down, altered and modified. Contrary to being illustrative of hidden memorials, the evidence clearly indicates new methods of practice within the Catholic community in order to ensure

²¹⁴ IBID P150

²¹⁵ Eirwen Jones, M. (1969). *A history of Western embroidery*. London: Studio Vista. P34

²¹⁶ Wingfield Digby, G. (1963). *Elizabethan embroidery*. London: Faber. P21

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the survival of a faith. The vestment collection at Stonyhurst College in Lancashire has been invaluable to this study in illustrating aspects of Catholic survival.²¹⁷ The context surrounding the discovery of each vestment also provides a crucial insight into the methods Catholics were using for the continuation of medieval practices and the extent to which this was occurring.

²¹⁷ By permission of the Governors of Stonyhurst College

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Figure 1:



*Chasuble.
1420/1450.
Discovered in the North East of England.
15th Century material with 16th century embroidery.
Photo by permission of the Governors of Stonyhurst
College*

One of the collection's pieces (Fig 1) is a surviving 15th century vestment. The well-defined embroidery was mounted on to the vestment in the 1500s. It was discovered in the North East of England having been in the possession of a Catholic family.²¹⁸ Clearly it has been cut down from its

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original size and whilst it is not entirely clear why it has been cut down, the likely conclusion is that the material had simply worn out over time. This is a clear demonstration of the recycling culture that was occurring during this period and the adaptation of the Catholic community in not only retaining medieval vestments, but reusing them in order to carry out Catholic practices during the Elizabethan era. Clare Brown acknowledges that in some cases vestments were 'altered in form' to make them 'acceptable in continuing use' or 'reworked to give an enhanced definition to their appearance in order to emphasise the liturgical message.'²¹⁹ The virtually pristine condition in which this vestment was discovered is evidence in itself of the care taken over medieval Catholic materials. The durability of the Catholic faith is undoubtedly reflected in the survival of this vestment and the desire to maintain it; but more importantly the way in which this vestment has been altered reflects the adaptation and the resilience of the Catholic community surviving within a new religious settlement.

Historians such as Eamon Duffy insinuate that medieval Catholic vestments remained in storage during this period and not in use. Duffy goes on to argue that the majority of parishes sold some of their material to 'cover the costs of expensive reformation changes.'²²⁰ In taking this view, Duffy overestimates the power of the authorities and, rather naively, severely underestimates the resilience of Catholicism. If we look at vestments that were created during Elizabeth's reign, then this seems to prove that medieval traditions and practices were still viewed as important and that there was a desire to maintain vestments for the purpose of continual use. This was indeed the case, and another vestment from the Stonyhurst College collection is a leading example.

²¹⁹ Brown, C., Davies, G., & Michael, M.A. (2016). *English Medieval Embroidery: Opus Anglicanum*. New Haven: Yale University Press in association with the Victoria and Albert Museum. P106

²²⁰ Duffy, E. (2012). *Saints, sacrilege and sedition: religion and conflict in the Tudor reformations*. London: Bloomsbury. P120

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Figure 2:



Chasuble

17th century

A travelling priest's vestment recovered from a wooden box in Samlesbury hall in Lancashire, discovered along with a chalice and other items used for Mass.

Photo by permission of the Governors of Stonyhurst College

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The vestment pictured was discovered in a trunk found at Samlesbury hall near Preston in Lancashire and was used by travelling priests for the purpose of visiting small houses in order to say Mass in secret.²²¹ It was found alongside an altar stone and a chalice as well as other items used to perform Mass. Samlesbury Hall holds particular resonance for the Catholic cause in the area during this period. Sir John Southworth, head of the Southworth family who resided at Samlesbury hall, was a fervent Catholic and was frequently arrested and heavily fined for refusing to leave his faith.²²² One of Southworth's sons, also called John, pleaded guilty to exercising the priesthood in 1654. He was the third member of the family in a generation to offer himself for the priesthood at Rheims or Douai. He entered the priesthood in 1613 and was ordained as a secular priest in 1618.²²³ The context surrounding the discovery of this vestment as well as the collection of Catholic Mass items found alongside it offers further evidence for the existence of a Catholic community which aimed to continue medieval Catholic practices within households; using Samlesbury hall to house travelling priests who would lead these practices. In addition to this example, there is further evidence of other gentry houses in Lancashire accommodating priests in the Elizabethan period. Christopher Haigh has highlighted just a few of these examples. He refers to Thomas Tildesley house in Leigh, used by the Benedictine Ambrose Barlow as his base.²²⁴ Further to this, at Prescott in 1582 the household of Richard Bold was used as a mass centre by a recusant priest whose services were attended by a number of local people.²²⁵ In the following year, a series of priests took shelter in the house of John Rigmaiden of Garstang where they 'said mass and were visited by other Catholics.'²²⁶ Lastly, Edward Norris's home in Childwall was used as a base by two priests in 1599.²²⁷ Frederick

²²¹ By permission of the Governors of Stonyhurst College

²²² Samlesbury Hall. *History of Samlesbury Hall*. Retrieved from <http://www.samlesburyhall.co.uk/about/history>.

²²³ Morrill, J. (2004). *Southworth, John [St John Southworth] (1592–1654), Roman Catholic priest and martyr*. Retrieved from <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/67460?docPos=1>.

²²⁴ Haigh, C. (2008). *Reformation and resistance in Tudor Lancashire*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. P281

²²⁵ IBID. P283

²²⁶ IBID. P283

²²⁷ IBID. P283

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Smith has also put forward that travelling clergymen, Laurence Vaux, John Morren, Richard Marshall and John Peel had all been at the house of John Mollineux in Melling, southernmost Lancashire, repeatedly between 1565 and 1568.²²⁸ As has been highlighted by Haigh, it is clear that seigneurial Protestantism was key to the survival of Catholicism in this period. As a result of the number of gentry houses that provided shelter for travelling priests, the missionaries had 'no difficulty in finding bases in Lancashire.'²²⁹

Whilst previous studies surrounding the topic of vestments have merely based their evidence upon those that survive from the medieval period and the vestments created by the Elizabethan authorities; little attention has been paid to the vestments that were created by Catholics at local level during the Elizabethan period for the sole purpose of the continuation of the Catholic faith. Eamon Duffy famously refers to an 'abrupt and effective suppression of Catholic cultus' during this period.²³⁰ However, the vestment pictured contains no sacred images as it has been made from dress fabric – the most readily available material at the time. The use of secular material in the design of the vestment and the production of the vestment using dress fabric, contrary to what Duffy states, shows the desire of the Catholic community to utilise what they had to their advantage and is not illustrative of a community who wanted to store medieval vestments merely as memorials of a declining faith.

²²⁸ Smith, F.E. (2016). The Origins of Recusancy in Elizabethan England Reconsidered. *The Historical Journal*, 60 (2), 301-332. doi: 10.1017/S0018246X16000169. P315

²²⁹ Haigh, C. (2008). *Reformation and resistance in Tudor Lancashire*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. P280

²³⁰ Duffy, E. (2012). *Saints, sacrilege and sedition: religion and conflict in the Tudor reformations*. London: Bloomsbury. P121

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Figure 3:



*Vestment.
17th Century.
Originating from the 1620s belonging to a Jesuit Priest.
15th Century Embroidery.
Photo by permission of the Governors of Stonyhurst College*

This is further illustrated in another vestment that was used by a Jesuit priest in the 1620s. The embroidery on this vestment (Fig 3) has been recycled from the 15th century and mounted onto contemporary fabric. The clumsiness with which it has been put together may be indicative of the need to reuse old material in the absence of the ability and opportunities to create new garments. Nevertheless, the use of medieval embroidery upon contemporary material as well as the lack of secular embroidery clearly demonstrates not just a continuity of a medieval faith but the initiative to create new ones for the very purpose of carrying out Catholic practices.

The adaptability of a community incorporating the old and new methods in order to ensure its survival is illustrative of an inventive approach developed by necessity. Further evidence to counter

the claim that medieval materials were merely being kept in storage, the condition of this vestment seems to provide evidence of medieval vestments being 'used to death'. This may be due to the fact that there was not a skilled needle worker to preserve it, therefore giving us an insight into the social context in which it was used. However, if we refer back to fig 2, this is a clear demonstration of a vestment that is in impeccable condition and has been created in the 17th century solely for the purpose of a priest to carry out Catholic practices rather than being preserved as medieval memorabilia. It is also important to note that the vestment in figure 2 was kept at Samlesbury Hall. Therefore, whilst both of these vestments confirm that they were indeed being retained for use at local level, it is clear that in order to continue the Catholic faith with any success, the role of gentry families and places such as Samlesbury hall were vital. Although Catholics clearly retained some elements of medieval practices, it is important to recognise that they were a community that was changing with the times. Contrary to Haigh's referral to them as a 'spineless' and 'backward community', they were in fact a resilient community who were willing to adapt and conform within a new settlement.²³¹ The preservation of medieval Catholic elements combined with new methods can perhaps be linked to the wider state of religion in the Elizabethan period. As discussed in the previous chapter, the use of a medieval Catholic framework was used to enforce the Elizabethan Church of England. This adaptation of medieval Catholic methods is a recurring theme throughout the Elizabethan period.

The material evidence has already provided an insight into the durability of Catholicism at local level and proven that Catholic activity and practices were still taking place. However, it has also provided evidence of the adaptation of the Catholic community seeking to exist within a new religious settlement. Historians such as J C H Aveling, Eamon Duffy and John Bossy wrongly define Catholicism in this period as a continuation of medieval Catholicism, with Bossy in particular labelling Catholicism

²³¹ Haigh, C. (1981). From Monopoly to Minority: Catholicism in Early Modern England. *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 31, 129-147. Doi: 10.2307/3679049. P129

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in this period as a remnant of 'the old religion'.²³² On the other hand, Christopher Haigh exaggerates the influx of new ideas with the premise that the Catholic faith was entirely replaced by a new, vibrant Catholicism of a devoted minority.²³³ Catholicism in this period cannot be defined as a continuation of a medieval faith carried out by a community that was stuck in its ways; nor can it be described as a religion that was entirely wiped out and abruptly replaced by a vibrant new faith. Instead, the material evidence has proven that Catholicism in the Elizabethan period involved the continuation of old practices combined with and enhanced by new ideas. The number of surviving vestments and the context in which they were discovered indicates the survival of the Catholic faith and the continuation of Catholic practices throughout the entire Elizabethan period, however this survival would not have been possible without adaptability. The material used to create new vestments and the cutting down of old vestments are illustrative of a community that was doing just that. As well as the material evidence, this adaptability is best demonstrated by the onset of what Alexandra Walsham refers to as 'Church Papists.' A phrase that was used to distinguish between men and women who 'revealed their adherence to the Church of Rome by boycotting attendance at Protestant services, and those who manifested their Catholicism in other, less provocative ways.'²³⁴ This period saw a transition from defiance and resistance to an increase in outward conformity. As William Sheils has pointed out, opposition in this period to the reformation changes 'for the most part was localised and passive, not challenging authority.'²³⁵ This was not, however, a reflection of a faith that had been suppressed by the authorities but, as Sarah Bastow sums up, this was a faith that wanted to retain core values but were also 'willing to adapt them to ensure their survival.'²³⁶

²³² Bossy, J. (1962). The character of Elizabethan Catholicism. *Past and Present*, 21 (1), 39-59. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1093/past/21.1.39>. P39

²³³ Haigh, C. (1981). From Monopoly to Minority: Catholicism in Early Modern England. *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 31, 129-147. Doi: 10.2307/3679049. P129

²³⁴ Walsham, A. (1993). *Church Papists: Catholicism, conformity and confessional polemic in early modern England*. Suffolk: Boydell Press. P9

²³⁵ Sheils, W.J. (1989). *The English Reformation: 1530-1570*. Harlow: Longman. P77

²³⁶ Bastow, S. (2007). *The Catholic gentry of Yorkshire, 1536-1642: resistance and accommodation*. Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press. P223

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Eamon Duffy rather naively concludes that the sale of 'medieval furniture, vestments, plates and books' meant that Catholicism in this period experienced dutiful and enforced conformity to royal and episcopal authority.²³⁷ With concentration upon the sale of materials recorded in the parish inventories, Duffy wrongly concludes that they demonstrate the 'abrupt and effective suppression' of Catholicism.²³⁸ However, Arnold Oskar Meyer rightly argues that we should 'under rate the Catholic Church if we thought she could be abolished by laws; and we should also under rate Englishmen if we thought they would allow the state to dictate their religion to them.'²³⁹ Although written evidence of Catholic nonconformity is minimal, and the evidence in the form of inventories does portray a sense of suppression, it is restrictive to merely rely upon the written material as evidence of a lost faith.

This is perhaps most clearly demonstrated in the fact that records indicate that many Catholics did in fact turn up to Church services in order to avoid fines. Arnold Oskar Meyer puts this down to the fact that many Catholics entered the church some time before service began and left before it was over, persuading themselves that there was no real connection between their time spent in the church and the performance of their heretical service.'²⁴⁰ It is therefore necessary to look further into how conformity is defined. In more recent work, Peter Marshall has correctly highlighted that 'the line separating clerical 'conformity' from 'non-conformity' was permeable and sometimes paper-thin... conformity was a more complex and polysemous phenomenon than it is sometimes supposed to have been, and one that scarcely lends itself to any form of precise statistical enumeration.'²⁴¹ As a result, although it cannot be denied that there was evidently an increase in outward obedience, the

²³⁷ Duffy, E. (2012). *Saints, sacrilege and sedition: religion and conflict in the Tudor reformations*. London: Bloomsbury. P118

²³⁸ IBID. P121

²³⁹ Meyer, A.O. (1967). *England and the Catholic Church under Queen Elizabeth*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. P73

²⁴⁰ IBID. P70

²⁴¹ Marshall, P. & Morgan, J. (2016). Clerical Conformity and the Elizabethan Settlement Revisited. *The Historical Journal*, 59 (1), 1-22. doi: 10.1017/S0018246X15000199. P22

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material evidence has indicated the continual use of vestments within households and has therefore already demonstrated that Catholicism had not been suppressed. Instead, this period in particular saw household Catholicism flourish.

John Bossy's work importantly highlights the importance of noble and gentry families in this aspect. In diminishing areas in which public authority was still virtually in private hands, nobles or gentlemen who felt the insufficiencies of the new found religion could retire to their estates - within this unity the rites and observance which had disappeared from public view could be preserved.²⁴² This concept has already been observed earlier in the chapter with regards to the role of Samlesbury hall in which the vestment discovered within the hall (Fig 2) was constructed specifically for the purpose of a travelling priest to perform Mass. The role of estates such as this were vital in sustaining the continuation of Catholic practices by providing accommodation for travelling priests and the general support for the Catholic cause. The second half of Elizabeth's reign in particular saw an influx of travelling missionary priests with the purpose of carrying out traditional Catholic practices within households. As Christopher Haigh has pointed out, a large number of missionary priests upon their arrival in England, resided in gentry houses who were able to provide both shelter and financial support.²⁴³ The use of new methods in order to continue Catholic practice is evident in these activities of travelling priests. The equipment used by the missionary priests was disguised to evade suspicion or capture. A vestment kept at the Wardour Chapel in Wiltshire is a prominent example of this practice. The vestment is entitled 'the pedlar's vestment' as it was disguised as a patchwork quilt in order to escape detection. It was predominantly used in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries by the priests at Wardour in visiting the Wiltshire countryside.²⁴⁴ This method of Catholic practice

²⁴² Bossy, J. (1962). The character of Elizabethan Catholicism. *Past and Present*, 21 (1), 39-59. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1093/past/21.1.39>. P39

²⁴³ Haigh, C. (1981). The Continuity of Catholicism in the English Reformation. *Past and Present*, (93), 37-69. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/650527>. P49

²⁴⁴ Chapel of all Saints Wardour Castle. *The Wardour Chapel*. Retrieved from <http://homepages.phonecoop.coop/alan.macdermot/WardourChapelA/Chapel.htm>.

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was on the rise during this period, as Christopher Haigh admits, by December 1588 the gentry were 'anxious for priests to settle with them, and a skilled household director such as John Gerard was in great demand.'²⁴⁵ The autobiography of John Gerard, a travelling Jesuit priest, provides an insight into the rise of household Catholicism through to the late 16th century. After entering the Society of Jesus on 15 August 1588, Gerard was dispatched almost immediately to England and managed to avoid capture during his movement amongst recusant gentry.²⁴⁶ As late as 1591, Gerard comments:

My hosts could seldom bring the essentials for Mass and I had therefore to bring them myself. But after a few years there was no need to do this. In nearly every house I visited later I would find vestments and everything else laid out ready for me'²⁴⁷

Whilst Gerard's account must be read with the understanding that his readership is young and aspiring members of the Jesuit College, it undoubtedly illustrates the growing appeal and success of household Catholicism during this period. Not only does Gerard's account demonstrate that Catholic vestments remained in use, it also reveals his encouragement for members of these households to continue to create new vestments:

I saw to it that all the changes I thought urgent were proposed and carried out by the master of the house himself. Then I brought out some fine vestments, which were a gift to me, and in this way encouraged the good widow to make others like them.²⁴⁸

Once again the evidence makes it clear that the increase in outward conformity did not reflect the suppression of Catholicism, but instead demonstrated the adaptation of a faith behind closed doors. The role of noble and gentry households in sustaining Catholicism also explains the decrease in outward resistance and defiance, as John Bossy also points out, the independent gentry generally

²⁴⁵ Haigh, C. (1981). From Monopoly to Minority: Catholicism in Early Modern England. *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 31, 129-147. Doi: 10.2307/3679049. P137

²⁴⁶ McCoog, T.M. (2004). *Gerard, John (1564–1637)*. Retrieved from <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10556>.

²⁴⁷ Gerard, J. (1988). Search at Baddesley Clinton October 1591. In P. Caraman (Ed.) *The Autobiography of a Hunted Priest* (pp. 45-52). London: By permission of the Society of Jesus, British Province.

²⁴⁸ Gerard, J. (1988). Summer 1589 - Winter 1591. In P. Caraman (Ed.) *The Autobiography of a Hunted Priest* (pp. 29-38). London: By permission of the Society of Jesus, British Province.

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disapproved of conspiracies such as the Babington plot as it made their task of maintaining the integrity of their households even more difficult.²⁴⁹ The advantages of this system, as correctly highlighted by Bossy, outweighed the possible penalty of a recusancy fine.²⁵⁰ The role of gentry households worked so well in helping to sustain Catholicism during this period as it mixed both the 'conservatism of the northern gentry with the adaptability of a new generation who were capable of surviving hard times.'²⁵¹

This combination of old and new is imperative to the continuation of Catholicism during the Elizabethan period. Whilst the existence of 'recusants' and 'conformists' have generally been categorised as two separate communities, Alexandra Walsham has correctly pointed out that during this period in particular, much of these characteristics overlapped and the majority of Catholics in fact mixed recusancy with conformism. This is perhaps most clearly exemplified by the role of women who continued to run a Catholic household, shelter missionary priests and educate their children in the Catholic faith, all whilst their husbands outwardly conformed.²⁵² Once again, the evidence makes it clear that Catholicism as a household religion was essential to its own survival. However, it must not be mistaken that Catholics were operating as an isolated community. The development of household Catholicism was a method of adaptation in order to operate within the national settlement. It may appear that Catholicism had been suppressed and eventually diminished by the Elizabethan authorities; as Keith Roberts Wark argues, the settlement of 1559 was indeed sufficiently comprehensive to discourage clear cut opposition.²⁵³ However it must be recognised that a degree of compliance was necessary in order for Catholic practice to continue. Occasional

²⁴⁹ Bossy, J. (1962). The character of Elizabethan Catholicism. *Past and Present*, 21 (1), 39-59. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1093/past/21.1.39>. P42

²⁵⁰ IBID. P41

²⁵¹ Bastow, S. (2007). *The Catholic gentry of Yorkshire, 1536-1642: resistance and accommodation*. Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press. P116

²⁵² IBID P67

²⁵³ Wark, K.R. (1971). *Elizabethan recusancy in Cheshire*. Manchester: Manchester University Press for the Chetham Society. P9

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conformity to the national church was not considered a grave sin and some were even prepared to take anti-Catholic oaths in order to continue to run Catholic households behind closed doors.²⁵⁴ It is this evolution of Catholicism that characterises its survival in this period.

Observing the consequences of Catholic practice during the Elizabethan period provides another insight into the extent of Catholic survival. The majority of evidence that has been used in previous studies only account for acts of recusancy, as it was only outward acts of defiance against the settlement that were being recorded. As Alexandra Walsham highlights, 'penal laws were designed to detect and discipline recusants, not church papists.'²⁵⁵ The consequence of this system meant that the records appear to present a situation in which Catholicism was a dwindling faith. However, as Alec Ryrie also makes clear, while recusants and open nonconformists could be (and were) counted, they were just the tip of the iceberg.²⁵⁶ Alexandra Walsham argues that local studies reveal that until the 1570s the Church of England appeared to be a tolerable substitute for, in an inferior version of, its medieval predecessor.²⁵⁷ It has therefore been mistakenly interpreted that by this period, over much of England the majority of Catholics had 'slipped into conformity to the Church of England' and what had begun as outward compliance with the law gradually 'resulted in actual membership in the national church.'²⁵⁸ However there is written evidence that depicts the survival of medieval Catholic vestments being hidden and retained, predominantly around Yorkshire, well into the sixteenth century. Between 1558 and 1603 in Beverley, West Yorkshire, the office accused Richard Levet, the Minister in Beverley of keeping 'divers and sundrie supersticious ymplements and bookes heretofore

²⁵⁴ Aveling, J.C.H. (1976). *The handle and the axe: The Catholic recusants in England from Reformation to emancipation*. London: Blond and Briggs. P70

²⁵⁵ Walsham, A. (1993). *Church Papists: Catholicism, conformity and confessional polemic in early modern England*. Suffolk: Boydell Press. P11

²⁵⁶ Ryrie, A. (2009). *The age of Reformation: the Tudor and Stewart realms 1485 - 1603*. Harlow: Pearson Longman. P246

²⁵⁷ Walsham, A. (1993). *Church Papists: Catholicism, conformity and confessional polemic in early modern England*. Suffolk: Boydell Press. P20

²⁵⁸ Haigh, C. (1981). From Monopoly to Minority: Catholicism in Early Modern England. *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 31, 129-147. Doi: 10.2307/3679049. P146; Meyer, A.O. (1967). *England and the Catholic Church under Queen Elizabeth*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. P70

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used in the abrogated servyce as Masse books portaces with other supersticious bookes vestements albes with other massing trinkitts, tabernacles, pixes, with hostes pretended to be consecrated.’²⁵⁹ Richard Levet was accused of retaining these objects for their original purpose and of using them to perform Mass. Although he denied practicing Catholicism, Levet admitted that he retained Catholic objects. Furthermore, between 1561 and 1625, in Mirfield, West Yorkshire, John Ledgard, Thomas Royds and John Beaumont were all accused of ‘retaining popish vestments.’²⁶⁰ Gilbert and Ledgard claimed that they had received old vestments for them to be defaced and sold. Royds admitted he had a chest of vestments but claimed that he had used parts of the vestments to make clothes for himself. Despite both defendants denying that they used the materials for their original purpose, these records reveal that Catholic vestments were still being retained and hidden well into the sixteenth century. Although the bulk of written records at face value support the fact that outward opposition was diminishing; the material evidence is unquestionably significant in demonstrating the desire to continue Catholic practice behind closed doors. Whilst it may appear that compliance with the national church was taking hold over the nation, the evidence merely points to a change in the way Catholicism was being practiced.

To conclude, material culture has provided an invaluable insight into the survival of Catholicism throughout the Elizabethan period that cannot be obtained merely from written sources. It has been demonstrated in this chapter that whilst much of the written evidence at face value appears to suggest that the Catholic community was disappearing altogether, the material evidence is the key into understanding the Catholic community at local level. Analysis of this material has proven that rather than a faith that was being suppressed; this period predominantly saw a change in the way Catholic practices were being carried out. Although the surviving vestments undoubtedly

²⁵⁹ The University of York. (2010). *Cause Papers in the diocesan Courts of the Archbishopric of York 1300 - 1858*. Retrieved from <https://www.hrionline.ac.uk/causepapers/causepaper.jsp?id=105863>.

²⁶⁰ The University of York. (2010). *Cause Papers in the diocesan Courts of the Archbishopric of York 1300 - 1858*. Retrieved from <https://www.hrionline.ac.uk/causepapers/causepaper.jsp?id=104310>.

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demonstrate a continuation of medieval Catholicism well into the 16th century, it has been made clear that Catholicism in this period was not merely a continuation of the old faith, but a combination of old practices developed by new methods. The material is invaluable in illustrating the new methods Catholics were prepared to undertake in order to ensure their own survival; the cutting down of medieval vestments, the creation of new vestments using dress fabric as well as the use of disguises for vestments carried by travelling priests, all support the stance that rather than being a dwindling community stuck in its old ways; Catholicism was in fact adapting itself in order to survive within a new national settlement. By exploring the context surrounding each piece of material evidence combined with the analysis of the written account of John Gerard; the importance of noble and gentry families with regards to the sustainability of Catholicism has also been recognised. The material evidence has also sought to illustrate that Catholics were not operating as an entirely isolated community, but their efforts to outwardly conform to the settlement whilst maintaining Catholicism at household level are representative of a durable, resilient and adaptable community that was willing to adjust in order to ensure its survival within the Elizabethan settlement.

Conclusion

To conclude, this thesis set out to determine the role of vestments in the reformed Church from both the Protestant and Catholic perspective through the combined use of material culture and written evidence. Through the examination of written theology compared with English Protestant writings, this study sought to uncover the reaction towards the evolution of clerical vestments and how these varying interpretations surrounding the matter of vestments contributed to the conflicts that emerged both on the continent and under Elizabeth I. By combining this with the analysis of material culture and written records of Catholic dissent under Elizabeth; the combination of old and new methods in establishing conformity to a new religious settlement would be determined.

This study has successfully proven that the controversy surrounding vestments under Elizabeth I had been developing long before. After the initial peak of this issue during the reign of Edward VI, these conflicts had been developing amongst exile communities on the continent, reflected in the struggles of the 1550s. Through the theological writings of John Calvin combined with the documented troubles at Frankfurt, it has been made clear that the scattered communities of exiles experienced considerably different interpretations of Protestant theology and their failure to form a united exile Church enabled these different interpretations to flourish within a number of separate exile congregations residing in Strasbourg, Frankfurt and Geneva in particular. Through the Troubles at Frankfurt, the particular debate over liturgy and adiaphora has been highlighted which set the scene for the debate that subsequently arose during the reign of Elizabeth. Whilst the origin of the disagreement has been highlighted by the publication of the Edwardian Book of Common Prayer in 1549; it has been demonstrated through the publications of the 1550s that it was undoubtedly the experience of exile and the opportunity for diverging interpretations of Protestant theology to emerge on the continent that enabled these debates to reignite with such ferocity under Elizabeth I.

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By exploring the conflicts that developed on the continent, it has been proven that these differences in interpretation set up the crisis faced by the bishops upon their return to England. Through the comparison of Queen Elizabeth's policies regarding vesture with radical Protestant tracts, it has revealed the ethical crisis that bishops found themselves in as advocates for further reform but with the belief that the most successful way to achieve complete reform was through a hierarchical church system. Through the analysis of these writings, it has been proven that the interpretation of vestments and the debate over church government were inextricably linked. This has been further supported with the analysis of the Archbishop portraits in their demonstration of vestments as symbols of religious authority in the Elizabethan period. Having made these links, the conflict which arose as a result has also been examined. Through the analysis of the Zurich letters, the divergences in Protestant theology regarding church government and adiaphora have been exposed. As a result of this analysis it has been confirmed that by wearing vesture as a visual reflection of authority, bishops faced hostility from radical Protestants who accused them of retaining popish elements of the Catholic church and whose doctrine would deny the authority of bishops altogether. In addition to being faced with hostility from radicals, the position of bishops in relation to the Queen has also been presented. Through the Queen's correspondence with Archbishop Matthew Parker, the evidence has confirmed that bishops were confronted with the realisation that they must comply with the Queen's orders or resign their offices. The conclusion has therefore been reached that bishops found themselves wedged between their ethical principles fuelling their dislike of vestments, and the importance of carrying out further reform. This resulted in their consideration of vestments as 'matters indifferent' meaning they could continue to comply with the Queen's wishes whilst continuing to preach pure Protestant doctrine. It has therefore been established that the Elizabethan period witnessed a Protestant reform that was using elements of a medieval Catholic church system.

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This combination of old and new methods within the Elizabethan religious settlement has been further reflected in the use and adaptation of medieval materials in ensuring the survival of Catholicism in Elizabethan England. Through the analysis of a selection of vestments from the Stonyhurst collection, the evidence has successfully confirmed the survival of medieval Catholic practices at household level through the continual use of surviving vestments from the medieval period. This conclusion has been reached from the visible alterations and cutting down of medieval vestments from their original size as a clear demonstration of the recycling culture that was occurring during this period, thus invalidating Eamon Duffy's statement that Catholic vestments remained in storage during this period and not in use.²⁶¹ The alterations made to medieval vestments and the use of new, more readily available material to create new vestments have further discredited the argument that medieval vestments were merely memorials of a declining faith. Through the examination of these different forms of alterations, including medieval embroidery being mounted onto contemporary material, it has been made clear that the material itself is illustrative of a new, inventive approach developed by necessity in order to ensure Catholic survival. By going into further detail with regards to the context surrounding the discovery of each vestment, the importance of seigneurial Catholicism has been recognised. With further support from secondary material, it has been clearly demonstrated that gentry houses were vital to the Catholic cause by sheltering travelling Catholic priests and storing vestments alongside mass equipment to be used by the priest when conducting services.

Whilst material culture has been invaluable to this study, the incorporation of written evidence has also been crucial. John Gerard's account has provided further evidence in support of the point that the role of gentry households was significant in helping to sustain Catholicism by highlighting the methods undertaken by gentry households to conceal and create new materials. Whilst the

²⁶¹ Duffy, E. (2012). *Saints, sacrilege and sedition: religion and conflict in the Tudor reformations*. London: Bloomsbury. P120

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importance of seigneurial Catholicism has been emphasised, the use of church court case catalogues has been acknowledged in their depiction of Catholic vestments being retained at parish level. As a result, the written evidence has succeeded in supporting the argument that through the combination of old and new, the English Catholic community succeeded in the adaptation of a faith in order to ensure its own survival. The evidence has therefore challenged the arguments put forward by John Aveling, Eamon Duffy and John Bossy in their characterisation of Catholicism as a continuation of a medieval faith, as well as invalidating the argument put forward by Christopher Haigh that the Catholic faith was entirely replaced by a new form of Catholicism; it has established that as opposed to being a dwindling community stuck in its old ways, or a community that had abandoned its medieval faith, the Catholic community of the Elizabethan period was one of a durability, adaptability and willingness to adjust in order to survive within the Elizabethan settlement.

The approach taken towards this thesis has provided a new understanding into the topic of vestments by combining material culture, visual evidence and written evidence in order to establish the role of vestments within the reformed church from a variety of angles. By recognising the role of vestments within reformed Protestantism on the continent, it has been demonstrated how the variety of interpretations within Protestant theology over vestments was the basis of the conflict that subsequently arose in Elizabethan England. The wider issues surrounding the symbolic nature of vestments has also been explored, with focus being paid to vestments as a visual reflection of authority in the higher levels of society and how this inflicted further tensions amongst Protestants in England. The role of vestments as material culture has also been revealed. The preservation and continual use of vestments amongst Catholics at local level has also established the state of religion in the Elizabethan period with regards to Catholic survival.

The approach undertaken in this study has provided a new insight into how the debate over vestments sheds light upon the wider religious tensions with regards to reformed Protestantism and

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Catholic survival in the reign of Elizabeth I, and how vestments symbolised these issues. It has shown that rather than being merely functional objects, the evolution of vestments and their role within the reformed church characterised the overlap between the Catholic past and a move towards a reformed England.

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