Ireland in the reign of Henry VIII: the making of Tudor political theology, 1515-47

James Leduc

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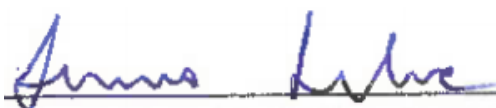The Department of History

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Summary

A fragmented land of lordships and crown territories, by the reign of Henry VIII (1509-47), Ireland was a renewed site of English intervention as the Tudor regime sought to impose its authority across the island. Yet, while historians recognise Henry VIII's reign as a watershed in Irish history, most see the king's break with Rome (1534-6) and the beginning of the Reformation as an act of legal schism with little to no immediate theological impact. When viewed through the lens of political theology, however, the ramifications of royal claims to sovereignty over church and kingdom become clearer and new avenues for thinking about order, power, and governance in Ireland appear. Exploring the making of Tudor political theology against North Atlantic and Eurasian worlds, this thesis argues that the break with Rome coalesced with the ramifications of the Kildare Rebellion (1534-5) and the Act of Kingly Title (1541) to alter the terms of Christian sovereignty and life in Ireland.

Tudor political theology had a set of imperatives – allegiance, obedience, 'civility', conformity, and service – that, as indices of moral governance, embodied specific arrangements between God, prince, and subject. Forming a constellation of standards through which order, governance, and power were convulsed and transformed across the tumultuous final decades of Henrician rule in Ireland, they were the crux of volatile struggles to define and assert 'true' Christian order and sovereignty. Tudor forms of life and service, then, contended with others whose obligations of allegiance were centred on rival sovereigns – namely, the pope, the Habsburg emperor, Irish lords, and the French and Scottish kings. In such volatile yet porous terrains of spiritual-civil power and law, and anchored in a distinctly post-Reformation Henrician Christianity that idiosyncratically harnessed Europe's theological landscapes, a new conception of 'true Christian crown subject-hood and service' appeared, one that, as the linchpin of Tudor political theology and the fount for a novel form of 'religion', was enacted and appropriated, consolidated and subverted, by English, English-Irish, and Irish alike in the interstices of diverse paradigms of (dis)order across 'Gaelic' and 'English' worlds.

With the turmoil of the 1530s–40s convulsing the tenets of divine and civil order, a distinctly Reformation political theology of 'truth' rooted in Henrician theocratic and sacramental kingship and crown subject-hood crystallized. What it meant to obey God and king, what 'civility' and 'conformity' connoted, and how these aligned

with 'true crown service' changed as aristocratic revolt and the Reformation galvanized growing instability across Ireland. As the regime enforced the Reformation, crown officials came to obsess over the 'truth' and 'sincerity' of the king's English-Irish and Irish subjects, and their service and submissions to the crown, a development further driven by how the political theologies of the inter-faith representation of Christians, Jews, and Muslims galvanized the terms and exigences of Tudor sovereignty and 'reform'. Consequently, gradations of perfection by which crown officials distinguished between degrees of obedience, conformity, and 'civility' gradually crystalized in Tudor discourse, turning the age-old moral concern with how one's inner thoughts aligned with outward conduct into a distinctly Reformation problem of colonial order and an index of new forms of sacramental kingship and crown subject-hood.

Meanwhile, as the threat of foreign intrigue and invasion loomed and the rhetoric of princely rule was weaponised in the factional rivalries that plagued Irish government, debates over what 'true' monarchical and vice-royal order should look like raged. At the heart of the problem lay the fundamental instability of the vice-royal office in Ireland. A revitalised form of 'government by reward and punishment' consequently took shape, whereby the demands of rewarding good service and punishing transgressions led to explicit appeals to the prince's sovereign gaze that mimicked God's omniscience and the unveiling of one's 'truth' in the confessional. In this volatile environment, counsel became a wedge for alternative Tudor and papal allegiances just as charges of treason proliferated, the perceived usurpation of princely *imperium* within Gaelic and colonial Ireland acquired a new urgency, and the status of the 'sacred' became violently contested. With 'reform' now a question of parsing 'true religion' from 'idolatry', and with the terms of Tudor political theology increasingly polarised around the poles of good and evil just as oaths became both instruments to enforce conformity and vectors for rival allegiances centred on England, Scotland, France, Spain, or Rome, the 'true Christian crown subject' emerged in stark opposition to the new bane of Tudor sovereignty, most emphatically embodied in the figures of the friars and the Geraldine: the 'devilish', 'idolatrous', 'deceitful', 'papistical traitor'.

'Religion', far from having remained unmarked by the break with Rome, was thus profoundly altered in the tumultuous final decades of Henry VIII's reign. For what gradually emerged was not 'Catholicism without the pope' but an Anglo-Irish variant of post-Reformation Henrician Christianity.

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Acknowledgements

Over the course of my doctoral studies, many have contributed to making this thesis what it has become. I entered the Ph.D. program at Trinity College with a project in mind: this current thesis was not it. Seeking to further my MA research into the life, thought, and times of an Elizabethan cleric in Ireland, following my first year-end review, however, Prof. Jane Ohlmeyer and Dr. Robert Armstrong expressed concerns that the topic I had outlined perhaps lacked the source-base that would have allowed me to fully engage the historical questions and problems I was bent on elucidating, and proposed I consider expanding the scope of my research beyond the life of a single cleric. Their suggestions proved decisive, and subsequent discussions with Prof. Colm Lennon, Dr. Mark Hutchinson, Prof. Thomas O'Connor, Dr. James Murray, Prof. John Walter, and Dr. David Edwards on everything from dissertation writing, reading priorities, and publication advice to, on the one hand, thoughtful suggestions about how I could feasibly explore my themes and questions of interest and, on the other, astute insights into the major themes and contexts I endeavoured to study, set me down the path that would culminate in this current study on Henrician political theology. Still at this point expecting to write a thesis on the Reformations in Ireland that covered the entire sixteenth century, I began my archival research in my newly-designated starting point: the reign of Henry VIII. What I discovered overhauled my plans and my expectations – and Prof. Micheál Ó Siocrú's comments helped refine and seal the scope of my project. What was initially supposed to be a single chapter on the Henrician years blossomed into an entire thesis – and, if I could do it all over again, I would not have it any other way.

I want to thank the library staff and archivists at Trinity College Dublin, the British Library, and Lambeth Palace Library without whom I would not have been able to complete this project. Historians and friends from my past years as an undergraduate and MA student in Montréal have also left their indelible mark on my thinking and writing; their combined impact is apparent across all pages of this study: Prof. Shannon McSheffrey, Prof. Wilson Jacob, and Prof. Ted McCormick. For years now, I have picked their brains on English, Irish, Reformation, and global history, on sovereignty, empire, and political theology, on historical method, theory, and writing, on ethics and philosophy in their entanglements with life, history, and the human condition. They

Notes and conventions

The terms 'English-Irish' and 'English of Ireland' are used interchangeably throughout to denote the inhabitants of 'English blood' and descendants of the Anglo-Norman conquerors of the twelfth century. I reserve the term 'Anglo-Irish' to refer more generally to relations and common cultural and other horizons between England and Ireland.

Modern dating is used; the year is taken to begin on 1 January.

The spelling for all place names, given names, and surnames as well as all quotations and titles of contemporary work, has been modernised, although 'archaic' words have been retained.

English translations of Latin correspondence are my own. The original Latin is provided in the footnotes.

Abbreviations

AC	*Annals of Connact, AD 1224-1544.* ed. Mart Freeman (Dublin, 1970)
ALC	*Annals of Loch Cé: a chronicle of Irish affairs, 1014-1590,* ed. and trans. William Hennessy (Dublin, 1871)
Anal. Hib.	*Analecta Hibernica*
Archiv. Hib.	*Archivium Hibernicum*
AU	*Annals of Ulster*, iii, ed. Nollaig O Muraile (Dublin, 1998)
AFM	*Annals of the kingdom of Ireland by the Four Masters*, v, ed. John O'Donovan (Dublin, 1856)
B.L.	British Library
Cal. Carew MSS	*Calendar of the Carew MSS, 1515-1574*, vol i (London, 1867)
CSPI	*Calendar of state papers, Ireland, Tudor period 1509-1547*, ed. Steven G. Ellis and James Murray (Dublin, 2017).
CSPS	*Calendar of state papers, Spain* (11 vols., London, 1862-1954).
HJ	*The Historical Journal*
Irish fiants	*The Irish fiants of the Tudor sovereigns during the reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Philip & Mary, and Elizabeth I, vols. i-ii,* ed. Kenneth Nicholls and Tomás Ó Canann (Dublin, 1994)
IHS	*Irish Historical Studies*
JEH	*Journal of Ecclesiastical History*
L.P.L.	Lambeth Palace Library
L&P	*Letters and papers, foreign and domestic, of the reign of Henry VIII*, ed. J.S. Brewer, J. Gairdner, and R.H. Brodie (32 vols., London, 1862-1932). *L&P Richard III-Henry VII*
L&P Richard III-Henry VII	*Letters and papers illustrative of the reigns of Richard III and Henry VII*, ed. James Gairdner (2 vols., London, 1861).

LW	*Luther's Works*, ed. Helmut T. Lehmann (56 vols., Philadelphia, 1960-76)
P&P	*Past & Present*
Patent and close rolls	*Calendar of patent rolls and close rolls of chancery, Henry VIII-Elizabeth I*, ed. James Morrin (Dublin, 1861)
SP Henry VIII	*State papers published under the authority of Majesty's Commission, King Henry the eighth* (11 vols., London, 1830-52)
Stat. roll. Irish Parl.	*Statute rolls of the Irish parliament: Richard III – Henry VIII*, ed. Philomena Connolly (Dublin, 2002)
T.N.A.	The National Archives of the UK.

Glossary

Adiaphora	Matters pertaining to devotional life and church ceremony that are indifferent to salvation.
'Coign and livery'	A Gaelic form of lordly military exaction that was also bound up in social and cultural obligations related to hospitality.
'Crown'	A political-theological abstraction of governmental thought that designates the body politic under God in its composite parts (King, governor, common weal) and in its relations between its personal and corporate dimensions (the king's physical body versus the king's corporate body).
Government	Not only the institutions of government or the crown regime in a narrow sense, but that which more broadly designates governance under God and prince as an apparatus of Christian order.
Office	A moral construct that defines the parameters of proper conduct and its transgression by delineating moral personae and their duties, obligations, and the limits beyond which they are violated.
Ontology or ontological	Having to do with Being, God/divine majesty, as these inflected the terms of Christian living, rule, and being-in-the-world.
Political theology	A discourse that homes in on the analogies between 'politics' and 'theology' in the terms of order, governance, power, and life – in short, sovereignty – as well as, more specifically, a historical framework of analysis that seeks to capture the dynamics of Christian order in its modalities of delegation and mediation of divine and princely majesty in the terms and horizons of Christian living and being.
Secularisation	The historical dynamic or 'process' by which the 'sacred' and the 'profane', and the 'spiritual' and the 'temporal', travel or are transformed across the domains of human and divine life and thought that the said movements and transformations themselves help constitute anew.
Soteriological	Matters pertaining to Christian salvation.

Sovereignty	Order not only as the 'playing ground' of conflicts between forms of life but, more specifically, in its threefold metaphysical, unitary, and plural guises, by which rule and legitimacy are rooted in a principle or ontology of origin, are in theory exercised within a specific jurisdiction without any lawful superior, and affirmed, negotiated, and contested through claims and counter-claims.
'Surrender and regrant'	Lord Deputy Anthony St Leger's 'reform' policy especially as implemented between 1541-3, whereby Irish lords renounced their name, customs, and land in exchange for an English title of nobility and estates as a royal grant.

Introduction:
Tudor political theology and Christian forms of life in the age of Reformations

I: Reformation in Ireland

The Reformations have long figured prominently in Irish historical writing. Historians have traced the chronology of its successes and failures, its structural deficiencies, and the vagaries of its development as it was unevenly implemented across the island. They have charted the setbacks, fortunes, practices, and activities of the Catholic Church and the confluence of local, regional, and transregional networks its personnel and flock brokered and participated in. Differentially attuned to the wider 'British' and Continental dimensions of the Reformations, studies have adopted 'national', local, and diocesan frameworks, focusing on strategies of 'reform', survival, and resistance, their intersections with statecraft and the formation of confessional and sectarian 'ideologies' and communities, and the relative 'political' or 'religious' character of 'reform', resistance, and revolt. The concern has been to: determine when 'religion' entered the fray as an explosive and divisive issue; ascertain the role of faith in Tudor programs of 'reform'; assess the relative strength of 'survivalist' or 'traditionalist' faith in pulling Catholics from the new creed; and identify when Catholic recusancy and a distinctly Tridentine ethos emerged.[1] While our knowledge of the Reformations has been

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[1] Nicholas Canny, 'Why the Reformation failed in Ireland: *une question mal posée*', in *JEH*, 30, 4 (1979); Karl Bottingheimer, 'The failure of the Reformation in Ireland: *une questions bien posée*', in *JEH*, xxxvi (1985); Steven G. Ellis, 'Economic problems of the church: why the Reformation failed in Ireland', in *JEH*, xli (1990), pp 239–65; Brendan Bradshaw, 'The English Reformation and identity formation in Ireland and Wales', in Brendan Bradshaw and Peter Roberts (eds), *British consciousness and identity: the making of Britain, 1533-1707* (Cambridge 1998), pp 43-111; Bradshaw, 'Sword, word and strategy in the Reformation in Ireland', in *HJ*, 21, 3 (1978), pp 475-502; Bradshaw, 'The Opposition to the Ecclesiastical Legislation in the Irish Reformation Parliament', in *Irish Historical Studies*, 16, 63 (1969), pp 285-303; Bradshaw, 'The Edwardian Reformation in Ireland, 1547-53', in *Archivium Hibernicum*, 34 (1977), pp 83-99; Ciarán Brady, ''Conservative' subversives: the community of the Pale and the Dublin administration, 1556-1586', in P. J. Corish (ed.), *Radicals, rebels and establishments: Historical Studies XV* (Belfast, 1985); Henry A Jefferies, *The Irish church and the Tudor Reformations* (Dublin and Oregon, 2010); Henry A. Jefferies, *Priests and prelates of Armagh in the age of Reformations, 1518-1558* (Dublin, 1997); Jefferies, 'Why the Reformation failed in Ireland', in *Irish Historical Studies* 40, 158 (2016), pp 151-170; Colm Lennon, *The lords of Dublin in the age of Reformation* (Dublin, 1989); Samantha Meigs, *The Reformations in Ireland: tradition and confessionalism, 1400-1690* (New York, 1997); James Murray, *Enforcing the English Reformation in Ireland: clerical resistance and political conflict in the diocese of Dublin, 1534-1590* (Cambridge and New York, 2009); Brendan Scott, *Religion and Reformation in the diocese of Meath* (Dublin, 2006); Mary Ann Lyons, *Church and society in County Kildare, c.1470-1547* (Dublin, 2000); Felicity Heal, *Reformation in Britain and Ireland* (Oxford, 2003); Elizabethanne Boran and C. Gribben, (eds), *Enforcing Reformation in Ireland and Scotland, 1550-1700* (Aldershot, 2006); Alan Ford and John McCafferty, (eds), *The origins of sectarianism in early modern Ireland* (Cambridge, 2005); Vincent P. Carey and Ute Lotz-Heumann (eds), *Taking sides? Colonial and*

considerably advanced, the question that has dominated the historiography ('why did the Reformation fail?'), however, has perhaps – although understandably – been unduly privileged.[2] Alternate framings and questions, accordingly, may shed new light on the Reformations in Ireland. One such framing is that of political theology.

This study seeks to 'recalibrate' political theology as a historical methodology to capture the dynamics of order and power in Tudor Ireland in its entanglements with Atlantic and Eurasian worlds.[3] To truly appreciate the trajectories and stakes of Tudor 'reform' in Ireland, however, the reign of Henry VIII must be re-evaluated. By studying the making of Tudor political theology in Henrician Ireland, we can appraise staple historiographical concerns from a fresh set of perspectives – and for this, rethinking the role and status of theology is key. Recent approaches to intellectual, political, and cultural history that have broached theology as a pluralist 'language' have re-prioritized and rethought its scope and significance in the early modern world. Scholars have sought to overcome a pernicious 'politics'/'religion' binary by focusing on the dynamism and impact of theological ideas in shaping early modern government, law, devotion, community, and identities.[4] Harnessing such works as well innovative studies on the interplay between 'self-hood', authority, and spiritual and civil governance in early modern European state formation,[5] this study further reframes the Reformations and the themes of order, power, and sovereignty in Ireland as problems of *moral governance* under God, prince, and pope. Such approaches suggest that to transcend the 'secular-political'/'religious' binary while remaining attuned to the ways government and 'reform' had varying impulses stemming from concerns over faith, God, and the

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[2] *confessional mentalités in early modern Ireland (Essays in honour of Karl S. Bottigheimer)* (Dublin, 2003).

[2] For two excellent examples of an alternative interpretive framework to the either/or implications of the success/failure paradigm in an early Tudor English context, see Alexandra Walsham, *Providence in early modern England* (Oxford and New York, 1999); Ethan H. Shagan, *Popular politics and the English Reformation* (Cambridge, 2003).

[3] It is in this sense similar to Adam Kotsko's efforts to reconfigure the discourse of political theology so it could grasp a neoliberal system of legitimation in the age of late capitalism. Adam Kotsko, *Neoliberalism's demons: on the political theology of late capital* (Stanford, 2018).

[4] Alexandra Walsham, 'The European Reformations and the 'Disenchantment of World' re-assessed', in *HJ,* 51, 2 (2008), p. 527; Jonathan Willis, *The Reformation of the Decalogue: religious identity and the Ten Commandments in England, c. 1485-1625* (Cambridge, 2017), pp 10-1. See also Jonathan Willis (ed.), *Sin and salvation in Reformation England* (Farnham, 2015), particularly Willis, 'Introduction: sin and salvation in Reformation England', pp 2-4, 12-3, and Alexandra Walsham, 'Afterword', p. 262; Alister Chapman, John Coffey, and Brad S. Gregory (eds), *Seeing things their way: intellectual history and the return of religion* (Notre Dame, 2009).

[5] Ulrike Strasser, *State of virginity: gender, religion, and politics in an early modern Catholic state* (Ann Arbor, 2004); Strasser, 'Embodying the middle ages, advancing modernity: religious women in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe and beyond', in Charles H. Parker and Jerry H. Bentley (eds), *Between the middle ages and modernity: individual and community in the early modern world* (New York, 2007).

exigencies of struggles for power, we must further bridge the gap between the 'state' and 'devotional life' by examining 1) how the languages of rule, order, and 'reform' were indexed to Christian forms of life, and 2) the circumstances in which the moral subjects produced by the Reformations – the 'true' and 'false' Christian – appeared in the intellectual, institutional, social, and devotional contexts of life under God, law, and earthly authority in Henrician Ireland.

Thus, this study foregrounds 'Christian life' – which has its Being from God – and examines how its forms and contours were rooted in what the following introduction serves to build towards: the political-theological paradigm of delegation and mediation as a new historical hermeneutic for narrating the histories of sixteenth-century Ireland and the Reformations. Such a hermeneutic illuminates how divine, princely, and papal majesty were delegated to and mediated by clerics and laity within the horizons of authority, law, office-holding, and devotion under God. If these constituted the spiritual and civil domains of Christian life, order, and governance as correlated elements in an apparatus of sovereignty that captures the suffusion of majesty in the church and the 'body politic' through Christian service to temporal rulers under God, this framework attests to how these collectively unfolded in the crucible of a pastoral and providential-salvific dispensation whose major fixture was the arrangement between God and Christian, spiritual and civil authority. As we refract the fruits of Irish historiography through such registers, the secularist lens through which the histories of early modern Ireland have too often been narrated are eroded, and the fundamentally political-theological character of life in Henrician Ireland appears in fuller relief. From there, we can begin to re-evaluate Ireland's place within Atlantic, Eurasian, and early Reformation worlds.

II: Political theology, government, and sovereignty

A useful point of departure for pursuing such re-evaluations in Tudor Irish history is the problem of spiritual and civil power and jurisdiction, which directly confronts us with 'religion', 'politics', and the 'secular' as analytical categories.[6] In sixteenth-century

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[6] Brendan Bradshaw recognized the importance in Ireland of the jurisdictional struggle between the 'spiritual and temporal arms' but the critical purchase of his insight is curtailed since he harnesses this 'ongoing medieval debate' only to foreground the novelty of the Counter-Reformation 'religious consciousness' of the 1590s. Brendan Bradshaw, 'The Reformation in the cities: Cork, Limerick and

Latin Christendom, transformations in territorial states and the dissolution of the Universal Church were accompanied by convulsions in the relations between faith, obligation, and temporal allegiance and the delineation of jurisdictional boundaries between spiritual and earthly realms as authorities vigorously promulgated and enforced newly legally codified definitions of 'true Christianity'. Within this volatile quagmire of evolving notions of Christian 'truth' and order, what it meant to be Christian, what 'belief' and 'faith' were, how these were expressed and embodied, all changed dramatically.[7] If historians of Ireland have long been attuned to these questions, a secularist epistemology, however, pervades the historiography: 'politics' and 'religion' are unchanging in their essence, mutually interacting in complex ways no doubt, but always referring to the same substantive identity that defines domains of human thought and action as either 'political' or 'religious'.[8]

There are ways to undo such harrowingly limited confines. Talal Asad proposes that the '"the secular" is conceptually prior to the political doctrine of "secularism", and that we must view the 'secular' and the 'religious' in their plural, interdependent

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Galway, 1534-1603', in John Bradley (ed.), *Settlement and society in medieval Ireland: studies presented to Francis Xavier Martin, O.S.A* (Kilkenny, 1988), pp 465-6.

[7] Lee Palmer Wandel, *The eucharist in the Reformation: incarnation and liturgy* (Cambridge, 2006); Wandel, *The Reformation: towards a new history* (New York, 2011); Peter Marshall, *Heretics and believers: a history of the English Reformation* (Yale, 2018).

[8] Historians' frequent acknowledgements that contemporaries did not compartmentalize 'politics' and 'religion' do little to alter this conceptual and analytical framework. The secularist dispensation in question was expressed in quasi-axiomatic form nearly a century ago when Robert Dudley Edwards asserted that 'Political considerations necessitated the subordination of the religious issue to the governmental policy as a whole'. Despite his impression that 'to contemporaries, religious and political considerations were hopelessly mixed', 'politics' is nevertheless consistently counterpoised to 'religion', which is concerned with doctrine, church discipline, preaching, and sincere faith and motive. R. D. Edwards, *Church and state in Tudor Ireland: a history of the penal laws against Irish Catholics, 1534-1603* (New York, 1935), esp. pp xxxiii, 225-233, 305. Even Henry Jefferies, who emphatically emphasises the need to foreground religion in any study of the Reformations in Ireland, falls prey to the power of the secularist discourse in, first, his interpretation of the justification for the royal supremacy in Ireland, when he writes that 'the justification for the king's supremacy over the Irish Church was political rather than religious' and 'side-stepped the controversial theological underpinning of the Henrician supremacy to appeal directly' to the lordship's 'political loyalties'; and second, when he reiterates the widely held view that the Palesmen's opposition to cess was a secular affair; the move forecloses any connections between constitutional liberties and conscience, or, between 'politics' and 'theology'. Jefferies, *The Irish church and the Tudor Reformation*, pp 77, 217. Ciaran Brady and James Murray, in their recent re-assessment of Sir Henry's reformation program as being comprehensively attuned to secular and religious matters, tackle 'the two interpretive predilections' linked to Edward's work noted above that allowed 'the dichotomy between the political and religious to persist unquestioned'. All the same, the authors do not rethink the categories of 'religion' and 'politics'. Brady and Murray, 'Sir Henry Sidney and the Reformation in Ireland', in Elizabethanne Boran and C. Gribben, (eds), *Enforcing Reformation in Ireland and Scotland, 1550-1700* (Aldershot, 2006), pp. 14-39, quote on p. 16. For Murray, indeed, while acutely sensitive to the interplay between liturgy, politics, identity, and faith, there remains in the end a 'complex sphere of contemporary Irish and English secular politics' whose 'bewildering series of contingencies' 'frequently and abruptly' impact 'religious responsibilities'. Murray, *Enforcing the English Reformation in Ireland*, p. 18.

historical formations, each of which was embedded in socio-discursive configurations of power that articulated different sensibilities, knowledges, and practices – in short, ways of inhabiting the world.[9] Neither 'sincerity' as the litmus-test of a religiosity *essentially* distinct from secular thought, sensibilities, and practice, nor the 'secular' and its attendant categories of 'interest', 'pragmatism', or 'opportunism', nor 'belief', 'faith', 'self' and 'agency' or reified institutional boundaries ('church' and 'state'), can serve to hive off 'religion' from 'politics', to highlight a distinctly secular sphere of political effects and contingencies, or to construe the 'religious' as a vehicle for the 'political'.[10] Thus, moving beyond efforts to determine the 'religious' or 'political' character of the Reformations in Ireland, or the 'political' or 'religious' nature of government 'reform', or when invocations of 'religion' were no longer mere facades for 'political' or 'secular' concerns, we can ask: what *were* 'religion', 'politics', and the 'secular' in the sixteenth century?

Political theology as a heuristic framework tackles and illuminates this terrain. A discourse that has both early modern roots and an important twentieth-century pedigree,[11] political theology has one central claim: that 'God-talk' and proximate theological themes insinuate themselves into seemingly unrelated or secular pursuits or domains.[12] Its point of departure depends upon a peculiarly modern and secular dispensation: the problem of theology in the 'modern age' whose claim to sovereignty is the displacement of God and its replacement with the figure of 'man' that exercises a

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[9] Talal Asad, *Formations of the secular: Christianity, Islam, modernity* (Stanford, 2003), introduction, quote on p. 16, pp 25-6 for an explicit statement. William T. Cavanaugh makes a similar point: to distinguish between 'religious' and 'secular' violence is futile, for what is 'secular' or 'religious' in different contexts is due to different configurations of power. William T. Cavanagh, *The myth of religious violence* (Oxford, 2009).

[10] For a stimulating critique, see Conal Condren, 'The history of political thought as secular genealogy: the case of liberty in early modern England', in *Intellectual History Review*, 27,1 (2017), pp 115-33. See also Hussein Fancy's work, which warns against looking for a kernel of 'secular', rational agency lurking behind 'religious' interactions. Hussein Fancy, *The mercenary Mediterranean: sovereignty, religion, and violence in the medieval crown of Aragon* (Chicago, 2016).

[11] See Carl Schmitt, *Political theology: four chapters on the concept of sovereignty* (1922), trans. George Schwab (Chicago, 2005), chap. 4; Benjamin Lazier, *God interrupted: heresy and the European imagination between the world wars* (New Jersey, 2008); Adam Kotsko, *The prince of this world* (Stanford, 2017); *Neoliberalism's demons*; Graham Hammill and Julia Reinhard Lupton (eds), *Political theology and early modernity* (Chicago, 2012).

[12] It is what Benjamin Lazier calls the 'displacement and diffusion of God-talk'. Lazier, *God interrupted*, p. 3. Adam Kotsko, too, contends that the 'theology' 'in political theology cannot be understood solely as a discourse about God' but embraces the far more capacious problems of legitimacy and evil, governance and the reality of suffering, in their intersections with gender, hierarchy, and race. Kotsko, *Neoliberalism's demons*, esp. pp 8-9, 28-32, 128-9.

mastery over a self-contained and enclosed world.[13] Yet what first appears as the displacement, or disappearance, of God, amounts to God's diffusion: the problem of theology, simply put, is that in an age where God is formally banished, God re-appears in new garb in law, philosophy, politics, and culture.

As descriptive of past lifeworlds, the discourse of political theology can illuminate occluded sixteenth-century Irish pasts, but in order to do so, we must account for how it cannot escape its rootedness in its own historical trajectories and planes. Far from a weakness or admission of presentism, this is in fact its strength. In our current secular dispensation, which urgently poses, if not thrusts upon us, the problem of the 'theological' in its relation to the 'political' or 'secular', political theology can best lend a hand in illuminating a past it is rooted in but which evinced very little of the signposts or characteristics that would come to define secularist being-in-the-world. If contemporary, secularist categories of the 'secular' and the 'religious' are hopelessly freighted and incapable of coming to grips with historical lifeworlds in which life, the divine, and the worldly operated on vastly different planes of existence, how the discourse of political theology problematizes those categories by shoring up their historical contingency allows us to elliptically access such pasts by designating their historicity at the thresholds of earthly and spiritual horizons. To 'feel' our way through such pasts we must see the array of 'secular' and 'religious' domains of life and thought that comprised them as always-already uncertainly 'spiritual' and 'worldly'. At no point were these questions ever settled – in Ireland, England, or elsewhere, perhaps especially so when dealing with not only the diversity of theological and legal thinking across Europe but with cross-cultural encounters. The modalities of 'spirit' and 'world's' suffusion in the *saeculum* and human earthly life were at their core uncertainly worldly and otherworldly. They were always the object of competing modes of theological interpretation, of competing claims by civil and ecclesiastical authorities who imparted to themselves if not always exclusive than often carefully segregated yet overlapping rule over spiritual or temporal jurisdictions that depended on the distribution of ends and means of human life in its legal, devotional, and salvific relations to time on earth and the eternal kingdom of God. If modernity, whatever else it may be, is 'political-

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[13] On political theology, medieval-modern periodization, and secularism, see Kathleen Davis, *Periodization and sovereignty: how ideas of feudalism and secularisation govern the politics of time* (Pennsylvania, 2012). See also Asad, *Formations of the secular*, p. 15, where he describes 'secularism' as a 'modern doctrine of the world in the world'.

theological' in its *nomos*, then our capacity to grapple with and understand the past must also share this point of departure.

If Adam Kotsko defines political theology as a 'holistic, genealogical inquiry into the structures and sources of legitimacy in a particular historical moment' and as a perspective that can capture the homologies between the 'political', the 'theological', and any 'metaphysical system', marrying such a genealogical investigation with a more empirically rich historical perspective allows us to make sense of the horizons of order, power, and governance in their synchronic and *longue durée* dimensions against the deeper metaphysics they operationalise in any historical space and moment. As Caroline Walker Bynum so beautifully put it in her study of the problem of 'likeness' in late medieval Christian devotional life, the 'relationship of an Other [God] to creation' 'is the Other as an engendering or a flowing out'.[14] It is, in other words, a principle of transcendence becoming one of immanence. Yet the devotional world of liturgy and material objects was, of course, not so isolated from the world of government, as Bynum's work itself highlights, and as James Murray and Salvador Ryan's respective research into liturgy, identity, government, and bardic motifs in late medieval and Tudor Ireland, also suggest.[15] If 'religion' in early modern Europe, as Ethan Shagan notes, was 'not a rigid or self-contained sphere' but was itself 'structured through its intersections with the culture in which it was imbedded',[16] and if 'religion', as Raymond Gillespie has observed in his work on popular devotion in early modern Ireland, 'was fundamentally about the conviction of individuals of the reality of the divine, which dictated their response to what they understood as the power and mystery of God at work in the world',[17] the forms 'it' took reach far beyond the devotional life of the people – and to fully grasp its contours, substance, and transformations, the interplay of clergy and laity in the making of what Gillespie has called an 'economy of

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[14] Caroline Walker Bynum, *Dissimilar similitudes: devotional objects in late medieval Europe* (Princeton, 2020), p. 27.

[15] James Murray 'The 'absenting of the bishop of Armagh': eucharistic controversy and the English origins of Irish Catholic identity, 1550-51', in Oliver P. Raferty (ed.), *Irish Catholic Identities* (Manchester and New York, 2013), pp 92-109; Salvador Ryan, 'The *Arma Christii* in medieval and early modern Ireland', in Lisa H. Cooper and Andrea Denny-Brown (eds), *The Arma Christii in medieval and early modern material culture, with a critical edition of 'O Vernicle'*, (Ashgate, 2014), pp. 243-272. See also Natalie Zemon Davis, 'The sacred and the body social in sixteenth-century Lyon', *P&P*, 90 (1981), pp 40-70; Anne Ramsey, *Liturgy, politics, and salvation: the Catholic League in Paris and the nature of Catholic reform 1540–1630* (Rochester, 1999); Wandel, *The Eucharist in the Reformation*.

[16] Shagan, *Popular politics in the English Reformation*, pp 1, 7. Stuart Carroll has similarly emphasised the social embeddedness of 'religion'. Stuart Carroll, 'The rights of violence', in *P&P, Supplement 7* (2012), pp 128-62.

[17] Raymond Gillespie, *A devoted people: popular religion in early modern Ireland* (Oxford, 1997), p. 15.

the sacred' must include the moral horizons and determinations of government and the 'state'. We are dealing here with the Christian metaphysics of 'presencing' – of how God, as the transcendental-immanent source of all being, existence, and life is 'present' not only in the devotional lives of Christian Europeans but, more generally and prosaically, in the domain of human governmental (dis)order, the arena of princely, lordly, and administrative affairs.

Thus, how was God as fount of all Being the ontological paradigm for life and thought? How were the modalities of God's Being – majesty and glory – operative in the world, in Tudor and Irish political-theological imaginaries, institutions, and governance? How were its correlates – Nature, or natural law as the human perception of unrevealed divine law universal to the entire community of *humanitas* – similarly harnessed in how medieval and sixteenth-century folk spoke of being Christian, crown servants, 'civil' or imperfectly so? To answer such questions is to tease out how contemporaries in Ireland and beyond delineated the spaces of the spiritual and the temporal, and it is a task that throws into fuller relief the horizons of life and thought within which any sense of cosmological place and agency were rooted. It is also a task that, from the vantage point of the secular dispensation we inhabit and the constrains it imposes on our ability to know and see other worlds, demonstrates that a historical perspective on the permutations of 'religion' and the 'secular' would give way to a history of the interrelations between and displacements of transcendence and immanence across all domains of human life and thought.

To fully capture these movements and their significance for historical life in Ireland and beyond, we must also reconsider that perniciously misunderstood red herring of historical and political thought: secularisation. Secularisation was not strictly a process per se, but a series of 'happenings' that enfold discontinuity within some semblance of 'continuity'.[18] Neither simply the triumph of the 'secular' over the 'religious', nor the evacuation of 'religion' from the world, nor even the separation of 'church' and 'state', 'secularisation' marks the displacement of the 'sacred' and the

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[18] As Giorgio Agamben writes, 'Secularisation is not a concept but a signature...that is, something that in a sign or concepts marks and exceeds such a sign or concept referring it back to a determinate interpretation or field, without for this reason leaving the semiotic to constitute a new meaning or a new concept. Signatures move and displace concepts and signs from one field to another (in this case, from sacred to profane, and vice versa) without redefining them semantically'. Giorgio Agamben, *The kingdom and the glory: For a theological genealogy of economy and government* (2007), trans. Lorenzo Chiea and Matteo Mandarini (Stanford, 2011), p. 4. For a fuller discussion, see *Signatura rerum: sur la méthode*, trans., Joël Gayraud (Paris, 2009), esp. chap. 2.

'profane' onto new areas of life, thought, and institutions, re-arranging both across celestial and earthly worlds, and re-constituting each in relation to the other and the new domains of experience, order, and power they come to designate.[19] In other words, any time the domains of the worldly and the spiritual – and related iterations of transcendence and immanence – are re-signified within the terms of order, divine and human life have undergone 'secularisation'.

Indeed, as Giorgio Agamben has shown, the 'movements' of transcendence and immanence are precisely what Christianity operationalize. For Agamben, Christian Trinitarian theology is itself a paradigm of government, one that still governs political thought in secular modernity. Forged among an array of Classical, Jewish, and Gnostic elements, it contains two countervailing governmental paradigms structured around the fracture between being and action that the Christian idea of *creatio ex nihilo* introduced into the 'Classical world': that of transcendent sovereignty and of immanent economy. God's Being and praxis in Christ and the Holy Spirit are separate but united, a single substance but three persons, that govern the world providentially by coordinating a transcendent principle (God's absolute otherness to Creation, or divine monarchy) with an immanent principle (God as the Being of all beings who actively intervenes in the *saeculum*, or the economy of divine ordering) in a manner that produces a paradigmatic fount for divine and human praxis in the world, and of how the two cooperate in the divinely-ordained Time of Creation. Attempts to think the unity-through-difference of God's transcendence and immanence make possible a horizon of governmental thought concerned with the salvific ordering of the divine, human, and nature that introduces the problem of the government of the world.[20] If Carl Schmitt famously espoused a 'vertical' or transcendent model of political theology anchored in the sovereign decision, and if Ernst Kantorowicz equally famously articulated a 'horizontal' or

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[19] It would be useful to heed Alexandra Washam's point that the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries witnessed cycles of de-sacralisation and re-sacralisation, or that even Protestant antipathy to 'idolatrous' and 'sacrilegious' customs or habits of seeing sanctity invested in objects and places where they adamantly insisted it was not, ended up imparting a certain 'holiness' to iniquity. Walsham, 'The European Reformations and the 'Disenchantment of World' re-assessed', pp 497-538. With that said, Walsham, however, does distinguish in this essay between sacralisation and secularization, with the latter remaining the signifier of the process by which 'religion' progressively retreats from the world. On the related problem of changing attitudes towards 'holiness' and 'iniquity', see Alexandra Walsham, *The Reformation of the landscape: landscape and memory in early modern Britain and Ireland* (Cambridge, 2011).

[20] Agamben, *The kingdom and the glory*, pp 1, 53-108. Christian order, then, presupposes chaos: the attempt to make coincide God's radically free will with Christ's salvific economy is itself a futile attempt to unite what has already been separated, to give an anarchic action a firm foundation in Being. Agamben, *The kingdom and the glory*, pp 53-65, 106-8.

immanent model of political theology rooted in theological-juridical abstractions of corporate perpetuity, for Agamben, Trinitarian theology binds these poles together as 'an activity that in the last instance, is not targeting the general or the particular, the primary or the consequent, the end or the means, but their functional correlation'.[21]

Within the 'functional correlation' of the ever-moving immanent and transcendent polarities of Christian Trinitarian government, we find, too, the arena of sovereignty and a power over conduct and souls. According to Michel Foucault, the Christian pastorate, or pastoral power, as a 'power of care', for centuries constituted the main grid through which power relations and governmental structures were challenged and re-organized, and counter-conducts elaborated. The Reformations, then, as struggles over who held the 'right to govern men, and to govern them in their daily life and in the details and materiality of their existence', were a revolt 'around the pastorate'. Foucault, too, links the problem of conduct in the sixteenth century to the new scope of the sovereign's power, who was now 'responsible for, entrusted with, and assigned new tasks of conducting souls'.[22] Indeed, the problem of sovereignty acquired a heightened urgency in the sixteenth-century worlds of increased global encounters, imperial and mercantile enterprise and rivalry, and consolidating territorial states and churches in a Latin Christendom torn asunder by the dissolution of the Universal Church.[23] Historians of Tudor Ireland have studied sovereignty through constitutional and cultural lens, focusing on jurisdictional independence, control of territory, cultural autonomy or transregional cultural-territorial imaginaries (for instance, the *Gaedhealtacht*, an area linking Ireland and the north of Scotland defined by a common culture and language), the legitimacy of and capacity to enforce one's rule, and Irish

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[21] Agamben, *The kingdom and the glory*, p. 122. Schmitt, *Political theology*, p. 36, passim; Ernst. H. Kantorowicz, *The king's two bodies: a study in medieval political theology* (Princeton, 1957). On Kantorowicz and Schmitt being two sides of the same 'transcendence/immanence' coin, see Jennifer Rust, 'Political theologies of the *corpus mysticum*: Schmitt, Kantorowicz, and de Lubac', in Graham Hammill and Julia Reinhard Lupton (eds), *Political theology and early modernity* (Chicago, 2012), pp 102-23.

[22] Michel Foucault, *Security, territory, population: lectures at the Collège de France, 1977-1978* (2004), Michel Senellart, ed. Graham Burchell, trans. (New York, 2007), pp 149, 229-31.

[23] Fore more conventional or 'constitutional' and 'political' framings of the question, see Quentin Skinner, *The foundations of modern political thought* (2 vols, Cambridge, 1978), ii, pp 284-301; Nannerl O. Keohane, *Philosophy and the state in France: the Renaissance to the Enlightenment* (Princeton, 1980), pp 54-82; and the essays in Part II of J. H. Burns and Mark Goldie (eds), *The Cambridge history of political thought, 1450-1700* (Cambridge, 1991), pp 157-344.

efforts, in the words of Christopher Maginn, 'to vest the sovereignty of Ireland in princes who were not also kings of England'.[24]

Yet, sovereignty is fundamentally a site of struggle where competing visions and enactments of life, law, order, and truth stake out their claims and relate back to a principle of origin – and, thus, has three dimensions: unitary, layered, and metaphysical. If unitary sovereignty takes the form of an undivided and exclusive authority within a given jurisdictional sphere, and if layered sovereignty was a matter of – as Lauren Benton shows – competing claims and encounters across jurisdictionally plural landscapes in the early modern world, where people were vectors of law, or channels for the overlapping claims to sovereignty through and against which legal regimes were forged,[25] at the core of both lies a metaphysical paradigm.[26] Focusing on the logic of sovereignty entails rethinking sovereignty in relation to ontology and state of exception.[27] According to Agamben, the state of exception comprises 'the dialectic of the foundation that defines Western ontology' from Aristotle onward. As he puts it, 'something is divided, excluded, and pushed to the bottom, and precisely through this exclusion, it is included as *arché* [rule or origin] and foundation'.[28] In the Christian

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[24] For a historiographical and thematic overview that covers the early medieval period to the early modern, see Maginn, 'Whose island? Sovereignty in late medieval and early modern Ireland', in *Eire-Ireland* 44, 3 (2009), pp 229-47, quote on p. 230. See also Maginn, 'Contesting the sovereignty of early modern Ireland', in *History Ireland* (2007), pp 20-25; Maginn, 'The Gaelic peers, the Tudor sovereigns and English multiple monarchy', in *Journal of British Studies* 50 (2011), pp 566-86; Brendan Bradshaw, *The Irish constitutional revolution of the sixteenth century* (London, 1979); Bradshaw, *The dissolution of the religious orders in Ireland under Henry VIII* (Cambridge, 1974); Marc Cabal, *Poets and politics: reaction and continuity in Irish poetry, 1558-1625* (Cork, 1998); Cabal, 'Faith, culture and sovereignty: Irish nationality and its development, 1558-1625', in Brendan Bradshaw and Peter Roberts (eds), *British consciousness and identities: the making of Britain, 1533-1707* (Cambridge, 1998), pp 112-39; Declan Downey, 'Purity of blood and purity of faith in early modern Ireland', in Alan Ford and John McCafferty (eds), *The origins of sectarianism in early modern Ireland* (Cambridge, 2005), pp 217-28.

[25] Lauren Benton, *A search for sovereignty: law and geography in European empires, 1400-1900* (New York, 2010); Richard J. Ross and Lauren A. Benton (eds), *Legal pluralism and empires, 1500-1850* (New York, 2013).

[26] The point was recognised by Ian Campbell and B. R. Siegfried in their studies of Aristotelian constitutional thought and Augustinian theology in Ireland, but one can go further still. B. R. Siegfried, 'Recognising Elizabeth I: grafting, sovereignty, and the logic of icons in an instance of Irish bardic poetry', in Brendan and Valerie McGowan-Doyle (eds), *Elizabeth I and Ireland* (Cambridge, 2014), pp 86-112; Ian Campbell, 'Aristotelian ancient constitution and anti-Aristotelian sovereignty theory in Stuart Ireland', in *HJ,* 53 (2010), pp 1-19; Campbell, 'Irish political thought and intellectual history, 1550-1730', in Jane Ohlmeyer (ed.), *The Cambridge history of Ireland, vol. 2, 1550-1730* (Cambridge, 2018), pp 506-28.

[27] As Carl famously wrote in *Political theology*, 'Sovereign is he who decides on the exception'. Schmitt, *Political theology*, chap. 1, p. 5.

[28] Giorgio Agamben, *The use of bodies* (2014) trans. Adam Kotsko (California, 2015), p. 264; Agamben, *Homo sacer: Sovereign power and bare life*, (1995) trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen, (Stanford, 1998), pp 11-28. The logic was given metaphysical expression by Aristotle in a metaphysics of potentiality that privileges actuality, a metaphysics which specifies the 'condition into which potentiality – which can both be and not-be – can realize itself'. Here, Sovereign Being, in the form of im-potentiality, as a

paradigm of government, the state of exception coordinates and renders indistinguishable the system's separate domains dialectically, be it God's being and action or spiritual and temporal power. It is the ontological depth that effectuates itself in, animates, pervades, and grounds disparate domains of human and divine life and activity in all their heavenly and earthly dimensions. Power, human and divine, and as a relation rather than a substance, is in its innermost depths always simultaneously transcendent norm and immanent order. It is always both 'theology' and 'politics'.[29]

Thus, Tudor political theology inhabited the junctures of metaphysical, unitary, and layered sovereignty – or tripartite sovereignty, a diffused, plural, and punctured apparatus that bound, separated, and proliferated different lifeworlds. Unitary sovereignty is consolidated by the capacity to enforce claims. But claims can be contested, opposed, resisted. Sovereignty is thus always 'layered' or negotiated in moments of encounter. Finally, sovereignty has a metaphysics – the structure of the exception – that both unitary and layered sovereignty harness. With Tudor political-theological order as a vector, Ireland and Anglo-encounter; spiritual, legal and civil order; and 'reform', conquest, and polity formation, can appear within the folds of sovereignty, this discontinuous, punctured, expansive 'force' that forged and insinuated itself within and across disparate customary and legal regimes, different forms of social organization, forging new links, adapting and destroying older ones, investing and producing moral subjects. The points at which these collided, negotiated their boundaries, or were parcel of exchanges, were the anchors around which worlds became more integrated without succumbing unilaterally to a homogenizing force. For as an apparatus, tripartite sovereignty proliferates difference, but its tentacular reach also brings people and things into contact, grounding and delineating socio-discursive spaces of being, knowledge, and experience – or engagement with self and world. If it can be triggered 'internally' within the structures and practices of any socio-discursive formation, it can also serve as a structuring frame from 'without', external to a set of practices, knowledge, and institutional forms, yet operating as a *dispositif* through which the terms of exchange and encounter are funnelled.[30] At the spiritual and civil

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potentiality that is fulfilled by giving itself to itself rather than it being destroyed in the passage over to actuality, realizes itself by suspending its own potentiality-not-to-be, becoming itself through an internal suspension that holds hostage, in an inclusive exclusion, the ground which makes it possible. Agamben, *Homo sacer,* pp 44-8.

[29] Agamben, *The Kingdom and the Glory*, pp 68-143; *Homo sacer,* pp 26-9, 49-67.

[30] I am much indebted here to Foucault's notion of a '*dispositif*' (apparatus), or 'the system of relations that can be established between disparate socio-discursive elements'. Michel Foucault, 'The confession

thresholds of 'world' and 'spirit' in whose folds lay what Jane Ohlmeyer has shown were the web of anti-imperial and imperial relations, practises, and power that characterised conditions in colonial Ireland,[31] and what Michael Braddick and John Walter have called the 'early modern grid' of power, this entanglement of mutually enforcing relations of subordination and ascendancy through which order, hierarchy, and hegemony were negotiated and disputed in early modern England and Ireland,[32] there lay sovereignty as a site of embattled Christians forms of life and service under God and prince.

III: Christian forms of life and service

If tripartite sovereignty structured and pervaded the disparate domains of life, in order to canvas the historical modalities of Christian living in Tudor Ireland, we must unveil another secularist trope: the 'self'. The question of the 'self', or the historicity of its constitution in relation to the fixtures of Christian order, are essential to any historical understanding of the vagaries of sovereignty, governance, and power. Too often has Tudor Irish history been narrated from an anachronistic secularist premise that operationalizes an 'agential self' dependent upon post-Enlightenment and Eurocentric rationales of the subject as an autonomous moral agent acting on the sovereignty of the will and navigating conceptually delineated spiritual ('religious') and temporal ('secular') realms.[33] Yet the 'self' in the 'premodern' world was anything but, and a way to retrieve its make-up is to explore its constitution at the thresholds of Christian government, theology, law, and metaphysics.

To begin, let us revisit the roots of Christian subject-hood in the Ancient World. As Foucault noted in his work on the government of self and others, '*Aletheia*, *politeia*, *ethos* [truth as ontological unveiling, government, and the formation of a moral subject]: the essential irreducibility of these three poles, their necessary and mutual relationship, and the structure of their reciprocal appeal of one to the other, has

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of the flesh', in Michel Foucault and Colin Gordon (eds), *Power/knowledge: selected interviews and other writings, 1972-77*, trans., Colin Gordon et. al. (New York, 1980), pp 194-5.

[31] Jane Ohlmeyer, '"A Laboratory for Empire?": early modern Ireland and English imperialism', in Kevin Kenny (ed.), *Ireland and the British empire* (Oxford, 2004), pp 27-9

[32] Michael J. Braddick and John Walter, 'Introduction: grids of power: order, hierarchy and subordination in early modern society', in Michael J.Braddick and John Walter (eds), *Negotiating power in early modern society: order, hierarchy and subordination in Britain and Ireland* (Cambridge, 2001), pp 1-42.

[33] For a critique of this liberal secular logic, see Sabah Mahmood, *The politics of piety: the Islamic revival and the feminist subject* (Princeton, 2011), intro.

underpinned...the very existence of all philosophical discourse from Greece to the present'.[34] Commenting in particular on the relationship between the prince and the practise of truth-telling through counsel, Foucault notes that 'what makes truth-telling with the Prince possible, desirable, and even necessary, is that how he governs the city depends on his ethos' 'and that this ethos is formed and defined through the influence of the true discourse addressed to him'. As the 'principle matrix of his way of governing', 'this ethos is the element which enables veridiction, *parrhesia*, to articulate its effects in the field of politics, in the field of government of men, in how men are governed'.[35] The government of self and other, in other words, comprised a field of power within which truth, government, and morality ceaselessly relayed through each other and defined 'philosophical', 'political', and 'moral' discourse in their identity and overlap. At these junctures, a field of governance and its attendant moral subject were formed.[36]

The truth of the moral subject in its entanglement with power and government, Foucault shows, coalesced with the perennial philosophical problem of the 'true life'. Yet philosophy as a form of life in relation to truth was altered again in early Christianity, which, departing from pagan forms, also modified in crucial ways the Judeo-Hellenistic relationship between truth, life and the theme of the 'other life', and God.[37] Thus, in Christianity, there is 'a true life, which is an other life in this world' and there is 'access to the other world as access to the truth and to that which, consequently, founds the truth of that true life which one leads in this world here'.[38] There is also the entirely new principle of obedience to the other: obedience to God and to God's will – which has the 'form of the law' – and to God's representatives. These two inflections defined Christian life and truth: 'There is true life only through obedience to the other, and there is true life only for access to the other world'.[39]

Pushing the nexus linking governance, life, truth, and power into the sixteenth century, and combining it with that other 'power of care' examined above – the pastorate –

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[34] Michel Foucault, *The courage of truth: the government of self and others II, lectures at the Collège de France, 1983-1984* (2008), ed. Frederic Gros, trans., Graham Burchell (New York, 2011), p. 66.
[35] Foucault, *The courage of truth*, pp 63-4.
[36] Foucault, *The courage of truth*, p. 68.
[37] Foucault, *The courage of truth*, pp 307-16, 325-9.
[38] Foucault, *The courage of truth*, p. 319.
[39] Foucault, *The courage of truth*, p. 320.

under the political-theological rubric of sovereignty and Christian government, another genealogy of order, power, and governance in Ireland can be drawn, one that foregrounds the 'true life' within the political-theological ambit of crown subject-hood and service.[40] If we are to explore the making and forms of Tudor political theology in Ireland and the impact of the Henrician Reformation therein, what, then, can we make not of the 'political' or the 'religious', but of the Tudor and Christian horizons of *moral governance*, of crown service as a testament to obedience and a duty of allegiance of the true subject, wherein the performance of service reflected and enacted their truth and obedience – or, conversely, revealed their disorderly and transgressive state?

IV: The political-theological paradigm of mediation and delegation of majesty

We can finally weave together the disparate threads parsed above and lay bare the paradigm of political theology announced at the beginning. If Christian providential and pastoral government in Tudor Ireland was itself an iteration of tripartite sovereignty that operationalised 'life' – understood as God's gift – through obedience and service to God and king, the notion of 'mediation' provides the missing link to understanding some of the deeper modalities of Christian ontology and power and its effectualisation in the structures of earthly order and authority.[41] In order to adequately capture how power functioned and was operationalized, we must evaluate its exercise through the paradigm of delegation and mediation, or the modalities by which divine and princely

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[40] Peter Brown's work on the making of Christian empire is instructive in providing further genealogical links to the historical formations studied here. Focusing on the notion of *padeia*, or grooming to the norms of public behaviour and styles of rule, including strategies of persuasion, he shows how Christians who began to intervene in the politics of the empire at the end of the fourth century, 'frequently did so by taking on roles, in their confrontation with those in power, that had originally been elaborated by men of padeia'. Peter Brown, *Power and persuasion in Late Antiquity: towards a Christian empire* (Madison, 1992), p. 34.

[41] An instructive point of departure for rethinking 'mediation' as a political-theological form and category that pervaded the structures of order, authority, and power in the Christian world are the liturgy and acclamation, the theology of glory, and the Eucharist. Acclamation and liturgy, indeed, bridge papal and princely imperial forms of power and the celestial and earthly hierarchies. See Ernst Kantorowicz, *Laudes regiae: A study in liturgical acclamations and mediaeval ruler worship* (Berkeley, 1958). The theology of glory, or, as Agamben put it, the 'economy of economies' that binds together God's transcendence and immanence through a circular fount of reciprocal glorification of the three persons of the Trinity, constituted the 'secret point of contact through which theology and politics continuously communicate and exchange parts with one another'. 'If glory is so important in theology', he continues, 'it is, above all, because it allows one to bring together within the governmental machine immanent trinity and economic trinity, the being of God and his praxis, Kingdom and Government. Agamben, *The kingdom and the glory*, chaps. 6-8, esp. pp 188, 201, 230. The Eucharist in Christian life and theology, finally, as the locus par excellence of representation and mimesis of the divine and Christ, constitutes a privileged site for mediation and the embodiment of grace. Wandel, *The Eucharist in the Reformation*.

Being and majesty were embodied by English-Irish, Irish, and English alike, occupying as they did different stations and vocations, and performing different kinds of service to God, lord, and king. Such was the Christian crucible of moral governance – and therefore, of 'true living'.

To bring such peculiarities of power into relief, I propose a synthesis of different scholarly treatments of divine, human, and imperial power and sovereignty. The first and arguably most important concept, here, is *imperium*, or the Roman-style doctrine of unitary sovereignty, its cognate terms, dominion and jurisdiction, and one of the most important abodes of *imperium* for understanding the dynamics of order, power, and governance in Ireland: the political-theological fiction of the corporate Crown.[42] The site *par excellence* where the 'transcendent' and 'immanent' dimensions of order and power were wielded, delegated, and mediated, the 'Crown' and its composite parts – the 'king' and 'body politic' – constituted the 'space' enfolded in God's providential and pastoral government within which the terms of order, polity, and Christian life, service, and crown subject-hood were determined and operationalized to different ends.

Intersecting with this was what Conal Condren has called the 'presupposition of office'. An office was not solely an administrative 'post' occupied by a person but a moral fixture of Christian order and sovereignty. An 'office' defined the parameters of moral conduct and its transgression, prescribing a *persona*-in-office whose contours and status as a moral individual were delimited by the duties, obligations, and responsibilities of the office in question, be it that of prince, subject, mother, obedience, and so forth. All offices, moreover, found their anchor in the 'epitome of office': God as supreme judge and Creator. The result was a 'world construed officially', a casuistical universe of moral duties and transgressions that structured thought about authority, conduct, legitimacy, and their limits, not to mention who could claim what office and under what circumstances. In considering the obligations and responsibilities of different *personae* in office, there is no need to resort to the 'inner moral, psychological agent' 'self-consciously [adopting] the social roles it played'. It was rather about a 'soul impressed with its own official identity'. The 'agential self', in other words, was not the secular fantasy of the autonomous moral agent, but the moral

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[42] On the political theology of the Crown and corporations, see Kantorowicz, *The king's two bodies*, chaps. 5-8. On concepts of corpus and the Roman law of corporations, see Brian Tierney, *Religion, law, and the growth of constitutional thought, 1150-1650* (Cambridge, 1982), esp. pp 20-7.

personae constituted by *officiae*.[43] 'Office', then, was the crucible of English and Irish Christian living.

Central to how the Crown and 'office' as bedrocks of spiritual-civil order in Ireland functioned in practice was how the modalities of divine and princely ordinary and exceptional powers were mediated and delegated. If Christian Trinitarian government harnessed a state of exception (*creatio ex nihilo* and God's grace) that both correlated transcendent and immanent governance in its effectualisation in the world, it was the emergence in the Middle Ages of an important theological and, later, juristic, distinction between two modalities of God's power – *potentia ordinata* and *potentia absoluta*, or God's ordered and absolute power – that accompanied the articulation of a theory of 'exceptional' power, one which from the late middle ages to the sixteenth century was to inflect the exercise of power, authority, and law in both Gaelic and English Ireland. The theological formulation stressed the contingent status of events and things by contrasting divine ordination with divine ability, or the given redemptive order God had ordained and what God could have done otherwise. Absolute power was not an action, but a dispensation that coincided with God's providential design and the workings of grace and miracles that were always-already ordained. If most commentators did not speak of God's *potentia absoluta* as a power of action, however, some did, with important consequences. This was the juristic sense of the term developed from the thirteenth and fourteenth century in which *potentia absoluta* comprised an action that referred to the pope, emperor, and later prince's capacity and right to act beyond and against the positive law.[44] What for God amounted to two modalities of a single, divine power, constituted for humans – owing to their inability to access the Eternal Law without mediation – a differentiation of God's power into two distinct modes of action, one ordered and one absolute, the latter connoting prerogative

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[43] Conal Condren, *Argument and authority in early modern England: the presupposition of oaths and offices* (Cambridge, 2006), passim, quotes on pp 22, 136, 139, 217-23.
[44] William J. Courtney, *Capacity and volition: a history of the distinction of absolute and ordained power* (Bergamo, 1990); Francis Oakley, 'The absolute and ordained power of God and king in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: philosophy, science, politics, and law', in *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 59, 4 (1998), pp 669-90; Heiko Oberman, *The harvest of medieval theology: Gabriel Biel and late medieval nominalism* (Cambridge, Mass., 1963), chap. 2. As Agamben argues, canonists and theologians shifted the terms of theologico-juridical discourse away from an older model of a 'sovereignty inseparable from its exercise', which rendered identical God's action and power with the government executive, towards one which distinguished between the two modalities of God's power to the effect that the latter was never exhaustively contained in the former. Canonists and theologians, thus, elaborated 'the doctrine of the *potentia absoluta* as a model for exceptional powers'. Agamben, *The Kingdom and the Glory*, pp 106-8.

or exceptional power.[45] In Ireland, the Christian modality of ordinary, delegated, and discretionary power was threefold and took the form of excommunication and absolution, mercy and execution, and the blessing and the curse, and all – albeit differentially – put into play God's Being and its investment in creaturely life and the powers they wielded.

Thus, it was within the terms of Christian metaphysics and government, the Roman tradition of *imperium*, the fiction of the Crown, the parameters of 'office', and the modalities of civil and ecclesiastical 'exceptional' or discretionary power, that both the structures of monarchical power in Ireland and the terms of Christian crown subject-hood and service unfolded, providing a moral-governmental fulcrum for 'true life' and the parameters of (dis)order. Although the Gaelic world of Christian order cannot be entirely reduced to this political-theological formation, it remains the case that as agents of either royal, papal, or God's sovereignty, as creaturely life acting in the world and participating in the matrices of Tudor order and power, the being, praxis, and service of the Irish, just like that of English and English-Irishmen, teetered at the thresholds of ordered and absolute power in much the same way that Jean Bodin later distinguished between the possession and administration of majesty: to 'administer' it was not to be its source.[46] Such a distinction captures the undulating flow of sovereignty as its abyssal fount and suffusion in the world rockily appeared in the folds of Tudor order in Ireland. Within this framework, we shall re-evaluate the Henrician Reformation in Ireland.

IV: Ireland in the reign of Henry VIII: a historiographical overview

Although some historians have qualified the older tendency to view Henry VIII's reign as an inaugural break from the past by correctly emphasising important continuities spanning the 1470s to the 1540s,[47] all agree that it marked a watershed in Anglo-Irish

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[45] For an example of what this logic looked like in English ecclesiastical thought at the of the sixteenth century, see Torrance Kirby, 'From 'Generall Meditations' to 'Particular Decisions': the Augustinian coherence of Richard Hooker's political theology', in Robert S. Sturges (ed.), *Law and sovereignty in the middle ages and the Renaissance* (Turnhout, 2011), pp 53-65.

[46] Robert Friedelburg, '"Self-defence" and sovereignty: the reception and application of German political thought in England and Scotland, 1628-69', in *History of Political Thought*, 23, 1 (2002), pp 246-7.

[47] Steven G. Ellis, *Reform and revival: English government in Ireland, 1470-1534* (Woodbridge, 1986); Christopher Maginn and Steven G. Ellis, *The Tudor discovery of Ireland* (Dublin, 2015); Christopher Maginn, 'Continuity and change: 1470-1550', in Brendan Smith (ed.), *The Cambridge history of Ireland, vol. 1, 600-1550* (Cambridge, 2018), pp 300-28. Peter Crooks has persuasively outlined threads of continuity that canvass the entire middle ages and the reign of Henry VIII. Peter Crooks, 'The structure of

relations. Witnessing a 'constitutional revolution' that saw the reorganization of lay and ecclesiastical structures and networks of law and power around royal *imperium* and the island's constitutional status elevated from a lordship to a kingdom, the period saw the emergence of an expansionist, centralizing state, characterised by some as the early pangs of a revitalised 'reform' government and the 'Tudor discovery of Ireland', by others as the beginnings of Tudor conquest, or by others still as the first steps towards Ireland's integration within a United Kingdom.[48] It was also a decisive period for both the formulation of remarkably resilient ideas on civil, ecclesiastical, and 'religious' reform and for Ireland's integration into Continental struggles for power.[49] Finally, the period saw the inaugural moment of Reformation in Ireland.

Yet, theology's decisive role as a 'pluralistic language' and an ontological fulcrum of divine and princely majesty, service, and life in Ireland has not received the historiographical attention it deserves. Perhaps in part due to the ongoing impact of an interpretive tradition that emerged out of much-needed efforts to de-confessionalise the writing of Irish history,[50] most historians understate or misconstrue the Reformation's theological dimensions and emphasise its largely belated impact: although they concede that some progress was achieved, the consensus remains that either resistance to the Reformation was isolated or muted, or the royal supremacy – according to which the

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politics in theory and practise, 1210-1541', in Brendan Smith (ed.), *The Cambridge history of Ireland, vol. 1, 600-1550* (Cambridge, 2018), pp 441-68.

[48] Bradshaw, *The Irish constitutional revolution*, pp 116-54; 'The English Reformation and identity formation in Ireland and Wales', p. 63, which considers the Roman origins of the form of unitary sovereignty that would transform discourses and practices of 'reform' and government in Ireland over the course of the sixteenth century; Ciaran Brady, *The chief governors: the rise and fall of reform government in Tudor Ireland, 1536-1588* (New York, 1994); Maginn and Ellis, *The Tudor discovery of Ireland*; David Heffernan, *Debating Tudor policy in sixteenth-century Ireland: 'reform' treatises and political discourse* (Manchester, 2018); David Edwards, 'The escalation of violence in sixteenth-century Ireland', in David Edwards et al (eds), *Age of atrocity: violence and political conflict in early modern Ireland* (Dublin, 2007), pp 34-78; Fiona Fitzsimons, 'Cardinal Wolsey, the native affinities, and the failure of reform in Henrician Ireland', in David Edwards (ed.), *Regions and rulers in Ireland, 1100-1650. Essays for Kenneth Nicholls* (Dublin, 2004), pp 78-121. On the longer-term ramifications in relation to the Three Kingdoms and eventually the United Kingdom, see Steven G. Ellis, *Tudor frontiers and noble power: the making of the British state* (Oxford, 1995).

[49] Heffernan, *Debating Tudor policy in sixteenth-century Ireland*; Brady, 'From policy to power: the evolution of Tudor reform strategies in sixteenth-century Ireland', in Brian Mac Cuarta (ed.), *Reshaping Ireland, 1550-1700: colonization and its consequences. Essays presented to Nicholas Canny* (Dublin, 2011), p. 26; Micheál Ó Siochrú, 'Foreign Involvement in the Revolt of Silken Thomas, 1534-5', in *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy. Section C: Archaeology, Celtic Studies, History, Linguistics, Literature*, 96C, 2 (1996), pp 49-66; William Palmer, *The problem of Ireland in Tudor foreign policy, 1485-1603* (Woodbridge, 1994), pp 26-72.

[50] James Murray, 'The Church of Ireland: a critical bibliography, 1536-1992. Part I: 1536-1603', in *Irish Historical Society* 28 (1993); Alan Ford, '"Standing one's ground": religion, polemic and Irish history since the Reformation', in Alan Ford, John McGuire, and K. Milne (eds), *As by law established: the Church of Ireland since the Reformation* (Dublin, 1995), pp 1-10.

English crown assumed the spiritual headship of the church – was deprived of theological ramifications as a mere act of legal schism.[51] The royal supremacy, however, was not simply about jurisdictional matters between king and pope; it involved, as James Murray notes, a 'strong doctrinal dimension', where the king deployed the 'rhetoric of Erasmian humanists' to defend the take-over of the church which he equated 'with the advancement of the Gospel and the sincere and true understanding of God's word'.[52] What however, was that 'strong doctrinal dimension', and how did it restructure the parameters of order and sovereignty in Ireland? Historians' aforementioned focus on Tudor efforts to alter the religion of the island's inhabitants, while certainly important, has had the unintended consequence of obscuring how the Henrician Reformation – and theology more generally – shaped the horizons of order, power, and governance in Ireland. The need to bridge the gap between 'state' and 'devotional life' highlighted above, in other words, requires ascertaining how the languages of Tudor rule, order, and 'reform' were themselves transformed by the Reformation and indexed to Christian life and service. Only then can we qualify, if not move beyond, the idea that the *modus vivendi* of the Henrician Reformation in Ireland was essentially characterised by what Henry A. Jefferies suggests took hold in the diocese of Armagh, namely, a form of 'Catholicism without the pope'.[53]

To uncover the full ramifications of the Reformation in Ireland, we must locate the Henrician settlement more squarely within the doctrinal and political-theological landscapes of Christendom and ascertain their impact on the terms of Henrician political theology. By attending to the doctrinal and political-theological specificity of Henrician order, governance, and power in Ireland, we can grasp the contours of law

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[51] Brendan Bradshaw's statement in his first article on George Browne made the point in its strongest, most axiomatic form precisely because he both acknowledged and then immediately disavowed the role of theology. 'The principle on which Henry took his stand', he begins 'was jurisdictional not doctrinal'. Then Bradshaw notes that the jurisdictional issue had a doctrinal dimension, for the 'repudiation of papal jurisdiction necessarily entailed the repudiation also of the ecclesiology on which papal supremacy was based'. All the same, 'the Henrician reformation is distinguishable from the continental movement because in England the extent of the theological divergence was delimited by the jurisdictional issue. From the point of view of the Roman Church, the Henrician reformation was schismatical whereas its continental counterpart was heretical'. Brendan Bradshaw, 'George Browne, first Reformation archbishop of Dublin, 1536-1554', in *JEH*, 21, 4 (1970), p. 303, no. 2. See also Jefferies, *The Irish church and the Tudor reformations in Ireland*, p. 77; Brendan Scott, *Religion and Reformation in the Tudor diocese of Meath* (Dublin, 2006), p. 40; Ute Lotz-Heumann, 'Confessionalization in Ireland: periodization and character, 1534-1649', in Alan Ford and John McCafferty (eds), *The origins of sectarianism in early modern Ireland* (Cambridge, 2005), pp 37-8; Mary Ann Lyons, 'The onset of religious change, 1470–1550', in Brendan Smith (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Ireland, vol. 1, 600–1550* (Cambridge, 2018), 517-20.
[52] Murray, *Enforcing the English Reformation in Ireland*, p. 93.
[53] Jefferies, *Priests and prelates*.

and moral governance in their local and transregional dimensions. Historians have long given due consideration to the French, Roman, Scottish, and Habsburg connections to Irish affairs, including the Continental dimension of the Reformations in Ireland and of British and Irish state formation.[54] Indeed, the complex array of alliances and intrigue involving English, French, Scots, Irish, imperial, and papal powers were central to the trajectories of English policy in Ireland, generating as they did the spectre of either French, papal, or Spanish invasion of one or several of the Atlantic archipelagic kingdoms.[55] Nevertheless, the theological and intellectual dimensions of such expansive landscapes of order and power in the Henrician era have either been neglected or insufficiently appreciated. In the wake of the 'discovery' of the 'New World' and the ongoing millenarian anxieties over Ottoman encroachment, moreover, the increasingly polarized, destabilized, and pluralized cultures of moral, theological, and governmental thought in Christendom during the Reformations reflected as well as precipitated convulsions in the civil and ecclesiastical, spiritual and temporal, folds of governance and interpolity order.[56] Yet historians of Henrician Ireland have largely ignored the Eurasian and 'New World' contexts, paying insufficient attention to the ways the allegedly deficient spiritual status of Jews, the looming spectre of the 'Turk', and the ramifications of the 'discovery' of the 'New World' either entered the fray of political-theological discourse in and on Ireland, or indirectly speak to the island's changing place within an emergently 'global' early modern world.

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[54] James Hogan, *Ireland in the European system, 1500-1557* (vol. i, London, 1920); J. J. Silke, *Ireland and Europe, 1559-1607* (Dundalk, 1966); Patrick J. Corish (ed.), *A history of Irish Catholicism, vol. iii* (Dublin and Melbourne, 1967), pp 1-40; Palmer, *The problem of Ireland in Tudor foreign policy*; Mary Ann Lyons, *Franco-Irish relations, 1500-1610: politics, migration, and trade* (Suffolk and New York, 2003); Brendan Bradshaw and John Morrill (eds), *The British problem, c. 1534-1707: state formation in the Atlantic Archipelago* (London, 1996); Steven G. Ellis and Sarah Barber (eds), *Conquest and union: fashioning a British state, 1485-1725* (New York, 1996); Colm Lennon, *An Irish prisoner of conscience of the Tudor era: Archbishop Richard Creagh of Armagh, 1523-86* (Dublin, 2000); Enrique García Hernán, *Ireland and Spain in the reign of Philip II* (Dublin, 2009); Declan M. Downey, 'Irish-European integration: the legacy of Charles V', in Howard Clarke and Judith Devlin (eds), *European encounters. Essays in memory of Albert Lovett* (Dublin, 2003), pp. 98-117.
[55] Palmer, *The problem of Ireland in Tudor foreign policy*, chaps. 1-4; Lyons, *Franco-Irish relations, 1500-1610,* chaps. 1-4. On the term 'archipelagic', I follow J. G. A. Pocock, 'The limits and divisions of British History: in search of the unknown subject', in *The American Historical Review*, 87, 2 (1982), pp 311-36.
[56] Matthew Dimmock, *New Turkes: dramatizing Islam and the Ottomans in early modern England* (Aldershot, 2005); Lee Palmer Wandel, *The Eucharist in the Reformation: incarnation and liturgy* (Cambridge, 2006); Lee Palmer Wandel, *The Reformation: towards a new history* (New York, 2011); Carina L. Johnson, *Cultural hierarchy in sixteenth-century Europe: the Ottomans and Mexicans* (Cambridge, 2011); Jennifer Nelson, *Disharmony of spheres: the Europe of Holbein's Ambassadors* (Pennsylvania, 2019).

Thus, through and against such expansive North Atlantic and Eurasian landscapes of power and imagination, one of the over-arching arguments of this study is that Henrician political theology in Ireland was inseparable from the wider Tudor, Irish, and Continental worlds it inhabited. If recent research has cast Irish and English history in their multi-centred interrelations within a larger Tudor framework that foregrounds Ireland's integral place in a Tudor 'political culture' and state,[57] this study highlights that exploring Henrician developments from a fresh political-theological perspective throws into further relief the lineaments of a common albeit differentiated crucible for a distinctly Tudor political-theological culture characterised by cascading scales of commonality and difference that accounts for both Ireland's unique position as well as shared histories with its archipelagic and continental neighbours. Tudor political theology, in other words, was the common yet diffused apparatus of tripartite sovereignty through which the imperatives of order and 'reform' all found contested expression.

How, then, must we broach Anglo-Irish encounter as a key ingredient in the formation and negotiation of Tudor political theology? The subordination of Gaelic elites to the Tudor regime, indeed, the very formation and consolidation of Tudor rule in Ireland, was a complex, uneven, and hybrid affair involving protracted yet frequently interrupted acts and instances of negotiation, intrigue, and resistance.[58] Yet if 'cultural exchange' was never a one-way street, nor did collaboration with the regime always entail Anglicization: colonial rule was simultaneously advanced and subverted through adaptive engagements with crown forces or adoptions of English cultural-governmental forms, and the Irish language itself could be adaptively re-deployed within new colonial

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[57] Mark A. Hutchinson, *Calvinism, reform, and the absolutist state in Elizabethan Ireland* (London, 2015); Brendan Kane and Valerie McGowan-Doyle (eds), *Elizabeth I and Ireland* (Cambridge, 2014); Christopher Maginn, *William Cecil, Ireland, and the Tudor state* (Oxford, 2012); Rory Rapple, 'Writing about violence in the Tudor Kingdoms', *HJ*, 54, 3 (2011), pp 829-54; Steven Ellis and Christopher Maginn, *The making of the British Isles: the state of Britain and Ireland, 1450-1660* (Harlow, 2007); Jane Dawson, *The politics of religion in the age of Mary, Queen of Scots: the earl of Argyll and the struggle for Britain and Ireland* (Cambridge, 2002); Brendan Kane, 'Ordinary violence? Ireland as emergency in the Tudor state', in *History*, 99, 336 (2014), pp 444-467. In a series of articles, Henry A. Jefferies has comparatively re-assessed revisionist arguments in English Reformation historiography from the perspective of the Reformations in Ireland. Henry A. Jefferies, The early Tudor Reformations in the Irish Pale', in *JEH*, 52, 1 (2001), pp 34-62; Jefferies, 'Elizabeth's Reformation in the Irish Pale', in *JEH*, 66, 3 (2015), pp 524-42; Jefferies, 'The English Reformation in Dublin', in *Reformation and Renaissance Review*, 18, 3 (2016), pp 233-53.
[58] Christopher Maginn, *'Civilizing' Gaelic Leinster. The extension of Tudor rule in the O'Byrne and O'Toole lordships* (Dublin, 2005).

conditions.[59] David Edwards's research into the fate of the MacGiollapadraig lordship from the 1540s to the 1580s is instructive of the approach I take here, although the angle of attack is considerably different. First, it confirms one of my main theses: that Tudor order was not only an instrument of 'reform', conquest, and control, but that its 'languages' of order and 'reform' became problematized in the spaces of governance and power produced by greater Tudor intervention in Ireland.[60] That the seemingly perfectly anglicised MacGiollapadraig could maintain a fully Gaelic lordship populated mostly by Irish tenants, continue using the Irish language, and persist in running the lordship according to Gaelic tenurial, legal, and military practises suggests the malleability and adaptability of Tudor languages of rule and order and the ultimately uneven and punctured fabric of Tudor sovereignty.

What this study seeks to do is provide greater depth to those languages and to demonstrate their political-theological provenance and dimensions. It suggests that Tudor political theology comprised a series of imperatives – allegiance, obedience, service, conformity, duty, honour, and 'civility' – that together created a barometer for defining office-holding in relation to 'truth' as indices of divine and royal order, the stakes being the 'truth' of one's person, service, and commitment to the 'king's cause' under God. All such imperatives relayed through and mutually constituted each other as they defined specific valences of Tudor order and determined the contours and bases of sovereignty and 'true religion'. The complex relations between these imperatives made possible a semantic range for each that encompassed myriad attitudes and governmental policies as well as the very possibility of contestation and subversion. Together, they formed a chain of interlocking imperatives of rule and sovereignty, constituting the languages of Tudor political theology in the crucibles of Anglo-Irish encounter.

Additionally, such a perspective refocuses familiar themes and events of Irish historiography and history within the dislocations in sovereignty that bridged just as

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[59] David Edwards, 'Collaboration without anglicization: the MacGiollapadraig lordship and Tudor reform', in Patrick J. Duffy, David Edwards and Elizabeth FitzPatrick (eds), *Gaelic Ireland, c.1250–c.1650: land, lordship and settlement* (Dublin, 2001), pp 77–97; Vincent Carey, *Surviving the Tudors: the 'wizard' earl of Kildare and English rule in Ireland, 1537-1586* (Dublin, 2002), esp. chaps. 5-6; Maginn, '*Civilizing' Gaelic Leinster*; Brendan Kane, *The politics of honour in Britain and Ireland, 1541-1641* (Cambridge, 2009); Kane, 'Languages of legitimacy? An Ghaeilge, the earl of Thomond and British politics in the Renaissance Pale, 1600-24', in Michael Potterton and Thomas Herron (eds), *Dublin and the pale in the Renaissance, c. 1540-1660* (Dublin, 2011), pp 267-79.

[60] Brendan Kane's research into honour in Britain and Ireland also brilliantly illuminates the point. Aside from the works just cited, see also Brendan Kane, 'From Irish Eineach to British honor? Noble honor and high politics in early modern Ireland, 1500-1650', in *History Compass*, 7, 2 (2009), pp 414-30; Kane, 'Making the Irish European: Gaelic honor politics and its continental contexts', in *Renaissance Quarterly*, 61 (2008), pp 1139–66.

they divided Irish, English, and Continental worlds, providing the local, regional, and transregional matrices for new dispensations of governance and power, not to mention new polities and jurisdictional entanglements. What such a focus equally helps explain, too, is the trajectories of Tudor 'reform' and government itself. Although for Edwards, local or regional investigations into *how* and to what effect Tudor 'reform' was implemented on the ground foregrounds the need to temporarily resist proposing grand narratives of sixteenth-century Ireland,[61] I suggest that my approach *does* nevertheless illuminate a different chronology of Tudor government in Ireland that can accommodate the local dynamics of Anglo-Irish exchange. Keeping in mind that Gaelic power struggles were themselves far from simply governed by calculated 'self-interest' or expediency as the mere secular sinews of a deeply martial culture unconcerned with 'supernatural' interlocutors and the pulls of devotion and piety,[62] my approach allows for at least two things. First, other illuminating points of contact or similarity between 'Irish' and 'English' worlds than those otherwise explored by historians become discernible, not to mention new perspectives on the ruptures and dislocations of colonial power; second, recovering dynamic and adaptable Gaelic political theologies that overlapped with yet were distinct from the English and Continental Christian normative paradigms they co-existed with tensely becomes all the more feasible and necessary.[63]

Consider, in this light, how the terms of 'collaboration' and 'resistance' Edwards examined were also entangled in the Reformation. The Reformation created a new set of vocabularies through which legitimacy, authority, and power were assessed, appealed to, and contested. Scholars of the English Reformation have noted the plurality of meanings and uses the royal supremacy generated as a focal point around which an array of rhetorical articulations of kingship, ecclesiology, and salvation were

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[61] Edwards, 'Collaboration without anglicization', pp 77–97.

[62] Kenneth W. Nicholls, *Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland in the middle ages* (Dublin, 1972); Katherine Simms, *From kings to warlords: the changing political structure of Gaelic Ireland in the later middle ages* (Woodbridge, 1987); Meigs, *The Reformations in Ireland*.

[63] While we can chart the trajectories by which Gaelic political-theological forms converged with English and Continental political-theological axes or horizons across the sixteenth century, Gaelic culture and society retained, as it always had, its own historical dynamism and adaptability. On the latter, see Brendan Bradshaw, 'Native reactions to the westward enterprise: a case-study in Gaelic ideology', in K. R. Andrews, N. P. Canny, and P. E. H. Hair (eds), *The westward enterprise: English activities in Ireland, the Atlantic, and America, 1480–1650* (Detroit, 1979), pp 65-80; Bradshaw, 'The English Reformation and identity formation in Ireland and Wales'; Cabal, *Poets and politics*; Cabal, 'Faith, culture and sovereignty'.

deployed.[64] 'Meek submission' and 'violent resistance' to the regime were not the only alternatives: as Ethan Shagan contends, 'different ideas related to the Reformation' were instrumentalised in an array of rhetorical, 'political', economic, and coping strategies that 'contributed to a process of negotiation through which new ideas and practises took root in England'.[65] In Ireland, this process was enfolded in newly emergent political theologies of 'truth' – or the changing contours of 'true' service and crown subject-hood – at the spiritual-civil thresholds of power, law, and competing claims to sovereignty involving the English, English-Irish, Irish, and their allies and enemies in 'Britain' and the Continent.

The following, then, is the overarching argument of this study. First, in offering a new interpretation of the Henrician Reformation – and particularly the political theology of the royal supremacy – it argues for the importance of viewing it from Ireland. Second, it demonstrates how Henrician theocracy hinged on the structural and rhetorical weight of *imperium* and its displacements across new discursive terrains that, by inflecting the imperatives of Tudor political theology as a site of struggles for sovereignty, provided a language that intersected with and was profoundly shaped by the worlds of English-Irish and Gaelic Ireland beyond it. Third, the study emphasises that the local and transregional matrices in which Tudor political theology was forged allow us to see the making and contestation of a significant historical formation that, in prescribing new relations between God, sovereign, and subject, proved to be the linchpin of Tudor political theology: *'true Christian crown subject-hood and service'*. As the languages and imperatives of Tudor order were appealed to and co-opted by a panoply of English, English-Irish, and Irish men navigating the volatile folds of power, intrigue, and government, Tudor rule in Ireland and 'true Christian crown subject-hood and service' were simultaneously consolidated and subverted.[66] If political-theological

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[64] On the royal supremacy as a plural site of multiple, competing meanings about proper order, see the literature engaged with in chapter 1.

[65] Shagan, *Popular politics in the English Reformation*, p. 22.

[66] When thinking about Tudor political theology, its imperatives, and languages, it may be helpful here to consider 'language' in the sense J. G. A. Pocock gave it: language-games with distinct rhetoric, idioms, vocabularies, preconditions, implications. It is 'a game recognized as open to more than one player' where 'the use by the ruled of the language of the rulers' may 'empty it of its meanings and reverse its effects'. The 'more institutionalised a language and the more public it becomes', he writes, 'the more it becomes available for the purposes of a diversity of utterants articulating a diversity of concerns'. J. G. A. Pocock, 'The concept of a language and the *métier d'historien*: some considerations on practice', in Anthony Pagden (ed.), *The languages of political theory in early-modern Europe* (Cambridge, 1987), pp 21, 24, 28, 31-2. For a complimentary approach that I draw on extensively throughout my study of Henrician political theology, see Peter Crooks, 'The structure of politics in theory and practise, 1210-1541'.

order concerned how divine and princely majesty and commands were delegated and mediated at the thresholds of the spiritual and civil domains of Christian life, the problem of sovereignty in Ireland, anchored as it was in the violently contested spiritual-civil terrains of power and law of the early Reformations, was about struggles between conflicting forms of life and service beholden to competing obligations of allegiance to God and different spiritual and civil authorities: the pope, friars and priests, the Habsburg emperor, Irish lords, and the English, Scottish, and French kings. Foregrounding the making, enacting, and subversion of 'true Christian crown subject-hood and service' at the thresholds of Irish, English, and continental worlds allows for a more substantive portrait of order and power in sixteenth-century Ireland to emerge. Fourth, what follows re-assesses how the conventional markers of 'high politics' and Anglo-Irish relations during Henry's reign collectively shaped the edifices of Tudor order and power. If the Kildare revolt (1534-5) raised the stakes of allegiance, obedience, and service in an age of volatile and unstable dynastic and imperial relations across Christendom, and if the Act of Kingly Title (1541) provided a constitutional focus through which both recent and remote developments found new policy and political-theological expressions, the primary motor for the galvanisation and transformation of such political-theological phenomena was the royal supremacy. The stakes: the fluctuating social depth of political-theology and moral governance and the changing local, regional, and transregional scopes for consolidating and subverting 'true Christian crown subject-hood and service'. Finally, this study suggests that the imperatives, contradictions, and tensions of Tudor political theology constituted a 'site' for the moral determinations of life and service in which a momentous change occurred: the overhaul of 'religion' and its transformation into a distinctly Anglo-Irish variant of post-Reformation Henrician Christianity.

VI: Sources and chapters

A cultural-intellectual history of order, power, and governance, our examination of Tudor political theology in Ireland foregrounds theology in an analogical dialogue between wildly differing documents, so that the terms, dynamics, and modalities of sovereignty and moral governance appear within the 'paper trail' left by a slew of events, developments, and phenomena related to power struggles, faction, intrigue, and the exigencies of order and government. This study, then, first and foremost uses the

government correspondence and 'reform' literature that makes up the *State Papers* and sets them in dialogue with the Irish annals, English, English-Irish, and Continental political-theological, moral governmental, and doctrinal tracts, parliamentary statutes, and the Henrician formularies of faith – namely, Archbishop of Dublin, George Browne's 'Beads' and 'Injunctions' (1538), and the regime's Ten Articles (1536), *Bishop's Book* (1537), and *King's Book* (1543). These are complemented by more strictly administrative records like the patent and close rolls and *fiants* of the Irish chancery as well as, more importantly, a re-evaluation of the import of St. Augustine's *Confessions*, Giraldus Cambrensis' corpus, and – albeit to a much lesser degree – Irish hagiographical material for Tudor political theology. In the pages that follow, the humanists, evangelicals, and the orthodox make crucial appearances alongside the Irish annals and the panoply of crown agents writing to or from Dublin and Whitehall. Together, they help us better establish a two-way dialogue between Ireland and the wider world that throws into relief the languages, assumptions, and terms of Tudor political theology and 'true Christian crown subject-hood and service'.

How exactly, then, does this look like? This study seeks to make visible fluctuating worlds of ideas, assumptions, and power that uncertainly stretched across vast expanses of time and space. Such, after all, and as we noted above, is the 'substance' of sovereignty as a spiritual-worldly apparatus of contested claims and forms of life rooted in divine majesty. The spaces of life and thought in their interactions engendered and were constitutive of the comingling of disparate intellectual-cultural currents, tapped into – consciously or otherwise – by people acting, thinking, being in the world. My method, then, involves three interrelated levels of interpretation and meaning: first, a focus less on self-contained 'schools of thought' or traditions than on the dispersal of their elements; second, an examination of power and governance as the entwined crucibles in which such languages were appealed to, transformed, re-appropriated in the formation of 'true Christian crown subject-hood', service, and sovereignty; and finally, an eschewing of efforts to trace networks of transmission, influence, or causality.[67] This is what it means to look at Tudor political theology as a 'language' and fulcrum of moral governance. And it is, of course, a testament to what the historical evidence itself reveals: that a different point of

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[67] On the slipperiness and unrelieability of 'influence' as a workable category, see Conal Condren, *The status and appraisal of classic texts: an essay on political theory, its inheritance, and the history of ideas* (Princeton, 1985), chap. 5.

departure – Tudor political theology – gathered into a discursive 'site' what were otherwise disparate elements that typically belonged to other discursive domains or 'languages'. My aim is not to show that Tudor political theology was Erasmian or Lutheran but to demonstrate that the rhetoric, idioms, motifs, and sensibilities to which they attest to in their 'humanist' or 'evangelical' guise could also find other abodes or shore up the qualitative make-up of other historical horizons of life, thought, and power across expanses of space through which people, things, and ideas moved. If power is a relation that constitutes conditions of knowledge and experience, or positions from which to know and be in the world, this study pursues a dialogical approach between 'text' and 'context' to grasp prevailing historical conditions of power.

A text is both a 'witness' and artefact. As a witness, it testifies to historical formations, while as an artefact, it is embedded in that formation, expressing and enacting it. That a Tudor 'reform' tract proposing a solution to the problem of government in Ireland was not widely read, or its advice never implemented to any significant degree, is besides the point.[68] For its silence in the domain of applied policy is immaterial to how loudly it resounds as an artefact of and witness to a historical landscape of discourse and power, a landscape whose changing horizons of moral governance would be obscured by a more narrow focus on causality and policy. Tudor political theology as it took shape in Ireland can thus acquire a new kind of specificity that highlights a common – albeit differentiated – geographically expansive cultural landscape, distilling along the way the stable coherence or 'identity' of 'humanist', 'scholastic', 'evangelical', or 'commonwealth' languages by foregrounding the dispersal of their elements across disparate walks of life and thought.

These languages' motifs and idioms have long and spectral lives: 'The diffusion of a language', writes J. G. A. Pocock, 'may be a very different story from its creation'. Whether in their similarities they share a common source or not, such languages are interdependent, for the 'creation and diffusion of languages must be seen going on within the activity of discourse as well as in the interactions between discourse and other social phenomena'. Historians, therefore, must be attentive to the array of 'communicative spaces, fields, and structures within which political languages were

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[68] Besides, David Heffernan has recently demonstrated how 'reform' treatises, proposing policies initially to little concrete effect yet repeated over time, could indirectly play 'a major role in the formation of government policy in each individual period of the Tudor conquest of Ireland' even if 'remarkably few treatises' could be credited as the definitive origin of any policy initiative. Heffernan, *Debating Tudor policy in sixteenth-century Ireland*, p. 17.

created and diffused'.[69] If Pocock is here referring to learned texts, and if the 'Cambridge School' of intellectual history with which Pocock is usually affiliated focuses on the *uses* of 'political languages' or on what texts *do* in context, such a method, although perfectly legitimate in its own right, has an application that, when tweaked and adapted, far exceeds its own conventionally applied parameters.[70] For it is also conducive to a more general re-imagining of the uses of texts that moves us beyond intellectual canon. As texts become repositories of clues about forms of life as emblems of moral governance, how both learned treatises or pamphlets and more mundane documents like government correspondence or administrative records were entangled in the power-saturated horizons of Christians living and their shared contexts emerges in fuller relief. What we are left with are historical formations of order and power catalysed in and by disparate 'texts' and 'contexts' spanning the Atlantic Archipelago, Western Europe, and the Mediterranean and 'New World', historical formations that reveal the contingencies of deep historical tides in their entanglements with the volatile unfolding of life in Ireland's contested spiritual-civil terrains in the reign of Henry VIII.

The study is divided into two parts, 'Structures' and 'Convulsions', each containing four and five chapters, respectively, with an 'Interlude' that bridges the discussion in both. Section II traces the post-Kildare Rebellion and post-Reformation semantic shifts of the conceptual edifices outlined in Section I – sovereignty, providence, governance, 'reform', 'civility', and 'office' – which formed the arsenal of Tudor political theology as indices of 'order'.[71] Organised thematically, each chapter weaves from different angles the disparate 'Catholic' and 'evangelical', 'reform' and 'common weal', and 'Renaissance' languages of Latin Christendom into schematised explorations of the capacious and intersecting faces of Tudor political theology in Ireland. Although the imperatives of Tudor political theology themselves underwent important changes, it should be noted, however, that the events, processes, and phenomena under examination were sedimented in different historical layers of disparate albeit overlapping cultural worlds, however much they intersected with or

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[69] Pocock, 'The concept of a language and the *métier d'historien*', pp 24, 29-30.

[70] See the essays in Chapman, Coffey, Gregory (eds), *Intellectual history and the return of religion*.

[71] My method here complements – although in its focus on forms of life, ontology, and moral governance differs from – recent approaches to the history of concepts. As some historians have suggested, 'We prefer not to talk about a concept as a single entity, but as a network of value-laden terms that constitute a conceptual field, a network that is constantly changing both in the composition of terms and in the meanings of some of those terms'. Early modern research group, 'Commonwealth: the social, cultural, and conceptual contexts of an early modern keyword', in *HJ*, 53, 3 (2011), pp 659-87, quote on p. 661.

were relayed through each other to produce the horizons of Tudor political-theological life and thought. In the socio-governmental and discursive interstices and spaces produced by and within which power relayed and pulsated, we can discern a set of plural impulses that evinced no single trajectory – and it was these that disparately threw into relief 'true Christian crown subject-hood and service' in its making, contestation, and subversion in the mires of Anglo-Irish encounter within fraught transregional worlds of struggles for sovereignty.

Revisiting the historiographical debate on the character of the Henrician Reformation, chapter one examines the central place of *imperium* in Henrician kingship and argues for the pivotal role it played in restructuring the spiritual and civil domains of Christian life. Locating its political-theological valences and ramifications in the plural political-theological and doctrinal landscapes of the Henrician and Lutheran Reformations, the chapter contends that, by tensely correlating 'church' and 'realm', which in effect re-catalysed the centuries-old transference of political-theological forms across either domain, the royal supremacy became a focal point in which not only an array of 'evangelical' and 'orthodox' doctrines coalesced in a vision of imperial theocratic kingship at whose heart lay a new spiritual-civil conception of obedience, but that it was nascent covenantal and penitential theology along with the doctrines of baptism and *adiaphora* (or things indifferent in matters of salvation) that proved decisive in determining the scope of Henrician princely governance and Christian crown subject-hood in Ireland. In the terms of allegiance and obedience that the royal supremacy inaugurated lay the cradle of new, distinctly Tudor, Christian forms of life and service that defined anew the 'true Christian crown subject'.

Taking a step back from the Reformation, chapter two outlines the basic structure of key fixtures of Tudor political theology and moral governance and provides a new framework that eschews the secularist hue of 'self' and 'agency'. It considers three templates for the 'self's' enaction in the world: the ontological continuum that canvassed 'it' and the 'external world'; the fiction of the Crown whose composite parts constituted the mutually-referential tenets of Christian order and service beholden to the governance of self and other at the king's command; and the reign of providence that coordinated joint divine and human action in worldly affairs. 'Agency', in other words, was a question of power as a relation that revolved around government of self and others within the rubric of divine and monarchical order. Embedded as moral governance was in the very substance of 'reform', it was in the trope of the 'common

weal' as a principle correlate of the 'Crown' that the pivots of moral governance under God found an anchor. The chapter ends by re-examining the plural meanings and associations of the 'common weal', how the trope itself changed over time, and what it can tell us about Ireland's place within the Renaissance and humanist landscapes of early sixteenth-century Europe.

Chapter three then pursues this examination of the language of 'reform' in the context of the Tudor discourse of 'civility' and explores the forms of divided moral subject-hood – 'Irish' and 'English' – that Tudor political theology in Ireland produced. Re-evaluating the sixteenth-century import of that oft-written about medieval commentator on Ireland, Giraldus Cambrensis, it locates the moral subjects of Tudor political theology and the contortions of 'civility' they were entangled in within two interrelated contexts: first, the socio-legal and 'constitutional' framework for the 'imperial', dynastic, and colonial dimensions of Tudor *imperium* in Ireland; and second, the Augustinian and Aristotelian metaphysics of becoming – the process according to divine and natural law of 'becoming civil' in which the *telos* of nature was actualised – that had deep roots in classical and insular Christian and colonial pasts, and which governed sixteenth-century European 'anthropological' thought in the Atlantic and Mediterranean fulcrums of imperial rivalry and encounter. Here, the figures of the 'New World savage' and the 'infidel Turk' became variables in the determinations of 'true Christian subject-hood' and 'civility' in Ireland. Together, these transregional planes shaped both the political theology of difference in Henrician Ireland and the island's peculiar place in a nascently 'global' early modern world. Yet, pervading as it did the colonial and 'imperial' fabrics of Tudor 'reform' and sovereignty, and while it differentially defined 'English' and 'Irish' moral subject-hood and nature – whereby the 'imperfect' 'Irish' and 'English-Irish' needed to, respectively, ascend to a higher state of 'civil living' they had never reached or return to the 'civil' state they had forgotten – the Tudor political theology of difference profoundly unsettled the terms of Christian crown subject-hood. If 'English nature' was a stand in for divine and civil order while 'Irish nature' could be synonymous with the 'savagery' that prevented the *telos* of their humanity from realising itself, the culminative fulfilment of the Tudor discourse of 'civility' was not only the 'becoming English' of the Irish but, more alarmingly, the 'becoming Irish' of the English themselves.

Chapter four narrows in on the political theology of 'office' as a fulcrum for the constitution and contestation of 'true order' and 'Christian subject-hood', focusing

especially on service, allegiance, 'civility', and the rhetoric of counsel as malleable barometers of (dis)order within the parameters of the 'Crown'. Key, here, is the distinction between 'mere subject-hood' and 'serviceable-subject-hood, unstable as it ultimately was. It was 'serviceable subject-hood' that formed a pluralistic ground for the diversity of forms of service and their differential relations to an array of ways to live in the world in obedience and service to God and king. Within its disparate folds, in the lives of men of different social station and vocation, the figure of the 'true Christian crown subject' fluttered in and out, tapped into in moments of dialogue with the crown and its representatives, imposed and canvased by 'reformers' and officials tasked with consolidating Tudor sovereignty in Ireland. As the 'highest form' of 'serviceable subject-hood', the chapter reconsiders a life of crown service as a variant of the *vita activa* revitalised in Renaissance Europe.

Chapter five continues this discussion and explores the dual impact of the royal supremacy and the Act of Kingly Title on the terms of Christian order, sovereignty, and crown subject-hood in Ireland. It shows how the operationalization of the Henrician doctrine of obedience as a litmus test of 'true subject-hood' and the changing 'politics of preaching' that accompanied the renewed need to inculcate knowledge of God and prince in the king's subjects coincided with a transformation in the discourses of 'reform' and 'civility' that were now indexed to a distinctly post-Kildare rebellion and royal supremacy political theology of 'truth' centred around the problem of dissimulation. From 1536 and especially during the deputyship of Anthony St Leger, the changing modalities by which interiority and outward behaviour were entangled with the more general problems of sovereignty and government found expression primarily through the revitalised modification of older legal and moral themes – namely, honesty and sincerity as arbiters of true 'civility', obedience, and conformity within an ever widening gulf between 'inner' and 'outer' self that corresponded to qualitative degrees of service and moral subject-hood that the Reformation newly galvanised. The chapter ends by considering the post-1541 transformations of the metaphysics of becoming and the post-Reformation political theology of 'truth', and hones in on the 'orthodox', 'evangelical', and 'humanist' folds of the newly emergent sacramental terms of kingship and crown subject-hood and submission as these took on the baptismal and penitential contours of a 'new kind of living'. Far from being side-lined or taking a 'conservative' turn, the Reformation, the chapter shows, had a decisive impact in the 1540s.

Chapter six then considers the debates in the 1530s-40s over what constituted proper monarchical and viceroyal order in relation to, on the one hand, the perceived Irish and English-Irish 'usurpations' of royal *imperium*, and on the other, the tensions intrinsic to the office of governor. Honing in on important yet hitherto neglected continuities between the deputyships of Leonard Grey and Anthony St Leger, the chapter demonstrates how, in the changing horizons of governance – exemplified by the emergence of generalised suspicion and surveillance as a staple of a new post-Rebellion and post-royal supremacy political-theological culture with distinctly 'works holiness' overtones – that ensued, the problem of the 'overmighty subject' became a lightning rod of intense debate as the terms of viceroyal order, 'office', and common weal-talk were weaponized in the factional struggles that characterised the final decades of Henrician rule. Indeed, some of the different modalities of ordinary and absolute power – the king's pardon, jurisdiction over treason, the capacity to alter the patent of a commission or office, how the king's civil and spiritual prerogative should be delegated – figured prominently in commentary over the proper terms of divine and temporal rule and order and how prerogative power was to be lawfully delegated. In the tensions inhering in the 'proliferation of sovereigns' and the office of lord deputy, the fault-lines of the paradigm of mediation and delegation of divine and princely majesty in Ireland reached a breaking-point and experienced a near on-going crisis.

Chapters seven and eight explore a related political-theological formation whose status and weight as an index of order and legitimacy in Ireland was thoroughly entangled in the novel horizons of governance then emerging: the Henrician economy of treason. Chapter seven explores how Christian subject-hood was affected by the proliferation of treason accusations that rode the waves of Ireland's becoming an island site of ever-more concentrated claims of English power over land and sea; the fallout of the Kildare Rebellion and the Reformation; the growing factional strife at Dublin Castle; and mounting violence across the lordship. The chapter then reconsiders the relationship between law, circumstance, and treason, and shows that the willingness to pardon malefactors, far from simply a necessity in the face of the regime's limited power or proof that the scope of the law was hindered by the exigencies of practical circumstances, was in fact functional to the dynamics of rule and treason as integral components of 'reform'. The discussion concludes with an examination of how the expanding scope of treason came to re-designate 'Irish transgression' as traitorous, marking the moment when the discourse of 'civility' and that of treason coincided, and

suggests how a focus on the Henrician 'culture' of treason in Ireland can locate the island in alternative genealogies of global imperial rule and law in the early modern world. Chapter eight then demonstrates the pivotal role the economy of treason played in the polarisation of Tudor political theology. The emphasis is on the cultural, legal, and spiritual-civil horizons that bound and separated 'Gaelic' and 'English' Ireland, and which served as corridors or outlets, first, through which the terms of Tudor order and 'true Christian crown subject-hood and service' were forged and contested, and second, across which a discourse of treason could consolidate itself in the mires of their fragments. At the thresholds of multiple sites of embattled Tudor and papal sovereignties – namely, a Eurasian 'millenarian juncture' of prophecy and its Irish and 'British' variants and aspirations, 'Irish' and 'English' structures of civil-spiritual order, the post-Reformation 'politics of truth' and 'holiness' – treason became a lightning rod for delineating the 'true Christian crown subject' from the new bane of Tudor sovereignty: the idolatrous, papist, devilish, Geraldine traitor.

Chapter nine discusses another political-theological instrument of 'truth' through which relations between God, prince, and subject were re-arranged: oaths. It argues that within the unevenly overlapping civil and ecclesiastical, temporal and spiritual, folds of interpolity order and Anglo-Irish encounter, oaths were important arbiters of Tudor order as 'instruments' of 'reform'. An array of Christian powers in Western Europe and the North Atlantic before and especially in the wake of the Kildare Rebellion and Reformation got involved in or were roped into the forging of new bonds of allegiance and expansive yet unstable polities and jurisdictional horizons that linked Irish, 'British', and Continental purviews of power and sovereignty. Oaths, here, became newly charged 'sites' of political-theological struggle as both the regime and English-Irish and Irish lords deployed them to either compel conformity within the Irish government, consolidate Tudor sovereignty across the island, or re-affirm or create alternative bonds of allegiance and obedience centred on competing spiritual and civil lords and sovereigns. Within such mires of order and power, an entanglement of oaths, dissimulation, and the Reformation 'political theology of truth' reveal the 'Janus-faced' character of Tudor rule and sovereignty as a pluralistic crossroads at which both assertions and subversions of Tudor power operated within simultaneously *de jure*, outlawed, and *de facto* horizons of English, papal, and Irish law.

Finally, the conclusion returns to the categories of 'religion', the 'secular', and the 'political' and outlines a new narrative of the chronologies of government, law, and

'reform' in Ireland based on the patterns set by Henrician political theology. The discussion then proposes a new interpretation of the Tudor state in whose contours and spectral effects we can, from the perspective of a theological genealogy of statist power, discern the seeds and spectres of modern secular governance.

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A historical universe is temporally and spatially sedimented, made up of composite, overlapping, discontinuous parts that together create the spaces of life and thought. Not simply a sea of ideas, concepts, sentiments, intuitions, and impressions, but also a fount of epistemological and metaphysical horizons, the sedimentations of one's *outillage mentale* run deep, made up as it is of layers of potentiality that, on the one hand, find immediate realisation and expression in discourse, in ideas and action, and on the other, constitute the dormant depths of a plane of historical reality that lies latent, silently embedding the seams of lived reality until re-activated, tapped into, operationalised. What I have set out to do in this study of Henrician political theology in Ireland is to uncover the depths of its historicity in its plural dimensions, to attune our gaze to the continuities, discontinuities, and flashes of human life and expression as they inhabit the layered ether of historical existence. And ontology, here, is the crux: the effectualisation of Being in the world, its manifestation in the majesty of prince and God, its expression in power and virtue, its violation in sin – in other words, its molding of the substance and contours of law and human creaturely life, as all cut through and shaped the horizons of moral governance and (dis)order that constituted the crucibles of sixteenth-century life and thought.

By uncovering occluded pasts and re-designating the present, political theology as a framework helps make legible the forms of life and thought the Eurocentric and colonialist secularist dispensation under which we live obscures.[72] Although the privileged position of 'English order' in the terms of historical narration are inevitably partially reproduced in an analysis primarily centred on English government in Ireland, nevertheless, recovering the patterns of Henrician political theology destabilises the

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[72] For stimulating reflections on the links between secularism and colonialism, see Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: post-colonial thought and historical difference* (Princeton, 2008); Davis, *Periodization and sovereignty*; Saba Mahmood, *Religious difference in a secular age: a minority report* (Princeton, 2015).

framework of the 'nation-state'[73] and illuminates the spectral kernels of the modern

state's future iterations, clearing the terrain for the possibility of its disappearance.

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[73] Although it does so from a different perspective than that pursued by Christopher Maginn, Stephen G. Ellis, and Jane Dawson in their 'centering' of the *Gaedhleacht*. Christopher Maginn, 'Gaelic Ireland's English frontiers in the late Middle Ages', in *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy. Section C: Archaeology, Celtic Studies, History, Linguistics, Literature*, 110C (2010), pp 173-190; Steven G. Ellis, 'The collapse of the Gaelic world, 1450-1650', in *IHS,* 31, 124 (1999), esp. pp. 468-9; Dawson, *The politics of religion in the age of Mary, Queen of Scots*; Dawson, 'The *Gaidhealtachd* and the emergence of the Scottish Highlands', in Brendan Bradshaw and Peter Roberts (eds), *British consciousness and identity: the making of Britain, 1533-1707* (Cambridge, 1996), pp 259-300.

Part I: Structure

Chapter 1:

Imperium and the royal supremacy

The 1530s were an important turning point in Irish history, not solely for any specific formulation of policy, or for witnessing the birth-pangs of 'reform government', or even for ambitious efforts to centralize Irish government and forge a 'king's party'. The single 'event' that funnelled all these developments into a focal point for new Christian forms of life, subject-hood, and service, was the royal supremacy. There are two crucial contexts against which the royal supremacy must be understood: the doctrinal and theological constellation of ideas it harnessed and the spiritual and worldly domains of Christian life and thought whose boundaries and statuses it convulsed and reformulated.

The debate over Henry's 'religion' persists, with historians considering the role of humanist, evangelical, and Catholic spirituality, theology, and devotion in the make-up of the king's faith after the break with Rome.[1] Indeed, from once characterising the English Reformation as 'Catholicism without the pope', historians now tend to see it as 'Lutheranism without justification by faith'.[2] Yet in assuming the Catholic identity of the Henrician settlement, and in largely insisting on its status as a legal schism with no theological relevance or ramifications, historians of Ireland have precluded the possibility of seeing the break with Rome in Ireland within its wider European theological context.[3] Crucial were the legal, jurisprudential, doctrinal, and political-theological faces of Tudor imperial kingship, and the myriad dimensions and implications of claims to royal *imperium* over civil and ecclesiastical polity. Scholars who have trodden this ground have carefully identified many of the theological and legal positions supporters and opponents of the royal supremacy both converged on and radically diverged from as they appropriated to different ends an array of 'orthodox' and 'evangelical' languages within the distinct climates of Henrician obedience and polemics.[4] If Henry's beliefs were a 'highly personal admixture of old and new' or a

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[1] Richard Rex, 'The religion of Henry VIII', in *HJ* 51, 1 (2014), pp 1-32; G.W. Bernard, 'Henry VIII: 'Catholicism without the Pope?', in *History* (2016), pp 201-21.

[2] Alec Ryrie, 'The Strange Death of Lutheran England', *JEH*, 53 (2002), p. 67; Diarmaid MacCulloch, 'Putting the English Reformation on the Map: The Prothero Lecture', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 15 (2005), p. 78.

[3] See introduction, section V, for the historiography.

[4] On *imperium* and the royal supremacy, see Alistair Fox and John Guy, *Reassessing the Henrician age: humanism, politics and reform, 1500-1550* (Oxford, 1986); Guy, 'The Henrician age', in J. G. A Pocock (ed.), *The varieties of British political thought, 1500-1800* (Cambridge, 1993), pp 13-46. On the doctrinally fluid nature of the Henrician Reformation, and on the royal supremacy more generally, see J.J.

'unique jumble of theological notions', and if it is clear that Henry seemed 'most at home with faith at once Catholic and evangelical',[5] Henrician 'faith' was an idiosyncratic beast, indeed.

This chapter follows in these scholars' footsteps while exploring other, under appreciated facets of the civil-spiritual web of ideas that comprised the paradigms and shifting contours of Tudor political theology in England and Ireland. What follows is not an attempt to define the king's personal faith, or to trace the 'influence' of Lutheran or evangelical theology on the Reformation in Ireland, but an effort to assess the degree to which disparate spiritual-intellectual strands that covered a range of theological positions were correlated in the Henrician settlement, providing a discursive template within which the imperatives of Christian sovereignty and subject-hood were appealed to, appropriated, or rejected. The tracts and state formularies of faith used in the chapter, in formally expressing assumptions and ideas that likely would not have found explicit expression in Anglo-Irish correspondence or 'reform' literature, have much to tell us about how the theology and doctrines laid bare therein illuminate key aspects of the political theology of Christian order, power, and subject-hood at work in Ireland. Pursuing such a re-interpretation of the Henrician settlement allows us to locate Ireland in what Lucy E. C. Wooding suggests was the 'complex, changeable, and eclectic' nature of English Catholicism, what Alec Ryrie has vividly referred to as the 'kaleidoscope of reformist opinion' in England, or what Ethan Shagan has designated 'the amphibiousness and ambidexterity of new religious ideas',[6] this pluralistic terrain that idiosyncratically gathered the theological landscapes of early Reformation Europe.

As Shagan observes, however, some of these efforts have underestimated the momentous rupture the royal supremacy produced in the fabric of Christian order and

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Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1968), pp 241-354, 384-423; G.R. Elton, *Reform and Reformation: England, 1509-1558* (Cambridge, 1977), pp 174-200; Diarmaid MacCulloch, 'Henry VIII and the reform of the church', in Diarmaid MacCulloch (ed.), *The reign of Henry VIII: politics, policy, and piety* (Basingstoke, 1995), pp 159-80; Richard Rex, 'The crisis of obedience: God's Word and Henry's Reformation', in *HJ* 39, 4 (1996), pp 863-894; Rex, *Henry VIII and the English Reformation* (2nd edition, Basingstoke, 2006); Lucy E. C. Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism in Reformation England* (Oxford, 2000); Peter Marshall and Alec Ryrie (ed.), *The beginnings of English Protestantism* (Cambridge, 2002); Ryrie, *The gospel and Henry VIII*; Ethan H. Shagan, *Popular politics and the English Reformation* (Cambridge, 2003), chap. 1; George Bernard, *The King's Reformation: Henry VIII and the remaking of the English Church* (New Haven, 2005); Peter Marshall, *Religious identities in Henry VIII's England* (Aldershot, 2006); Marshall, *Heretics and believers: a history of the English Reformation* (New Haven and London, 2017), pp 123-302.
[5] J.J. Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1968), p. 417; L.B. Smith, *Henry VIII: the mask of royalty* (1971), p. 100; Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism*, p. 10.
[6] Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism*, p. 2; Ryrie, *The gospel and Henry VIII*, p. 10; Shagan, *Popular politics in the English Reformation*, p. 7.

power. In particular, he argues that historians' insistence on the slow modification of 'religious practise and belief', the widely shared humanist reformist irenicism and the search for a '*via media* between Rome and Geneva', or their privileging those for whom the royal supremacy was spiritually insignificant has in fact obscured *how* national acceptance of the royal supremacy, rather than being a 'by-product of innate English moderation', was instead the 'result of a *political process*' entangled in the new power the break with Rome produced within the realm. In addition, Shagan notes how the 'sheer volume of religiously motivated dissent against Henrician policies in these years belies the idea of a spiritually indifferent royal supremacy', so that the rejection of papal power and endorsement of the royal supremacy were tethered to an array of perspectives on kingship, relations between church and the civil realm, and the nature of spiritual and worldly jurisdiction and obedience.[7]

In re-evaluating the royal supremacy in relation to the trajectories and displacements of *imperium* as these intersected with Christian life and subject-hood in Ireland, I want to pursue the thread canvased by Shagan and emphasise a specific, highly consequential strand of political-theological argumentation in the 1530s for the terms of Christian sovereignty, order, and crown subject-hood and service in Ireland as these intersected with the dynamism and forms of Henrician imperial kingship. Although John Guy suggests that 'imperial' forms of kingship did not 'greatly disturb existing concepts of "feudal" kingship' in Ireland and Scotland,[8] the situation in Ireland was certainly more complex, and to fully understand it, we must re-evaluate the royal supremacy, the doctrinal and theological landscapes of Christendom it harnessed, and its impact on Ireland.

Key, here, were the Christian delineations of the spiritual and temporal realms, for their respective status and the boundary between them were anything but determined. As Conal Condren put it, 'To distinguish spiritual from temporal was an act of understanding, to separate them was a matter of policy, and churches were enmeshed in temporal as well as spiritual activity'.[9] The earthly and otherworldly dimensions and status of empire, kingdom, and church, as Ernst Kantorowicz has shown, had been in

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[7] Shagan, *Popular politics and the English Reformation*, chap. 1, esp. pp 29-32, 47, 50-5. On spiritual indifference, Raymond Gillespie, too, has noted that: 'Religious ideas arising from the consciousness of God's providence might express themselves anywhere on a spectrum ranging from piety to indifference'. Raymond Gillespie, *A devoted people: popular religion in early modern Ireland* (Oxford, 1997), p. 63.

[8] John Guy, *Tudor England* (Oxford, 1988), p. 373.

[9] Conal Condren, *Argument and authority in early modern England: the presupposition of oaths and offices* (Cambridge, 2006), p. 271.

profoundly flux from the Church Fathers onward. For Christology, canon law, liturgy, and Roman law and imperial thought comprised an ever-shifting conceptual toolbox around which ecclesiology and distinctly Christian understandings of kingship, monarchy, or empire – in short, forms of papal and royal rulership – crystalized and evolved.[10] The Tudor dispensation constituted a particular configuration of this web. The stakes, ultimately, were the uncertainly spiritual-temporal status of the Tudor polity, the Christian crown subject and life it inaugurated, and the terms of order, power, and governance that bound sovereign, polity, and subject-hood together.

Thus, if the royalist view of the royal supremacy was simple – that *imperium* lay in the crown alone, with parliament simply acknowledging, declaring, and enforcing a divinely ordained, legal reality that had long been usurped[11] – its roots were many, its legacy ambiguous. What follows demonstrates how it embraced or adapted older – as well as made possible new – accounts of what the proper relations between temporal and spiritual power, between human and divine law, and between king and parliament, laity and clergy, should be. After covering this terrain, the chapter weaves such threads together to illuminate their ultimate stakes for Tudor political theology: the coincidence of obedience and *imperium* in the royal supremacy, the doctrines it galvanised and re-oriented, and their shaping of 'true Christian crown subject-hood'. The Henrician theocratic dispensation thus appears in a novel doctrinal and political-theological light, one whose contours emerged in fullest relief in the English crown's Irish dominion.

1.1: The contested histories of World and Spirit

By the sixteenth century, princes had long claimed forms of temporal sovereignty that were much indebted to Roman law, and this 'Roman legacy of imperium' was central to the early modern dynamics of civil and ecclesiastical sovereignty. *Imperium* in classical Rome denoted an independent territorial unit and authority underpinned by a legitimating historical claim. The concept re-appeared in European legal and political discourse with the recovery of Roman law in the twelfth-century, but with slight alterations: no longer solely a basis for universal claims to sovereignty, it imagined, in

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[10] Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The king's two bodies: a study in medieval political theology* (Princeton, 1957); Kantorowicz, *Laudes regiae: a study in liturgical acclamations and mediaeval ruler worship* (Berkeley, 1958), p. 112. See also Francis Oakley, *Kingship: the politics of enchantment* (Oxford, 2006), pp 68-125. On the Roman law of corporations' links to ecclesiology and constitutional thought, see Brian Tierney, *Religion, law, and the growth of constitutional thought, 1150-1650* (Cambridge, 1982), pp 19-25, 57-8.
[11] Guy, *Tudor England*, pp 369-71.

the words of David Armitage, a 'formula of particular sovereignty' whereby 'the sovereign – whether collective, or individual – within each polity could claim the same independence of authority that had been enjoyed by the Roman emperors at the height of their power'.[12] This formulation, assuming the emperor was the source and sanction of law and justice, and influenced further by humanist and Erastian principles, was precisely such imperial pretentions that informed Henry VIII's self-image as glorious monarch who claimed to be 'emperor in his own realm'.[13] As we shall see in chapter three, 'imperial' power, or claims to *imperium*, in the Tudor dominions had a series of precedents, roots, and adjacent phenomena that found expression in England and Ireland in a series of loosely intersecting planes. For now, it suffices to note that one of the most consequential vectors for *imperium* – which, as Barbara Fuchs notes, denoted 'both internal control of a polity and external expansion beyond that polity's original boundaries'[14] – was the royal supremacy.

On 1 May 1536, the first session of the Irish reformation parliament began its proceedings. Bringing together the colonial lordship's spiritual and secular elites, the assembly was charged with passing a variant of the settlement adopted in England two years prior. In only four weeks – and encountering little resistance except from the spiritual proctors in the House of Commons[15] – six acts were ratified, and a complete, civil overhaul of ecclesiastical jurisdiction began. Most importantly, the Act of Supremacy confirmed Henry VIII and his heirs as the Supreme Head on Earth of the Church of Ireland, abrogated papal control of all ecclesiastical responsibilities and, from the crown's perspective, overcame the division between the *ecclesia inter Anglicos* and the *ecclesia inter Hibernia* with the all-Ireland *Hibernica ecclesia*.[16]

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[12] David Armitage, *The ideological origins of the British Empire* (Cambridge, 2000), pp 30-1. See also Anthony Pagden, *Lords of all the world: ideologies of empire in Spain, Britain, and France c. 1500-c. 1800* (New Haven, 1995), pp 11-28.

[13] Brendan Bradshaw, 'The Tudor Reformation and Revolution in Wales and Ireland: the Origins of the British Problem', in Brendan Bradshaw and John Morrill (eds), *The British Problem, c. 1534-1707: state Formation in the Atlantic Archipelago* (London, 1996), pp 62-4, quote on p. 63.

[14] Barbara Fuchs, 'Imperium studies: theorising early modern expansion', in Patricia Clare Ingham and Michelle R. Warren (eds), *Postcolonial moves: medieval through modern* (Basingstoke, 2003), p. 72.

[15] On the issue of clerical resistance, see Brendan Bradshaw, 'The opposition to the ecclesiastical legislation in the Irish Reformation parliament', in *HIS*, 16, 63 (1969), pp 285-303.

[16] Three other major acts – including one passed in 1537 during the second session – legislated the transfer of power 'from the papal curia to the royal administration': the Act of First Fruits (1536) required that newly appointed bishops pay their first year's salary to the Crown rather than to Rome; appeals to the roman curia were forbidden under the Act of Appeals (1536), and the Act of Faculties (1537) stipulated that 'ecclesiastical dispensations and licenses [be] issued to the clergy by the Primate of Ireland rather than the curia'. Other acts included the Act of Succession (1536), which legitimated the heirs of the king's wife, Anne Boleyn, and the Act of Slander (1536), which made criticisms of the king's

Such legislation dramatically altered the terms of Tudor order. Although the break with Rome produced a confusion of *imperium* in the relations between the church in England and Ireland, revealing the uncertain status of the church in its relation to a Tudor *imperium* split between two formally separate jurisdictions – Ireland may have been a separate dominion from England and, after 1541, its own kingdom, but invocations of the king's title over Ireland were not consistent regarding whether Henry VIII was the Supreme Head on earth under Christ of the *Church* or of the *Churches* of England and Ireland[17] – nevertheless, the act's 'imperial' thrust was clear, as was its Christian purpose. Enacted 'to the pleasure of Almighty God' 'to repress and extirp all errors, heresies, and other enormities and abuses heretofore used in the same' the Act of Supremacy proclaimed that just as the king was supreme head of the Church in England, as recognised by the clerical hierarchy and authorised by the English Parliament, 'so in like manner of wise, forasmuch as this land of Ireland is depending and belonging justly and rightly to the imperial crown of England for increase of virtue in Christ's religion and for the conservation of peace, unity, and tranquility of this land of Ireland'.[18]

Royal power thus comprised a power of enforcing temporal-spiritual order to ensure that the spiritual needs and ends of all Christians were met, that heresy and treason were identified and punished, and that God's law and providential ordering of the world were properly maintained and never infringed by undue papal and clerical usurpation. Contemporaries had long laboured both to clearly delineate the temporal from the spiritual all the way to their discrete interconnectedness and to ensure that their necessary complementarity was correctly understood as properly arranged poles of God's government of Christian civil and spiritual life.[19] These were the contested terms and parameters of God's law, of 'spirit' and 'world', that formed the juridically and spiritually plural spaces of life and thought that conflicting Christian forms of life

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reformation policies treasonable offences. Colm Lennon, *Sixteenth-century Ireland: the incomplete conquest* (2nd edition, Dublin, 2005), pp. 135-6.

[17] Compare for instance *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 323 and T.N.A., SP 60/11, f. 140Br.

[18] 28 Hen. VIII. c. 5. [Ire.]. Historians have often insisted that the regime first justified the king's new title in the parliamentary session of 1536 in 'political' rather than 'religious' terms by appealing to the lordship's elites' colonial loyalties, which effectively 'side-stepped the controversial theological underpinning of the Henrician supremacy'. Yet they only quote the first part of the passage, leaving out the crucial phrase about Christ's religion, God, and the extirpation of error. Henry A. Jefferies, *The Irish church and the Tudor reformations* (Dublin, 2010), p. 77; Bradshaw, 'The Opposition to the ecclesiastical legislation in the Irish Reformation parliament', p. 303.

[19] Clerical taxation in and of itself, for instance, could be construed as a temporal affair, but was spiritual in so far as it was necessary for the maintenance of a cleric's pastoral life. Daniel Eppley, *Defending royal supremacy and discerning God's will in Tudor England* (Aldershot, 2007), pp 116-7.

operated within.[20] Yet, if the spiritual was seen as an invisible, inner faculty, the operations of the Holy Spirit in every Christian, and if the temporal or civil was seen as encompassing the domain of the flesh, the ordering of worldly life, and all uses of coercive punishment, the proper delimitations between any of these were far from agreed upon. What, then, of all this in Ireland, and of Henry's imperial status, in the context of the supremacy's quasi-theocratic claims?

To answer this question, we must first make a short inroad into developments in England, developments that were crucial to the terms of spiritual and civil order and kingship in Henrician Ireland. Although according to the English humanist Thomas Starkey, Henry VIII now possessed the same authority over the church of England as the Emperor Justinian had in Constantinople, the royal supremacy in fact went far beyond Roman law, which, while granting the emperor far-reaching powers in ecclesiastical affairs, had acknowledged that the pope was the 'head of all the holy churches'.[21] The royal supremacy had deep roots in the early Tudor assault on ecclesiastical franchises and liberties, on actions against churchmen in royal courts, and the effervescence of charges of *praemunire* (the upholding of a foreign jurisdiction in English dominions) from the 1480s onward.[22] Such moves themselves galvanised a much older tension: the consolidation of canon law during and after the twelfth-century revival of Roman law, which brought the roles of priest and lawyer ever-more closely together as arbiters of church penitential and juridical orbits; in thirteenth-century treatises, for instance, jurists were referred to as 'priests of the law'.[23] It became an increasingly volatile issue from 1485, when the first calls for royal superiority over popes within England were voiced, disputes between common law and ecclesiastical courts intensified, beliefs in the superiority of common law and statute over canon law gained traction, and common lawyers more frequently voiced their frustration with the problem of dual authority fragmented along ecclesiastical and civil lines. At stake was the heated issue of delineating spiritual from temporal jurisdiction.[24] Years after Henry

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[20] On how contemporaries determined and interpreted what God's law, what it was expressed through, and to whom and under what circumstances it applied, see Jonathan Willis, *The Reformation of the Decalogue: religious identity and the Ten Commandments in England, c. 1485-1625* (Cambridge, 2017), chap. 1.

[21] Thomas Starkey, *An exhortation to the people, instructing them to Unity and Obedience* (1536), f. 83; Rex, *Henry VIII and the English Reformation*, p. 7.

[22] Fox and Guy, *Reassessing the Henrician age*, p. 174.

[23] Kantorowicz, *The king's two bodies*.

[24] John Guy, 'The Henrician age', in J.G.A. Pocock (ed.), *The varieties of British political thought, 1500-1800* (Cambridge, 1993), pp 24-5; Christopher Haigh, ed., *Revising the English Reformation* (Cambridge,

VIII first made grand declarations of his imperial power in 1515, the concurrently evolving common lawyer, anti-clerical position was given its most forceful and developed expression in the 1530s with the premiere common lawyer of the day, Christopher St. German, in whose hands king-in-parliament was sovereign in both civil and ecclesiastical affairs and canon law was subordinated to common law.[25]

The break with Rome, moreover, also rode the waves of the humanist assault on corruption in the English Church and attendant call for its reform from earlier in the century.[26] Humanists, following Erasmus, had certainly by then developed an ideal of godly kingship, one which could go down curiously imperial directions. Consider, for instance, Thomas Paynell's translation of Agapetus's, *The precepts teaching a prince or a noble estate his duty* (London, 1530?). As Lucy Wooding notes, the tract 'opened with an address which might have been written with Henry VIII in mind, reflecting as it did his longing for imperial status, his sense of representing God to his subjects, and the idea of kingship as a sacred responsibility'. After all, God, too, was the head of an empire. As Paynell wrote: 'For why God in likeness of his celestial empire, hath delivered to the / the sceptre and governance of this world, to instruct and teach thy subjects to keep justice, and to punish them, which persuade the contrary, following and obeying his laws and his precepts, and ordering thy subjects as right and equity requireth'.[27] Meanwhile, and just after Henry first expressed his conscientious misgivings about his marriage to Catherine of Aragon, evangelical ammunition became involved in the mix once William Tyndale's *Obedience of a Christian man* (Antwerp, 1528) came under the English king's attention. Although their theologies diverged, and although Tyndale condemned the royal divorce, that Anne Boleyn introduced Henry to his writings proved fateful, for his wedding of *imperium* and anti-papalist arguments in biblical terms were precisely what the Tudor king would later use to abrogate papal power within his dominions.

1987), pp 56-74, 210-1; Christopher W. Brooks, *Law, politics, and society in early modern England* (Cambridge, 2008), pp 97-8, 123, chapters 2-6 more generally.

[25] Guy, 'The Henrician age', pp 25-6; Guy, *Tudor England*, pp 121-3; MacCulloch, 'Henry VIII and the reform of the church', pp 264-6; T.F. Mayer, 'Tournai and tyranny: imperial kingship and critical humanism', in *HJ* 34, 2 (1991), pp 263-8.

[26] Guy, *Tudor England*, p. 118. On Christian reform and humanism in Henrician England, see also Marshall, *Heretics and believers*, pp. 29-36; Margo Todd, *Christian humanism and the puritan social order* (Cambridge, 1987), pp 34-43; Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism*, pp 8-9, chap. 1.

[27] Agrepatus, *The precepts teaching a prince or a noble estate his duty*, trans., Thomas Paynell, (London, 1529) sig., ; Wooding, *Rethinking English Catholicism*, pp 44-7, quote on p. 46.

Yet the roots went deeper still. In the fifteenth century, modifications in ecclesiastical governance coincided with resignifications of royal power as ecclesiastical forms of prerogative power came to buttress royal legitimacy and the exercise of justice in the king's name.[28] Related, here, was the shift away from, as Shannon McSheffrey put it, 'appeals to a universal church and towards the English kings as font of Christian justice'. Consider the case of sanctuary, illustrative as it is of the parallels of such developments in England and Ireland. The privilege of sanctuary became viewed 'somewhat less' in terms of 'the immunity and tuition of holy church' 'and somewhat more' as 'the king's privilege', and as something which, in triangulating sacrality, jurisdiction, and justice, augmented and expressed rather than impeded royal power.[29] The shift eventually coincided with the growing proclivity to try churchmen on charges of *praemunire* as well as with the growing tendency to assert the primacy of common over canon law.

The coincidence of these processes engendered a redefinition of royal justice that culminated in a rejection of sanctuary as a privilege contrary to 'our laws', as Henry VIII would have it. If sanctuary petered off in the 1540s in England, analogous assaults on the privilege were undertaken in Ireland as well in the context of both new claims of imperial kingship and of the post-Kildare rebellion crackdown. Henry VIII's ordinances for Galway (28 April 1536) is a case in point. If not a haven for sanctuary, Galway – a site of treasonous activity involving religious establishments just a few years later – was worthwhile enough as a sanctuary site to catch the regime's attention; that it was an English colonial town at the periphery of the colony and whose ports and havens were often the site of suspicious or outright anti-Tudor intrigue was surely significant.[30] In his ordinances, Henry attacked the friars who, in their religious house, 'take upon them to have privilege, as a sanctuary for all such malefactors, and will not suffer any of them to be attached, or to be justified by our laws'. Henry commanded the aldermen of Galway to apprehend all such 'malefactors' claiming sanctuary 'as well in any house of the friars, or other religion, as in other profane places' and to punish them according to English law.[31]

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[28] Shannon McSheffrey, *Seeking sanctuary: crime, mercy, and politics in English courts, 1400-1550* (Oxford, 2017), p. 62; Gwilym Dodd, 'Reason, conscience and equity: Bishops as the king's judges in later medieval England', in *History* (2014), pp 213-40.
[29] McSheffrey, *Seeking sanctuary*, pp 16, 57.
[30] On traitorous activity in Galway and the security threat it posed as a port town, see chapters 7-8.
[31] L.P.L., Carew MS 611, f. 43. (*SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 310).

All the same, events took a different turn in Ireland than in England. First, no humanist, evangelical, or common law-inspired assault on canon law took place. To the contrary, canon law occupied a pivotal position in the clerical colonial *mentalité* as a hefty civilizational wedge with which the Pale clerical establishment distinguished itself from the 'uncivil' and improperly Christian 'mere Irish'.[32] In addition, if bishops in both England and Ireland were expected to assist the crown in its administrative, governmental, and diplomatic affairs – with, say, Richard Kite, archbishop of Armagh serving as a diplomat in Spain from 1515-20, or the archbishops of Armagh and Dublin often serving as councillors in Dublin Castle – spiritual men were rarely if at all appointed as lord chancellors in England after Wolsey's fall in 1529, whereas the practise in Ireland continued: archbishop of Armagh and Primate of Ireland, George Dowdall, for instance, was appointed Lord Chancellor as late as 1546, an office he held until his death in 1558. The vicegerential and border conditions of Ireland brought crown governance there closer to what it was in Wales, Calais, and the North of England,[33] meaning that, while the ecclesiastical and civil polities in England and 'English' Ireland were two sides of the same governmental coin, with government functioning and 'reform' undertaken as a joint civil-ecclesiastical effort, how this played out in both areas differed. Examples, indeed, abound of clerics of different ranks serving as mediators between and counsellors for Irish, English-Irish, and English lords, captains, and officers, or of joining lord deputies and others on hostings and military campaigns against the Irish, or being considered desired heads for the proposed joint spiritual-civil provincial councils that would help restore order in the land, or of being called upon to contribute to the marches or to settle competing territorial claims.[34] Lord Deputy Anthony St Leger's 'reform' programme in the 1540s, moreover – a strategy facilitated by a changing religious climate in England – sought the 'conservative' Pale clerical establishment's accommodation of Henry's new title to their 'reformist' and civilizational ethos, which led to the senior clergy's rather fragile integration into the web of social and economic relationships he created, and, ultimately, their incorporation

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[32] Murray, *Enforcing the English Reformation in Ireland*, pp 37-8, 48-81.

[33] For a fuller discussion of this important question, see chapter 5.

[34] See for instance *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 34; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 69; SP *Henry VIII*, iii, p. 131; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 59; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 61; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 115; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 208; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, pp 116-8; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 224; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 241. For O'Rourke and O'Reilly's competing territorial claims, see Christopher Maginn, '"Surrender and regrant" in the historiography of sixteenth-century Ireland', in *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 38, 4 (2007), p. 968.

into the 'king's party'.[35] If such integration was crucial to providing an outlet for royal supremacy *imperium* in Ireland, so were the structures of delegated power that canvassed both England and Ireland. Cromwell's assumption of vicegerential powers, indeed, was a significant expression of the new theocratic Tudor polity's intervention – and therefore channel for spiritual-civil *imperium* – in Ireland, as was the royal mission of 1537-8.[36] 'Reform' in Ireland, then, had by the late 1530s become thoroughly entwined in the theocratic dynamics of the Henrician Reformation, and it was always both a matter of king and God, as the various initiatives to enforce the Reformation and good order across the island make clear (see chapter five in particular). All these highlight the complementarity of ecclesiastical and civil government as both mutually and symbiotically enforcing faces of God's government of the world, albeit as fractious and overlapping vectors of monarchical and divine sovereignties.

Again, to better grasp the diverse spiritual, moral, and civil strands of divine and temporal power at work in this configuration, we must consider the Romano-Christian forms of univeralism that underpinned Tudor monarchy as a variant on the 'model of Christ the *Rex et Sacerdos*' common to both kingly and papal rule and which had important consequences for how temporal and spiritual rulership were understood in England and Ireland. In Ernst Kantorowicz words, the 'divine right of kings and the imperial right of pontiffs are the diverse manifestations of the same idea', the 'model of Christ the *Rex et Sacerdos* which both king and bishop emulated'. Just like Christ himself, the 'Prince not only donned the episcopal shoes, but became — like the bishops' celestial prototype — both the head of a mystical body and its groom'.[37] As the imperialization of Christian temporal power from Eusebius onwards – when the terms of Christian temporal and imperial power as emblems of Christ, the eternal *Logos*, were theorised in the wake of Emperor Constantine's conversion to Christianity – found its counterpart in the twelfth- and thirteenth-century imperialization of papal power. Thus, from the eleventh-century papal reform movements, and drawing on traditions of clerical independence and aspirations for hegemony, the temporal *regnum* came to be subordinated to the absolute superiority of the spiritual over the temporal.[38] It was an

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[35] Murray, *Enforcing the English Reformation in Ireland*, pp 160-203, esp. 180, 187.
[36] See chapter 8 and 9 for a fuller discussion of these.
[37] Kantorowicz, *Laudes regiae*, p. 112; Kantorowicz, 'Mysteries of state: An absolutist concept and its late medieval origin', *Harvard Theological Review* (1954), p. 82.
[38] Kantorowicz, *Laudes regiae*; Oakley, *Kingship*, pp 109-110.

arrangement that reached its apogee in Thomist governmental thought,[39] and especially in the pontificate of Boniface VIII, whose bull *Unam sanctam* (1302) stated, 'We declare, we affirm, we define and pronounce that for every human creature it is absolutely necessary for salvation to be subject to the Roman pontiff'.[40] This, as we shall see, was precisely the salvific terms of crown subject-hood and kingly imperial sovereignty that Henrician theocracy inaugurated in Ireland.

The interchangeability of the two figureheads of Romano-Christian universalist *imperium* was manifest in the controversies spurred in England and beyond by the break with Rome. The Tudor dispensation harnessed the commonplace designation that clerical offices had nothing to do with dominion, rule, and power, but were spiritual offices of doctrinal instruction, persuasion, and admonishment pertaining only to souls and conscience. The move effectively denied any administration of lordship, of coercive authority, to the Church and its hierarchy, defining these as worldly affairs inimical to the domain of Spirit, or the Gospel – a move, indeed, that was by the mid-1530s often leveraged by evangelicals and reformers in England and across the Continent against the Holy See.[41] Yet it also opened the Tudors to the same charge. For Martin Luther and Tyndale as much as for 'conservatives' John Fisher, bishop of Rochester, and Thomas More – although for wildly different reasons – the royal usurpation of the spiritual charge over Christian souls was a travesty. As Luther pithily put it, 'Squire Harry just wants to be God'.[42] If, for Starkey, at issue was the fact that papal usurpation effectively made it possible for popes alone to be 'almost able to make an emperor',[43] for others within England, Ireland, and Europe, the problem was that the English king had now effectively become pope: the claim, indeed, was not uncommon in England or abroad, including in Ireland, where, for instance, William Walshe, a servant of James of Desmond, 'pretended' earl, reportedly made reference during a conversation at the earl's table in 1538 to 'our new Pope in England', to which a certain

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[39] St. Thomas Aquinas allowed for the free exercise of royal sovereignty within the princely *regnum*, claimed for the papacy, in the final instance, an overarching spiritual power in civil affairs if the Christian good and the tenets of the faith were compromised or violated. See Steven Ozment, *The age of reform, 1250-1550: an intellectual and religious history of late medieval and reformation Europe* (New Haven and London, 1980), pp

[40] Cited in Guy, 'The Henrician age', p. 30.

[41] See, for instance, *Obedience in church and state*, pp 139, 151, 153, 155; Henry Walter (ed.), *Doctrinal treatises and introductions to different portions of the Holy Scriptures* (2 vols., Cambridge, 1848), vol. i, pp 240, 334; *LW 45*; Starkey, *An exhortation to the people*, ff 49-50, 52-3.

[42] John Schofield, *Philip Melanchthon and the English Reformation* (Ashgate, 2006), p. 145.

[43] Starkey, *Exhortation unto the people*, f. 63

merchant present responded 'I know no new pope there, neither no pope, but the king'.[44]

Indeed, efforts to reclaim an English imperial past that did away with papal 'tyranny' and 'usurpation' were central to assertions of monarchical sovereignty in both England and Ireland – an explicit rejection of papal claims of jurisdiction over Christian islands and to grant dominions to civil powers.[45] Not only was an Irish, 'British', and Eurasian culture of prophecy paramount here, as we shall see in chapter eight, but the 'King's Greater Matter' engendered a flurry of initiatives that saw the Tudors reach out to scholars in England and the Continent to furnish historical evidence that proved that as imperial sovereigns, English kings had throughout history had no earthly superiors.[46] The campaign culminated in the Act in Restraints of Appeal in 1533, which formally declared England an empire subject to no other earthly authority (although it still recognised the pope's authority in matters of heresy).[47] In Ireland, the situation was

[44] *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 115. The German reformer, Martin Buber, for instance, also accused bishop Stephen Gardiner, and other proponents of the royal supremacy of establishing a Caesaro-papalist dispensation in England. It was a devil's ruse, he said, to replace one pope with another. Pierre Janelle, ed., *Obedience in church and state: three political tracts by Stephen Gardiner* (Cambridge, 1930), p. xli. For claims that Henry set himself up as pope in his own realm coming from the kingdom of Spain, see Marshall, *Religious identities in Henry VIII's England*, p. 117.

[45] On Cromwell's efforts in England to rehabilitate the reviled King John into a pioneering precursor to the Henry VIII's struggles against the 'tyrannies of Rome' and to denounce as a traitor the revered St. Thomas Beckett, who was martyred in the twelfth century in the investiture battle between king and pope, see Carole Levin, 'A good prince: King John and early Tudor propaganda', in *Sixteenth Century Journal*, xi, 4 (1980), pp 23-32; Brooks, *Law, politics, and society in early modern England*, p. 48. See also chapter 7 below, section 7.5.

[46] To name but a few points of tension, this included whether or not princes lawfully held dominion over church property and finances; whether or not the clergy or the entire community of the faithful constituted the church as that which held sole authority to interpret scripture and, if so, what the role of parliament or general councils were therein; whether or not absolution and pardons were a prerogative of the pope or the bishops alone; whether or not holy days could be determined by civil authorities; or be it by whom and by what means heretics could be punished or restored to the Christian community, or body of Christ. See Eppley, *Defending royal supremacy*, especially chapter 3. For a discussion of the Tudor and continental scholars enlisted in the enterprise, see Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer: a life* (London, 2018), pp.

[47] 24 Henry VIII c. 12 [Eng.]. The most concerted campaign of historical and theological excavation was that pursued for the *Collectanea satis copiosa*, composed in 1530-31, the authors of which sought to establish the three basic principles of the novel theory of English regal power they were devising: divinely ordained secular *imperium*, spiritual supremacy, and the right of the English Church to provincial self-determination. Fox and Guy, *Reassessing the Henrician age*, pp 158-9; Guy, 'The Henrician age', p. 34; Rex, *Henry VIII and the English Reformation*, p. 9. 'Propaganda' works included the Latin and English editions of the thirteenth-century French tract, *Disputations between a clerk and a knight*, written by French civil lawyers advancing an argument for 'imperial kingship' that denied papal plenitude in support of Philip the Fair against Pope Boniface VIII; *A Glass of Truth* (1532); and *Articles devised by the whole consent of the King's Most Honourable Council* (1533). Such thinking also owed much to the re-appropriation of the vehemently anti-papal arguments advanced in Marsilius of Padua's *Defensor pacis* (1324). Later in 1532, the royalist camp expressed much the same when they took a leaf out of the canonists' page and reformulated Bracton's thirteenth-century dictum in his *On the laws and customs of England*: that the king was 'under God and the law, because the law makes the king' became the king was 'under God but not the law, because the king makes the law'. The lawyers, however, the

slightly different. The famous but apocryphal *Bull Laudabiliter* of 1155 had granted

Ireland as a lordship to the English crown in order that it conquer the land and re-

integrate it within the folds of Christian 'civility'. By the sixteenth century, however,

the bull had become a cornerstone of the Pale ecclesiastical sense of self and difference

from the Irish, bestowing upon them a sense of missionary and historical purpose –

although it was an ethos that lent itself well to the royal supremacy, which gave it a

renewed impetus.[48] All the same, it proved divisive. During the rebellion of 1534-5,

Thomas FitzGerald, Lord of Offaly, sent men to the pope with documents to prove that

the English had historically held Ireland by papal pleasure and grant.[49] According to

some, moreover, the pope was nothing short of a royal figure for the Irish. In late 1540

– and reiterating the earlier counsel of John Alen, Master of the Rolls, and of Edward

Staples, bishop of Meath, from 1537 and 1538, respectively – the Dublin administration

proposed that the most effective way of getting the Irish to obey the king would be if he

were declared king of Ireland, for the Irish had long held 'the foolish opinion' that the

pope, rather, should be king.[50]

The debates the redistribution of monastic property in the late 1530s generated

in the Irish Parliament are revealing, too, in this regard. Speaking in the Commons in

October 1536, chief justice of the King's Bench in Ireland, Patrick Barnewall declared

that 'he would not grant that the King, as Head of the Church, had so large power as the

Bishop of Rome; and that the King's jurisdiction therein was but a spiritual power, to

reform or amend the enormities and defaults in religious houses, but not execute man's

laws, nor to dissolve abbeys, or to alterate the foundation of them to any temporal

use'.[51] The argument was significant not least for representing a local Irish and early-

Reformation variant of a much older theological-juridical doctrine, that *dominium* was

not grounded in grace or spiritual power and jurisdiction; it also marked a local iteration

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very same who first expressed visions of English unitary sovereignty that abrogated papal supremacy in the realm, relied on common law precedent and Fortescue's notion of *dominium politicum et regale*, to argue that the royal prerogative itself was accounted for in the common law: the civil law maxim that placed the king above the law, in other words, had no place in English law. Guy, 'The Henrician age', pp 27-8.

[48] Murray, *Enforcing the English Reformation in Ireland*, pp 36-7, 80; Ciaran Brady and James Murray, 'Sir Henry Sidney and the Reformation in Ireland', in Elizabeth Morann (ed.), *Enforcing Reformation in Ireland and Scotland, 1550-1700* (Aldershot, 2014), pp 14-39. On the bulls importance in Elizabethan Ireland, see Colm Lennon, *An Irish prisoner of conscience of the Tudor era: Archbishop Richard Creagh of Armagh, 1523-86* (Dublin, 2000).

[49] *L&P*, no. 746; *Cal. of Carew MSS*, no. 84.

[50] *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 278. For Alen and Staples' recommendation, see *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 480; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 30.

[51] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 372.

of the wider position assumed by the papal bulls of 1493 and 1497 that granted swathes of the 'New World' and Atlantic and Pacific waters to Iberian powers as their sole zone of influence – an increasingly contested position, indeed, in the emergently global world of imperial rivalry.[52] For Barnewall, the church was not wholly subsumed within the orbit of Tudor sovereignty, split as it was between its spiritualities and its temporalities. Although he later conceded to the king's wishes,[53] the argument he first pronounced was nothing short of a denial of the integrated spiritual and civil imperial sovereignty claimed by the royal supremacy.

If the full 'recovery' of English sovereignty over England occurred in 1534, in Ireland, it was only in 1541, when with the Act of Kingly Title the lordship was declared a kingdom and Henry its king, that English *imperium* found – in theory, anyway – untrammelled constitutional expression. Yet it also evinced some degree of continuity – or more precisely, it depended upon a strategic re-imagining of the past. A distinctly polemical royal title in England – *fidei defensor*, bestowed upon Herny VIII by Pope Leo X in 1521 in the wake of the English king's treatise against Luther – actually had an analogue in Ireland, where the concept of protector was less polemical than it was colonial, and the two were analogously re-adapted to new circumstances. Thus, resembling the same logic expressed by Gardiner in 1535, whereby the role of 'defender of the faith' was conflated with being 'chief' and having supremacy over the church, with the former always having been *de facto* the latter and with the royal supremacy, therefore, realising *de jure* a practical arrangement that had always existed, the Irish council wrote: 'forasmuch as Your Majesty had always been the only protector and defender, under God of this realm', the Dublin administration in 1541 wrote, 'it was most meet that Your Majesty, and your heirs, should from thence forth be named and called King of the same'.[54] And even then, the king was not satisfied. He took issue with the Act because the wording implied his new royal title over Ireland – which he alleged always to have possessed by inheritance and right of conquest – was bestowed by authority of parliament: a clear challenge, in other words, to his insistence that

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[52] Pagden, *Lords of all the world*; Elizabeth Mencke, 'Empire and state', in David Armitage and Michael Braddick (ed.), *The British Atlantic World, 1500-1800* (Cambridge, 2002). On key medieval and sixteenth-century thinkers on relationship between *dominium*, nature, and grace, see Annabel S. Brett, *Liberty, right, and nature: individual rights in later scholastic thought* (Cambridge, 1997).

[53] Jefferies, arguing against Bradshaw's earlier characterisation, has convincingly shown that Patrick Barnewall was not simply motivated 'by self interest' in his resistance to the dissolution. Jefferies, *The Irish church and the Tudor reformations*, pp 75-6; Brendan Bradshaw, *The dissolution of the religious orders in Ireland under Henry VIII* (London, 1974), pp 50-1.

[54] *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 304; *Obedience in church and state*, pp 119, 121.

imperium lay in the crown alone. A new act the following year, the Crown Act of Ireland, promptly reworded the formulation.[55]

1.2: *Imperium* and the Henrician doctrine of obedience: a fount for a new Tudor Christian polity and form of life

From 1530 onward, Henry VIII came to see his *imperium* as divinely ordained and himself as fulfilling the role of the Old Testament monarch.[56] As the royal supremacy and the role to which he was convinced God called him remained the driving force of his policy over the final decade of his reign, in effect fashioning, in the words of Alec Ryrie, 'a form of Christianity defined by kingship: God's kingship and Henry's own', his own self-understanding of the 'supreme spiritual responsibility' inherent in Christian kingship – namely, of being a purveyor of a Christian truth long obscured by the darkness of papal usurpation and error – matured and he (along with others) came to see his own liberation from his prior blindness as but the birth-pangs of a more general spiritual illumination.[57]

The consequences for the statuses of the 'spiritual' and the 'civil' were profound. For the royal supremacy internally divided the 'spiritual' in numerous ways. First, the Act of supremacy placed the *potestas ordinis* of the clergy (the power to preach and teach, administer the sacraments, absolve, and excommunicate) beyond the crown's reach.[58] If we consider this against the fact that Henry claimed for himself the power to define doctrine (see below), the move in effect divided the 'spiritual' between doctrine and priestly sacramental powers. Second, the 'Word of God' became synonymous with the more general epithet of 'divine law' with which it had hitherto been distinguished. As such, it was no longer exclusively associated with preaching.[59] Third, it also muddled the distinction between the 'spiritual sword' and the 'temporal sword'. The question of who could punish heretics and by what means, or with what power, is especially illuminating in this regard. Prior to the Fourth Lateran Council of

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[55] *SP Henry VIII*, i, p. 659.

[56] Rex, *Henry VIII and the English Reformation*, pp. 10; Felicity Heal, *The Reformation in Britain and Ireland* (Cambridge, 2003), pp. 133-40; Guy, 'The Henrician age', p. 26; Ryrie, *The gospel and Henry VIII*, p. 68.

[57] Alec Ryrie, 'Divine kingship and royal theology in Henry VIII's Reformation', in *Reformation*, 7 (2002), pp 49-77, quote on p. 77; Rex, 'The religion of Henry VIII'.

[58] Eppley, *Defending royal supremacy*, p. 65.

[59] Rex, 'The crisis of obedience', p. 890.

1215, not all bishops agreed that heretics should be handed over to the civil authorities for punishment; doing so, they claimed, would make them participants in the shedding of blood – a veritable violation of spiritual power. The problem was formally resolved in 1215 by conciliar decree which stipulated that secular office-holders, with the guidance of the church, should take an oath to eliminate heresy within their jurisdiction.[60] This effectively created the condition of possibility for the incorporation of a coercive element within the orbit of the 'spiritual' – the hallmark, as it were, of Henrician spiritual-civil *imperium*, rule, and kingship, and, crucially, of 'reform' in Ireland.

All such developments, however, hinged on the most fateful innovation of Henrician political theology: a new doctrine of obedience. As the 'King's Great Matter' progressed and England found itself increasingly isolated in Europe, obedience as a barometer of national unity became the necessary safeguard and condition to protect against the dual threat of foreign invasion and papally-sanctioned domestic unrest that threatened 'England's new-found imperial status'.[61] Yet while obedience was a fount for paradox, holding together a panoply of occasionally complementary, other times radically opposing, doctrines and views, it was nevertheless with the royal supremacy that *imperium* found a new resting place, where obedience came to coincide without remainder with a now God-like *imperium*. If several years after Henry VIII died and his young son ascended the throne, Thomas Cranmer would accuse Stephen Gardiner of having made 'a chain of gold and copper together, confounding and mixing together corporeal and spiritual, heavenly and earthly things',[62] and if the charge, came from a theological rival at a time when the fluidity of the Henrician years increasingly gave way to more starkly delineated 'Protestant' and 'Catholic' positions, Cranmer's point nevertheless rings true and inadvertently gets at the heart of the abiding tension the royal supremacy put into play: the uncertainly 'spiritual' and 'civil' status of the civil-ecclesiastical polity, domains, and jurisdictions it erected, all of which found a common

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[60] R. I. Moore, *The formation of a persecuting society: authority and deviance in Western Europe, 950-1250* (2nd edition, Blackwell, 2007).

[61] Heal, *The Reformation in Britain and Ireland*, pp 135-37, quote on p. 135. Rex, *Henry VIII and the English Reformation*, p. 13; Eppley, *Defending royal supremacy*, pp 14-15; William Palmer, *The problem of Ireland in Tudor foreign policy, 1485-1603* (Woodbridge, 1994), chap. 3, pp 71-72.

[62] Catharine Davies, *A religion of the Word: the defence of the reformation in the reign of Edward VI* (Manchester and New York, 2002), p. 38.

root in obedience, or what Richard Rex has called the primary doctrine of Henrician 'religion'.[63]

It was Gardiner's use of the Pauline notion of the 'obedience of the faith' as expounded in his *De vera obedientia* (1535) was decisive. The bishop of Winchester ingeniously deployed Luther's monastic doctrine of obedience against his doctrine of *sola fide*, reduced Christian liberty to freedom from papal power, conflated obedience with faith, and equivocated on the obedience owed to king and that owed to God, despite his categorical insistence that commands contravening God's law must not be obeyed.[64] Crucial here was the Lutheran expansion of the 'medieval' notion of obedience, which while including the biblically-sanctioned obligation to obey superiors, was most fully articulated in its sacrificial and salvific dimensions in monastic vows of obedience and Rules. Gardiner's innovation entailed combining the Lutheran doctrine of obedience with its monastic counterpart so that under Gardiner's hand, the old monastic notion of obedience to a rule and abbot as an act of charity came to define the duty of obedience a subject owed to their monarch. Obedience, in other words, was identified with the word of God, and the word of God with the obedience to the king, so that obedience to the king itself became a 'good work' necessary for salvation.[65]

Between 1535 and 1543, other doctrines and sacraments, however, entered the fray. Scholars of the Henrician Reformation have underappreciated the extent to which not only the often-commented upon centrality of *adiaphora* (or things inessential to salvation) in the post-supremacy religious settlement but also the sacramental theologies of penance and baptism as well as nascent covenantal theology impinged in fundamental ways on the terms of Tudor rulership and Christian subject-hood in the 1530s and beyond. The royal supremacy not only defined the spiritual-civil polity through its conflation of 'faith' with 'obedience' to the crown. For through it and the doctrine of obedience it operationalized, familiar tenets of Christian theology acquired a new significance and proximity to *imperium*, one which, while precipitating the conflation of 'church' and 'realm' in a newfangled spiritual-civil imperative of unity, again highlights the capaciousness of Henrician political theology in its simultaneous convergence with and divergence from major tenets of 'Catholic' and emergently 'Protestant' theologies. The Henrician doctrine of obedience, in other words,

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[63] Rex, 'The crisis of obedience', pp 863-894; Rex, *Henry VIII and the English Reformation*, pp 17-8.
[64] Rex, 'The crisis of obedience', pp 886-7.
[65] Rex, 'The crisis of obedience', pp 80-1, 85-6.

precipitated a seismic change to the very substance of power, whereby, just as the sacramental domain remained formally beyond the crown's jurisdictional reach, princely governance and power themselves acquired sacramental dimensions. The political-theological formation of Christian rulership and subject-hood – namely, the salvific import of post-Reformation Henrician kingship as a quasi-sacramental fount of order, power, and crown subject-hood – thus created as well as the forms it took in Ireland will be investigated in detail in chapter five, as will the penitential dimensions of order and power. The current task, by focusing on the theologies of baptism, covenant, and *adiaphora*, is to understand in general outline the processes, dynamics, and political-theological forms at play, and for this we must examine how the amorphous rhetorical and theological knots within which Tudor state and subject-hood were enacted entangled more than 'obedience' and 'faith'.

That this was so is unsurprising. Important continuities ran through the regime's formularies of faith (see below), regardless of any decisive differences; the so-called 'conservative' reaction after the Six Articles that ostensibly defined the regime's religious disposition for the remainder of Henry VIII's reign, after all, was not as clear-cut a 'traditional' Catholic settlement as has been conventionally assumed.[66] As the regime forged diplomatic links with the League of Schmalkalden – an association of Lutheran Germans – in the wake of the break with Rome, Henry's genuine theological concerns and desires to consult with the League for the doctrinal orientation of his Church, and the ensuing dialogue on doctrine, left their mark on the Reformation settlement . The 'Ten Articles' of 1536, the first Henrician formulary of faith, was ambiguous in its simultaneous couching of Catholic dogma in Lutheran language and departure from said dogma in reservedly evangelical directions. Although there is some debate as to whether the Ten Articles were directly influenced by the Wittenberg Articles or the conversations held between the English emissaries and the German Lutherans in 1535-6 in the first bout of talks between England and the Schmalkalden League, historians recognise important affinities between the English formulary and such works as not only the Wittenberg Articles but also the Augsburg Confession of 1530 and Philipp Melanchthon's *Loci Communi* of 1535, even if they disagree over their significance.[67] Similarly, *The institution of a Christian man* (or *Bishop's Book*, as

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[66] Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism*, pp 63-5; Ryrie, *The gospel and Henry VIII*, chapter 1.
[67] Marshall, *Heretics and believers*, pp 238-40; McEntegart, *Henry VIII, the League of Schmalkalden, and the English Reformation*, pp 58-61; Bernard, *The king's reformation*, pp 282-92; Rex, *Henry VIII*

it came to be known) of 1537, composed as it was by a committee at Cromwell's behest in his capacity as vicegerent in spiritual matters, was doctrinally confused; although it did enjoy some degree of authority, its idiosyncratic mix of Lutheran and 'orthodox' language and formulations satisfied very few, and most importantly, it never received Henry VIII's approval. It was eventually re-written and published in 1543 as *A necessary doctrine and erudtion for any Christian man* (formally known as the *King's Book*).[68]

Aside from a few key theological tracts, the discussion from here onwards will focus primarily on the Henrician formularies of faith in England: although the Articles of 1536 were never widely used, and if the *Bishop's Book*'s use remained relatively stunted – both the Articles and it did, however, seem to form the basis of Archbishop of Dublin, George Browne's formulation of religious-ecclesiastical 'reformist' policy in Ireland, the latter, along with Cromwell's Injunctions to clergy, being published by him in several towns throughout the lordship, and informing the iconoclastic campaigns in England and Ireland in 1538-9 – I want, here, to suggest other, hitherto underappreciated, shared horizons between Henrician, 'orthodox', and 'evangelical' 'religion' that may shed new light on the Reformation settlement in England and particularly Ireland.[69]

Consider, then, the theologies at play. As Rex noted with regards Henrician obedience, there is something of the structure of *sola fide* in the political-theological arrangement promulgated by the royal supremacy. According to Luther, the Englishmen Tyndale, John Frith, Robert Barnes, Thomas Cranmer, and other proponents of justification by faith alone, good works played no role in salvation or justification as such, but were expressions of love as the certain sign that one had been terrified by the Law unto perpetual repentance and, only thence, forgiven through faith in Christ and thus justified and saved. If as in Catholic doctrine, good works contributed to salvation rather than being its sign, then good works, as mere externalities or the Law, became worldly – or external – encroachments upon the domain of the purely spiritual, which was internal. The Sermon on the Mount, then, was not a new law nor was Christ a new Lawgiver. Only through faith unencumbered by the Law, only through faith as made

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and the English Reformation, pp 145-8; Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism*, p. 64; Schofield, *Philip Melanchthon and the English Reformation*, pp 68-82; MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer*, pp 161-6. McEntegart in particular has an extensive list of the pertinent historiography.

[68] Ryrie, *The gospel of Henry VIII*, p. 45.

[69] On the relevance of the *Bishop's Book* in Ireland, see chapter 5, sections 5.1 and 5.6.

possible by the grace-prompted recognition that the Law contributes nothing to salvation other than teach Christians of their sole reliance upon God through faith in Christ, can one be truly Christian and be saved.[70] The law, then, did not cause or ensure salvation, but was its precondition under specific circumstances; conversely, faith fulfilled the Law, because a Christian living a repentant life in faith 'delights in the laws of God', as Luther put it.[71] Similarly, submitting to the royal supremacy was not the condition of one's salvation, for it was a reflection of already having accepted the true doctrine of Christ which *required* submission to the royal supremacy. Yet, here, Gardiner's innovation comes through: swearing to or accepting the royal supremacy, much like recognizing one was saved through faith in Christ alone, marked ambivalently both the consequence and condition for one's status as a true Christian crown subject – and it did so as a 'good work'.[72]

It was not first time an economy of good works could serve as a model of princely government and precedents make clear the rupture caused by the royal supremacy. The Dublin clerk James Yonge's *Governance of Princes* (1422), a translation of the widely-circulated, pseudo-Aristotelian *Secreta Secretorum* adapted as an advice-manual to his patron, the 'White Earl' of Ormond, for instance, laid out the commonplace assertion that the prince 'must be subject and obedient to the stableness of good laws, and above all things, to God's law, not in false hypocrisy in word or in deed, but by showing and openly doing good works, so that all folks may perceive that he fears God and that he is subject to His might'.[73] Yet with the royal supremacy, the spiritual-civil dispensation at hand was of an entirely different order. For Yonge, the honest performance of good works was an imperative of rule that demonstrated the ruler's worthiness to his subjects, who would consequently not fall into disorder.[74] Although royalist emphases on obedience to the king that ran against contractarian understandings of government as a cooperation between the ruler and the governed

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[70] Trueman, *Luther's legacy*, pp 83-120, 123-7, 158-68; Whiting, *Luther in English.*

[71] Whiting, *Luther in English*, p. 199.

[72] Indeed, at the root of the ambiguity was not only the dexterous deployment of distinct theological languages, but Henry VIII's failure to appreciate the distinction between good works that were necessary as a *consequence* of justification and good works that were necessary as a *condition* of justification. McEntegart, *Henry VIII, the League of Schmalkalden, and the English Reformation*, esp. p. 53; Schofield, *Melanchthon and the English Reformation*, pp 63-4, 71-2, 133-4.

[73] Lin Kerns (ed.), *The secret of secrets (Secreta Secretorum), a modern translation, with introduction, of the Governance of princes* (Lewiston, 2008), p. 18.

[74] As far as a king's subjects' obligations are concerned, Yonge writes, 'if the king displeases them, men should not stop their prayers to God that He maintain and sustain their king for the profit of the realm, and to the good of the commons. They ought to thank God that He has given them such a good king'. *Secreta.*, p. 25.

were not without precedent in fifteenth-century Ireland,[75] with the royal supremacy, obedience *as a 'good work'* became enfolded in the terms of subject-hood and salvation, and all were indexed to imperial kingship.

Thus, evincing another instance of evangelical distortion and of uncertainly spiritual and temporal horizons, the royal supremacy, then, inaugurated a polity in England and Ireland organized around the conflation of God's Word with the laws of the realm, wherein true Christian crown subjects were saved by Christ alone through submission – on oath or otherwise – to the Reformation decrees. The polity, in other words, was transformed into a court of the gospel as a New Law, with Christ the new Lawgiver being mediated through the sacral-temporal head of the civil and ecclesiastical commonwealth. The condition for salvation was submission to Christ through the political-theological horizons of the burgeoning 'state'. Christ was mediator between God and Christian, but so was the king, who, with the royal supremacy, became a Christ-like figure. This was a tension that was to haunt the post-supremacy 'politics of religion' in the sixteenth century and beyond: that it was by Christ alone that the faithful can have remit of their sins, but that, paradoxically, it was through obedience to the monarch that one had access to Christ. With the law thus promulgated, with the obligations of the true Christian and subject thus defined, all become veritable agents in Christ's salvific order under the rule of Henry VIII on earth, this God-like king who had the salvation of his subjects in his cure. Tyndale captured the dynamic well: 'God hath made the king every realm judge over all, and over him is there no judge'. If judging and resisting the king was tantamount to judging and resisting God and to damning God's law and ordinance, and since no one judged kings but God, if 'the subjects sin, they must be brought to the king's judgement' for the 'king is in the room of God; and his law is God's law, and nothing but the law of nature and natural equity, which God graved in the hearts of men'.[76]

Over a period of nearly a decade, the royal supremacy engendered the conflation of baptism and covenant, and made them both features of a conditional salvation predicated upon the authority of the Christ-Prince as Head of the Church and realm in a manner that distorted more novel evangelical formulations. While William Tyndale's covenantal theology of the 1530s – according to which God 'conditionally' promised to

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[75] Peter Crooks, 'The structure of politics in theory and practise, 1210-1541', in Brendan Smith (ed.), *The Cambridge history of Ireland, vol. 1, 600-1550* (Cambridge, 2018), p. 454.
[76] *Doctrinal treatises*, pp 177, 240. See also Guy, *Tudor England*, pp 119-22.

save Christians who lived the doctrine of *sola fide* – was the first expression of what would eventually become a defining feature of English and Scottish political theology more generally, the national covenant,[77] the immediate roots of Tyndale's theology, however, reach back into the late-fifteenth and early-sixteenth centuries and well beyond English shores. Tyndale's use of the 'covenant' as an organizing principle of his theology was heavily indebted to Luther's theology of baptism, which formulated the sacrament in covenantal terms as God's promise that salvation would come to those who were repentant and obedient in their struggle against sin through faith. It also resembled the doctrine that would prove so central to Swiss and South German theology. Loosely covenantal understandings of baptism, indeed, were not uncommon by the 1520s: even Erasmus in 1505 had spoken of 'the Christian life as a living out of the sacrament' of baptism.[78] Covenantal language was also commonly deployed in Dublin-Whitehall correspondence to describe Irish and English-Irish associations, although it hardly carried the same salvific import as, say, how the *Bishop's Book* described the working of God's grace 'according to his pact and covenant made with and unto his spouse the church', although oft-repeated proscriptions of any association with the Irish – whose 'kind of living' was, as we shall see in chapter five, condemned as 'devilish' – certainly resembled the First Commandment's forbidding of 'secret pacts or covenants with the devil'.[79] The Ten Articles, moreover, and re-stating a non-controversial position on the doctrine, declared that 'No man can enter into the kingdom of heaven, except he be born again of water and the Holy Ghost', for by the sacrament of baptism all 'obtain remission of their sins, the grace and favour of God, and be made thereby the very sons and children of God'.[80]

Yet, if baptism was that which allowed the person born in sin to first gain access to the efficacious Holy Spirit and to have, by its operations, their sins remitted, entry into the kingdom of heaven and the granting of everlasting life that the sacrament made possible was also jeopardized for all who refused to obediently subscribe to the supremacy, subscription to which was, in an important sense, tantamount to being 're-baptized'. And here we depart from Tyndale's 'Law and Gospel' and Trinitarian

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[77] On the 'national covenant' and its relation to covenantal theology in England, see Edward Vallance, *Revolutionary England and the national covenant: state oaths, Protestantism, and the political nation, 1553-1682* (Rochester, 2005).

[78] Whiting, *Luther in English*, chapter 3, and p. 224.

[79] Charles Lloyd (ed.), *Formularies of faith, put forth by authority during the reign of Henry VIII* (London, 1825), p. 106.

[80] *Formularies of faith*, pp xviii-xix.

covenantal theology by which God the Father covenanted with God the Son and God the Holy Spirit to restore creation to its pristine purity.[81] It was in the *King's Book* of 1543, when Henry sought to eliminate some evangelical and all sacramentarian orientations the Reformation had unleashed, that baptism, covenant, and a 'good-works' theology became intimately correlated. On the new terms of Christian faith, the *Book* declared that 'And this faith every Christian man professeth and covenanteth to keep, when he received the sacrament of baptism'. 'And because God hath made promise and covenant with man' that God will assuredly keep, 'therefore God is called…faithful to man, and keepeth and observeth his faith, that is to say, his promise to man, requiring that that man should likewise keep his faith and promise towards him'.[82] The intimations of covenantal obligation elaborated above were explicit in the *King's Book*, the convergence between obedience to prince and God beckoning a calling in whose crucible a new Christian life of reciprocal yet conditional obligations between prince and subject sprung.[83]

All this had profound implications in Ireland for both the rejuvenated substance of Christian subject-hood and service. Although we should not overstate the affinity – nor should we assume that Henrician formularies presented an identical covenantal theology as either Tyndale or its Continental counterparts – it is nevertheless significant that in Anglo-Irish correspondence, as noted above, covenants were spoken of alongside or were occasionally even interchangeable with the likes of bonds, alliances, promises, and truces.[84] As we shall see in chapters five and nine, the languages of covenant, baptism, and demonization deeply inflected the terms of Tudor discourse on Ireland and the Irish – not to mention the regime's deployment of oaths and their entanglement in the terms of order, life, and crown subject-hood, especially after 1541 – so that, in effect, the First Commandment's forbidding of 'secret pacts or covenants with the devil' bore important affinities with oft-repeated proscriptions of any association with the Irish.[85] If the sacrament of baptism had long been an ordering

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[81] Ralph S. Werrel, 'Sin and salvation in William Tyndale's theology', in Jonathan Willis (ed.), *Sin and salvation in Reformation England* (Farnham, 2015), pp 25, 28-31, 36-7; Whiting, *Luther in English*, pp 232-72.
[82] *The King's Book, or the necessary doctrine and erudition for any Christian man, 1543*, ed. T.A. Lacey (London, 1932), pp 10-1.
[83] *The King's Book*, pp 32-7.
[84] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 107; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 164; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 190; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 204; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 41; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 70; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 86; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, pp 169-73; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 303.
[85] *Formularies of faith*, p. 134.

principle in Latin Christendom, especially after the decisive 'reform' efforts of the Carolingians to create an *imperium christianum*, we should see the renewed focus on baptism and its relation to power, *imperium*, and salvation in the sixteenth-century Reformations as a new development in this longer history,[86] one whose Tudor iteration played a decisive role in the political theologies of order and sovereignty in Henrician Ireland. There existed, then, structural affinities between a spiritual or lay life of crown service and the living out of the sacrament of baptism or a covenant between king and subject as the renewal of a 'new kind of living', and these revealed something of the 'structure' of conversion to a new kind of living under God and king; the 'fashioning' of Tudor Christian crown subject-hood in the wake of the royal supremacy, after all, was a variant of the 'experience' of conversion, in terms of one's re-constitution as a crown subject in a novel relation to a newly conceptualised 'truth'.[87] If this was how the imperative of unity-through-obedience was to be achieved, such unity also had another vital dimension with important implications for the relations between the 'spiritual' and 'temporal', and spiritual and civil jurisdiction and power: *adiaphora*. Henrician treatments of *adiaphora* – which showed clear signs of radical 'evangelical' and Protestant thought – highlight the capaciousness of Tudor claims in Ireland as well as England to a unitary, universalising, imperial sovereignty.[88]

The Ten Articles set the stage, articulating claims concerning the right to lawfully legislate on proper ceremony and to oblige all to obey, a right Henry VIII would continue to insist upon throughout his reign. Thus, it was expressly stated that certain ceremonies and rites were not 'expressly commanded by God, nor necessary to our salvation'. They possessed not the power 'to remit sin, but only to stir and lift our minds unto God, by whom only our sins be forgiven'. Yet since they had been 'prudently instituted and used in the churches of our realm', it was required that Christians accept them 'as we have here prescribed them unto you, and to conform

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[86] On the sacrament of baptism in medieval Europe and its entanglement with Christian *imperium*, see Owen P. Phelan, *The formation of Christian empire: the Carolingians, baptism, and the imperium christianum* (Oxford, 2014). On Continental developments, see Kat Hill, *Baptism, brotherhood, and belief in Reformation Germany: Anabaptism and Lutheranism, 1525-1585* (Oxford, 2015).

[87] It was hardly ever a totalising turning-of-the-page into a new life, although that is precisely the motif that was, implicitly and explicitly, at play. For a discussion of 'conversion' narratives as a central motif in evangelical theology and circles under Henry VIII, see Marshall, *Religious identities in Henry VIII's England*, chap. 1.

[88] On *adiaphora*, see Quentin Skinner, *Foundations of modern political thought* (2 vols., Cambridge, 1978), i, pp 68-9; Gunther, *Reformation unbound*, pp 9-10, 26, 33-7, 47, 50-60.

yourselves obediently unto the same'.[89] Once again, we arrive at the paradoxical salvific trappings of Tudor royal supremacy-inflected political theology: although certain articles may not be necessary for salvation, since faith and obedience to the crown were conflated, since salvation was only for those within the church, and since to be members of the church, one needed to obey the laws of God and prince (which meant subscribing to the royal supremacy) or be deemed a high traitor and, by implication – although the power remained formally beyond the crown's purview – be excommunicate as a papist or heretic, the question of conformity was undoubtedly one of salvation. This was a key premise concerning how the king, as head of the church, could exercise spiritual power – and others, too, beyond Gardiner, agreed.[90] Barnes, for instance, claimed in 1531 that temporal power might exercise spiritual authority in two ways. First, in a manner contrary to God, which was unacceptable, and second, on *adiaphora*, which needed to be obeyed; the English 'evangelical', indeed, took a 'strikingly generous view' of which matters the king was absolutely allowed to legislate on.[91] Thomas Starkey, too, when he joined the chorus of debate surrounding the powers of king, parliament, and church recognised or authorised by the royal supremacy, made the point explicitly. On account of the importance of Christian unity and obedience to the ruler who maintained it, all laws of the realm were to be obeyed on the pain of both civil punishments as well as damnation: 'And such things as by their own nature be indifferent, are made thereby to our salvation necessary'.[92] For these Englishmen, *adiaphora* were neither good nor ill, neither commanded by God's word nor necessary for salvation; but Christians were obliged to adhere to them when they formed part of the firmament of the sovereign's legal order. For the obedience that obligated the conformity of Christian crown subjects was so by virtue of God's word, which required obedience to authority as divinely ordained earthly power.[93] The making of *adiaphora* into something essential for salvation was, in other words, about their instrumental value in maintaining Christian unity and charity. God's proper ordering of the world made everything that fell in its proper place within it – be they doctrinally things

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[89] *Formularies of faith*, pp xvi, xvii-xvii, xxxi.
[90] Against Martin Bucer following the diet at Ratisbon in 1541, where the authority of princes in matters of religion was debated, the English bishop argued that the prince, when enacting a penalty against, say, the eating of flesh on a certain day, 'will not have in view the thing ordained, which considered in itself is of very small moment, but the maintenance of peace, quiet and obedience'. *Obedience in church and state*, pp 179, 181.
[91] Ryrie, *The gospel and Henry VIII*, pp 71-2.
[92] Epply, *Defending royal supremacy*, pp 48-52, quote from Starkey on p. 48.
[93] Starkey, *An exhortation to the people*, f. 7.

necessary or indifferent for salvation – into soteriological elements. Sovereign was the Word of God, and if the post-supremacy civil-ecclesiastical polity of the Tudor crown reflected the divine ordering it canvased, obedience and *imperium* were its crux.

In this light, Starkey's *Exhortation* of 1536, as a sustained support of the royal supremacy that extolled its doctrine of obedience, is worth reviewing in detail. For Starkey, the spiritual and civil or politic bodies – or church and realm – were united under the auspices of the royal supremacy. The *Exhortation* in fact should be considered as important as *De vera obedientia* – not in terms of its impact, but because similar to Gardiner's tract, the *Exhortation* also brought into relief some of the most consequential underlying political-theological structures of royal supremacy-informed, spiritual-civil imperial kingship in England and Ireland.

Starkey began by counterpoising that which was 'worldly and politic' and 'by nature indifferent' to the 'scripture and gospel of God' which 'never admit change or innovation'.[94] This is the foundation for his thoughts on *adiaphora* and the office of preacher and prince. The preacher disseminated the Word of God in the world, while the prince, just like Emperor Justinian allegedly before him, had 'full authority to order all such things as pertained to Christian policy'.[95] The bishop of Rome never had a special authority over others. Christ never commanded that Peter, and the bishops of Rome, be the sole custodian of the keys to the kingdom of heaven. Indeed, the pope was made head of the church not by the authority of any general council – which Starkey implied was truly representative of the spiritual body of the church – but by the emperor, who thought it expedient to do so. After Constantine conferred such headship to the pope, Starkey continued, his successors gave themselves 'privilege and possession, with much worldly authority and jurisdiction, thinking thereby much to honour God, whose vicar in earth he soon after began to call him self'.[96] It was the emperor Justinian, moreover, who gave conciliar instructions and rules the 'strength and power of laws', binding men to them, for before, such spiritual exhortations bound no one, 'but were received at liberty'.[97] Not only was papal supremacy unnecessary to the conversion of spiritual unity in Christendom, it was actually inimical to it; nations differed in their customs, in *adiaphora*, and such diversity aligned with the course of nature. It was a politic and civil affair – although one necessary for the conservation of

[94] Starkey, *An exhortation to the people*, f. 25.
[95] Starkey, *An exhortation to the people*, f. 83.
[96] Starkey, *An exhortation to the people*, ff 51, 62-3.
[97] Starkey, *An exhortation to the people*, f. 70.

unity in the spiritual body – and therefore fell within the orbit of the civil and politic office of the prince.[98]

Yet if Starkey made clear the boundaries between the spiritual and the civil or politic, the thrust of his political theology immediately muddled what he explicitly sought to distinguish – and, crucially, by doing so, it reproduced the soteriological terms of the royal supremacy and the uncertainly spiritual and civil quality of the polity and law it promulgated. The unity of the spiritual body, which Starkey conceded was of a higher order and significance than the civil or politic body, nevertheless required unity in the latter, which was achieved by disposing one's self 'with heart and will' to cast away all blindness and superstition and 'with diligent endeavour and cure form our judgements with right knowledge and convenient obedience'.[99] The 'unity spiritual' brought 'man to an higher consideration', which meant that 'all obedience presupposed and taken to all civil and politic rule, a certain consent of spirit and mind, and as it were with one heart a heavenly conspiracy, to the attaining of heavenly things, which by God are to man'.[100] Spiritual unity was kept through faith and loving charity to another,[101] but since, in quasi-Erasmian fashion, a key tenet of love and charity was also a willing and loving obedience to the prince, which was presupposed by the higher order of spiritual life the Gospel called all Christians to (as we shall, again, as far as Ireland is concerned, see in more detail in chapters four and five), the hierarchically distinguished spiritual and civil unities found a common abode in obedience to the king, an obedience that as a result could not be clearly defined as either solely civil and politic or spiritual and heavenly. Starkey, too, in other words, could be said to have echoed Gardiner's strategy of using Luther's doctrine of obedience against his doctrine of *sola fida*, the truth of which the English humanist denied (he distinguished between 'naked faith' and a charitable faith, or faith forged through charity, ie., good works).[102] Of course, salvation was Christ's prerogative alone – Christians must in love 'walk in outward works', by the faithful love owed to Christ, the Head of the spiritual body, according to his commandment[103] – but obedience was a work done willingly, in love and charity, and only this could maintain the unity of both the spiritual and the civil or politic body.

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[98] Starkey, *An exhortation to the people*, ff 51-81.
[99] Starkey, *An exhortation to the people*, f. 37.
[100] Starkey, *An exhortation to the people*, f. 65.
[101] Starkey, *An exhortation to the people*, f. 68.
[102] Starkey, *An exhortation to the people*, f. 80.
[103] Starkey, *An exhortation to the people*, f. 57.

Leaving Starkey aside for the moment, the fiction of the 'Crown' as the corporate and perpetual unity of the king's person and estate, or the Head and Body, was a crucial pivot in this distinction, one that spoke to the peculiarities of the English civil and ecclesiastical polity in both England and, indeed, Ireland, that foreground the uncertainly spiritual and temporal quality it bestowed on the 'state', on *imperium*, on any sort of jurisdictional power. According to John Fortescue in *The government of England* (1471), and deploying the commonplace description of the Church as the mystical body of Christ, the community of men constituted by law was a body mystical, bound together and united into one by the law.[104] What the royal supremacy did was compel the spiritual body of Christ to coincide with the corporate, temporal yet perpetual body of the king/common-weal/civil polity. In the Tudor state, the only jurisdiction in Europe where the prince was the spiritual and temporal sovereign of both church and commonwealth, the renewed and contested status of the spiritual and the temporal in their relations to each other and in their effective exercise by the civil and ecclesiastical powers that claimed them as their own was a problem raised with particular alacrity and urgency. If Gardiner's 'obedience' was an unprecedentedly salvific category, and with the conflation of faith and obedience in mind, being members of the church as the one body who professed the faith of Christ also meant that the church and the polity were uncertainly correlated – and Gardiner himself justified his prince's new title of 'Supreme Head of the Church' in precisely these terms. While what the church was, what its relationship to Scripture, tradition, the Word of God, the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and the community of the faithful were, was hotly contested,[105] Gardiner's position nevertheless brought the theocratic polity's underlying structures into relief. The bishop did distinguish between 'church', which signified all who were united by faith in Christ in one body, from 'realm' which incorporated all subjects of the king's dominions. Yet he quickly noted that since the church and the realm comprised the same people, if the king was head of the realm, he should also be head of the church; to have it otherwise divided the Christian subject between two

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[104] Brooks, *Law, society, and politics in early modern England*, p. 26.

[105] Lee Palmer Wandel, *The Reformation: towards a new history* (New York, 2011). For a discussion of Luther and More's conceptions of 'the church', see John M. Headley, 'The Reformation as crisis in the understanding of tradition', *Church, empire and world: The quest for universal order* (Ashgate, 1997). On specifically English debates in the final decades of Henry's reign, see Fox and Guy, *Reassessing the Henrician age*, pp 199-220; Marshall, *Religious identities in Henry VIII's England*.

masters, God and King, one which laid claim to them as Christians, and another to whom they were subjected not as Christians, but as mere subjects.[106]

One of the stakes was the further blurring of 'church' and 'commonwealth', or at least, the explicit application of 'commonwealth' language as a stand-in for the common benefit or profit to the church – a move that put into intriguing play disparate yet overlapping spiritual and civil unities. In the *Bishop's Book*'s section on the Ninth Article of faith, for instance, analogies were drawn between the citizens of a city, in their separate offices and vocations, united in one body for their mutual benefit, for their commonwealth, and those united in Christ, forming one church and congregation, by the Holy Spirit, living in 'one faith, one hope, one charity, and one perfect unity, consent, and agreement, not only in the true doctrine of Christ, but also in the right use and ministration of his sacraments' and labouring, 'every one in his vocation, for *the common wealth of this whole body, and of every part and member of the same'*. With Christ at its Head as the only intercessor between the members of the community of the faith – or the 'saints', the living, the dead, and the unborn, united in perfect charity, and forming the mystical body of Christ – the church was none other than 'the commonwealth of saints'.[107] Such 'moves' first found expression in Ireland, initially a little nebulously in the Waterford man, Edward Walshe's *The office and duty in fighting for our country* (London, 1545): Walshe inveighed against those who accumulated wealth for their own ease or the 'high treasure of their hearts', and who seek to 'amplify their possessions and livelihood, not regarding the anxious thoughts and study that they are bound to take for the common weal and preservation of the church of God'. 'Such', he charged, 'have not received revelation of the respect that our saviour Jesus Christ had to the common weal' nor the 'study and circumspection which the apostles, Peter, Barnabas, and Paul had to the common weal, in preaching the gospel, observing always the circumstances that made for the common weal'.[108] Then – and more emphatically – in 1548, the cleric Walter Palatine referred to the 'the commonwealth of God's Church'.[109]

The section in the *Bishop's Book* on the priestly jurisdiction is also noteworthy in this regard; reminiscent of Starkey's own thoughts on the matter, it, too, is suggestive

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[106] *Obedience in church and state*, pp 93, 95, 97. The political-theological ramifications of this internally divided subject and the dispensations of power and order it produced were profound; we will return to this important topic in the conclusion of this study.

[107] Emphasis mine. *Formularies of faith*, pp 52-3, 70, 79.

[108] Edward Walshe, *The office and duty in fighting for our country* (London, 1545), sigs., Bv-Bvi.

[109] T.N.A., SP 61/1, f. 243 (Shirley, *Original letters*, pp 20-1).

of the uncertainly spiritual contours of the Henrician polity and political theology in England and Ireland, and, relatedly, the manner in which the unity it canvased destabilised the delineation between 'World' and 'Spirit'. The power of the priests was, according to the sacrament of orders, divided into two parts: the *potestas ordinis*, as we discussed above, and the *potestas jurisdictionis*, the latter consisting of three 'special points'. First, the power to 'rebuke and reprehend sin', 'to excommunicate the manifest and obstinate sinner', and to 'absolve and receive them again, whensoever they shall return unto the church by condign penance'; second the power of ordination – or to admit men into the priesthood – which was of 'man's ordinance'; and finally, the power to devise 'certain rules or canons' regulating holy days, the ministration of sacraments and the form of the liturgy, and the 'rites, ceremonies, and observances' – or *adiaphora* – of the church 'as do tend and conduce to the preservation of quietness and decent order to be had and used among the people' in church.[110]

However, the circumstances and form of their – *adiaphora*'s – application, the *Book* continued, had always been determined by the priests and the consent of the people, and, after princes were christened, by the consent and affirmation of princes. Kings, in other words, 'with the consent of their parliaments', had the authority to 'revoke and call again in their own hands, or otherwise restrain all the power and jurisdiction' not sanctioned by Scripture 'which was given and assigned unto priests and bishops' by their 'license, consent, sufferance, and authority…whensoever they shall have such grounds and causes to do so…for the weal of their realms, the repressing of vice, and the increase of Christ's faith and religion'. Much like Starkey put it, if all Christians, in other words, were obligated, by the law of God, to obey their precepts within their priestly jurisdiction, they could, under reasonable cause, defect from those that pertained to *adiaphora* – unless they were ordained by the 'common consent of the people, and authorized by the laws of the Christian princes'.[111] Christ, after all, ordained 'the authority of Christian kings and princes to be the most high and supreme above all other powers and offices in the regiment and governance of his people; and committed unto them, as unto the chief heads of their commonwealths, the cure and oversight of all' within their dominion, 'without any exception'. And this authority consisted 'specially and principally to defend the faith of Christ and his religion, to conserve and maintain the true doctrine of Christ' against 'abuses, heresies,

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[110] *Formularies of faith*, pp 106-12.
[111] *Formularies of faith*, pp 114-6.

and idolatries' – which they were mandated by God to abolish –, to punish the 'heretics and evil preachers' who peddled such blasphemy, and finally, to oversee all bishops and priests and ensure they properly exercised their office as ordained by Christ. While kings did not have the *potestas ordinis* of priests, they did have the power of oversight in the name of Christian order, so that even bishops must obey all princely laws not contrary to the laws of God, '*propter conscientiam*' – and conscience, as we shall see in chapter two, was crucial to the terms of Christian order and sovereignty in Henrician Ireland. Although nowhere in any of the Articles and formularies was the king's power to define doctrine asserted, Gardiner did expressly expound the idea in his *De vera obedientia*, while the very act of formulating articles of faith, of incessantly editing the drafts, and of intervening in the dialogue and the debates, certainly demonstrates that Henry VIII remained firmly convinced that it was in his power and authority to do so.[112] Besides, by 1539, Henry VIII was openly deciding what constituted the law of God and what was mere *adiaphora*.[113] Thus by virtue of obeying the command to reject the pope's unlawful pretensions to 'occupy the whole monarchy of the world in his hands', 'the king's faithful subjects' shall 'have thereby singular wealth and commodity, as well spiritually, to the edifying of our souls, as corporally, to the increase of our substance and riches'.[114] If every Christian, as members of Christ's mystical body, were all bound to Christ and to each other by the Holy Spirit, which was 'charity itself',[115] it follows, then, that, under the new dispensation of salvific obedience, such unity was also the glue within the more strictly 'civil' domain of the kingdom.

Yet, the *coup de grace* of such conflation of 'church' and 'realm', or the spiritual and temporal polities, came when Starkey referred to the nation with the term usually referred to the church: a congregation ('a whole congregation and perfect, as this is of our nation') – a move, as we shall see later, that was explicitly – albeit

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[112] *Obedience in church and state*, pp 116-7.

[113] In the personally-edited draft of the bill of what would eventually become the Six Articles, the articles on clerical celibacy and vows of chastity and widowhood were all divinely ordained, while private masses were not decreed by the law of God, as Norfolk's question had put it, but simply agreed with divine law. Confession, similarly, was not obliged by God's law, although here, Henry simply omitted the prior claim that it had been instituted by God. McEntegart, *Henry VIII, the League of Schmalkalden, and the English Reformation*, pp 161-2. As Daniel Eppley has shown, only Christopher St. German in Henry VIII's reign removed all possibility of conscientious resistance by arguing that the king-in-parliament was the sole arbiter of Christian truth and whatever it declared aligned with God's law. Others, such as Gardiner, Tyndale, and a cast of theologically diverse allies and opponents, whatever other pronouncement to the contrary, still allowed for conscientious dissent of any policies that contravened God's law. Eppley, *Defending royal supremacy*, chaps. 1-2. On the issue of authority and scriptural interpretation, see also Wooding, *Rethinking English Catholicism*, pp 84-92.

[114] *Formularies of faith*, pp 116, 120-3.

[115] *Formularies of faith*, p. 50.

differentially – reproduced in Walshe's *The office and duty of fighting for your country*.[116] If *adiaphora* – which in and of themselves neither commanded 'strength, power, nor lawful authority or obligation' until they were agreed to by a nation and by common assent – became necessary for salvation, they were to be obeyed as such by the nation-as-congregation. And this, Starkey stated, you 'must think, and this you must do, with meekness and obedience, most Christian people, if you will be of the Christian flock'.[117] The conflation of spiritual and civil body, of church and realm, was complete: a meek, wilful, heartfelt, and free obedience to the prince, as commanded by Christ, was the condition for inclusion into the Christian flock.

The significance of this Henrician redefinition of *adiaphora* is that it throws into relief the expansive scope of Tudor political-theological power. Certainly, *adiaphora* were to many decisively not spiritual. But the problem was precisely what constituted a thing indifferent as opposed to a matter essential to salvation – and therefore, what precisely the status and boundary between the 'spiritual' and the 'temporal' was.[118] Such a capacious treatment of *adiaphora* should be seen as an emblem of the expanding horizons of state governance from the 1530s onward. Even among supporters of the papacy, a similar trend prevailed: resorting to an orthodox view of the Church and its tradition, More's critique of the Lutheran notion of Christian liberty paralleled the effects of the most comprehensive of the proponents of *adiaphora* as obtaining on one's salvation. As More wrote in his *Confutation of William Tyndale's answer* (1532-33), 'The Church hath none such as make no matter to salvation. For everything that God will have believed pertaineth to salvation, since the contrary belief is disobedience…'.[119] The same could be said of Cardinal Pole's position in the vehemently non-conformist tract he wrote while in Italy, *De Unitate Ecclesiasticae Defensione* (1534-5). Espousing a theology that almost entirely excluded the possibility of *adiaphora*, Pole envisioned a church in which the gap between disagreement in church government and error was very narrow, indeed.[120] A more 'conservative' ecclesiology, in other words, resembled – in its effects as a symptom of the widening purview of governmental power – the quasi-Lutheran terms of *adiaphora* in which, at

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[116] Starkey, *An exhortation to the people*, f. 83. For Walshe, see the 'Interlude' between chapters 4 and 5.
[117] Starkey, *An exhortation to the people*, f. 71.
[118] Shagan, *Popular politics in the English Reformation*, chap. 1; Shagan, 'Clement Armstrong and the godly commonwealth: radical religion in early Tudor England', in Peter Marshall and Alec Ryrie (eds), *The beginnings of English Protestantism* (Cambridge, 2002), p. 81.
[119] Cited in Marshall, *Religious identities in Henry VIII's England*, p. 85.
[120] Shagan, *Politics in the English Reformation*, p. 39.

the hands of the likes of Gardiner and Starkey, the doctrine of Henrician obedience found untrammelled expression. Ultimately, although Henrician formularies defended church ceremonies and certain beliefs not explicitly sanctioned in Scripture, as Peter Marshall has remarked, not only does it remain 'open to question' whether 'such matters could be regarded as *adiaphora*…in the Lutheran understanding of the term'. It also remains the case that 'Henry considered the positive laws of his Church to be binding in conscience on all his subjects, and to that extent to insist that they were not necessary to salvation was something of a semantic evasion'.[121] Thus, although Henry's claims to distinguish adiaphora from what was essential to salvation was not endorsed by all, it remains that one of the primordial undercurrents or crux of the royal supremacy in both England and Ireland was obedient *libertas* and conditionality: as we shall see in more depth in chapter five, only the 'true Christian subject' who either freely *chose* to swear the oath of supremacy when paradoxically required or compelled to do so, or freely *chose* to live in obedience to the king as 'imperial' civil and ecclesiastical sovereign upon submission to the crown, was in fact truly Christian, and thus a member of the church and therefore justified and saved.[122] The promise of God had become the promise of the king.

One may object that the doctrines declared in government formularies were insufficiently impactful 'on the ground'. Such criticisms, however, important as they may be if the task is to ascertain the practical scope of state power or the causal relations of influence between text, policy formulation, and action, would miss the point of our purpose here. The point here is that the royal supremacy nevertheless put into play the problem of supreme earthly authority under God meant that how office-holders, English and English-Irish captains and lords, indeed all ordinary crown subjects when roped in or called upon enacted a life of Christian crown service either through submission or the enforcement of crown 'reform' policy, became to differing degrees embroiled in the rejuvenated life of obedience that submission to the monarch's new theocratic and imperial title inaugurated. Besides, while it was 'increasingly obvious that the regime', as Peter Marshall put it, 'spoke with multiple voices',[123] it

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[121] Marshall, *Religious identities in Henry VIII's England*, p. 93.
[122] According to Edward Vallance, it was only around 'the middle of the sixteenth century [that] the word covenant, instead of being used to refer to a unilateral 'testament', took on an increasingly conditional sense'. While perhaps true, the terms of political-theology order in England and Ireland clearly demonstrate the structural workings of the logic of a conditional covenant by the 1530s despite it not being expressly articulated. Vallance, *Revolutionary England and the national covenant*, p. 28.
[123] Marshall, *Heretics and believers*, p. 272.

remains true that the imperative of an obedience conflated with faith and turned into a good work, the elevated status of the doctrines of penance, baptism, and the covenant, and the implications of the widening import and scope of *adiaphora* for the expansive reach of Tudor state power, all made themselves felt in the emergent terms of order, sovereignty, and subject-hood in England and in Ireland, albeit on different terms.

Indeed, although the heated battles and rifts between 'evangelical' and 'orthodox' that emerged England did not reach the shores of Ireland, it was in Ireland that the ambivalent doctrinal identity or fluidity of the Henrician Reformation was in clearest relief, if only as a logical or structural affinity within the political-theological languages of Henrician Christian rulership and crown subject-hood. For it was in the king's Irish dominion that the 'renewal of life' that underpinned the promotion of the Gospel was most evident, silently unfolding as it did within the mires of the discourse of 'civility' and the 'becoming civil' of the Irish and English-Irish it promoted.

1.3: Conclusion

Imperium had many faces, both 'spiritual' and 'civil', with many roots and outlets. It appeared in civil and ecclesiastical jurisdiction, in debates over the scope of law, and in historical imaginaries that underpinned claims to sovereignty in 'church' and 'state' in England and Ireland. If its trajectories in the undivided, unitary sense had long figured in the political theologies of spiritual and civil rulership across Christendom it was from the historical evolution of this constellation of ideas and practises of law and rule that there emerged, in Henry VIII's break with Rome, the newfangled political-theological terms of Tudor sovereignty and 'true Christian crown subject-hood', predicated as these were on the specific doctrines of penance, baptism, the covenant, and *adiaphora*. Together, these became inflected by the exigencies of Henrician obedience in a newly expanded scope of princely governance of bodies, consciences, and souls, redefining the (salvific) parameters of allegiance, and Christian crown-subject and service, not to mention the very status of 'church' and 'realm', along the way, around new characterisations of Christian unity.

Even among historians who are well-attuned to the paramountcy of theology in the Henrician Reformation, however, confusion on this point arises and certain secularist habits re-enter the fold. Thus, for Ethan Shagan, the 'genius' of Henry VIII was to make his settlement about loyalty rather than theology, so that, by defining

opposition to the royal supremacy as papistry – treason – rather than heresy, the Catholic nonconformists' theological arguments could be ignored, their opposition answered on non-theological terms, 'so long as their crimes were against the state rather than the Church'. Specifically, it was with the Treason Act of 1534, Shagan argues, that the regime displayed an awareness that its actions were perceived as spiritual, or as having spiritual dimensions and implications; declaring that calling the king a heretic or a schismatic was treason represented an effort to 'silence this strand of opinion' so that the legislation consequently divided people who 'shared a common Catholic theology along political lines'.[124]

Yet Shagan here in effect resorts to the kind of framework he initially set out to dismantle. Contra his stance, the conformists and nonconformists cannot simply be seen as sharing a 'common Catholic theology' because the royal supremacy forced an internal division between 'Catholicism' as a coherent theological system. There is no need to resort here to some ostensibly 'political' domain to explain the rift within those opposed to the evangelicals. Rather, Henry VIII's move amounted to the strategic 'profanation' of a spectrum of theological 'orthodoxy' – but it was not a total move nor did the regime therefore simply occupy a non-spiritual 'political' space of its own creation. We are dealing, rather, with efforts to create a space of *adiaphora* where, as we shall see in chapter eight, the boundaries between 'treason' and 'heresy', and, as we have just shown, those between 'state' and 'church', were redrawn uncertainly and inconsistently. What took effect was the theologically determined, mutual refashioning of 'church' and 'state' under the Henrician doctrine of obedience, this bedrock of the newly sacralised crown as Head of the Church on earth under Christ, with the consequence that the 'state's' governmental purview – the remit, in other words, of princely moral governance under God – considerably expanded. The regime's emphasis on obedience and loyalty, far from only allowing them to ignore the theological arguments of non-conformist Catholics if they remained within the bounds of orthodoxy as defined by the king – although this certainly occurred – also made salvation within the church evermore a question of loyalty within the realm. Such was the consequence of the 'state' becoming more 'church-like' both in England and Ireland.

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[124] Shagan, *Popular politics in the English Reformation*, pp 51-2.

All the same, this introductory foray into the faces of *imperium* at the thresholds of 'world' and 'spirit' is incomplete – and a further inroad into its political-theological forms in Ireland has much to tell us about its trajectories and dynamics. In the cause of 'reform' in Ireland and in support of Henry's break with Rome, there emerged the lineaments of a new Tudor sovereign dispensation rooted in *imperium* – or unitary sovereignty – and linking God, prince, and subject that was simultaneously new in its totality but the product of adaptations of older ideas and developments in many of its constituent parts. And here, Brendan Bradshaw's work remains an indispensable point of departure, for he remains the historian of Tudor Ireland who has most extensively examined the paramount role of unitary sovereignty in Anglo-Irish affairs. In *The Irish constitutional revolution of the sixteenth century*, Bradshaw was laudably attentive to the intricacies of dynastic and statist concerns and alliances, how these underpinned distinct visions of 'reform', and to the role of unitary sovereignty in either obstructing or animating these different orientations and their policy expressions. Yet, despite the painstaking nuance and astuteness with which he teased out the threads of 'reform' and conquest, a major problem looms: unitary sovereignty is assigned categorically to 'modern' innovations, with its ostensible opposite – dynastic concerns – relegated to the 'medieval'. Moving beyond a 'medieval/modern' framework that, in Bradshaw's hands, also acquired the Whig thrust of aligning 'responsibly' conceived 'reform' with a liberal modern attitude and conquest with a retrograde, illiberal martial ethos,[125] we need to attune ourselves to the modalities, circumstances, and dynamics of *imperium*'s displacement across disparate socio-discursive domains. What we must capture is the complex array of arrangements in which *imperium* became a revolving piece in an ever-moving puzzle of government, networks, and rivalry through which the jurisdictional quagmires that both bridged and divided English and Irish civil and ecclesiastical polities were enacted and conceptualised. If nothing else, this suggests the need to re-evaluate the 'Irish constitutional revolution' of the sixteenth century from the perspective not only of *imperium* but of its new political-theological abode in Tudor theocratic kingship.

Imperial kingship – and *imperium* more generally – of course, was in a certain sense a phantom, a resource to draw on that could bite its teeth in multiple sites, a spectre that came and went in declarations and discourse which could be but were not

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[125] Bradshaw, *The Irish constitutional revolution*, esp. part III, 'The liberal revolution'; Bradshaw, *The dissolution of the religious orders*, pp 257-8.

always a grandiose display of the crown's practical power. It was a political-theological fiction to appeal to and draw on that had real consequences in the world, not least in policy, diplomacy, and war, where imperial claims could readily be enacted and felt by its wielders, defenders, and those compelled in deference to submit to it. But it also did not envelope all manifestations of power, moral-governmental discourse, and legal, administrative, courtly, and social life. *Imperium* was always more than simply unitary: an 'edifice' with many roots, it was embedded in jurisdictionally and culturally fragmented spaces of moral governance and struggles for order and power. Yet just as law had a life in 'public' discourse that was – and still is – irreducible to courtly procedure,[126] the fiction of unitary sovereignty similarly had a life of its own beyond the practical capacities of the crown and its representatives to enforce or impose it 'on the ground'.[127] This gap between rhetoric, 'practical power', and law is instructive. Sovereignty first and foremost consisted of how its claims were operationalized, for *imperium* in its unitary sense without a doubt had a decisive impact as a discursive resource in the networks of power and influence within and across 'English' and 'Gaelic' worlds – in rivalry and faction, policy and 'reform', both in the halls of government or administration as well as 'on the ground', when crown officials and others operationalized unitary sovereignty in their activities, which were themselves diversely felt by elites and non-elites at local and regional levels.

With this in mind, the elevation of Ireland's constitutional status from a lordship to a kingdom, while bolstering the 'Erastian principle' reformers had sought to establish after the royal supremacy and making clear 'the crown's authority over the kingdom's spiritual polity',[128] also codified by parliamentary statute and focused within a single constitutional settlement and accompanying 'reform' strategy ('surrender and regrant') not only the 'disparate ideas' of preceding decades.[129] Centuries-old vestiges of Ireland

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[126] Brooks, *Law, politics, and society in early modern England*, passim.

[127] Discussing the impact of Roman law on the development of theocratic notions of sovereignty in the middle ages and their attendant role in shaping treason laws, John Bellamy, for instance, reminds us that such claims never always corresponded exactly with the letter of the law nor the writings of all jurists: 'Kings assumed the guise and the rights of sovereign princes some considerable time before they were universally recognized as such'. J.G. Bellamy, *The law of treason in England in the later middle ages* (Cambridge, 1970), pp 9-11.

[128] Murray, *Enforcing the English Reformation*, pp 130, 134.

[129] Namely, Henry's 1520 'shadowy blue-print for a unified common-wealth', strategies of coercion and persuasion, blurred distinction between 'Irish enemies' and 'loyal English subjects', indentures as a strategy of provisional 'reform', and proposals to grant Irish lords English titles of nobility and elevate Ireland into a kingdom. Lennon, *Sixteenth-century Ireland,* p. 92; Maginn and Ellis, *The Tudor discovery of Ireland*, pp 185-6; Christopher Maginn, 'Continuity and change: 1470-1550', in Brendan Smith (ed.), *The Cambridge history of Ireland, vol. 1, 600-1550* (Cambridge, 2018), pp 324-5.

as a 'regnal polity', after all, were not forgotten, forming both an earlier background to Lambert Simnel's coronation in Dublin in 1487 as 'Edward VI' 'by the grace of God, king of England, France and Ireland', eventually culminating in the Act of 1541.[130] More importantly, if it also funnelled a principle of unitary sovereignty that in a diffused, uneven, and differentiated manner had inflected Tudor political theology in Ireland since at least 1515, it was the royal supremacy that first galvanised and focused these developments into a singularity from which the terms of Tudor political theology, sovereignty, and crown subject-hood and service were re-signified, problematized, and then constitutionally refocused in 1541.

As a political-theological locus of unitary sovereignty and spiritual-civil Christian rulership, the royal supremacy has not received the historiographical attention it deserves. While it too harnessed and galvanized older currents and processes, the royal supremacy was nonetheless a new point of reference for the rhetorics and institutional, military, or policy instantiations of order, power, and Christian crown subject-hood at the newly destabilised thresholds of 'world' and 'spirit'. Within this paradigmatic, uncertainly spiritual-civil crucible, spiritual and temporal sovereignty in Ireland were turned into renewed sites of contestation between royal and papal claimants to *imperium* in a re-vamped colonialism through which 'true Christianity', the 'true Christian', and the proper jurisdictional arrangements between civil and spiritual power were determined, not to mention the increasingly forward yet still beleaguered initiatives to 'reform' Ireland were pursued. Of course, doctrinal and political-theological themes discussed in this chapter did not undergird all invocations of or appeals to obedience nor did they necessarily inflect all performances – rhetorical or otherwise – of service and allegiance in Ireland. The point is that the royal supremacy put these into play in the webs of governance, power, and legitimacy that comprised the ebbs and flows of moral governance in England's western neighbour. Although, as Henry A. Jefferies has argued – and referring to Rex's contention that obedience was the primary feature of the Henrician settlement – the Kildare Rebellion's widespread support among the Pale suggests that 'the English crown could not depend on the same level of obedience among the colonial elites in the Pale',[131] it is clear that the salvific doctrine of obedience was to play a decisive role in defining the contours of Henrician political theology as a pluralistic language and dynamic of rule, order, and governance

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[130] Crooks, 'The structure of politics in theory and practise, 1210-1541', pp. 448-9, 467.
[131] Jefferies, 'The early Tudor Reformations in the Irish Pale', pp 46-7.

in Ireland. Such was how the doctrinal quagmire and political theologies of theocratic *imperium* turned service and crown subject-hood into worldly outlets for divine and royal majesty and truth.

In short, the principle of *imperium* and its material enaction was diffused, its roots heterogeneous, and its displacements plural and consequential, with the royal supremacy inaugurating a polity and rhetorical repertoire of Christian order that could be both buttressed and undermined by its entanglement with Gaelic, English, and continental worlds. If forms of unitary power travelled widely and had many outlets, if these mingled with and were relayed through disparate forms of delegation and mediation, all faces of Tudor political theology provided an abode.

Thus we begin anew our investigation are the political-theological fixtures of moral governance, 'reform', and the 'commonweal' as indices of God's providential government of the world. To this, we now turn.

Chapter 2:

Providence, government, and the commonweal: the political theology

of moral governance

'Civility', service and the active life, counsel and the profit of the king, duty and virtue, and *le bien publique*: such were some of the commonplace tropes of sixteenth-century moral-governmental thinking north of the Alps. If in England, the amphibiously capacious 'common weal' rhetoric was invested with an array of assumptions and understandings as to what constituted the common or public good, virtuous service and an active life, and the particular relationship between mode of government, the body politic, and the commonweal,[1] the same could be said of Ireland, albeit on different terms. Although historians have devoted much attention to the Elizabethan and Stuart periods,[2] Brendan Bradshaw, Steven Ellis, and Christopher Maginn have drawn historians' attention to the 'commonwealth' languages of Lancastrian and early-Tudor Ireland.[3] Yet if Bradshaw set the stage four decades ago by arguing that the prevalence of the 'commonwealth' as 'a cardinal philosophical concept' of 'reformist' literature after 1515 revealed a humanist influence on Irish affairs, the discussion has not moved beyond denying his thesis by either emphasizing the difficulty in assessing 'humanist influence', noting the on-going evolution of two older, overlapping traditions in England and Ireland, namely, that of 'common weal' talk and a 'reformist' ethos, or by categorically denying its role until the final decades of the sixteenth century.[4]

Let us first consider the problems with Bradshaw's argument. Bradshaw depends on an older historiographical position which identified humanism with Platonic

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[1] Paul Slack, *From reformation to improvement: public welfare in early modern England* (Oxford, 1999), chap. 1, citations on p. 13.

[2] Markku Peltonen, *Classical humanism and republicanism in English political thought, 1570-1640* (Cambridge, 1995); Vincent Carey, 'The Irish face of Machiavelli: Richard Beacon's Solon his follie (1594) and republican ideology in the conquest of Ireland', in Hiram Moegan (ed.), *Political ideology in Ireland, 1541-1641* (Dublin, 1999), pp 83-109; Andrew Hadfield, 'Tacitus and the reform of Ireland in the 1590s' in Jennifer Richards (ed.), *Early modern civil discourses* (London, 2003), pp 115-30; Mark A. Hutchinson, *Calvinism, reform, and the absolutist state in Elizabethan Ireland* (Routledge, 2015).

[3] Brendan Bradshaw, *The Irish constitutional revolution of the sixteenth century* (Cambridge, 1979), pp 49-57; Christopher Maginn and Steven G. Ellis, *The Tudor discovery of Ireland* (Dublin, 2015), pp 139. Peter Crooks makes the case for the existence of a sophisticated political culture in fifteenth-century Ireland. Peter Crooks, 'Factions, feuds and noble power in the Lordship of Ireland, c. 1356-1496', *IHS*, 35, 140 (2007), pp 425-54.

[4] Ciaran Brady, *The chief governors: the rise and fall of reform government in Tudor Ireland, 1536-1588* (New York, 1994), p. 26; Maginn and Ellis, *The Tudor discovery of Ireland*, p. 139; Ian Campbell, 'Irish political thought and intellectual history, 1550-1730', in Jane Ohlmeyer (ed.), *The Cambridge history of Ireland, vol. 2, 1550-1730* (Cambridge, 2018), pp 506-28.

philosophy in stark contrast to its ostensible Aristotelian-Scholastic counterpart;[5] his heuristic framework, indeed, is also overly categorical. He contrasts humanist strategies of persuasion as the means to move men and women towards greater moral rectitude with strategies of coercion rooted in an Augustinian condemnation of the depravity of man; the one sees the state as a positive vehicle for 'reform' that privileges a change in internal disposition (which he aligns with Christian humanism), the other as a purely coercive instrument that depends on law to effect any sort of spiritual or inner transformation of character and faith (which he sees as emblematic of a Machiavallian cunning and Protestant pessimism regarding humanity's capacity for redemption). To this, he then attaches what he calls the essentially humanist 'Socratic-Platonic epistemology' that privileges the intellect over the will. In this essentially humanist framework – where, first, a positive anthropology centred on *imagio dei*; second, *sapientia*, *humanitas* and Ciceronian, Stoicist, and Platonic virtue as the means of practical action which contrasts to the 'essentialist quiddities' of Aristotelian philosophy best represented in 'scholastic dialectic'; and third, the Christian commonwealth as the theatre of an activist humanist moral philosophy in the world – he marries a Platonic *res publica* rationally governed to attain public virtue with a 'biblical social morality' to achieve Christian justice.[6]

Yet, even the Italian humanists were thoroughly patristic and Augustinian in their assessment of human propensity towards sin and corruption, a pessimistic view that was also indebted to Stoicist and Epicurean outlooks. This negative view of human tendencies, moreover, was compatible with their conviction that Man was made in the image of God – indeed, it was its corollary, for they privileged the will over the intellect since it was by the sheer voluntarist force of a free will spurred by God's grace and providence that humanity could achieve its glorious and divine potential.[7] Bradshaw's starkly delineated humanist and Protestant anthropologies, too, fails to account for the philosophical, moral, and theological strands they shared, including the Erasmian ideals

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[5] Campbell, 'Irish political thought and intellectual history, 1550-1730', p. 507.

[6] Brendan Bradshaw, 'Transalpine humanism', in J.H. Burns and M. Goldie (eds), *The Cambridge history of political thought, 1450-1750* (Cambridge, 1991), pp 95-131; Bradshaw, 'Sword, word and strategy in the Reformation in Ireland', in *HJ* 21, 3 (1978), pp 475-502.

[7] Charles Trinkaus, *'In our image and likeness': humanity and divinity in Italian humanist thought, vol. i* (2 vols., London, 1970); Hutchinson, *Calvinism, reform, and the absolutist state in Elizabethan Ireland*, intro.

and principles that underpinned later Protestant notions of spiritual and civil discipline, vocation, and 'reform'.[8]

Now, there are many moving parts, here, including questions about the will, providence, subject-hood and vocation, their collective entanglements with 'reform' culture and strategies of implementation, and a 'common weal' concern with *le bien publique*. These will be spelt out in subsequent chapters. For now, let us broach Maginn and Ellis' position. Maginn and Ellis suggest that the rise of a more elaborate reform literature after 1515 was a result not of any humanist influence but of three intersecting developments specific to Anglo-Irish affairs: the ramifications of Poyning's Law (1494) in depriving the English of Ireland of their traditional mode of petitioning their king, the parliamentary address; rumours of the king's impending 'reform' of Ireland; and Cardinal Thomas Wolsey's diplomatic manoeuvrings on the Continent.[9] Yet while Maginn and Ellis are right to bring our attention to such developments and to the old 'reformist' milieu in colonial Ireland, it seems likely that moral-governmental and 'reformist' discourse in Henrician Ireland developed at the crossroads of multiple 'traditions', which included both fifteenth-century innovations as well as humanist-inflected new departures. Bradshaw's contention that the 'common weal' became a 'cardinal philosophical concept' in Irish 'political culture' after 1515, while overstated, *does* nevertheless speak to a certain refinement and intensification of focus that describes a new development not altogether incompatible with Maginn and Ellis' view – and recently complimented by Peter Crooks who has also suggested the importance of 'neo-classicist' discourse in fifteenth-century English 'political' discourse – that the post-1515 climate of 'reform' emerged within the folds of the fifteenth-century 'reform' tradition.[10] As several historians have put it, after all, 'commonweal' was 'merely the latest coinage in a succession of terms denoting the ethical and social purposes of government, its duty to provide for security, social order, justice, peace, and prosperity', and it was a term or concept that continued to shift over time, both subtly or

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[8] Margo Todd, *Christian humanism and the puritan social order* (Cambridge, 1987).

[9] Maginn and Ellis, *The Tudor discovery of Ireland*, pp 140-1; Christopher Maginn, 'Continuity and change: 1470-1550', in Brendan Smith (ed.), *The Cambridge history of Ireland, vol. 1, 600-1550* (Cambridge, 2018), esp. pp 312, 314.

[10] Peter Crooks, The structure of politics in theory and practise, 1210-1541', in Brendan Smith (ed.), *The Cambridge history of Ireland, vol. 1, 600-1550* (Cambridge, 2018), pp 441-68, esp. pp 444 and 468.

dramatically, as it was appealed to by men of different social station in disparate contexts and to – often conflicting – ends.[11]

We should, then, reframe the question of humanism's import on Irish affairs in Henry VIII's reign around what Paul O. Kristeller long ago noted: that as humanists began to consider the importance of including philosophy in the *studia humanitas*, a humanist background came, by the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, to be combined with 'solid philosophical achievements which were derived from different origins'. Although this should not lead one to identify 'humanist' with the general currents of Renaissance thought, these thinkers, Kristeller argued, 'should be taken into account if we wish to understand the indirect influence of humanism on Renaissance thought, an influence which in many ways was even more important than its direct contribution'.[12] As we saw in chapter one, a humanist-inflected Tudor imperial kingship and polity gradually took shape before and after the royal supremacy in England and Ireland. While there is no evidence in Ireland of what Charles G. Nauert has defined as the hallmark of Christian humanism, namely a 'programme for a comprehensive regeneration of religion and society through humanistic scholarship',[13] the Tudor theocratic polity intervening in Ireland especially from the mid-1530s onward had at the very least been partially built with humanist tools.[14]

Rather than locating Irish moral-governmental and intellectual world's squarely within a 'humanist' fold, then, it is more appropriate to place such worlds within both Renaissance frames and an early sixteenth-century – and eventually Reformation – matrix of classical and Christian metaphysics and spirituality. In particular, moral-governmental discourse in Ireland participated in a 'common weal' tradition and its transformation from – in England – the 1450s and in Ireland in particular, the 1510s and

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[11] Early modern research group, 'Commonwealth: the social, cultural, and conceptual contexts of an early modern keyword', in *HJ*, 53, 3 (2011), pp 661-4.

[12] Paul O. Kristeller, *Renaissance thought: the classic, scholastic, and humanist strains* (vol i., 2nd edition, New York, 1961), pp 19-20, chaps. 5-6.

[13] Charles G. Nauert, 'Rethinking 'Christian humanism', in Angelo Mazzcco (ed.), *Interpretations of Renaissance Humanism* (Leiden and Boston, 2006), pp 155-80, quote on p. 168.

[14] As Aysha Pollnitz has shown, while a 'liberal education, the study of classical languages, and literature that Renaissance pedagogues often referred to as the *bonae litterae*, transformed the upbringing of royal children and helped to reshape the political and religious culture of early modern Britain', Henry VIII's 'immersion in the *bonae litterae* was critical in teaching the king to fight Rome with his pen and to govern his church in the 1530s and 1540s' even if the king's actions marked more of an co-optation of Erasmus' spiritual and other teachings than a 'sincere desire to affect Erasmian religious reform'. Aysha Pollnitz, *Princely education in early modern Britain* (Cambridge, 2015), pp 1-2, 11, chaps. 1-3.

especially 1530s onward;[15] in a tradition of counsel beginning to show subtle signs of humanist influence, as we will see in chapter four; and in classical and Augustinian traditions and ontology, as we shall see below and in chapter three, in particular. The peculiarities and specificities of the Renaissance in Henrician Ireland to differing degrees inflected distinctly Renaissance concerns and orientations within 'native' English and Irish traditions of moral governance, transforming and 're-embedding' them in the changing terms of early Reformation interpolity and political-theological order.[16]

In order to continue the task of reconsidering the relative weight of and intersections between distinct moral-governmental languages – 'humanist' and Renaissance, 'evangelical' and 'Catholic', and those of the 'common weal', 'counsel', and the 'Crown' – the current chapter sets the interpretive stage. It argues that if we are to trace the impact and vagaries of the Tudor Reformation and the making of Tudor political theology in Ireland, we must first come to grips with the ontological and providential horizons of 'commonweal' and 'reform' through which 'self' and 'action', as moral-governmental determinations, were conceived and enacted. Bradshaw's emphasis on the Christian dimensions of the commonweal is correct, but his analysis requires revisiting. The attendant political-theological matrix of human and divine agency had several revolving parts, namely the classical-Christian cosmological and ontological matrix linking 'self' and 'world', the government of self and other at the sovereign's command under God and at the thresholds of the Crown's composite parts, and the overarching framework of God's providence. Only against these can we attune ourselves to the layered conceptual and phenomenal valences and meanings of the 'common weal' as a moral-governmental trope in Irish affairs.

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[15] On the emergence in the 1450s-1470s of a self-consciously reformist language of common weal emerged in England, see David Starkey, 'Which age of reform?', in Christopher Coleman and David Starkey (ed.), *Revolution reassessed: revisions in the history of Tudor government and administration* (Oxford, 1986), pp 21-7.

[16] Historians of England have explored the different ways in which native English traditions of civic government, 'common weal' rhetoric, or counsel intersected with Italian civic humanism or classical Renaissance alternatives. See, for instance, Arthur B. Ferguson, *The articulate citizen and the English Renaissance* (Durham, N.C., 1965); Slack, *From reformation to improvement*, chaps 1-2; John Guy, 'The Henrician age', in J.G.A. Pocock (ed.), *The varieties of British political thought, 1500-1800* (Cambridge, 1993), pp 16-7; Guy, 'The rhetoric of counsel in early modern England', in Dale Hoak (ed.), *Tudor political culture* (Cambridge, 1995), pp 292-310; Christian D. Liddy, *Contesting the city: the politics of citizenship in English towns, 1250-1530* (Oxford, 2017).

2.1: World, Being, and 'self'

For centuries, the status of faith and reason, the soul, intellect, and the will, and their individual and interdependent relationship to God, law, and authority could differ radically under disparate authorial pens, and while how the arts and sciences were arranged in relation to each other and the demands of theology, Christian living, and civic life, too, often profoundly diverged from one thinker or school of thought to another, that the 'world' as Creation remained something to be read, its signs to be discerned as evidence of the divine *logos* to which they referred to as their source and which necessitated that knowledge take the form of interpretation of this primordial language as that to which all things in the world referred to, was common to most, if not all.[17]

If some Renaissance intellectual, civic, and cultural activity from the fifteenth century onward displaced theology from the orbit of civic life in novel ways, the civic conditions of the Italian city states were, of course, hardly those of England and even less Ireland. Nor, moreover, had such scandalous works as Machiavelli's *Il principe* (1513), which many contemporaries thought touted the evacuation of Christian morality from all affairs of government, had yet had any discernible impact in the 'British Isles'.[18] Besides, ontologically, God still prefigured relations between 'religious' and 'non-religious' domains of life, however different that prefiguration and the displacement of the 'profane' and 'sacred' it engendered may have appeared. For at a time when, as Conal Condren contends, the world was construed through 'office' or 'relations of office', at a time when moral *personae*-in-office were invested with duties and obligations, making distinctions between the domestic, the legal, the 'political', the civic, and theological 'far more negotiable metaphorically than they have become', 'self' and moral conduct were always-already tethered to what was 'presupposed of the

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[17] On the complex and plural Renaissance intellectual landscapes, see Kristeller, *Renaissance thought*, vols. I and ii. For a discussion of different Christian anthropologies, or discussions of the status, composite parts, and interconnections between soul, will, and intellect, and the distinction between as well as interrelations of faith and reason, see Heiko Oberman, *The harvest of medieval theology: Gabriel Biel and late medieval nominalism* (Cambridge, Mass., 1963), chap. 3. On the world as ontological continuum bearing the meaningful signs of God to be interpreted being the epistemological conditions of knowledge, see Michel Foucault, *Les mots et les choses: une archéologie des sciences humaines* (Paris, 1966), chap. 2. Guiseppe Mazzotta, too, refers to humanism's origins in and later departure from the 'medieval circle of knowledge', whereby strings of correspondence revolving around illumination made all of forms of learning refer to each other. Guiseppe Mazzotta, 'Humanism and the medieval encyclopaedic tradition', in Angelo Mazzcco (ed.), *Interpretations of Renaissance Humanism* (Leiden and Boston, 2006), pp 113-24.

[18] On Machiavelli and Ireland, see Carey, 'The Irish face of Machiavelli', pp 83-109.

world as a whole', namely, the twin poles of God and Satan, the one 'the epitome of office, the other as its abuse'.[19]

I will return to the important theme of 'office' in chapter four. For now, consider the implications of this broad – and admittedly schematic – outline of Christian thought for contemporary conceptions of 'self' and 'world'. Although distinct philosophical and theological anthropologies advanced different visions of the relations between 'lower' and 'higher', 'inner' and 'outer' man and between the man in a state of sin as opposed to man in a state of grace,[20] knowledge, experience, ideas, virtues, desires, passions: these were nonetheless not 'in' the mind or the 'self' nor were they properly in the object per se. They straddled the gap between subjects and objects, or a 'self' and the 'world' 'out there'. The ontological status of order belied any radical or total separation between 'self' and 'world' and 'inner' and 'outer' 'self'. There was no sense of exclusive localisation in the 'self', 'mind', 'interests', or 'desires' of a subject as distinct from the world thought of in moral-ontological terms, as would later emerge in powerful, alluring, and pervasive currents of thought that continue to hold sway in the twenty-first century.[21] All across Europe and Ireland, the corporeal, material, and the cosmic were linked: if the external world and its objects were what they appeared to be and could be captured as such through the faculty of sight, what one ate, moreover, physically and morally embodied their soul, for food, God, and nature were linked to the 'natural' hierarchy of the world, divided as it was, among other ways, between those who worked the lands and those who did not.[22]

Consider, too, natural law, that law imprinted in the hearts of all by God and according to which Creation itself was governed and humans 'became civil' (see chapter three). As the law of God made intelligible to men outside direct revelation, natural law also provided a bridge, or inner connection, linking values, norms, and

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[19] Conal Condren, *Argument and authority in early modern England: the presupposition of oaths and offices* (Cambridge, 2006), pp 136, 217-23.
[20] Oberman*, The harvest of medieval theology*, pp 58-68.
[21] Charles Taylor, *Sources of the self: the origins of modern identity* (New Haven, 1988), pp 118-36.
[22] Stuart Clark, *Vanities of the eye: vision in early modern European culture* (Oxford, 2007). On the moral ontologies of food, see Susan Flavin, 'Food, drink and society in sixteenth-century Ireland: cultures of consumption' in Eve Campbell, Elizabeth FitzPatrick and Audrey Horning (eds), *Becoming & belonging in Ireland c.1200-1600* (Cork, 2018), pp 212-43. It is no accident that, for many commentators, as Eric Haywood put it, 'the fate of the Irish was written' not only 'in the way they spoke' but 'more than anything, perhaps', in 'the way they ate'. This was what 'made them what they were, and would continue to be'. Eric Haywood, 'Humanism's priorities and empire's prerogatives: Polydore Vergil's description of Ireland', in *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy. Section C: Archaeology, Celtic Studies, History, Linguistics, Literature*, 109 C (2009), p. 215.

'reality'.[23] Thus, if people behaved according to their own 'singularity' or 'appetite' – a common complaint in Henrician Ireland and elsewhere in this period – it constituted not a stable or autonomous ground for the 'self' but was rather a cause of concern precisely because it marked an aberration in God's well-functioning cosmos that ultimately leading to generalised disorder and potentially tyranny, especially if the disordered office-holder was the ruler or his lieutenant, as we shall see in chapters four and six.

Practises of the 'self', the work the 'self' 'did' on itself, which was the anchor of philosophy as a way of true living among Socrates and Plato, were what allowed one to come, as Foucault put it, 'face to face with the reality of Being itself'.[24] Yet the ontic landscape comprising 'self' and 'truth', and 'soul' and 'Being', underwent important transformations with the Neoplatonists and early Christians. In the first centuries of Christianity, 'truth' became localised in the deepest recesses of the soul in a novel way, no longer remaining as a force of attraction forged at the crossroads of knowledge, will, and the master's discourse per se, nor even as a guide to harmony and justice simply imprinted on the 'divine element' of one's soul, but something to uncover through confession, contemplation, and self-interpretation in absolute obedience to God.[25] If in its post-Platonic meaning, the soul was understood as a 'unique locus where all our thoughts and feelings occur', and if for Plotinus and the Neo-Platonists the soul became a point of contact between 'self' and the Platonic Idea, now conceived as the mind of transcendent God, St Augustine gave this ontic landscape a decisively Christian identity: for the Church Father, truth was not in the 'self' but in God; through memory, the soul came to God, came to its own self-knowledge, but memory moved the 'self' beyond 'itself', for the journey inward thrust one outside of oneself and into the bosom of God. God, then, was closer to the 'self' than 'it' was to 'itself' because the activities of intelligence, enquiry, and thought were guided by God within while God remained infinitely above and beyond the 'self'.[26]

Two examples from Irish political-theological discourse suffice for now to demonstrate the analogical universe in which souls, the good, and God were linked ontologically within a common canvas bridging celestial and temporal order.

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[23] On natural law, see Anthony Pagden, *The fall of natural man: the American Indian and the origins of comparative ethnology* (Cambridge, 1982), pp 61-4.

[24] Michel Foucault, *The government of self and other*: *lectures at the College de France 1982-83*, ed. Frederic Gros, trans. Graham Burchell (Picador, 2011) pp 255, 373.

[25] Michel Foucault, *L'origine de l'herméneutique de soi. Conférences prononcées à Dartmouth College, 1980* (Paris, 2013), pp 50-1, 65-91.

[26] Taylor, *Sources of the self*, pp 187-98, esp. 187-90.

(Conscience was another important anchor here; it will be dealt with below). First, the anonymous 'State of Ireland' in 1515 brought this ontological continuum in clear relief when diagnosing the ills of the land and its nefarious effects on the common weal. On 'coign and livery' as an abominable extortion that was 'contrary to the law of God and man', the author was explicit that its continued use by lord deputies was 'a great jeopardy and peril of his soul'. Second, when discussing the failures of the pastorate in Ireland to care for the souls of the flock, the tract resorted to an analogy of labour – specifically a theological analogy of the plough, or the pastorate of souls, as spiritual labour: priests focused more on the 'plough rustical' than the 'plough celestial' and 'tend much more to the lucre of that plough, whereof growth slander and rebuke, then to lucre of the souls, that is the plough of Christ. And to the transitory lucre of that rustical plough they tender so much, that little or nought their chargeth to lucre to Christ, the souls of their subjects, of whom they bear the cure, by preaching and teaching of the word of God, and by their good example giving'.[27] The second example is from a 1533 report on the state of Ireland penned by then master of the rolls, John Alen. Concerned with what the proper order between king, governor, and office-holders should be in order to maximise the benefit to the common weal and ensure the land remained perpetually in good order, Alen condemned the practise of appointing native-born governors, for 'it tendeth to the nutriment and daily increase of customable and most detestable sins, as well so the great and high danger of Christian souls innumerable, as to the peril, I fear, of the King, having the order and governance over them, before God'.[28] Both the 'State' and Alen's tract were concerned, ultimately, with God's order, and in each tract, such 'things' and qualities as souls, pastoral care, 'coign and livery', and the offices and *persona* – or 'selves' – of priests and the governor were all deeply moral phenomena and indices of the Good as both related to and reflective of the divine government of the world.

Thus, the structures of 'self-hood' canvassed in such intellectual formations pervaded Tudor political theology in England and Ireland. 'Reason', 'heart', 'appetites', 'virtue', 'truth', the 'remembrance' of one's allegiance and obedience – all such commonplaces of Tudor discourse constituted bridges between 'self' and 'world', bridges that, combined with the things in the individual and the world that they bound, manifested God's rational order. We may, then, propose the following: the manner in

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[27] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 15-6.
[28] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 178.

which Christianity correlated true life, obedience to the other, life in the other world, and themes of the true life as 'other' or otherworldly or 'unworldly' life (or 'other life' being the access to truth) either here on earth or the Kingdom of God thereafter, along with the 'ontic order' described here, together formed one of the more primordial bedrocks of 'true' Christian subject-hood in the Tudor domains and beyond. God, prince, and the Christian subject were the hierarchically correlated embodiments of God's design. Indeed, all imperatives of Tudor political theology and order referred to God's government of the world as their ontological source, for Creation canvased all into an ontological continuum that bound 'self' and 'world' in a moral-governmental relation of virtue and truth that constituted the beginning and end of the Christian crown subject, or the norms and tenets by which such a subject was constituted as aligning with or deviating from 'the good' as rooted in God's providential order. For providence was also a matter of 'self-knowledge'. As the canon of Merton Priory, Thomas Paynell put it in his translation of Agrepatus, *The precepts teaching a prince or a noble estate his duty* (1529): 'we mortal men specially are taught and instructed with holy scripture to know our self. For who that knoweth himself, shall know God…he is God's servant, that doth nothing contrary to God's commandment'.[29] In late 1544, councillor Sir William Wise alleged that Lady Power did not seem to intend repaying Lord Deputy Anthony St Leger 'the galloglass money' she owed, adding that 'I pray God give her grace to know herself, or your lordship opportunity to reform her'. Two years later, it was the king's general solicitor and Butler client, Walter Cowley, then imprisoned in the Tower of London, who declared to 'love and praise almighty God for the punishment and free grace to know myself.'[30]

2.2: Governance, *imperium*, and dominion: the corporate Crown and the commanding of Tudor rule

Let us now outline the lineaments of another foundation of Tudor political theology: the fiction of the 'Crown' and the government of self and other under God as, first, the matrix of command, order, and dominion underpinning Tudor, papal, and divine sovereignty in Ireland; and, second, as the funnel through which the moral-

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[29] Agrepatus, *The precepts teaching a prince or a noble estate his duty*, trans., Thomas Paynell, (London, 1529), sig. Aiiii v.
[30] *CSPI*, no. 672; T.N.A., SP 60/12, f. 125v.

governmental figures of 'king', 'counsellor', and 'crown subject' were produced. In Ireland, as in England, that power was invested in office, which was both a 'room' – to use a term frequently deployed in contemporary correspondence – in an administrative sense (a king, a cleric, a counsellor, a clerk, a sheriff, and so forth) as well as the very substance of subject-hood, an hermeneutic template for defining the parameters of good and evil within which subject-hood acquired its status, duties, and obligations. Yet the Crown's composite parts – king and body politic, the corporate and public, and physical and private, dimensions of the polity – were not only a theory of sovereignty, of the body politic in its transient and permanent components. It was expressive of an ontology and of human and divine praxis in the world. The glue that held all together was 'government'.

What 'governance' signified was crucial to contemporary understandings of 'reform', crown service, and their relation to the 'common weal' under the government of God and King. In Henrician Ireland, 'sovereignty' and 'government' were correlated terms – and the pluralistic paradigm of 'mediation' and 'delegation' was the foil through which their mutual referentiality found expression in the terms of service and subject-hood. As conduits for *imperium*, they underpinned and animated not only sovereignty and spiritual-civil order, but also service and subject-hood, triangulating all in specific relations between God, prince, and subject. It is from this premise that, as far as *persona*-in-office as vessels for divine and human will and command are concerned, we can grasp the interplay between transcendent and immanent majesty in God, king, and their ministers through the service they performed and in the rhetoric and policies of 'reform' and conquest that shaped Tudor thinking about and activity in Ireland.

Throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the word 'land' had come to embody an ideal of corporate community rooted in English notions of liberty and the constitutional peculiarities of Ireland, positing divisions as it did between 'English' and 'Irish. The latter point will be explored in the following chapter. For now, it suffices to note that, by Henry VIII's reign, then, the languages of government in Ireland had long been linked to public concern, corporate forms of authority and community, and the 'impersonal crown' and the *corpus mysticum* in particular.[31]

As a political-theological 'organico-abstraction', the 'Crown' was a 'composite body' comprising the parliamentary estates with the king as their head, the lot forming

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[31] Crooks, 'The structure of politics in theory and practise, 1210-1541', esp. pp 445-50, 452-3, 458-61.

the 'body political and mystical' that was the realm. Another, 'vertical' 'corporate'
dimension to this political-theological arrangement complemented these 'horizontal'
ones: *Dignitas*, or as Ernst Kantorowicz put it, the 'Phoenix-like one-man corporation
encompassing in the present bearer of the Crown the whole genus, the past and future
incumbents of the royal Dignity'.[32] The political theology of the 'Crown' had its
precursors in theological and canonist corporation thought, whereby the common
ecclesiastical confusion between the 'mystical Body of Christ' and the 'mystical Body
of the Church' along with the idea of the 'Lord's Two Bodies' ('the natural and
mystical, personal and corporate, individual and collective bodies of Christ') eventually
came to condition analogous forms of 'corporational' thought and perpetual majesty in
the civil domain.[33] The organological metaphor boasted different strands in Ireland: the
land as either 'corporate of itself' or as a 'member', commonly used to describe
England's status as a *corpus mysticum*.[34] Such homologies, of course, not only
reproduced the tense correlated unity-in-difference of the Trinity; the changes in the
statuses and jurisdictional scope of the 'spiritual' and the 'temporal' they marked, were
all the more consequential, as we argued in chapter one, once Henry VIII became the
spiritual Head of the Church on earth under Christ. The king's profit and honour was
coeval with that of the common weal of his subjects; his princely wisdom, bounty, and
clemency were morally distinct from his natural person yet of a piece with his natural
disposition in so far as these were the requirements – duties and obligations – of his
kingly office. The king, moreover, ruled and governed his subjects, while parliament
was, as the highest court of the realm and the representative of the people, an essential
instrument in the functioning and legitimacy of that rule. The power that the king
enacted and which sustained it in its functioning was circular: power emanated from the
king, flowed to subjects, relayed through the people in parliament, the statutes of the
realm, and law, reverberating back to the king, who was, in practise and in theory, and
depending on circumstance and whom you asked, both absolute and limited, above yet

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[32] Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The king's two bodies: a study in medieval political theology* (Princeton, 1957),
pp 447-9.
[33] Kantorowicz, *The king's two bodies*, chap. 5, quote on p. 199. On the theologies of corpus and its
relation to the Trinity, ecclesiology, and Eucharistic thinking, see also Henri de Lubac, *Corpus mysticum:
l'eucharistie et l'Église au moyen âge* (1944) (Paris, 2009). On the central importance of ecclesiology
and canon law in the history of 'church' and 'state' government, see also Brian Tierney, *Religion, law,
and the growth of constitutional thought, 1150-1650* (Cambridge, 1982).
[34] Crooks, 'The structure of politics in theory and practise, 1210-1541', pp 460-1.

constrained by law and other corporate bodies or estates.[35] As Thomas Starkey put it in 1536, 'from the princes and rulers of the state cometh all laws order and policy, all justice, virtue and honesty to the rest of his body politic'.[36] And English constitutionalism, of course, had God as its fount, the transcendent yet immanent power and truth relayed to the world through law, custom, and grace.

While by the seventeenth century, the terms 'government' and 'sovereignty' had more prominently entered the lexicon of moral-governmental vocabulary in Ireland,[37] such was not the case in Henry VIII's reign. The word 'government' was sparsely used, sovereignty never at all. *Imperium* or 'jurisdiction' was the term for the latter, dominion being a close cognate that also carried connotations of possession, inheritance, and property.[38] As for 'government', I have come across it on only three occasions: first, in Thomas Cromwell's *Ordinances for the government of Ireland* (1534); second, in a piece from the 1530s on the king's title to Ireland according to the Chronicles, in which the purpose of the Anglo-Norman invasion was described as 'To set the people of the land in government of god's laws'; and third, when the council of England, in 1546, wrote to Lord Deputy Anthony St Leger and the Irish council that the 'King's Majesty being very desirous, for sundry causes of great importance, to be fully and truly advertised of certain matters touching the state, policy, and government of that His Majesty's realm'.[39]

The commonplace term, rather, was 'governance', and, harnessing older stands of medieval thought in Ireland, England, and beyond, it encompassed a range of interrelated meanings all centred around order and command; as Aquinas put it, 'to

[35] The fiction of 'king-in-parliament', as it was called, could, indeed, accommodate the whims of a more assertive king with absolutist tendencies and the 'royalists' who defended such a view of kingship and the royal prerogative against those who invested parliament with greater primacy than they. On monarchy more generally, see J. H. Burns, *Lordship, kingship, and empire: the idea of monarchy, 1400-1525* (Oxford, 1992).
[36] T.F. Mayer (ed.), *Thomas Starkey: Dialogue between Pole and Lupset* (London, 1989), p. 33.
[37] John Davies, for instance, spoke of the Tudors never having established 'true sovereignty' over Ireland, or of the 'looseness of civil government' in the land. John Davies, *Discoverie of the True Causes why Ireland was never entirely Subdued, nor brought under Obedience of the Crowne of England, until the Beginning of his Majesties Happie Raigne* (London, 1612). Or consider a certain Robert Rothe's description of Butler in 1616 as bearing 'out his honours and the charge of his government very worthily'. *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 146, in note.
[38] On this issue in European, imperial, and Atlantic contexts, see Patricia Seed, *Ceremonies of possession in Europe's conquest of the New World, 1492-1640* (Cambridge, 1995); David Armitage, *The ideological origins of the British Empire* (Cambridge, 2000); Ken MacMillan, *Sovereignty and possession in the English New World: the legal foundations of empire, 1576-1640* (Cambridge, 2006).
[39] B.L., Lansdowne MS 159, f. 83v; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 566.

govern is to guide that which is governed to its appointed end'.[40] Thus, a governor's command could govern or make one govern themselves; it could require that one govern in a 'politique fashion' and with 'good justice' or 'virtue',[41] to be made conformable to the laws and governance of the king or the common weal.[42] 'Administration', too, as in the 'administration of divine matters', or 'charge', had a similar meaning, and was often coupled or interchangeable with 'governance' or the command or imperative to 'govern'.[43] To govern, then, meant essentially to order, in the sense of both to command and to fix things in their proper place – from one's heart, mind, soul, and conscience, to one's service and conformity, obedience and 'civility', to the revenues of the land, the distribution of property, the operations of the courts, to the language one spoke, the clothing they wore, and the customs they lived by.[44] If governance was something you 'did', moreover, it was also something which you had, as were *imperium*, dominion, or rule; these were possessions or inheritances 'over' people, common weal, or church.[45] One could have, for example, 'the governance, guiding, and leading of all others', or have in 'his possession and governance almost the whole country', or be tasked with 'hav[ing] the charge and governance of the king's subjects' and defend them against invasions by the Irish'; similarly, it could be recommended that garrisons be in 'the governance of such as his majesty shall appoint to the rule of that country'.[46] It was a form of leadership and guidance, then, that intersected with the Christian pastorate as a form of spiritual-civil power over souls.[47] 'Governance' was also closely related to the king's 'honour' and 'profit' as imperatives that were indistinguishable from the common weal or the office of the king – such was

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[40] On governance and *imperium* in medieval Ireland, see Crooks, 'The structure of politics in theory and practise, 1210-1541', pp 450-1, 454-5.

[41] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 52; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 59; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 60; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 90.

[42] *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 526.

[43] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 196; The point is also made, for instance, in Bishop of Winchester, Stephen Gardiner's tract , *De vera obedientia* (1535), in Pierre Janelle (ed.), *Obedience in church and state: three political tracts by Stephen Gardiner* (Cambridge, 1930), pp 109, 111.

[44] References to order oneself or be ordered according to the sovereign's command and will, or to recalcitrant subjects' refusal to order themselves, or to the 'ordering of the king's affairs' in Ireland and the 'good ordering and establishment of the country', abound in government correspondence under Henry VIII. *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 164, 166; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 245-6; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 249*; SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 294-5; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 298; SP *Henry VIII*, ii, p. 520; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 34; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 58; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, pp 87-8; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 135; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, pp 161-3.

[45] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 376; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 414; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 442; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 545; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 346; L.P.L., Carew MS 602, f. 150.

[46] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 308; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 414; T.N.A., SP 60/7, f. 134r; T.N.A., SP 60/11, f. 113r. See also the administration's note in 1544 that master of the king's ordnance, John Travers, had 'taken upon his charge the chief garrison and rule of Leinster'. T.N.A., SP 60/11, f. 103r.

[47] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 414.

what the Crown's composite parts operationalized, expressive as these were of the ambiguous perpetuity and impermanence of the corporate and mystical, personal and natural, bodies of the king. Indeed, nowhere was this clearer than when governance as something possessed and exercised was explicitly something to be delegated, as we shall see in chapter six.

Conscience, too, as a link of sorts between reason and the will connected to the *synderesis*, or the repository of God's law within all humans, was never far from the parameters of governance as a salvific guide, judge, and spur for action.[48] If Archbishop Thomas Cranmer's clerical informant is be trusted on the content of the letter his master Cardinal Ghinucci sent to Seville regarding the content of Manus O'Donnell's letter to Pope Paul III in 1537, the Ulster lord, in his appeal for papal aid against the English crown, spoke of how while the king never 'put governance among them…they have lived and do live without order, with great charge of conscience'. For it was for the 'discharge of his soul', that O'Donnell pledged to work with the 'Holy Father' and desired 'in God's name to look in his heart, to give him aid and sorrow for help to uphold the Holy See Apostolic'.[49]

While conscience continued its medieval association with the jurisdiction of equity courts as an arbiter of land-related litigation,[50] in the wake of the break with Rome and the tumultuous convulsions of the horizons of moral governance in Ireland that followed,[51] it also became a renewed governmental imperative, reflecting fifteenth-century shifts in England, when the natural law terms of reason, conscience, and equity began to more decisively inflect the terms of princely order, obedience, and legitimacy.[52] As a matter of good government linked with reason, equity, justice, and

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[48] For a general overview of conscience as a point of contact between God, morality, and action, see Timothy C. Potts, *Conscience in medieval philosophy* (Cambridge, 1980), pp 10, 32-60; Linda Hogan, *Confronting the truth: conscience in the Catholic tradition* (New York, 2000), chaps. 2 and 3; Stefania Tutino, *Uncertainty in post-Reformation Catholicism: a history of probabilism* (Oxford, 2018), chap. 1, esp. pp 5-9.

[49] T.N.A., SP 1/128, ff 66r, 66v-67r.

[50] Lord Deputy Grey and council in November 1536, for instance, spoke of how while Cromwell had requested that the council dispatch Lady Skeffintgon comfortably after her husband's death, the latter's debts were too large so that they could not, 'of our conscience', 'discharge her otherwise than we did'. *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 396. See also Bishop Nicholas Comyn of Waterford and William Walsh's letter to Cromwell from 1537, in which they relate their findings to Cromwell's command that they 'determine by equity and conscience the matter between his servant David Shyeghan and Sir Alexander Gough, priest, of Youghal, for certain lands and tenements there'. T.N.A., SP 60/5, ff 123r-124v. Other examples of conscience's relation to the just distribution of wealth and property, or land assessments, see, from 1546, *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 486; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 567; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 576.

[51] See chapters 5-8 in particular.

[52] Gwilym Dodd, 'Reason, conscience and equity: bishops as the king's judges in later medieval England', in *History* (2014), pp 213-40.

God, following the dictates of one's conscience as a crown officer was a duty:
Archbishop of Dublin, George Browne, reporting to Cromwell in early 1538 on the
activities of papal supporters in the Pale, declared that:

> But if so traitorous a fact, and like flagicious iniquities, should pass,
> neither justly examined nor condignly punished, being committed
> while the King's Grace's High Commissioners been there, seeing
> these men so ready and prompt to admit the Bishop of Rome's letters,
> and so sturdy and flinthy against our Prince's power; what will men
> think? I cannot in my conscience, considering mine oath and
> allegiance, let such enormities escape, but just make relation, that the
> King's Majesty may have sure knowledge how unfaithful a sort he
> hath in this land; and namely, the Spiritualty, which seduces the rest.[53]

'Reform', in other words, depended on conscience, and this could be an individual's
conscience as much as a 'corporate' conscience.[54] If Cromwell's *Ordinances for the
government of Ireland* (1534) stated that the 'jeopardising' of one's life 'in the King's
service, and defence of the country' was 'consonant to all reason, conscience, and
equity', Alen insisted three years later that, 'if we may not have all our judges
Englishmen natural, for likelihood of indifference, that we have on grave person of high
learning and substantial understanding in the law, with well approved conscience,
which shall be only the chief justice, informer, and moderator of all the other judges,
but also an head counsellor, deviser, and orderer in all our Sovereign Lord's weighty
affairs'.[55] It was also a matter of a well-ordered administration, to the extent that, on the
one hand, speaking against those with a 'true heart' could offend conscience,[56] and, on
the other, even suggesting to defy the king's deputy was enough to trouble one's
conscience, however justified they may have felt in doing so (and Alen certainly
thought it was in 1546, even if his scruple may have been mere casuistical lip-service to

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[53] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 540-1.
[54] Dennis R. Klinck has called the latter 'an impersonal or disembodied notion' and has shown its
centrality to Chancery jurisdiction. Dennis R. Klinck, *Conscience, equity and the court of Chancery in
early modern England* (Montreal, 2010), p. 17.
[55] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 212; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 483-4.
[56] As Thomas Agard put it in April 1538, 'If I should except the Lord Deputy's house, I might do, for the
form of speaking, but yet then I should offend my conscience, in speaking against it'. *SP Henry VIII*, ii,
p. 567.

the demands of hierarchy, unity, and order).[57] Similarly, matters of conscience entered the fray as an alibi for innocence for Irish lords who wished to dispel accusations of misdemeanour, such as when Ego O'Donnell, writing to Grey in August 1537, relayed that, 'for the discharge of his conscience', he had told his father to avoid the company of a woman he 'kept…against God's laws and right' and that it was because of his concern and advice, she later admitted, that she complained about him to the king.[58] Conscience, then, as that other 'ontic' bridge to God alongside reason and the soul, was an index of restraint and moral rectitude as tenets of service and the obedient and conformable crown subject.

Overall, then, 'governance', was an 'office' that prescribed duties and obligations, one that one inhabited or was 'appointed' to[59] as well as an action that a *persona*-in-office performed over self and others: one governed themselves but also had or took others under their governance, or put others in 'peaceable governance' – such, indeed, was the aim of 'reform'.[60] A realm or person could, moreover, be 'misgoverned' or be in a state of 'evil governance', which ranged from imperfectly embodying the terms of Tudor subject-hood to violating the laws of God.[61] The entire edifice of 'governance', indeed, fit under the political-theological rubric of order 'before God'.[62] *Imperium* and 'government', and therefore 'reform' and 'common weal', were also the space for the divine will to makes its presence felt. All fell, in other words, however indirectly, within the purview of providence. In 1520, the earl of Surrey thanked God for the peace currently reigning in the land, adding that he was at 'war with no man of great power, save O'Neill and his adherents, in to whose country, with God's grace, I will enter the 11 day of this month, and intent not to leave him, unto the time he be ordered, and I will command him to be'.[63] Tudor sovereignty, in other words, was about the proper ordering of men as the execution of one's office at the behest of the sovereign's command under God.

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[57] Thus, upon devising a book against Lord Deputy St Leger in 1546, a book to which Browne and others contributed, Alen stated that 'On my faith and duty to the King's Majesty, at the first invention and framing of that book, my heart and conscience grudged much thereat, and I was own utterly bent to have repaired to my Lord Deputy and Council, and discharged myself thereof; fearing that upon the information and promise of others, though they affirmed as they did to me that the council would testify my book true, that I should be discovered'. *SP Henry VIII*, iii, pp 579-80.

[58] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 472.

[59] One letter, for instance, speaks of who needed to be 'appointed to the governance' of the land. *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 196.

[60] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 51; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 129; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 376.

[61] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 342; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 550.

[62] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 178; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 194.

[63] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 38.

2.3: The reign of providence

God was the beginning and end of Creation, of order, of history itself. In the words of Alexandra Walsham, belief 'in the ultimate ordering of the universe by a supreme supernatural being or sublime overriding force was firmly entrenched' was an amorphous phenomenon, a 'diffuse body of opinions, individual components of which could assume varying colours and forms according to the social context and cultural arena in which they were invoked and employed'.[64] God as Lord of History, as the sovereign who willed humanity across providential tides, was in effect an expression of the Christian problem of government. Although historians have noted the important role new kinds of providential and apocalyptic thinking among the Irish, English-Irish, and New English in Elizabeth's reign played in shaping their responses to and understandings of changing circumstances and their own communal fates in which they were entwined, strikingly little attention has been paid to early Tudor Ireland.[65] That the whole world was providentially ordered as a reflection of God's will, and that all worldly authority was thus intimately part of God's providential design were, of course, revitalised themes in early Lutheran and evangelical treatises, from Melanchthon in Wittenberg to William Tyndale and John Barnes in England.[66] Yet providence also had more prosaic dimensions. What follows here is an alternative history of the more mundane dimensions of providentialist thinking, namely, the range of ways providence figured in notions of 'self' and action in the world, in ecclesiastical and civil life, and in the major currents and dynamics of Anglo-Irish encounter, before the dual thrusts of confessionalisation and generalised conquest profoundly altered the political-theological, legal, and socio-cultural landscapes of Ireland. That men were vessels of their own and God's power and agency in the world was a widely held presupposition in the sixteenth century, and Anglo-Irish correspondence and the Irish annals, bears this out.

The publicly proclaimed curse on Lord Offaly in November 1534 at the high cross in Dublin is an instructive place to start, for it perfectly reveals the symbiotic relationship between human and divine agencies in the context of heavenly and earthly,

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[64] Alexandra Walsham, *Providence in early modern England* (Oxford, 1999), pp 2-3.
[65] Marc Cabal, *Poets and politics: reaction and continuity in Irish poetry, 1558-1625* (Cork, 1998); Cabal, 'Providence and exile in early modern Ireland', in *IHS* 114 (1994), pp 174-88; Brendan Kane, *The politics and culture of honour in Britain and Ireland, 1541-1641* (Cambridge, 2009), p. 49; Alan Ford, 'Apocalyptic Ireland, 1580-1640', in *Irish Theological Quarterly*, 78, 2 (2013), pp 123-148.
[66] Quentin Skinner, *Foundations of modern political thought* (vol., i, Cambridge, 1978), pp 66-7.

celestial, spiritual, and civil, hierarchies. The marshal of the king's army, Sir William Skeffington tried to get the chancellor – then John Barnewall, 3rd Baron of Trimlestown – to announce that the rebel Offaly was cursed for the murder of John Alen, archbishop of Dublin, but the former refrained, demanding instead that he be counselled by men who knew the ecclesiastical jurisdictional lay of the land: he was told that he could not proclaim Offaly cursed until the dean of St. Pulcar and the prior of Christ Church made a like pronouncement, for during the 'time of *Cedi vacanti*', they were vicar generals and over-rid the chancellor's authority in such matters. The chancellor (as a royal officer), in other words, could not lawfully make public pronouncements of the sort for their legality was determined by the liturgical calendar, which bestowed certain powers upon clerics during specific windows of sacred time. When finally announced, the curse stated that

> [We] invoke and call in vengeance against the said Thomas, and every of the persons aforesaid, the celestial place of Heaven, with all the multitude of angels, that they be accursed before them, and in their sight, as spirits condemned; and the devil to stand and be in all their doings, on their right hand, and all their acts to be sinful, and not acceptable before God. Been they, and every of them, cast out from the company of Christian people, as damned creatures, and all that they shall doo, to be done in their damnable offence and sin.[67]

The whole cast of otherworldly beings, from angels to the devil, was invoked as witnesses to the 'execrable' act and placed in relation to the perpetrators' agency as opposite poles, with God and the angels on one side accursing them, and the devil as actually standing in their place, the driving force committing such abominable and sinful actions. The place where the archbishop was killed was now declared interdict on the authority of the keeper of the spiritual jurisdiction of the Metropolitan See of Dublin, the last in line in a glorious hierarchy of power starting with the authority of the 'Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, and of the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, Saint Patrick the Apostle, and Patron of Ireland, all other the Apostles, and company of Heaven, and... the authority of our Mother Holy Church'. The domains of the spiritual

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[67] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 217.

and the temporal were interwoven into the terms of earthly praxis and the jurisdictional webs of socio-political life whose fabrics a curse or excommunication irrevocably damaged in the worlds here-below and here-after. For not only the perpetrators and abettors, but any laity and cleric who ignored the interdict, not to mention all 'cities, lands, towns, castles, villages, all manner of chapels, and all other places, wherein the said cursed persons been, or any of them be, or at any time hereafter shall be, come, or resort unto', were cursed. Priests, moreover, were commanded to cease all divine services until three days after the perpetrators left the area.[68]

Law, blessedness, and iniquity as mediated by an ecclesiastical hierarchy of command were operative in people and space. The accursed carried iniquity with them as they became the very purveyors of damnation in the world, making unholy the spaces they defiled and accursed the people who helped them or later acquainted or aided them, where ever they happened to be. And it was on the authority and power of the Metropolitan See of Dublin and angels under God that not only the boundaries of the Christian community itself, but also that between holiness and iniquity and its distribution in space and among people, were determined and made into law. The non-compliant were excommunicated, and, if a cleric, were deprived of all ecclesiastical benefits. The curse banished the perpetrators from the Christian community, depriving them of all mercy except from Christ, who it was trusted, may in 'His infinite mercy...call them to grace of repentance, and amendment of this their execrable offence', and 'deleting' ['delytit] the very memory of them from the world.[69]

God, then, operated in the world in differing, scalar degrees of proximity to human beings and the *saeculum* according to prescribed norms of law, order, and conduct. Consider another case: that of war. Military campaigns against Irish and English-Irish lords – in other words, the military dimensions of Tudor 'reform' – were not the acts of men only, but a combination of human activity blessed and guided by God. Government correspondence is replete with appeals to God's protection, grace, or intervention in all crown affairs, whether to invoke God as being on 'their' side against the crown's 'Irish enemies', to enlist divine aid against malefactors, to thank God and prince in tandem for the successes of the crown's officers and subjects, or to attribute ultimate responsibility for both their security in times of war and rebellion as well as the

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[68] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 218.
[69] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 218-9.

land's peace and quietness to divine will.[70] Even the protection of highways and the resulting well-being of subjects was also a matter of providence: the Dublin administration in late 1544, for instance, described the highway between Limerick and Waterford as a dangerous place put under the charge of Tege McBrien through James fitz John Fitzgerald, earl of Desmond, 'so as we know, thanks be to God, your poor subjects may reasonably pass'.[71]

It was also matter of one's truth, since God became the ultimate arbiter that divided true from false subjects. God, after all, actively promoted English rule in Ireland. In the midst of Offaly's rebellion, the Irish council informed Henry VIII of the 'rebel and traitor Offaly's' formidable force: 'Howbeit, if it had not pleased God to preserve us, it were to be marvelled that we had no more slain'.[72] The same sentiment was expressed by councillors Gerald Aylmer and Alen in late December 1535, with an added prognostication that hinged on the truth of service: 'Thanks be to God, the king's cause hath taken effect and furtherance, beyond the expectation of many. And, God willing, if we be not severed by false means, greater things shall be done'.[73] William Wise expressed the point succinctly in 1546: 'God send good success to them that meaneth well and small power to shrews'.[74] If God ensured the safety of obedient Tudor subjects, God also wreaked havoc upon the king's enemies, such as when 'the bastard Geraldines' killed each other 'by the permission of God', as Lord Deputy Leonard Grey and councillor William Brabazon reported in May 1537.[75]

Praising God was a spectacle, but in different ways depending on the audience and the nature of the divine intervention in question. Crown officers' praises for God found its formal culmination in a liturgy of the divinely ordained righteousness of English rule and order in Ireland that had its own designated holy spaces. The mayor and aldermen of Dublin beseeched Cromwell in late January 1538 not to suppress Christ Church Cathedral, for, among other things, during '*times of victory and triumph*, processions are made, and '*Te Deum laudamus*' customable is sung, to the laud and praise of God, and the honour of our said Princes and Princesses'.[76] It was also up to

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[70] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 80-1; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 549-550; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 547; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 355; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 357; T.N.A., SP 60/7, f. 14v; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 83; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 240; T.N.A., SP 60/11, f. 158r; T.N.A., SP 60/11, f. 112B; T.N.A., SP 60/12, f. 85r.
[71] *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 505.
[72] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 236.
[73] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 295.
[74] T.N.A., SP 60/12, f. 7r.
[75] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 439.
[76] Emphasis added. *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 545.

God's grace to use earthly vessels to set examples of obedience and order to the recalcitrant. In the lead-up to Conn Bacach O'Neill's formal creation as earl of Tyrone in 1542, Lord Deputy Anthony St. Leger was hopeful: 'I trust in God', he declared, that 'this submission of O'Neill will be a spectacle for all the Irishmen of Ireland', who were certain to fall in line when required to do the same.[77] Later, if the judge and by then master of the rolls, Sir Thomas Cusack, in late March 1546, saw God's work in the currently obedient state of the land, his various appeals to providence took an interesting twist: as a rhetorical or persuasive strategy in the rivalry between James Butler, earl of Ormond, and St Leger, whose rule in Ireland Cusack was defending and praising, it co-opted the Irish as mere objects in the bickering and conflict of a divided administration, turning them into mere jubilant mouthpieces for St. Leger's greatness. As he put it, he considered no man of 'better conformity than those Irish lords', the earls of Thomond and Tyrone, the lords of Upper Ossory, O'Connor, O'Molloy, who helped with defence as was required from time to time until the return of St. Leger, 'weeping and lamenting' his departing, given his lordship commendations and praises, 'in thanking God of his coming among them'.[78]

Providence, then, was an awning for entwined sacral and human agencies enfolded into each other in the world and as such, it was a transregionally contested site of sovereignty and allegiance, especially after, first, Offaly, during his rebellion in 1534-5, cast his die in the imperial and papal camps against the crown, and, second, the ramifications of the royal supremacy in 1536, when England and Ireland's positions in the dynastic and spiritual order and struggles of Christendom were changing. Fearing in mid-1539 the machinations of the Geraldines, the Scots, and Rome as well as the 'papist' character of the country, Alen – by then lord chancellor – grew concerned with the prospect of invasion from the north, exclaiming that unless 'God convert the minds of our adversaries, we be in much peril'.[79] Several months later, Cowley expressed the royalist take on God's providential design most clearly when he described Grey's recent activities in the Pale and proposed sending a royal army against Desmond, O'Neill, O'Donnell, and the other Irish they were bound to against the king. 'Thanks to God', Grey, 'with the only aid of God', and Dublin, Drogheda, and a few of the English Pale, defeated the Irishmen and Scots. As for the 'Geraldine League', with 'God's grace', a

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[77] *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 352.
[78] T.N.A., SP 60/12 f. 95r.
[79] *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 137.

royal army will 'not only redound to the King's high honour, but within a few years redub His Grace's charges, with a perpetual glory to His Highness, and such a revenue, as not only may bear the charges of the land, but a yearly treasure to His Grace's coffers.[80]

There are important theologies of the will and of God's relation to it inhering in such views; we will explore such issues at length in chapter five. For now, consider, too, how the 'general reformation' of Ireland was itself thought of in providential terms. That English transgression of proper rule was a matter of divine ire was an idea with a long pedigree in Ireland.[81] By the sixteenth century, however, it was through the language of 'reformation' and, as we shall see in chapter eight, prophecy that such ideas were largely expressed, linking the fates and troubled or hoped-for sovereignties of diverse *de jure*, *de facto*, or would-be rulers across Ireland, Wales, Scotland, and England. For now, it suffices to address the first half of the providential equation: 'reformation'. By 1535, Cowley was hopeful about the prospects of the 'general reformation' of the land, which he claimed was 'never so nigh to take full effect, if God continue to the King in that purpose'. Yet Cowley also explicitly tied this providentially-ordained reformation to proper service: God's continuation of the king's purpose required that those 'in authority here to apply their policy, hearts, and courages thereto, and not to work in inward grudges, studying to hurt or prejudice other; wherein your oft exhortations shall much bote. If every of them apply their own charge, it shall be most convenient'.[82] The reformation of Ireland was also matter of providence for St Leger, even if he occasionally expressed it in banal or commonplace terms, such as when, while commissioner in 1537, he declared that 'trust[ed] in God we shall at one return leave this country in better cast they it hath been any time this hundredth passed…'.[83]

The interplay between God and an array of human agents in the cause of 'reform' was most clearly expressed by Cromwell's client in Ireland, Francis Harbart, in the spring of 1536. As he recounted, the land was in such peace and quietness since

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[80] *SP Henry VIII*, iii, pp 145, 147.
[81] James Yonge, Dublin clerk and client to the 'White Earl' of Ormond, in the early fifteenth century, for instance, had considered it a truism verifiable by history itself: 'That God punishes them that chasten not their subjects, I think it appears many times by diverse English captains of Ireland in the past and present, whose negligence in not punishing their nations and subjects have destroyed themselves, their nations, and their lands'. *Secreta secretorum*, p. 44.
[82] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 332.
[83] L.P.L., Carew MS 602, f. 107v.

Offaly's capture, 'whereof laud praise and honour be on to God, and on the our most noble Prince. For the keeping of His Grace's army here, is that makes the peace so well to be kept; for, and the Irish men had strength against us, there were no trust in their promises, when they might see advantage'. 'I trust in God', he continued, 'that my lord deputy will do on to the king's grace good service, for he is both valiant and quick, and forward in doing of his service, and painful'. With that said, Co. Kildare was completely wasted, 'But would God, that it would please the king's highness to send Englishmen for to inhabit here; then I would not doubt, about his grace would have here a good country, and also on to his grace's profit, for on to that, there is no way to the reformation of this land'.[84] How 'reform', order, war, and 'civility' in the guise of appeals to Irish untrustworthiness (see chapter three) and the necessity of divinely-approved English settlement were entangled in the imperatives of service in the king's cause under God's providence could not be in clearer relief.

Yet the king's men in Ireland were not always so hopeful. As Grey and the councillors put it in April 1537, 'But for these 200 years, and more, such hath been the miserable chance to this land, that whensoever the Prince was best minded to the reformation hereof, having time and all things never so propice thereto, some chance happed, which was the let thereof; and seldom hath it been seen, that service don here hath been acceptably taken; so as, of likelihood, the time appointed by God for the reformation of this land is not yet come'.[85] True, or 'acceptable', service, here, was curiously untethered from God's ordained reformation of the land. Whether the crown should undertake a 'reformation' or 'conquest' of Ireland was, of course, a matter of logistics, circumstance, and human affairs and action: it was precisely the question Cromwell himself pondered in mid-1535 soon after Offaly's revolt had been squashed.[86] Yet, by linking the present as a time when an unprecedented degree of acceptable service was performed to the inkling that such a time was nevertheless unpropitious for the general reformation of the land, the administration categorically separated human action from the fulfilment of God's plans in a supreme nominalist

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[84] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 307-8.
[85] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 430.
[86] T.N.A., SP 60/2, f. 83r.

move. They expounded, in other words – and outside a Calvinist cadence – nothing short of an Augustinian maxim: God's absolute sovereignty over the world.[87]

All the same, a position seemingly between these two poles could be expressed. As Alen wrote in his 'A note of the state of Ireland with a device for the same' (1546):

> Perchance it may be said to me, it is no hurt while these men live, and my lord deputy (in whom they have great affiance) rule there, they will keep touch. I pray God send it, but I doubt it much, *and I think he does himself*. Yet grant it to follow so is this a good policy for the king to hazard his realm on such wise, as either the governor failing (and per chance every other shall not be of such wit and experience as he is), or the subjects, which never persevered any while longer than they were in fear of the sword digressing his grace must begin a new charge or conquest.[88]

Not evincing the kind of resignation Grey expressed in 1537, but also not as wistful as Cowley, St Leger, and others, Alen partook in both: an awareness that the king's subjects needed to be true and steadfast in their pursuit of king's cause and the reformation of the land combined with a more pessimistic realisation that human contingencies were difficult barriers to surmount, although how he then related these to providence differed from Grey. For Alen – and as we shall see in chapter five, casting a grave doubt on the post-1541 terms of Tudor sovereignty in Ireland – not only men, but even God doubted that the Irish would be in order, and it was this dual divine-human disillusionment with the prospect of the Irish becoming obedient and ordered by their own power, that necessitated a new conquest.

The space of the *saeculum* – or world – then, as much as the domain of God's action, were not uniform. The horizons of the *saeculum* were not universally demarcated by any strict separation between profane and sacred but were themselves enfolded in the terms of sacral intervention in earthly life. The crux was the providentially inflected parameters of good governance and conduct and related expectations of the success or failure of war and 'reform'. Occasionally, God acted in

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[87] On Augustine's subordination of humanity, the *saeculum*, and history to God's absolute sovereignty, see Karl Löwith, *Meaning in history: the theological implications of the philosophy of history* (Chicago, 1949), pp 169-170.

[88] Emphasis added. T.N.A., SP 60/11, f. 157r.

concert with humans, serving as the final arbiter of a battle waged, or of an action pursed to 'reform' or obstruct the Irish, or to advance the king's cause, order, or revenues. Other times, human action was at odds with God's design. 'even the 'will' – to anticipate a later chapter – was equally subject to the poles of God's providence as the place of free human action relative to the working-out of God's design in the world. What was never doubted, however, was God's presence behind all events and actions.

2.4: 'Reform' and the common weal

Tudor 'reform' and the common weal were thoroughly providential in their make-up, differentially tethered to Creation as moral entities or pursuits. To act in the name of 'reform' or the 'common weal' or good of the land, tied as these were to the king's honour and royal duty, was to serve king and God as a Christian crown subject; the 1524 indenture between Piers Butler and the earl of Kildare, for instance, explicitly identified the pacifying of their feud with the king's honour, God's pleasure, and the common weal of the land.[89] The 'common weal' and its 'reform' was another index of royal governance suffused in God's Creation, the web in which the modalities of rulership and lay and spiritual subject-hood and service were constituted, whatever their differentiated position on a hierarchy of estates and their mutual obligations to each other to ensure the proper functioning of the Christian community.

The year 1537, however, was a turning point. Not only was it then that proposals to elevate the constitutional status of Ireland from a lordship to a kingdom were first made. It was also the year when the discourse of the common weal grew closer to its humanist counterpart in England. The result was the (re)transformation of the worldly and rhetorical sites of order, power, and governance in which relations between sovereign, God, and subject, and their respective statuses vis-à-vis the corporate, spiritual, and civil dimensions of Romano-Christian legal and monarchical thought and terms of association, found anchor and expression. Yet what exactly was the 'common weal' that the crown and its servants were obligated to safeguard? How Tudor officers in Ireland understood the 'common weal' is the area most illustrative of both the overlap and gap between Irish moral-governmental discourse and typical 'humanist' 'commonwealth' talk in England and beyond.

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[89] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 105.

Among crown officials and Palesmen, 'common weal', 'common wealth', 'publique weal' or simply 'weal' represented a profit, good, or benefit that was common to all, and it encompassed matters of land tenure and use, royal revenues and proper rule, war, faction, and peace, and the imperatives of allegiance and obedience, conformity and 'civility', and service. A few representative examples will suffice. The anonymous 'State of Ireland' (1515) outlined the perceived prevailing disorders in the realm and their causes, identifying a handful of areas in need of 'reform': crown relations with the Irish lordships, the church, English governing practises in Ireland, and the offices of governor and Irish captains. The author then proposed remedies, referring to the 'instructions in execution for the common weal', and to the subjects' 'own weal and profit'.[90] One peculiar usage of 'common weal' in the text, however, warrants further thought. The tract attached the term to the Irish chiefs: 'As often as any of the said captains maketh great cost for the common weal of his room, that cost shall be cessed equally on all his men and subjects of his room, and that is all the rent, that they payeth to their captain for their lands'.[91] From this, we can surmise that, at the very beginnings of a new birth-pang in 'reformist' moral governmental culture in Ireland, this Palesman framed Irish lordly and military activities within the language of 'common weal', and that in conceptualising a military office as having its own 'common weal', the author – paralleling the structure of the 'Crown' – brought into relief the singular, 'imperial', and corporate dimensions of both office and commonweal as abstractions, as we shall see in chapters three and six.[92]

In 1526, Cowley's 'A discourse on the cause of the evil state of Ireland' for the first time – and overlapping, perhaps, with humanist proposals and ambitions in England to overhaul the material bases of social order to productive ends – explicitly identified the regulation of corn production, cattle-raising, and the feeding of the beasts as something that 'shall be a great commodity for the common weal and ourselves'.[93] By mid-1536 – and slightly reminiscent of the conflation of 'church' and 'realm' examined in chapter one –

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[90] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 18, 23. See Bradshaw's analysis of the tract in *The Irish constitutional revolution*, pp 49-57. Bradshaw attributes the shift to the introduction of the concept of the commonwealth elaborated under a Christian humanist framework, which, while partially true, is overstated in his account. Ibid., p. 54.

[91] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 5.

[92] See chapter in 6 in particular for an extensive discussion of this theme.

[93] B.L., Lansdowne MS 159/2, f. 4.

churchmen, moreover, explicitly linked the 'commonweal' to spiritual allegiance and devotional life of the colony. In the latter instance, too, it was also enfolded in assumptions about English 'civility' and order: although some regarded the suppression of all abbeys to be 'a necessary thing for the common wealth',[94] hearing rumours that the king intended to suppress their monastery, the prior and convent of St Wolstan's advised Cromwell against it, for it would 'be greatly at length to the decay and hindrance of the common weal of the land; as the decrease of virtue, English order and speech, good hospitality and divine service there well and duly kept'. From a different devotional register, the prior and convent then stated they prayed for Cromwell as one 'of their most special benefactors' and that he may be assured to have the 'prayer and hearts of all the king's true subjects dwelling within the English Pale…that indifferently in that behalf favoureth the common weal'.[95] As Grey's report from 1537 on the abuses of marcher lords – who among other things mingled with the Irish to the detriment of the king's 'honour and common wealth here' – made abundantly clear, their duties to God were of a piece with their regard for 'his gracious honour, profit, or the common wealth of his subjects'.[96] Finally, if in 1515, the 'common weal' was tethered to a specific office, by 1546, the 'weal' in the hands of at least one commentator became a stand in for his personal well-being and fate which God governed directly, and punitively at that: imprisoned in the Tower of London for having participated in the anti-St Leger coup, Walter Cowley lamented that 'I am a young most unhappy man' and though having decided to 'most quietly' 'live here God ordaining me weal, I would I to tangle herein to punish me for my offences chiefly against him'.[97]

We should, however, a distinction between two meanings of 'commonwealth' in English discourse and thought that G.R. Elton long ago noted, one which Bradshaw failed to take notice of but which had a clear presence in English moral-governmental discourse in Ireland: 'commonwealth' as a 'political structure' and the 'commonwealth' as that which referred to the 'welfare [and] well-being, of all members of a community'. In the latter instance, Elton suggests, contemporaries were speaking less of 'commonwealth' more than they were 'the common weal'.[98] Thus, all references in Ireland to 'the common weal' discussed so far dealt not with the corporate body of the

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[94] B.L., Add. MS 48017, f. 162a.
[95] T.N.A., SP 60/3, f. 92r.
[96] B.L., Add. MS 48017, f. 165b (*SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 478).
[97] T.N.A., SP 60/12, f. 118r.
[98] G.R. Elton, *Reform and renewal: Thomas Cromwell and the commonweal* (Cambridge, 1973), pp 5-7. For Ireland, see Crooks, 'The structure of politics in theory and in practise, 1210-1541', 444-5.

community enfolded in the king, but its interest and well-being, although its association with office in the 1515 'State of Ireland' presents a curious corporate designation that was yet coterminous with the body politic as a whole. Such references to the 'common weal of this land' or 'realm', or to the 'common weal' of the king's subjects, or even to that which 'benefits the common weal', abound in Henrician government correspondence and Irish 'reform' treatises.[99]

The tides turned in 1537, however, in ways that marked a move from one meaning of the commonweal to its other, but in a manner that destabilises Elton's identification of 'commonwealth' with 'political structure' and 'common weal' with general well-being of the community. For we begin to see 'common weal' itself refer to something tantamount to the lordship or kingdom as a corporate body.

First, an apparent transitional phase. In a letter to Cromwell, the Irish council spoke not of the advancement of the weal, or publique weal, or common weal of the land or of the king's subjects, but of having within their charge, 'under His Majesty, the moderation and governance of a common weal'.[100] Now, while still falling within the adjectival form, that *a* commonweal was now explicitly an object of governance suggests some added significance and that perhaps for the first time in an Irish setting, the lordship itself was referred to as a commonweal in the sense of the corporate lordship of Ireland as the king's 'second body'.

The first unequivocal deployment of 'commonweal' in its corporate guise came with John Alen, who was among those who came closest to contemporary English humanist musings on the common weal – a perhaps unsurprising coincidence, given that he showed evidence of what Ciaran Brady has called an 'unmistakable sign of renaissance influence' that suggests humanist training: calligraphy and the penmanship of his letters.[101] In the same report cited above concerning the necessity of appointing

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[99] For 'reform' treatises, see for instance Cowley's device on Ireland, T.N.A., SP 60/6, ff 116r-122v.
[100] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 442.
[101] Although it goes without saying that he was hardly one of the 'commonwealth men' of Elizabeth's reign, as they were so-called, these Palesmen who both struggled against the lord deputy in the 1560s and 1570s over the constitutionality of the cess and fought to retain, in the final decades of Elizabeth's reign, their increasingly eroded rights and privileges as English subjects; nor was Alen's rhetoric identical to the Palesmen commonwealth rhetoric and thought in the 1580s and 1590s, which Hugh O'Neill himself drew on in elaborating his 'faith and fatherland' creed during the Nine Years' War. Brady, *The chief governors*, pp 26, 239, on the cess controversy, see pp 231-49; Hutchinson, *Calvinism, reform, and the absolutist state in Elizabethan Ireland*, pp 37, 45, 62-3, 142. On Hugh O'Neill, commonwealth rhetoric, and the 'faith and fatherland' creed during the Nine Years' War, see Ruth A. Canning, *The Old English in early modern Ireland: the Palesmen and the Nine Years' War, 1594-1603* (Woodbridge, 2019), pp 51-2, 62-3. Vincent Carey, moreover, speaks of the Alen brothers' 'commonwealth aversion' to 'overmighty

English-born judges that had a 'well approved conscience', Alen lamented that a 'great part of the common wealth standeth, not only by indifferent administration of justice, but also in making such judges, as shall well know the law, with the due circumstance how it should be executed'. If the term retained its ambivalently adjectival quality, the corporate dimensions soon became clear: he then spoke of what is 'so necessary for the common wealth' and, in a second letter to the commissioners disparaging the nefarious effects of a disordered deputy, noted how 'the head of this common weal, under the King's Majesty, is His Highness Deputy for the time being, which representeth the majesty and authority of the head, the Prince, our Master the King; so as, in my opinion, that he being of those qualities that his room requireth, all the common weal shall prosper, and otherwise perish'.[102] Alen's 'book' expressed nothing short of a clear corporal metaphor in the context of vicegerential-monarchical order in Ireland.

Of course, the ambiguity between its corporate and qualitative designations persisted, because 'the common weal' remained a moral category denoting the interest of the community. Consider the commissioner Master George Paulet's report to Cromwell, one of the more prominent instances of the intersections between 'reform' and 'commonwealth'. A scathing indictment of disorder in Ireland, after laying out the principal causes of such disorder, he then asked Cromwell to travel to Ireland 'to make the noblest journey that ever was made, both for per profit and wealth' for 'every man is not displeased for the common wealth but for his own singularity, and such men is not be in this land for that singularity hath destroyed all together for men man say and write their minds…'.[103] Note, here, however, how Paulet's 'common wealth' is an ambivalent fiction, neither unequivocally the corporate embodiment of the community Alen and the English and other humanists so clearly appealed to nor the more generic designation of the community's well-being and profit. Justice Thomas Luttrell then referred to how the constant changing of deputies 'is much to the decay of the common weal, for thereby they have the less occasion for the good order of the people, and is less favoured and dreaded with Irish men and others, and have not so good knowledge to order the people, and to know what things were best to be done for the common wealth, as they should if they had continuance here'. It 'should be good for the common

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subjects'. Vincent Carey, *Surviving the Tudors: the 'wizard' earl of Kildare, 1537-86* (Dublin, 2002), p. 88.
[102] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 483-4; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 488.
[103] L.P.L., Carew MS 602 f. 134.

wealth', he added, 'to introduce English order'.[104] Later, in 1542, St. Leger and the council similarly spoke ambivalently of the dividing of Meath as beneficial 'for a common weal'.[105]

By the late 1530s, in other words, Tudor officers more frequently used the notion 'common wealth', which came to both denote the general good as per prior usage as well as a corporate body. The ambiguity remained and references to the 'weal' of the king's subjects continued throughout the remainder of Henry VIII's reign, but the more frequent use of the term coupled with its nascent 'corporatisation' is suggestive of the slow and as of yet uncertain emergence of a new moral-governmental language of the common weal that marked a departure from prior usage. It was perhaps not a coincidence that Alen's usage of 'common weal' acquired this corporate dimension soon after he proposed that Henry VIII should become the Supreme Governor of the Kingdom of Ireland: dislocations in *imperium*, in other words, precipitated a further convergence of governance of self, other, and common weal, coming together in the consequently altered, new Irish iteration of the political-theological fiction of the 'Crown'. Marking, indeed, the ambivalence of the fictions of 'king' and 'body politic' as well as a middle-ground between the corporate adjectival forms of the 'common weal', it is revealing that in the same month Alen penned his piece, Grey referred to both the 'common wealth of [the king's] subjects' and to the king's 'honour and common wealth' in Ireland.[106]

The most humanist invocation of the 'common weal' in both its qualitative and corporate senses in Ireland, however, came nearly ten years later, in Edward Walshe's *The office and duty in fighting for our country* (1545). It was a piece that, dedicated to St Leger and supportive of his policy of 'reform', perfectly capped a distinctly English-Irish variant of 'commonweal' 'reformist' rhetoric with the typical humanist reverence for and citation of classical authors. A work on the love and attachment one harbours for their native country and the duty one owes to it, all of which were rooted in Scripture and natural law, Walshe declared that his oration was a 'trumpet' that 'shall be doubtless forever a mirror to all such as shall hereafter desire to govern in a common weal'.[107] Although the terms of 'civility' and the distinctly post-Reformation religiosity and living under God and king will be explored in the interlude, for now, especially

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[104] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 507, 509.
[105] *SP Henry VIII*, iii, pp 405-6.
[106] *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 480.
[107] Edward Walshe, *The office and duty in fighting for our country* (London, 1545), sig. Aiiii.

noteworthy is how Walshe triangulated native country, duty and honour, and the commonweal within the general framework of God's providence. 'How great study and industry is requisite of us', he wrote, 'to force that no wrath or evil may come to our native country; wherein our fathers are preserved and kept', the duty to whom was 'by the very commandment of God' and according to which 'we are bound'. '[W]e do due honour to our fathers', he continued, 'if suffering pernicious mischief to grow against our common weal that successively may destroy the same'.[108] The 'common weal' was centrepiece as an orientation for moral ordering: those who accumulated wealth for their own ease or the 'high treasure of their hearts', and who sought to 'amplify their possessions and livelihood, not regarding the anxious thoughts and study that they are bound to take for the common weal and preservation of the church of God' 'have not received revelation of the respect that our saviour Jesus Christ had to the common weal' nor the 'study and circumspection which the apostles, Peter, Barnabas, and Paul had to the common weal, in preaching the gospel, observing always the circumstances that made for the common weal'. A 'classic' humanist condemnation of the scholastics followed for failing to heed such apostolic precepts that were 'necessary instructions for our Christian solicity', precepts that had been 'declared unto us with great and heavenly discretion by the very Etnickis as Plato, Socrates, Aristotle, Tully, Cato, Seneca, Plutarch, and all other famous authors that ever hitherto did write'.[109] If the 'infidels' of the past and the 'Greeks and Romains as of other common weals' could cultivate such a noble and honourable attachment to their country, surely one blessed with the Gospel and light of Jesus Christ could elevate such a duty to their native country to new heights and have the good and profit of the 'commonweal' evermore firmly imprinted on their hearts.[110]

If Alen, Walshe, and others moved closer to the contemporary humanists in England who, although they still used 'commonwealth' or 'commonweal' in the merely qualitative sense, also unequivocally deployed the term in its corporate designation, all the same, even with this new usage, differences in degree, however, as well as in moral philosophy remained between commentators in Ireland and prominent English humanists, although some of these differences can perhaps be explained away by the disparate forms or genres of writing (letter versus treatise or pamphlet) in question.

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[108] Walshe, *The office and duty*, sig. Aviii.
[109] Walshe, *The office and duty*, sigs. Bv-Bvi.
[110] Walshe, *The office and duty*, sigs. Cii-Ciii.

While Thomas More, for instance, had in 1516 spoken of the 'best state of a common weal' (*optimus status reipublicae*) and spent all of *Utopia* meditating on what it would look like, and while Richard Morison, in *A remedy for sedition* (1536) stated that a commonwealth, 'like a body', was 'a certain number of cities, towns, shires that all agree upon one law and one head', Thomas Starkey, in *A dialogue between Lupset and Pole* (1536), spoke of the 'description of a common weal', or the 'very and true common wealth', which existed when all its constituent parts were joined together 'in perfect love and unity' 'as members of one body.[111] Under the English humanists' pens, then, the corporate dimension of the common wealth was evident, its enfolding in the corporate body of the realm more systematic, the constitutive connection between the common weal and the active life as a realisation of 'man's dignity and nature' in accordance with God's laws foregrounded, and the scope of the required love and unity for the 'true common weal' more expansive. Nevertheless, the point is less whether such affinities make Alen and others humanists. Rather, they demonstrate the movements or even emergence of a 'humanist-esque' language in the entanglements of England, Ireland, and the Continent across which corporate political-theological fictions and their attendant horizons of moral governance and praxis travelled.

2.5: Conclusion

God was the fount of all, linking governance, dominion, 'reform', and common weal in disparate ways. All were correlated terms in a political-theological web of God's providential government of the world, the canvas within which the 'self' as a moral phenomenon navigated the exigencies of spiritual and civil order, with 'government', 'dominion', and 'command', as fulcrums of human and divine agency, being correlated in the fiction of the Crown as a microcosm of earthly and divine order. Within the ontological continuum and providential horizons of God's Creation and government of the world, the political-theological fiction of the Crown in its intersections with that of the 'common weal' constituted the bases for 'self-hood' and cooperative divine-human agency in the world. The 'Crown' in many ways, then, exemplified the paradigm of delegation and mediation in its 'purest' form. As a barometer for the properly ordered dominion comprising both the king and the body politic, it was also a horizon already

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[111] Thomas Mayer (ed.), *Thomas Starkey: Dialogue between Pole and Lupset* (London, 1989), p. 22; Morison's tract cited in Elton, *Reform and renewal*, p. 6.

inhabited by a panoply of office-holders who served or represented the king directly or indirectly according to the modalities of delegation and mediation by which his majesty, through his command, found itself either wielded and ministered by, or relayed through, crown officers.

In this environment, an array of Renaissance and other political-theological currents congealed across a range of 'reformist' and governmental interventions in as well as enactments and reflections of order in Ireland, with 1537 in particular proving a turning point for the corporatisation of the 'commonweal' in Tudor political-theological discourse in Ireland, and the consequent re-arrangement of the composite parts of the 'Crown' as *corpus mysticum*, as Sir John Fortescue had it in the 1470s. This theme of corporatisation will be pursued throughout the remainder of this study, but for now, it suffices to note that it occurred roughly simultaneously as other key, disparate theological currents in Ireland re-modulated the relationship between 'English' and 'Irish' and their associations, and between the 'common weal', civil and divine order, and the office of the governor – between, in other words, governance, sovereignty, and 'reform'. As we shall see in chapters four and six, 'commonweal' tropes provided the modalities of subject-hood or 'self-care' through which the problems of truth, government, and morality were correlated and indexed to Christian living under God and king. If the royal-supremacy polity and the Christian form of life and subject it operationalized canvased a distorted web of 'evangelical' and 'orthodox', and Renaissance and 'humanist' currents, Tudor 'reform' and the common weal, too occasionally harnessed these disparate political-theological and intellectual threads.

What, then, to make of purported humanist influence in Ireland during the reign of Henry VIII? A few provisional conclusions can be proposed.

If the *direct* impact of humanist thought and methods on Ireland was limited, it would perhaps be more accurate to suggest that conditions in Ireland allowed for the development of 'humanistic' themes beyond the import of actual humanist concerns and methods as such – although, it would be best to see this situation not as the birth-pangs of humanist learning in Ireland but as evidence of Ireland's place within a larger Renaissance world profoundly changed by the cumulative impact of humanism. It would do well, first, to locate Ireland within Lucy Wooding's reinterpretation of English Catholicism. The 'King's Great Matter' and the royal supremacy in particular galvanised decades of diffused humanist concern with 'reform', renewal, and the education of the laity in matters of faith, devotion, and piety, focusing such energies

into a concrete government programme of 'reform' that constituted the foundation and expression for distinctly English forms of 'religion'.[112] Consider, too, the affinities between Erasmian critiques of 'idolatry' and 'superstition' and the regime's own efforts to stamp them out in England and Ireland in the 1530s.[113] Wolsey's designs for the 'reform' of the lordship and his personal appointments – Archbishop Alen and Bishop Staple – from 1514 onward, in addition, could prove a fruitful 'source': a man of known humanist patronage, it is worth pondering the impact his interventions had in providing a focus for the crystallization and development of a new 'reform' language and culture, one that drew on and galvanised a burgeoning, native tradition of 'reform' within the Pale and colony but which also amounted to an early expression of the 'reform' initiatives he pursued from 1517 in England. Note, moreover, first, how since the fifteenth century, attitudes towards labour, productivity, and wealth and poverty changed, and how these changes found fullest expression in humanist literature from the 1520s onward that emphasised the requirements of productive and industrious living in accordance with one's vocation and calling to benefit the common weal; and second, the growing concern over the course of the sixteenth century with parental governance of children and proper parental discipline and correction in the household. The 'reformist' ethos in Ireland, which while not intrinsically humanist, begins to resemble – in its intensity and focus on what was good for the 'common weal of the realm' – how humanists and others in England developed their diagnoses of the ills of English society, their proposed remedies, the character of the well-ordered common weal, and their faith in government action to 'reform' it.[114] Calls in Ireland, for instance, to raise English-Irish children in 'good manners and learning' so they could have proper 'knowledge of God', or to have judges reside in houses, to put galloglass and husbandry to labour, to put 'idle soldiers' to work in the 'mines of the earth' or the fishing trade, to have the Irish switch to tillage and manuring to make their 'wasted lands' more 'civil', or to 'correct' 'vagabonds', abounded.[115] If Ireland saw little humanist activity on its

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[112] Wooding, *Rethinking English Catholicism*, esp. chaps. 1-4.

[113] Peter Marshall, *Religious identities in Henry VIII's England* (Aldershot, 2006), pp 133-7.

[114] Todd, *Christian humanism and the puritan social order*, chaps. 2 and 5; Paul A. Fideler, 'Poverty, policy and providence: the Tudors and the poor', in Paul A. Fideler and T.F. Mayer (eds), *Political thought and the Tudor commonwealth* (London and New York, 1992), pp 194-222; J. W. Allen, *A history of political thought in the sixteenth century* (London, 1928), pp 134-56.

[115] See for instance, B.L., Lansdowne MS 159/2, f. 7; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 191; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 270; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 347; T.N.A., SP 60/11, f. 44r; T.N.A., 60/11, f. 53r; T.N.A., SP 60/12, f. 9v.

soil, it was nevertheless – however indirectly – the object of humanist 'reform' and the well-spring for a distinctly humanist-inflected 'religion' and ethos of renewal.[116]

One of the most important matrices for the elaboration of such concerns, however, was the thorny question of 'civility' and it is not unreasonable to surmise the possible – and again indirect – 'influence' of humanist sensibilities on Irish affairs here. As Mark Hutchinson has noted, in his *Utopia*, a 'notion of a hoped-for unitary commonwealth' provided 'More with the moral justification for colonial projects, because the extension of the civil and rational processes of government to colonies [was] seen as drawing out the better qualities of man'. According to Hutchinson, this 'humanist' consensus broke down under Elizabeth: it was not only, he notes, that Elizabeth's Irish subjects were deemed difficult to reform; in Ireland, it was the 'larger humanist episteme, with its optimistic assessment concerning man's capabilities and the civilizing process, which came to be challenged'.[117] Yet even before this consensus received an irrevocable blow, it was hardly without its own internal tensions: the links between 'civility', 'reform', and a 'barbarous' people's capacity for improvement as applied to both the 'mere' Irish and the Gaelicized English of Ireland was neither straightforward nor settled in the reign of Henry VIII.

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[116] On Cromwell's humanist credentials, see Elton, *Reform and renewal*, chap. 2, esp. pp 31-4.
[117] Hutchinson, *Calvinism, reform, and the absolutist state in Elizabethan Ireland*, pp 17, 19.

Chapter 3:

The political theology of difference: transregional imaginaries

and the Tudor discourse of 'civility'

'Civility' was a defining imperative of Henrician political theology.[1] If the task of

Tudor 'reform' was to reduce Ireland to obedient 'civility', and if 'civility' was a stand

in for 'Englishness', where the line between it and 'Irishness' stood, however, was not

always clear. 'Anglicization' and 'Gaelicization' were two-way processes with multiple

points of contact and exchange.[2] When appraising English colonial discourse on

Ireland, then, practises of cultural signification are key – indeed, beyond Kenneth W.

Nicholls's valid critique of Steven G. Ellis' 'two-nation theory' and his rejection of the

'Gaelicization' thesis, the latter's focus on the colonists' adamant insistence that they

were 'English' remains important.[3] As Sparky Booker observes, just like how

'ethnicity' was determined in the Iberian peninsula and German colonies in eastern

Europe, in English border contexts like Ireland and the Welsh marches, it was above all

descent and ancestry ('blood') that determined 'ethnic identity', with 'access to English

law', 'involvement in the colonial government', and (in Ireland) 'their shared history of

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[1] While divergent in their views on its relative status in and importance for Tudor policy in Ireland, historians have long afforded processes of 'Anglicization' or English notions of 'civility' a central place in the unfolding and transformations of Anglo-Irish relations. For select, key works and differing interpretations, see: David B. Quinn, *The Elizabethans and the Irish* (Washington, 1966), chap. 9; Nicholas Canny, *Elizabethan conquest of Ireland: a pattern established, 1565-1576* (Hassocks, 1976); Christopher Maginn, *'Civilizing' Gaelic Leinster. The extension of Tudor rule in the O'Byrne and O'Toole lordships* (Dublin, 2005); John Patrick Montaño, *The roots of English colonialism in Ireland* (Cambridge and New York, 2011); Steven G. Ellis, *Defending English ground: war and peace in Meath and Northumberland, 1460-1542* (Oxford, 2015), chap. 6; Ellis, 'Civilising the natives: state formation and the Tudor monarchy, c. 1400-1603', in Steven G. Ellis and Luda Klusakova (eds), *Imagining frontiers: contesting identities* (Pisa, 2006), pp 77-92.

[2] James Muldoon, *Identity on the medieval Irish frontier: degenerate Englishmen, wild Irish, middle nation* (Gainseville, 2003); John Morrisey, 'Cultural geographies of the contact zone: Gaels, Galls and overlapping territories in late medieval Ireland', in *Social & Cultural Geography* 6, 4 (2005).

[3] Kenneth Nicholls, 'Worlds apart? The Ellis two-nation theory on late medieval Ireland', in *History Ireland*, 7, 2 (1999), pp 24, 26; Steven G. Ellis, '"More Irish than the Irish themselves"? The "Anglo-Irish" in Tudor Ireland', in *History Ireland*, 7, 1 (1999), pp 22-6. As Nicholls wrote elsewhere, ''To speak of the 'Gaelicisation of the Normans' as if it were an external process, without taking into account the fact that many – and perhaps most – of the people in question belonged by birth as much to one race as to the other, is to place the process of assimilation in a false perspective'. K. W. Nicholls, *Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland in the middle ages* (Dublin, 1972), p. 17. While the essay in question is certainly not without its conceptual and interpretive problems, Brendan Bradshaw's earlier intervention and engagement with Ellis' work in particular does advance a persuasive critique of Ellis' 'two nation' theory and argument against the 'Gaelicisation' thesis. Brendan Bradshaw, 'Nationalism and historical scholarship in modern Ireland', in *IHS*, 26, 104 (1989), pp 330-2.

conquest' serving as important markers.[4] To signify, moreover, was to delimit in ways that did not always map onto 'socio-cultural' realities. If for Andrew Hadfield and Willy Maley, 'Ireland was both a mirror and a hammer – reflecting and fragmenting images of England', the country, in the words of Andrew Murphy, was a place where 'the standard tropes of colonial stereotyping' were 'always likely to unravel in the encounter with the imperfect Otherness of the Irish'.[5]

Yet while historians have successfully problematized the tendency to privilege Lowland England as normative and to treat any deviation thereof as 'Irish' by pointing to similar practices found elsewhere in England, Wales, Scotland, and the Continent,[6] the 'norm' as such and the ontological status it imparts to identity remains inadequately interrogated.[7] To problematize the conceptual integrity of 'the norm' is to problematize 'identity' or 'culture'. For a norm is not only differentiated from 'deviance'; it also requires an internal, ontological difference to itself in order to constitute itself as a 'norm' from which an 'other' can emerge and be defined.[8] 'Identities' are sites for

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[4] Sparky Booker, *Cultural exchange and identity in late medieval Ireland: the English and Irish of the four obedient shires* (Cambridge, 2018), pp 256, 258. This was also a central point Nicholls made in his intervention against Ellis.

[5] Andrew Hadfield and Willy Maley, 'Introduction: Irish representations and English alternatives', in Brendan Bradshaw et. al. (ed.), *Representing Ireland: literature and the origins of conflict, 1534-1660* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 15; Andrew Murphy, *But the Irish sea betwixt us: Ireland, colonialism, and Renaissance literature* (Kentucky, 1999), pp 7, 58. See also Andrew Hadfield, *Spenser's Irish experience: wilde fruit and salvage soyl* (Oxford, 1997); Hadfield, *Literature, travel, and colonial writing in the English renaissance, 1545-1625* (Oxford, 1998). As Thomas Healy put it, representations of Ireland and the Irish always involved 'complex meditations on the nature of English civility' itself. Thomas Healy, 'Drama, Ireland and the question of civility', in Jennifer Richards (ed.), *Early modern civil discourses* (Houndmills, 2003), p. 131.

[6] R. R. Davies, *The first English empire: power and identities in the British Isles, 1093-1343* (Oxford, 2000), pp 113-41. See Booker, *Cultural exchange and identity* for a sustained engagement with this literature.

[7] The problem is especially acute in James Muldoon's hermeneutic of the frontier. Against wider Eurasian and Atlantic forums of encounter, Muldoon considers the multiple frontiers where anxieties of 'degenerating' from a state of 'civility' crystalized – or, where the 'degenerate English' 'became' like the 'wild Irish' and, later, the 'New World savage'. Yet his exploration of how the line between 'centre' (the site of normative Christian identity) and 'frontier' was historically transformed and displaced takes the dichotomy for granted. What he charts is less multidirectional exchange between 'periphery' and 'centre' than a unilinear process that only allows the 'centre' to be altered when it has been safely displaced to the 'frontier', whether it involve the 'other' without or that closer to home, in, say, a space of urban encounter. Muldoon, *Identity on the medieval Irish frontier*, passim, esp. p. 6.

[8] Only that internal difference, or 'vertical' difference to itself, allows the possibility of 'horizontal' difference to the 'other' to emerge. For Gil Anidjar, 'identity' is constituted through its conditions of possibility and impossibility; it is constituted both in and through what it is not, or the culture of the other as well as by its non-identity with itself, 'by an internal difference, a self-difference which is the difference of any identity not from the state of non-identity from which it had to be wrenched, but with a "state" anterior to the difference of identity with non-identity'. As Jacques Derrida writes, 'there is no self-relation, no relation to oneself, no identification with oneself, without culture, but a culture of oneself as a culture of the other, a culture of the double genitive and of the difference to oneself'. See Gil Anidjar, *The Arab, the Jew: A history of the enemy* (Stanford, 2003), pp xx. Joep Leerssen makes a complementary point in an Irish context, deploying the distinction between a 'hetero-image' and an

claims: the socio-institutional and discursive edifices which shape and reflect them are traversed by relations of power, by claims and counter-claims, and are made up of local, regional, and transregional layers that form amorphous repertoires of traits that can be appealed to or rejected, emphasized or downplayed, by people in differing circumstances pursuing different ends. Identity, then, is always a site for struggles for sovereignty involving self and other.[9]

At the heart of English discourse on Ireland, there lay the simultaneous recognition and disavowal of similarity whereby 'Englishness' was the internally fractured 'norm' in whose cracks and crevices lay monsters. Such is the anxiety that characterises colonial discourse: the inability to fully suppress the Other that haunts the colonizer, unsettling the coherence and integrity of its identity.[10] Yet if Ireland was a site of interplay between difference and similitude, to the English, it was, Murphy observes, a 'proximate Other' – 'neither wholly Other or fully the Same'.[11] Within the framework of the 'proximate Other', this chapter examines the metaphysical, theological, and legal dimensions of the Tudor discourse of 'civility' against the ethos of 'reform'. By thinking 'proximity' through both the modalities of inclusion and exclusion that tie the political theology of difference to metaphysics, we can reconsider the terms and dynamics of 'Anglo-Irish' difference and relations. As Brendan Kane notes, the period cannot be reduced to a simple story of the 'inevitable march of English colonial oppression and Gaelic and Old English decline' and 'the easy lumping of elites

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'auto-image' to do so. 'The auto-image', he writes, 'is primarily the implied negative counterpart of a given hetero-image [and] is thus the embodiment of the ethnocentricity against which the foreign becomes recognizably foreign'. What needs to be studied, then, is 'not just the substance, but also the mutual interaction and interdependence of the English image of 'Ireland', of the Irish image of 'England' and of the English and Irish auto-images of themselves as related to both these hetero-images'. Joep Leerssen, *Mere Irish and Fior-Ghael: studies in the idea of Irish nationality, its developments and literary expression prior to the nineteenth century* (Amsterdam and Philadelphia, 1986), pp 9, 11. Elsewhere, Richard Kirkland engages with Homi K. Bhaba and Gayatri Spivak to destabilise what I call here the norm, and what he refers to as a 'notionally centred logic of knowledge'. Richard Kirkland, 'Questioning the frame: hybridity, Ireland and the institution', in Colin Graham and Richard Kirkland (ed.), *Ireland and cultural theory: the mechanics of authenticity* (London, 1999), pp 18-9. For a study of the figure of the werewolf in medieval Ireland that destabilises the norm against the multiple temporalities of a 'post-colonial present' that defy modernity's commitment to linear time, see Catherine E. Karkov, 'Tales of the ancients: colonial werewolves and the mapping of postcolonial Ireland', in Patricia Clare Ingham and Michelle R. Warren (eds), *Postcolonial moves: medieval through modern* (Basingstoke, 2003), pp 93-110.

[9] This is why Valentin Groebner chooses to speak of 'identification' rather than 'identities'. Valentin Groebner, *Who are you? Identification, deception, and surveillance in early modern Europe*, trans., Mark Kyburz and John Peck (New York, 2007).

[10] Homi K. Bhabha, *The location of culture* (London and New York, 1994), esp. pp 85-92; David Lloyd, *Anomalous states: Irish writing and the post-colonial moment* (Dublin, 1993).

[11] Murphy, *But the Irish sea betwixt us*, p. 7.

in Ireland into rigid ethnic and/or religious categories'.[12] If Kane eschews the question of 'how the negotiation of cultural difference turned so violent and chaotic' in favour of asking 'why a focus on cultural difference came to dominate when the points of contact seemed so strong',[13] my reading of Tudor political theology and 'civility' tackles Kane's inquiry by re-affirming the importance of the *political theology of difference*.

To grasp the depths of the political theology of difference in Ireland, we must account for the wider transregional imaginaries that shaped Tudor political theology in Ireland – and here, historians must integrate the 'New World' and the Ottoman Empire within their purview.[14] Of course, Ireland was not the 'New World'.[15] Disparaging the tendency to flatten out the categories of 'civility' and 'barbarity' as generalizable prisms through which to make sense of divergent cultural landscapes, Kane and Murphy have emphasized the need to parse differences between Ireland and the 'New World' in English economies of knowledge and conquest. Their work attests to the importance of delineating, in Murphy's words, 'the *complexities* of Ireland's colonial positioning' and suggests that the subtleties of the discourse of 'civility's' expansive transregional scope need to be better identified and placed.[16] Thus, while the tenor of 'civility' within Europe changed in the Atlantic and Eurasian fault lines of Habsburg, papal, and Ottoman universalist aspirations, Ireland acquired a distinct position in the attendant inter-imperial and dynastic rivalries and diplomacy of the early Reformations, with the Irish themselves designated in ways both similar to yet different from not only the 'New World' 'savages' to the West, but also the 'Turks' to the East. Heeding pleas not to take for granted the binaries of colonial discourse and following Kane's efforts to treat English desires to eliminate Gaelic culture alongside the impulse 'which drove the systematic destruction of unorthodox cultures in England itself',[17] we must reconfigure

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[12] Brendan Kane, 'From Irish Eineach to British honor? Noble honor and high politics in early modern Ireland, 1500-1650', in *History Compass* 7, no. 2 (2009), p. 415.

[13] Brendan Kane, *The politics of honour in Britain and Ireland, 1541-1641* (Cambridge, 2009), p. 22.

[14] With one notable exception (an article by Joep Leerssen, which I will engage with below in sections 3.1 and 3.2), the 'New World' has been left out of accounts of Henrician Ireland, while the Ottomans have gone largely unmentioned. James Muldoon's aforementioned *Identity on the medieval Irish frontier* does canvas a wide transregional framework, and while helpful to think with, the analysis remains overly general.

[15] Murphy engages with this literature in *But the Irish sea betwixt us*, chap. 1.

[16] Brendan Kane 'Masculinity and political geographies in England, Ireland and North America', in *European Review of History/Revue européenne d'histoire*, 22:4 (2015), pp 595-619; Murphy, *The Irish sea betwixt us*, p. 6.

[17] Brendan Kane, 'Ordinary violence? Ireland as emergency in the Tudor state', in *History* 99, 336 (2014), p. 458. Keith Thomas made a similar point in relation to perceived 'Irish nomadism', vagrants and 'masterless men', and English preferences for 'a population of fixed abode' at home and abroad. Keith Thomas, *In pursuit of civility: manners and civilisation in early modern England* (Yale, 2018), p.

the Tudor discourse of 'civility' not only diachronically across a contested set of Christian colonial insular pasts, but synchronically within Atlantic, continental, and Mediterranean worlds.

Thus, within the terms of Tudor political theology, the 'Irish' and 'English' were always potentially 'figures of lack' stuck between the poles of Tudor order: obedient/disobedient, conformable/non-conformable, 'civil'/'uncivil'. Tudor political theology, in other words, produced divided moral subjects, although they were not divided in the same way. At the heart of the discourse of 'civility' lay a Christian metaphysics of becoming – this prescriptive paradigm governing the Christian terms for 'becoming civil'. As the moral *telos* of both 'Irishness' and 'Englishness', the two occupying different positions on the historical-civilisational continuum of the 'civil human', the 'true English crown subject' was a fragile creature whose integrity was always threatened by the monsters beyond its reams. The terms and temporalities of Tudor English horizons of life and thought were perennially haunted by an absence that turned the 'Irish' and the 'English' into a 'figure of lack' that was the 'proximate other' to the 'true Christian English crown subject', or the other that was never exclusively Other but also never fully the Same. Such a 'figure of lack' was always potentially a life in need of 'reform' or improvement, of restoration to a prior pristine state (the 'decayed English') or of ascension to a state of perfection it had never had (the 'wild' or 'mere Irish'). If English historical and socio-theological consciousness enacted and reflected a specific normative Christian time rooted in the civilizational *telos* of Nature and 'civility', the 'Irish' and 'decayed' 'English-Irish' both re-affirmed and unsettled its terms as targets of Tudor 'reform' and as imperfectly 'English' crown subjects.

Yet in the depths of this metaphysics of 'civility', lay the most consequential of its fluttering figures: the 'enemy'. Given that the 'civil'/'savage' binary was anything but fixed in Tudor Ireland, identifying 'the enemy' was a troubling affair. In attempting to write a history of 'the enemy' – or more precisely, why that history has been nearly impossible to tell – Gil Anidjar begins with Paul's messianism and commandment to love your enemies. The apostle's commandment, he shows, generalizes the 'enemy' in

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185. Gerry Smyth, in the context of modern Irish history and post-colonial critique proposed a method and perspective that carries a similar import. As he writes, 'A model based on intimate and radically destabilising exchanges between Ireland and England in the modern period, while still retaining sight of the realities of domination and subordination, might go some way to undoing the violent oppositional logic imposed (and critically superimposed) on the colonialist encounter'. Gerry Smyth, 'Decolonisation and criticism: towards a theory of Irish critical discourse', in Colin Graham and Richard Kirkland (ed.), *Ireland and cultural theory: the mechanics of authenticity* (London, 1999), p. 45.

its rendering epistemologically indistinct enemy from neighbour, so that the possibility of knowing 'the enemy' as 'enemy' is foreclosed.[18] The enemy is thus an absent presence; it appears just as it withdraws, its constitutive connection with the non-enemy silenced just as it is gestured at.[19] In the Tudor dominions, the vanishing presence of the enemy also locked in with amorphous delimitations of the 'civil' from the 'uncivil' and was thus pivotal to the metaphysics of becoming. Such was the 'enemy' in Tudor political theology: always lurking in the fault-lines of Tudor discourse, shadowing all, propelled to the surface by the historical circumstances that shook the terms of 'Englishness' and 'Irishness'.

3.1: Constitutional anomalies and the Tudor 'imperial crown'

Within Europe, 'civility' was a capacious beast that cast its net wide. Many self-declared European custodians of 'civility', for instance, viewed peasants – just like the Spanish theologians viewed 'New World' 'savages' – as possessing underdeveloped faculties of reason. 'Even among our own people', the School of Salamanca theologian, Francisco de Vitoria remarked, 'we can see many peasants who are little different from brute animals'.[20] Such attitudes were clear within England itself, where, if Henry VIII could fulminate in 1537 that the 'most savage' region of his kingdom – the North – could break out in rebellion, an anonymous humanist tract from 1546, *A supplication of the poor commons*, spoke of how it was important to employ one's study to leave the young Prince Edward with 'a commonweal to govern and not an island of brute beasts, among whom the strongest devour the weaker'.[21] So, what made Ireland, if not entirely unique, then different? To understand the Tudor discourse of 'civility' in Ireland and the divided moral subjects it produced, we need to explore the late-medieval (colonial)

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[18] As Anidjar writes, 'What the messianic constitutes and deconstitutes, beginning with Paul, is at once the theological enemy as both personal and political and as neither personal nor political. The divided subject of Paul is both enemy and beloved, slave and sovereign…' Anidjar, *The Arab, the Jew*, p. 9.

[19] And when an enemy is identified in this manner, in this space of suspended morality where the enemy and the neighbour are indistinguishable, the enemy is never truly 'the other', and as such, its vanishing traverses the space of the same, the space of identity as a space of difference to the other and to oneself, such that the site itself becomes an epistemic ground for 'the permanent possibility of war'. Anidjar, *The Arab, the Jew*, p. 3.

[20] Vitoria quote cited in Anthony Pagden, *The fall of natural man: the American Indian and the origins of comparative ethnology* (Cambridge, 1982), p. 97.

[21] The anonymous tract is cited in J.W. Allen, *A history of political thought in the sixteenth century* (London, 1943), pp 139-40. Alex Ryrie suggests that only Henry Brinkelow and not Robert Crowley, as Allen thought, was possibly the author. Alec Ryrie, *The gospel and Henry VIII* (Cambridge, 2002), pp 146-7.

constitutional arrangements of the Irish lordship. Let us begin with the infamous Statutes of Kilkenny (1367).

The statutes were primarily concerned with enforcing respect for ecclesiastical liberties and outlining the proper arrangements between civil and ecclesiastical jurisdiction in the English lordship of Ireland. If this could easily transcend 'ethno-cultural' differences – the act, after all, found support among several Irish bishops – how the Irish were included within English civil and ecclesiastical orbits was revealing: only those who kept the peace, were loyal to the English crown, learned English, and followed English customs and manners could be granted English liberty or benefices and offices.[22] Significantly, as Brendan Bradshaw observed, the 'reason for the exclusive nature of the legislation – framed as to apply to the colonial community alone – was not to place the Gaelic community outside the law but to leave them beyond it'. While not creating 'a constitutional distinction', it did contribute to instability and the alienation of the Irish, for the dual-system of government it promulgated 'shelved the conquest policy without abrogating it, thus aiming to contain the problem rather than to resolve it, to alleviate the symptoms while preserving the cause'. According to Bradshaw, the tension this produced was not grounded in ethnic or racial hostility, but in the constitutional terms of tenure. For from the fourteenth century onward, the main constitutional problem was not the personal status of the Gael under the law, but rather the legal status of 'non-feudal' lordships.[23]

Sparky Booker has recently amended this portrait of fifteenth-century colonial Ireland, painting a more complex picture of sustained Anglo-Irish exchange that periodically produced colonial anxieties in the Pale over the place and loyalty of the Irish. Their legal position was in fact much more ambivalent than Bradshaw conceded.[24] With Booker's intervention in mind,[25] however, there is something of Bradshaw's account that remains decisive: the contradiction inhering in the terms of colonial *mentalité* that saw English legal claims over Ireland retain their universalist flavour while in practise dissolve into a dual-system of government predicated upon distinct tenurial practices. From the mid-1510s onward, this *mentalité* and English

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[22] John Watt, *The church and the two nations in medieval Ireland* (Cambridge, 1970), pp 199, 212-5.

[23] Brendan Bradshaw, *The Irish constitutional revolution of the sixteenth century* (Cambridge, 1979), pp 11-4.

[24] Booker, *Cultural exchange and identity in late medieval Ireland*.

[25] Booker's work also clearly demonstrates the inadequacy of Bradshaw's categorical distinction between 'race' and any constitutional matters, or his conflation of racial resentment with a 'Gaelic movement of national liberation'. Bradshaw, *The Irish constitutional revolution*, p. 27.

kingship more generally took on imperial flares and pretensions, whose many roots stretched back centuries, all finding sixteenth-century expression in a series of loosely intersecting planes.

Henry VIII's appeal to centuries-old imperial claims over Scotland, his revival of the 'Hundred Years War' and dreams to conquer the French throne, and his bombastic declarations and theatrical display of imperial power in England and Tournai in 1515 were all early instantiations of a mix of new and older – albeit revivified – forms of imperial prowess and pretensions.[26] Similarly, Henry VIII's imperial claims over Ireland also intersected with age-old colonial claims over the lordship drawn out of Anglo-Norman chronicles of the conquest that were still being read in the sixteenth century. The king's title and right to *all* of Ireland was justified in terms of both an abiding historical Christian missionary zeal that had its origins in a papal grant and in the fact that the kings, princes, and lords of Ireland had all in the past become liegemen of English kings.[27] The conquests of past ages, too, especially that of Edward II, frequently served as a model of comparison for the present, providing warnings of dangers to heed as well as examples of glorious success that bolstered English and English-Irish optimism for the triumphs soon to come.[28]

Yet new developments were afoot, galvanising and re-orienting older currents. If Ireland was roped into European and imperial dynastic deliberations and arrangements through a series of treaties and oath-bound obligations (see chapter nine), the corridors through which *imperium* found expression on the island were also enfolded in what Joep Leerssen has argued were the new possibilities the European 'discovery' of the 'New World' opened up for the Tudors in Ireland. For it 'facilitated a new discourse' that 'moved Ireland closer to Europe' and redefined its status in English imaginaries from a place of wonder and 'barbarity' at the very edge of the world to one that could no longer remain as a constitutionally defined outsider, a site of unfortunate

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[26] John Guy, *Tudor England* (Oxford, 1988), pp 121-3; Guy, 'The Henrician age', in J.G.A. Pocock (ed.), *The varieties of British political thought, 1500-1800* (Cambridge, 1993), pp 24-5; Diarmaid MacCulloch, 'Henry VIII and the reform of the church', in Diarmaid MacCulloch (ed.), *The reign of Henry VIII: Politics, policy, and piety* (Basingstoke, 1995), pp 264-6; T.F. Mayer, 'Tournai and tyranny: imperial kingship and critical humanism', in *HJ*, 34, 2 (1991), pp 263-8.

[27] B.L., Lansdowne MS 159/18, ff 83-4. Giraldus Cambrensis discussed these in detail in the late thirteenth century, and James Yonge, the Dublin clerk also mentioned them when iterating the rights the English crown had to Ireland in his 1422 adaptation and translation of the *Secreta scretorum* for his patron, the 'White Earl' of Ormond. See Giraldus Cambrensis, *Expugnatio Hibernia, the conquest of Ireland*, ed. and trans. A. B. Scott and F. X. Martin (Dublin, 1978), and Lin Kerns (ed.), *The secret of secrets (Secreta Secretorum), a modern translation, with introduction, of the Governance of princes* (Lewiston, 2008), pp 69-70.

[28] See for instance, *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 409-19.

'cultural difference' tolerated as a separate entity.[29] Although Leerssen remains problematically silent on English assimilatory ambitions prior to the sixteenth century, his point still stands: with the entry of 'New World' into European intellectual horizons, the centuries' old ambition to assimilate Ireland into English horizons was given a new impetus.

As Habsburg activity in what would become the Americas spurred talk about fulfilling the prophetic Universal Monarchy and claims to being 'lord of the world', if Tudor claims to imperial rulership within their domains and Henry VIII's bid to be elected Holy Roman Emperor shortly thereafter (1517-9) were in no way related to the catalytic impact of 'Discovery' on the spiritual-civil terms of empire and rulership in Christendom, the latter certainly re-located England, Ireland, and their relation to 'empire' within new 'globalising' forces and arrangements, of which the Habsburg-papal-Ottoman imperial rivalry was a significant element.[30] Indeed, in raising the spectre of crusade against the 'infidel Turk', it buttressed claims to Universal Monarchy with declarations to ensure the survival of Latin Christendom. Even in Ireland, decades before the Reformation, and continuing a long tradition of crusading zeal against 'Saracens' and 'Turks',[31] 'the Turk' was already entangled in the political theology of Christian unity within the Tudor dominions. For the Jubilee year of 1495, the pope – granting an 'indulgence, pardon, and remission of sins' to all who lived in the 'domination and possession' of Henry VII – desired 'to provide and withstand the most cruel purpose and infinite malices of our most cruel enemies of our Christian faith the Turk'.[32] It is significant, too, that the anonymous 'State of Ireland' (1515), ends with an appeal to a messianic prophecy that links the conquest of Ireland with Henry VIII's Christ-like overcoming of the Turk in Rome.[33] Henry himself, indeed, was occasionally prone to bouts of crusading fervour in the Holy Land when the occasion called.[34] All these formed the general climate in which 'reformist' zeal in Ireland and England grew.

In this environment, the language of *imperium* provided an English-Irish and particularly Pale perspective on Irish disorder and disobedience. The first signs of

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[29] Joep Leerssen, 'Wildness, wilderness, and Ireland: medieval and early-modern patterns in the demarcation of civility', in *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 56, 1 (1995), pp 32-4.

[30] On prophecy and Universal Monarchy in Ireland, see chapter 8, section 8.2. On Henry VIII's efforts to claim the imperial throne, see J. J. Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1968).

[31] Norman Housley, *The later crusades, 1274-1580: from Lyons to Alcazar* (Oxford, 1992).

[32] *L&P Richard III – Henry VII*, pp 93-4.

[33] See chapter 8, section 8.2.

[34] Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII*, p. 106.

important shift came with the anonymous 'The State of Ireland', famous among other things for being the first tract to recommend making great Irish lords members of parliament and for its promotion of a policy of regional conquest and colonies that would become commonplace after the 1530s.[35] Bradshaw's analysis of the tract remains the strongest in identifying the new thrusts of *imperium* slowly entering Irish 'reformist' circles. The tract marked a departure from earlier colonial perspectives: recalling the discussion in the last chapter about how Irish captaincies were seen as corporate offices from which the common weal of those under them would flow, the goal was no longer the restoration of the colony and completion of the twelfth-century conquest, but concern for both providing good government, prosperity, and peace for the island as a whole and the creation of a constitutionally and jurisdictionally integrated community for both English and Irish.[36] Most significant, too, is the tract's reference to 'Irish rebels' which implies a constitutionally-defined status of subject-hood denied in the hitherto commonplace epithet, 'Irish enemies' (sections 3.3 and 3.4 below).[37] Henry VIII soon expanded such proposals: in 1520, at the same time as he instructed his lord lieutenant in Ireland, the earl of Surrey, on how to reduce the lordship to obedience, along the way most vividly invoking his Roman-style imperial pretensions – 'And it may be said unto them' that 'We, being their Sovereign Lord and Prince, though of our absolute power We be above the laws, yet we will in no wise take any thing from them, that righteously appertaineth to them'[38] – he also gave expression to his nascent vision for a new constitutional paradigm for Ireland – or, as Colm Lennon put it, the 'shadowy blue-print for a unified common-wealth' by which Gaelic lords would take their title *and* lands from the crown.[39]

This brings us to an important European-wide corridor of *imperium*: the governmental objectives of Renaissance monarchies across Europe, which, despite important differences, retained remarkable similarities.[40] Indeed, one especially

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[35] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 1-31. Bradshaw, *The Irish constitutional revolution*, pp 49-57; Maginn and Ellis, *The Tudor discovery of Ireland*, chap. 2.1; David Heffernan, *Debating Tudor policy in sixteenth-century Ireland: 'reform' treatises and political discourse* (Manchester, 2018), chap. 1.

[36] Bradshaw, *The Irish constitutional revolution*, p. 54.

[37] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 28.

[38] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 53.

[39] Colm Lennon, *Sixteenth-century Ireland: the incomplete conquest* (2nd edition, Dublin, 2005), p. 92. *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 51-7.

[40] As Guy summarised, these included 'dynastic security, territorial centralisation, increased revenues to finance the costs of warfare and building projects, the subordination to the crown of the nobility and higher clergy, control of local "franchises" and feudal privileges, and the augmentation of regal power'.

important area of monarchical state building in England and Ireland was the resumption of crown lands and the creation of a royal affinity. Although both had 'late-medieval' roots, by the early sixteenth century in England, this involved 'the resurrection of long-out-of-use legal obligations that also emphasized the ultimate tenurial superiority of the crown in connection with the holding of land'.[41] While not eliminating local networks of influence and power, efforts from the 1490s in England and the late 1510s in Ireland to reclaim royal land and to create a royal affinity sought to restructure networks of power more firmly around a principle of *imperium*.[42] The two, indeed, were of a piece.

Yet the construction of a royal affinity in England compels us to qualify our understanding of government 'reform' in Ireland, complicating as it does the (colonial) discourse of 'civility' and the growing prominence of Roman-style *imperium* as a prism through which Tudor commentators perceived the ills of the land and the remedies to fix them. 'Reform' in England had more particularistic connotations than in Ireland, where 'reformation' often entailed conquest, whether regional or general.[43] In Ireland, moreover, where the colony's jurisdictional boundaries spread unevenly across a series of overlapping 'frontiers' characterized by diverse cultural contact zones, a spectrum of cultural exchange, and permeable gradations of effective royal authority, such rhetoric revolved around Henry VIII and others' concerns over Irish and English-Irish 'usurpation' of crown dominion, possession, and rights in the land, most particularly the earldom of Ulster and in Munster, and to reclaim the crown's 'old right'.[44] Acknowledgement that one's lands, estates, and names had been 'usurped' from the

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John Guy, 'Thomas Wolsey, Thomas Cromwell and the reform of Henrician government', in Diarmaid MacCulloch (ed.), *The reign of Henry VIII: politics, policy, and piety* (Basingstoke, 1995), p. 36.

[41] Christopher Brooks, *Law, politics, and society in early modern England* (Cambridge, 2006), pp 34-5; Guy, *Tudor England*, p. 165; David Starkey, 'Which age of reform?', in Christopher Coleman and David Starkey (eds), *Revolution reassessed: revisions in the history of Tudor government and administration* (Oxford, 1986), pp 14-5.

[42] Guy, 'Thomas Wolsey, Thomas Cromwell and the reform of Henrician government', pp 52-6; Guy, *Tudor England*, pp 164-77; Bradshaw, *The Irish constitutional revolution*; Steven G. Ellis, *Reform and revival: English government in Ireland, 1470–1534* (New York, 1986).

[43] Maginn and Ellis, *The Tudor discovery of Ireland*, pp 164-6.

[44] T.N.A., SP 60/6, f. 116v. As one 'remembrance for Desmond' put in June 1536, 'all the king's tenants' in Desmond's territories were to 'be written for unto the exchequer of Ireland to answer the king for their intrusion on the king's possession there'. The 'king hath lost much of his right in that country', it concluded, and 'now is the time to help to reform' it. T.N.A., SP 60/3, f. 103r. See also the English Privy Council's report from August 1541, in which they counsel Henry VIII, now he was king of Ireland, on how best to reduce the land to order and, among other things, restore the possessions of the crown which currently and for a long time have remained in the hands of 'the usurpers'. T.N.A., SP 60/10, ff 127r-129v, quote on f. 127r.

king, indeed, pervaded post-1541 submissions to the crown.[45] Yet if the Tudor 'imperial crown' defined Ireland's constitutional subordination in the Act of Supremacy (1536), it would find new meaning after the 'constitutional revolution' of 1541.

A sure sign of the new-fangled weight of *imperium* on governmental thought, three years after Ireland was made into a kingdom, Lord Deputy Anthony St Leger and the council re-designated the disturbances of 'past years' as 'civil wars'.[46]

The significance of the permutations of *imperium* in the post-1541 discourse of 'reform' will be explored in chapter five. For now, consider another important feature of the imperial dimensions of Tudor sovereignty and colonial rule: the distinction between *de jure* and *de facto* rule. Harnessing traditions of Ancient thought, and Roman and Christian universalism, some who theorised imperial rule in Christendom had long advanced the claim that the Holy Roman Emperor or pope as 'lord of the world' exercised the universality of their rule through the distinction between *de iure* and *de facto* rule, with the former encompassing a claim to spiritual or civil sovereignty over the world that did not correspond to any practical capacity to govern.[47] The distinction between *de iure* rule and *de facto* rule speaks to how, from an English perspective, the peculiarities of power and claims to dominion over Ireland, an area *de iure* ruled by an absent king but *de iure* and *de facto* governed by his viceroyal representative, were analogous to the internal structures of *imperium* and power as these took shape in the mires of the caesaro-papalist tradition of imperial rule.[48] That same logic also pervaded English claims to dominion over areas not under effective crown control, for the Irish were seen as detaining by violent usurpation – in other words, *de facto* – what belonged to the king *de iure*, and it was within these intellectual folds, too, that Henry VIII made the absolutist declaration of being 'above the laws'. What we see taking place in the 1530s, then, was the re-coordination of *de jure* and *de facto* rule through the ambit of a newly consolidated royal affinity.

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[45] See, for instance, T.N.A., 60/10, f. 268r; T.N.A., 60/10, f. 271r; T.N.A., SP 60/11, f. 39r; *L&P,* xviii (i), no. 636.2.

[46] T.N.A., SP 60/11, f. 112B. Consider, moreover, when Lord Deputy St Leger counselled the king in late 1542 that since the castle of Dungarvan was a strategic location, it should be 'annexed to your Imperial Crown' – an especially timely move, too, St Leger suggested, given that both the earls of Desmond and Ormond had claimed it for themselves. *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 436

[47] Anthony Pagden, *The lords of all the world: ideologies of empire in Spain, Britain, and France, c. 1500-c. 1800* (New Haven and London, 1995), chap. 2.

[48] John M. Headley, 'Germany, the empire and *monarchia* in the thought and policy of Gattinara', *Church, empire and world: the quest for universal order* (Ashgate, 1997), pp 15-31.

Of course, if the distinction between *de iure* and de *facto* rule was rooted in the post-Glossators tradition of law that 'claimed for the emperor *auctoritas* but not *potestas* or dominium in the affairs of individual rulers, peoples and polities',[49] Tudor policy in Ireland was much more interventionist. Indeed, throughout the fifteenth century, English discourses of 'reform' and conquest in Ireland underwent important alterations in the context of both the changing contours of English chivalry and the glorification of violence it promoted as well as ongoing debates across Christendom over the sources of legitimate *imperium* and the extent of imperial jurisdiction. On the one hand, it was debated, was consent or voluntary submission of the ruler required, or could princes effectively establish their sovereignty by right of conquest? On the other, and as just noted above, did imperial jurisdiction require *de facto* governance of territories and people or did *de jure* claims suffice to articulate the true scope of imperial power? As corporate and public forms of rule and community acquired greater salience in English moral governmental discourse (see chapter two, section 2.2), a greater wedge appeared between 'English' and 'Irish'.[50] And we return here to the longer-term legacies of the Statute of Kilkenny, passing through that foundation stone of English liberties: the Magna Carta. As Peter Crooks notes, the 'liberties of Magna Carta … served to define the English settlers against the native population'. By 1410, Magna Carta and the Statute of Kilkenny were enshrined in the same parliamentary act that created 'a new set of exclusionary liberties, now described with increasing regularity as the "liberties of the land of Ireland"'.[51] Attempts throughout the sixteenth century to integrate Irish nobles within the folds of the Tudor state and peerage was always an assimilatory project with a contradiction at its heart: the simultaneous recognition and disavowal of Irish nobility, for Tudor overtures to and therefore affirmative recognition of Irish nobles was the precondition for official efforts to make them English – an ambition that readily set the Tudor 'multiple monarchy' askance from the Irish and Continental norm,[52] not to mention from contemporaneous imperial forms of rule in the Habsburg 'New World', where local and imperial rule, culture, and

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[49] Headley, 'Germany, the empire and *monarchia*', pp 29-30.
[50] Peter Crooks, 'The structure of politics in theory and practise, 1210-1541', in Brendan Smith (ed.), *The Cambridge history of Ireland, vol. 1, 600-1550* (Cambridge, 2018), pp 461-4, 466-7.
[51] Crooks, 'The structure of politics in theory and practise, 1210-1541', p. 458.
[52] Christopher Maginn, 'The Gaelic peers, the Tudor sovereigns and English multiple monarchy', in *Journal of British Studies*, 50 (2011), pp 566-86.

legal infrastructure co-existed in complex arrangements that allowed for local autonomy among Indigenous rulers.[53]

3.2: The political theology of colonial difference and the metaphysics of becoming: Giraldus Cambrensis between Atlantic and Mediterranean worlds

As Carina L. Johnson has shown, the creation of a 'global' cultural hierarchy with Europe at its centre depended on categories of cultural comparison emphasising difference and hierarchy gradually overcoming those rooted in 'ingrained ideas of cultural similitude and natural religion' under the combined impact of Ottoman encroachment, 'New World' colonisation, and the Reformations.[54] That Anglo-Irish acknowledgements of 'cultural' similitude gradually gave way later in the century to an unmitigated emphasis on irreconcilable difference marked a 'local' iteration of this 'global' process. Yet, if we are to tackle the catalysing effect of the 'New World' and Ottoman expansion on European imaginaries and Henrician Ireland, we must also grapple with how the emphases on difference that emerged mid-century was already embedded in a much older ontological framework. If Christian observers struggled to locate the people across the Atlantic within a Christian biblical and natural law cosmology,[55] and if the terms within which Tudor commentators appraised the relationship between 'Irish' and 'English', 'nature' and 'reason', and God, prince, and sovereignty, differed in important respects from those of the 'New World' debates, they were beholden to the same classical and Christian legacy.

Reflecting on the histories of Ireland, language, and colonial violence, Patricia Palmer has noted that to focus on a later episode of silencing while ignoring 'the originary moment of encounter' is, as she so evocatively put it, 'to write history as autopsy'.[56] For Palmer, this decisive encounter between 'English' and 'Irish' that cauterised the English tongue as the troubled receptacle of imperial-cultural triumph

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[53] J.H. Elliot, *Empires of the Atlantic world: Britain and Spain in America, 1492-1830* (Yale, 2006), chap. 1; Lauren Benton, 'The legal logic of wars of conquest: truces and betrayal in the early modern world', in *Duke Journal of Comparative and International Law*, 28 (2018), pp 425-48; Lauren Benton and Adam Clulow, 'Empires and protection: making interpolity law in the early modern world', in *Journal of Global History*, 12, (2017), pp 74–92.

[54] Carina L. Johnson, *Cultural hierarchy in sixteenth-century Europe: the Ottomans and Mexicans* (Cambridge, 2011). On the argument as it pertains to Ireland, see Kane, *The politics and culture of honour*.

[55] Pagden, *The fall of natural man*; Johnson, *Cultural hierarchy in sixteenth-century Europe*.

[56] Patricia Palmer, *Language and conquest in early modern Ireland: English Renaissance literature and Elizabethan imperial expansion* (Cambridge and New York, 2001), p. 4.

and fractured and suppressed Irish histories, was the Elizabethan conquest of Ireland. Shifting the focus toward the political theology of difference, I suggest that to uncover the 'originary moment of encounter' of Tudor discourse on Ireland, we must grapple with the history of Being and tackle the structure of the ontological difference (or the difference between 'Being' and 'beings') in its Aristotelian guise, by which being-as-potential becomes being-as-actuality. For at the heart of the Tudor discourse of 'civility' lay an Aristotelian metaphysics of becoming whose Christian iteration can be traced back to St Augustine.[57]

According to Augustine, sacred history, as Eternity, was infinitely distinct from secular history and the world, the *saeculum*, or Time. Eternity was God, that which was 'supreme over time because it is a never-ending present' or that which was 'at once before all past time and after all future time'. It was God, or Being-as-Eternal-Present that gave beings (Time, creatures, creation) their being. God is the Being of all beings, and the latter, as created beings existing in time, are simultaneously similar and dissimilar to God, never reducible to God insofar as they inhabit the *saeculum*, but nevertheless partaking in God, from 'whom' they derive their substance as creaturely life.[58] Time, history, the *saeculum*, creaturely being – these, in other words, were not only mutable phenomena; they were essentially at the mercy of God and God's providence,[59] a mercy tirelessly reiterated in Tudor times, such as in the *Bishop's Book* (1537), which affirmed that all 'other powers, which in heaven, earth, or hell, be nothing as of themselves'.[60] St. Augustine, in other words, instituted a norm according to which temporal being must conform with in order to truly be: God. More

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[57] The genealogy putting Augustinian theology with Aristotelian philosophy drawn here differs from – although it is complementary to – that outlined by B. R. Siegfried, who has shown how an anti-Aristotelian Augustinian theology that underpinned Gaelic notions of divine and human sovereignty in Elizabeth's reign differed from the largely Aristotelian assumptions that prefigured English sovereignty in England and Ireland. see B. R. Siegfried, 'Recognising Elizabeth I: grafting, sovereignty, and the logic of icons in an instance of Irish bardic poetry', in Brendan and Valerie McGowan-Doyle (ed.), *Elizabeth I and Ireland* (Cambridge, 2014), pp 86-112. On Aristotelian metaphysics in Irish 'political thought', see Ian Campbell, 'Aristotelian ancient constitution and anti-Aristotelian sovereignty theory in Stuart Ireland', in *HJ*, 53 (2010), pp 1-19; Campbell, 'Irish political thought and intellectual history, 1550-1730', in Jane Ohlmeyer (ed.), *The Cambridge history of Ireland, vol. 2, 1550-1730* (Cambridge, 2018), pp 506-28.

[58] Augustine, 'Book XI', *Confessions*, pp 262-3.

[59] God, in other words, is here nothing other than Aristotle's im-pontentiality: that which actualizes itself as unrealized potential rather than becoming actuality, that which 'simply taking away its own potentiality not to be, letting itself be, giving itself to itself' – it is the being, in other words, which constitutes itself sovereignly.

[60] These, the *Book* continued, 'have all their might, force, and strength of him only, and be all subject unto his power, and be ruled and governed thereby'. Charles Lloyd (ed.), *Formularies of faith, put forth by authority during the reign of Henry VIII* (London, 1825), p. 31.

specifically, the norm bespoke the manifestation of God in Nature as the reflection of God's creative will and perfection, understood by human beings as the natural law. For it was a condition that although beholden to divine grace was also abetted by Nature within.[61] Such was the ontological fulcrum – or the ontology of difference – permeating the discourse of 'civility', suffusing the constructions of cultural hierarchy, and in which 'Englishness' and 'Irishness' as legal-cultural statuses and identities were designated and delineated.

Let us begin with a figure from the colonial past who was still in some respects a contemporary: Giraldus Cambrensis. If the Cambro-Norman's corpus was still read in Ireland by the early sixteenth century, its import – and particularly that of the *Topographia* – had long been far wider, prefiguring Continental views on Ireland as a land of wonder and fables inhabited either by 'beasts', 'savages', or 'uncivil' people who had yet to actualise their natural potential.[62] For our purposes, the most striking feature of Giraldus' commentaries on Ireland was the tradition he inaugurated and the political theology of difference – or the capacity to simultaneously acknowledge and disavow similitude – it bequeathed to later generations, and which characterised Ireland as a 'proximate Other' – or the 'unquiet middles' that 'haunt' unitary representations of history, people and nation, and identity, and that as 'middle spaces' were both Same and Other.[63]

The colonial discourse of 'civility' in Ireland was in the hands of the Cambro-Norman scholar rooted in a transregional imaginary that far exceeded the insular boundaries of North Western Europe. Centuries before the Tudors, Giraldus compared Ireland to the wonders of the Orient: Ireland, he ventured, existed in a temporal limbo, the western counterpart to the East that was simultaneously imprisoned in an earlier age while being contemporaneous to the present, for both it and the East were lands of

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[61] In the words of the renowned Dublin humanist Richard Stanihurst decades later in his *De rebus in Hibernia gestis* (1584), 'Nature, then, by whose rule and regulation all things exist, has implanted in every created thing certain sparks of fire by whose heat individual objects are kept alive'. John Barry and Hiram Morgan (eds), *Great deeds in Ireland: Richard Stanihurst's De rebus in Hibernia gestis* (Cork, 2013), p. 129.

[62] On Gerald of Wales's popularity in sixteenth-century English Ireland, see Hiram Morgan, 'Giraldus Cambrensis and the Tudor conquest of Ireland', in Hiram Morgan (ed.), *Political ideology in Ireland, 1541-1641* (Dublin, 1999), pp. ; Eric Haywood, 'Humanism's priorities and empire's prerogatives: Polydore Vergil's description of Ireland', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy. Section C: Archaeology, Celtic Studies, History, Linguistics, Literature*, 109 C (2009), pp 198, 201-5.

[63] On the tradition Giraldus inaugurated, see Murphy, *Betwixt the Irish sea*. On 'unquiet middles', see Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, *Hybridity, identity, and monstrosity in medieval Britain: on difficult middles* (Basingstoke, 2006), passim, esp. pp 44, 77-108; Mathew Xavier Vernon, 'Gerald in the middle: hybridity and historical narratives in History and Topography of Ireland and The Conquest of Ireland', in *Postmedieval: a journal of medieval cultural studies*, 8, 4 (2014), pp 404-24.

wonders at opposite ends of the Age of the World, the former embodying the world in its infancy, the other belonging to the age of its maturity it its 'impure' or 'decayed' form. And herein lay Ireland's peculiar status as a corrupted yet pure land of wonder. For in Ireland's immaturity, lay the source of its corruption: since Ireland was closer to earlier ages of the world than its current old age, the nature of everything was corrupt. Yet it was a corruption not wholly like that which reigned in the East, which, while lavished in riches and luxuries, was pervaded by an enemy 'that one cannot get away from': the air. The East was the abode of the 'well of poisons' which waned the more distant it grew from its source – hence its relative weakness in the West, this intrinsically superior land where the dangers to health were so few in comparison. Yet Ireland, despite being corrupted, also evinced something of the superiority of the West. Giraldus insisted that the island's deficiencies – the corrupted nature of its coarse and barbarous peoples, the animals and fauna that it lacked – were not to be wholly condemned but in fact praised. For if it was a deficient land of wonder at the western brink of the world, he also thought of it as an emblem of an earlier age when the world was young and had yet to be corrupted.[64] Giraldus, in other words, assimilated Ireland into the orbit of the 'West' just as he laboured to keep it apart by drawing it, elliptically and metaphorically, into the 'decadent' orbit of the 'East'.

As alluded to above, by the 1520s, the 'East' remained a poignant symbol of un-Christian (dis)order in the form of the 'infidel Turk'. In Ireland specifically, 'the Turk' became the foil against which insular colonial historical imaginaries and claims to sovereignty were articulated, the problem of reducing Ireland to 'civility' was pondered, and both the pre- and the post-Reformation terms of 'true Christian crown subject-hood' were delineated.[65] Thus, in June 1521, to make his case to Henry VIII on how best to conquer Ireland, Surrey resorted to history and a regional comparison: Ireland, was five times larger than Wales, and it took ten years for Edward I to conquer it. Moreover, the inhabitants of Ireland, 'can and do live more hardly, than any other people…in Christendom and Turkey'. Master Peche, whom Surrey noted had journeyed across Turkey, had, since his arrival in Ireland, rode with him across the country to acquire as much knowledge about 'the state and manner of this land, and [the]

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[64] Gerald of Wales, *The history and topography of Ireland*, trans. John O'Meara (2nd edition; London, 1982), pp 53-6.
[65] The impact of the Reformation will be treated in chapter 5.

disposition of the people' there, and he, too, attested to it.[66] Surrey and Peche's testimonies served to shore up the 'rough living' of a people who required a more belligerent strategy of 'reform'. Such a portrait also had a devotional and spiritual dimension, for in the aristocratic rivalries between the three great Anglo-Irish magnate houses, 'the Turk' was weaponised as a figure whose 'faith' was seriously deficient; it was no accident that aristocratic accusations of misconduct invoked this figure to make a point about their rivals' spiritual deviance and lack of obedience. Thus in 1526, the earl of Kildare invoked Turkey to emphasise the deplorable conditions that prevailed on the estate of his primary rival in Ireland, Piers Ruadh Butler, the earl of Ossory: 'So as, and if the King's Grace do not see for the hasty remedy of the same, there is like to be no more Christianity there, then as the mids of Turkey; for the spiritual sword is there clearly despised'.[67] Piers Butler later quipped in similar terms against the 'pretended earls of Desmond' (James fitz John Fitzgerald, 13th earl *de facto* and James Fitzmaurice, 13th earl *de jure*), who have 'been as far separated from the knowledge of any duty of allegiance, that a subject ought to owe his prince, as a Turk is to believe in Christ'.[68] All this resembled, too, St Leger's statement in 1546, when, in an effort to prove his worth as a crown subject, the lord deputy suggested he could comply with the king's every command, even if he decided to send him to Turkey. The appeal invoked a comparison between two 'unruly lands' – and unfavourably so for Ireland – that reinforced not only St Leger's obedience to his king, but also the monumental worth of his endeavours in such a 'hellish' place that he had brought, he claimed, to an obedience unknown for a hundred years.[69] Such formulations fell within the ambit of natural law, and this is where the matrix linking Giraldus, Ireland, the Ottoman Empire, and the 'New World' comes to light. If Anglo-Irish discourse never invoked the 'New World' throughout Henry VIII's reign, and if the Tudors embarked on no Atlantic voyages of their own until well into the sixteenth century, their connections are nevertheless clear in other ways.

Historians have drawn parallels between how Elizabethan English and Spanish commentators spoke of the Irish and the 'New World' Indigenous nations, respectively, with Brian Lockey in particular identifying natural law as the common crucible of both.

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[66] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 73-4.
[67] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 123.
[68] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 229-30. On the rivalries and disputed claims involving James fitz John, James Fitzmaurice, and Ormond, see Anthony M. McCormack, *The earldom of Desmond, 1463-1583: the decline and crisis of a feudal lordship* (Dublin, 2005), pp 69-74.
[69] *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 573.

As Lockey notes, just like Spanish commentators were divided over how to characterise the 'New World' Indigenous peoples, the Elizabethans, too, were split into two camps over how to appraise the condition of the Irish. The first saw them as capable of improvement, attributing their 'barbarous' ways not to any 'natural disposition' but to education and a corrupted environment. The second considered the Irish as irredeemably tainted, akin to the Aristotelian 'natural slave'.[70] Reading an earlier period of Tudor Irish history against developments in the Atlantic world, however, highlights a problem with Lockey's interpretation. For Lockey, English colonial discourse was marked by the untenable reliance on both natural law and the English common law tradition, whereby common law was simultaneously universal yet particular, the root of legitimate imperial rule but also singularly tethered to English nature.[71] If Lockey highlights how the two legal traditions were incommensurable, as far as the divided moral subjects of Tudor political theology are concerned, they were in fact mutually supportive, the two coalescing in a distinctively English colonial *mentalité*.[72]

In the tradition he inaugurated, Giraldus provides a link between a distinctly insular discourse of 'civility', early sixteenth-century Spanish appraisals of 'New World' 'barbarousness', and Tudor diagnoses of 'Irish savageness' that underpinned English claims to *imperium* in Ireland. Although the Cambro-Norman cleric doubled-down on the less qualified indictments of 'Irish barbarousness' in his *Expugnatio Hibernica*, he nevertheless opened his account with a defence of the *Topographia*'s much-criticized focus on miracles. 'For nature', he reminded his readers, 'have no power over the Lord of Nature'.[73] In a work that harshly condemned the Irish as a 'barbarous' people who were Christian in name only,[74] Giraldus could not but re-assert Ireland's anomalous status, this wonderous site of miracles as a peculiar place of God's

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[70] Brian Lockey, 'Conquest and English legal identity in Renaissance Ireland', in *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 65, 4 (2004), pp 548-9. Later in the century, according to Nicholas Canny, there developed from the 1560s and 1570s an English 'ideology of colonization' shaped by Atlantic 'discoveries' and Spanish colonial practices in the 'New World' and which emphasized in new ways the 'incivility' of the Irish. Canny, *The Elizabethan conquest of Ireland*, chap. 6; Canny, *Kingdom and colony: Ireland in the Atlantic World, 1560-1800* (Baltimore, 1988), pp 33-5. See also Jane Ohlmeyer, '"A Laboratory for Empire?": early modern Ireland and English imperialism', in Kevin Kenny (ed.), *Ireland and the British Empire* (Oxford, 2004), pp 26-60.

[71] Lockey, 'Conquest and English legal identity in Renaissance Ireland', pp 553-4.

[72] On the uses of natural or civil law in English imperial endeavours and ideology, see MacMillan. See also Ian Campbell's work on the topic, which emphasises the natural law assumptions shared by Protestants and Catholics in seventeenth-century Ireland and which sets explorations of 'race' and 'ethnicity' within natural law and humanist frameworks. Ian Campbell, *Renaissance humanism and ethnicity before race: the Irish and the English in the seventeenth century* (Manchester, 2013).

[73] Cambrensis, *Expugnatio Hibernica*, p. 7.

[74] Cambrensis, *Expugnatio Hibernica*, p. 145.

special intervention. That nature could not deviate from God's will was, of course, an axiom shared by all Spanish theologians and jurists involved in debating the nature of the Indigenous peoples over whom the emperor claimed dominion, whatever else their differences. For natural law was 'the mediator', as Anthony Pagden put it, 'between this level of divine intelligence and the rational soul of man'.[75] If we are to ascertain how 'Irishness' and 'Englishness' related to each other and the complex internal and external modalities of differentiation and identification that allowed one to distinguish the 'civil' from the 'barbarous', then, we must think of the metaphysics of becoming in relation to the related 'Great Chain of Being' on which all God's creatures occupied distinct yet linked positions in a 'cohesive vision of nature'.[76] And what Pagden has called the 'heroic-bestial' continuum was here pivotal to European debates over 'savageness' and its relation to *imperium*, conquest, and divine and natural order. From Bernardo de Mesa's rejection in 1511 of the widely-held view that the 'New Word' 'Indian' was Aristotle's 'natural slave' and Bartolomé de las Casas instructions to would-be missionaries to lead men and women to the Christian faith through persuasion that excited the will, to Vitoria's claims in *De Indis* (1532) that 'the Indian' was not some form of 'natural man' but simply a less mature human in need of instruction, the metaphysics of becoming pervaded the commentary: rejecting efforts to determine the 'humanity' of that which was 'savage', these Spaniards insisted the capacity for self-improvement and to develop 'civil' ways of life was intrinsic to all through exposure to and imitations of higher creaturely forms. Within these parameters, 'barbarity' as a state was a capacious one possessing plural forms, marked by both emblems of uncouth living and signs of 'civil order'.[77] If Giraldus, too, especially in later iterations of the *Topographia*, assumed the full humanity of the Irish and their intrinsic capacity for improvement, both he and the Spanish commentators defied any straightforward

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[75] Pagden, *The fall of natural man*, p. 67. Even the nominalist position, which has often been viewed as untethering natural law from divine law in an immanence of an autonomous right reason, remained beholden to this understanding of the natural law as the bridge between God and Creation.. see Heiko Oberman, *The harvest of medieval theology: Gabriel Biel and late medieval nominalism* (Cambridge, Mass., 1963), chap. 4, esp. pp 108-10.

[76] As Peter Remien summaries the idea, the 'Great Chain of Being' was 'a 'vertically oriented cosmology characterised by the principles of plenitude, continuity, and graduation and stemming from the wish to integrate human social and political structures into a cohesive vision of nature'. Peter Remien, *The concept of nature in early modern English literature* (Cambridge, 2019), p. 15. The classic study on the topic remains Arthur Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being: a study of the history of an idea* (Cambridge, MA, 1976).

[77] Pagden, *The fall of natural man*, pp 22, 50, 102-7, 126-45.

distinction between 'civility' and 'incivility'.[78] He also anticipated anxieties over 'degeneracy' that, beginning in the early days of the colony in Ireland, were later to haunt English sensibilities on both sides of the Atlantic.

3.3: The Tudor discourse of 'civility' I: Henry VIII and the Earl of Surrey, 1520-1

Giraldus's works, then, help us transregionally 'locate' the contours and terms of a distinctly Anglo-Irish political-theological imaginary through which an Augustinian and Aristotelian metaphysics of becoming came to govern the Tudor discourse of 'civility' in Ireland. So, what was this discourse? What can it tell us about the ontological status of the 'Irish' and 'English' moral subjects of Tudor political theology? To begin, consider Henry VIII and the Surrey's epistolary exchange from 1520-1, which laid bare the elastic and spectral contours of the Tudor discourse of 'civility', not to mention its divine, natural, and common law underpinnings. As such, it warrants careful analysis.

Outlining what the general aims of his Irish administration were to be, Henry VIII informed Surrey that 'by the help of God', he would reduce 'that Realm to the knowledge of God, obeisance of Us, whereof shall ensue peace, wealth, and prosperity to all the inhabitants of the same'. Henry then referred to 'our rebellious Irish enemies' against whom he commanded Surrey to with all his power, and with the heads and captains of the 'Englishry, as Irishry' and 'our obeisant subjects' to 'serve Us in our wars for the reduction of that land to civility and due obedience, according to their natural duty of allegiance'.[79] Later that same year, the king again wrote to Surrey, commending his lord lieutenant's 'valiant acquittals, provident circumspection, and politique demeanour' as well as his 'all towardly diligence done and employed in and about the reduction of that our Dominion, and the disobeisant subjects of the same to peaceable governance, due order, subjection, and obeisance'. The king also praised Surrey's work in making the 'chief captains' [the Irish], 'by recognition of their natural duty of allegiance' 'come into him'. Yet, if it was good that Conn Bacach O'Neill and

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[78] As Lindsey Zachary Panxi notes, Giraldus ended his discussion of werewolves with the types of transformation of the Eucharist, this mystery beyond human understanding. By ending with the Eucharist, 'Gerald reveals that the analogy in which he is most interested is the spiritual parallel between the multivalent nature of the sacrament and the werewolves'. The 'werewolf', in other words, offered 'a spiritual admonition applicable for both the colonisers and the colonised'. Lindsey Zachary Panxi, 'Rewriting the werewolf and rehabilitating the Irish in the *Topographia Hibernica* of Gerald of Wales', in *Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 46 (3), (2015), pp 34-5, 40.

[79] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 32, 34.

the 'other captains' were slowly recognizing 'Us' 'as their Sovereign Lord', they must always, with 'circumspect and politique ways used' be furthered in their obedience and 'observance of our laws' 'governing themselves according to the same, but also following justice, to forbear to detain rebelliously such lands and dominions as to Us in right appertain; which thing must as yet rather be practised by sober ways, politique drifts, and amiable persuasions, founded in law and reason, than by rigorous dealing, communications, or any other enforcement by strength or violence'.[80] What made matters more difficult for Henry VIII, however, was the will of Irishmen, which he viewed as mere unbridled sensuality and insolence: 'For realms without justice be but tyrannies and robberies, more consonant with beastly appetites, than to the laudable life of reasonable creatures. And where wilfulness doth reign by strength, without law or justice, there is no distinction of propriety in dominions … but by strength the weaker is subdued and oppressed, which contrary to all laws, both of God and man'. Yet, if it were 'requisite that every reasonable creature be governed by a law', and if the aim, ultimately, was that they 'change their old Irish manners, and fall to more curial, discrete, and cleanly order, than ever they used before', Henry conceded the possibility of mending English laws and approving Irish ones if the former proved 'too extreme and rigorous' and the latter proved 'good and reasonable'.[81]

Several key themes are at play, here. First, Henry VIII referred to the Irish as both 'enemies' – the age-old designation that referred to their 'outsider' status – and his 'obseisant subjects', the latter who, according to their 'natural duty of allegiance', were to help reduce the former to the knowledge of God, 'civility', and obedience. Such designations testified not only to their ambiguous constitutional status, but also to the amorphous nature of 'civility' as the fluttering standard against which friend was demarcated from foe, law from lawlessness, obedient from disobedient, and 'English' from 'Irish'. The Irish, in other words, were simultaneously 'reasonable creatures' with 'beastly appetites', enemies and subjects, who both possessed and lacked law. Nor did Henry VIII conceive of 'reform' as the mere imposition of English laws across all areas of Ireland. The point was that the Irish conformed: in forging a well-ordered legal regime out of the most reasonable ingredients of both English and Irish law that would foster reasonable living among the Irish that accorded with human and divine law, they would finally be induced 'to conform their order of living to the observance of some

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[80] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 51.
[81] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 52-3, 56.

reasonable law, and not to live at will, as they have used heretofore'.[82] And, it was through methods that accorded with law, justice, and reason that they would be made to obey, 'so, of good congruence, they be bound, both by law, fidelity, and allegiance, to restore unto us our own' – in other words, not 'detain rebelliously' dominions the crown claimed by right. Indeed, the matter needed to be handled 'politically, patiently, and secretly', for to proceed otherwise would potentially arouse jealousy and suspicion among the Irish.[83] In the policy of politique secrecy, indeed, lay the principle that shadowed major strands of Tudor policy in Ireland: a commitment to self-styled persuasion that obscured the violence at its heart. The possibility of Irish resistance to Tudor tactics was an artefact of 'Irishness' itself, one that bespoke a manner of living by men who were both enemies and subjects, their conformity unstable, always open as they were to falling back into beastliness.

Shortly after, Henry VIII defined Tudor power and activities in much the same way in a letter to an undisclosed Irish lord. Explaining his purposes and the means by which Ireland would be reduced to 'virtuous living, good order, and politique governance' and seeking to make amenable to them Surrey's presence and military activities, Henry wrote that if the lord lieutenant were to be removed or not furnished with sufficient power, 'those that, according to their fidelity and natural duty of allegiance, do and well be glad to employ their bodies, substance, and puissance, for the accomplishment of such laudable and meritorious purposes' would be put in danger. The king then exhorted the unnamed Irish lord to be serviceable to the crown and to provide Surrey with assistance, for which he would be generously rewarded with letters patent for his lands and 'creation of a name of dignity' for him and his heirs. Moreover, since the crown's purpose was to have Irish rebels recognize and declare their errors, and to 'reconcile themselves by virtuous admonitions, reasonable offers, and charitable exhortations', the crown opted against a policy of military invasion – a 'charitable order' 'not only approved by the Evangelies, and all laws, but also enjoined by precept to all princes, prelates, and governors'.[84]

In the months that followed, Surrey moved about the country, marauding violently to the borders and beyond into Gaelic territory, securing promises of service and peace from the great magnates of Ireland, lesser English-Irish nobility, and Gaelic

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[82] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 53-4.
[83] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 53.
[84] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 59.

lords.[85] The lord lieutenant, though, quickly began to favour a policy of general conquest as the only sure way to permanently reduce Ireland to obedience. Surrey informed Henry VIII in June 1521 that Irishmen of the west had 'confederated', intending to hurt the king's subjects in the Pale, and blamed this turn of event on the 'fair words and persuasions' Henry had insisted he deployed in his dealings with the Irish for putting 'them in such pride'.[86]

The difference in policy preference between the king and his lord lieutenant illuminates not only the supposedly distinct poles of Tudor 'reform' – persuasion and coercion – but also two possible iterations of the violence at the heart of Tudor rule and 'civility'. Indeed, to capture the depths, scope, and ramifications of the systemic violence that was such an integral feature of Tudor political theology and 'reform', we must re-evaluate the status of 'persuasion' and 'coercion' as political-theological viewpoints and policy orientations. Historians have vigorously debated the extent to which the regime tilted towards 'persuasion' or 'coercion', what the relationship between the two was, and what their respective intellectual underpinnings were. Having moved away from Bradshaw's earlier, overly-rigid framework,[87] the consensus is now that strategies of 'persuasion' and 'coercion' were not opposites represented consistently by separate sets of laymen and clerics across the century, but the two poles of all government strategy in Ireland resorted to both on 'ideological' grounds and in response to specific exigencies.[88] More recently still, others have challenged the overly-categorical distinction between 'reform' and 'conquest' that has often served to distinguish conciliatory policies and sensitivities from their more belligerent counterparts, with David Edwards in particular pushing historians to think of the Tudor 'drive to Anglicisation' as encompassing all possible attitudes of Tudor 'reform' and

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[85] On the earl of Surrey's time in Ireland, see Bradshaw, *The Irish constitutional revolution*, pp. ; Brady, *The chief governors*, pp. 1-18; Steven G. Ellis, *Tudor Ireland: crown, community and the conflict of cultures, 1470-1603* (London, 1985), pp 108-16; Montaño, *The roots of English colonialism in Ireland*, pp 79-82; Gerald Power, *A frontier elite*, pp 66-74.

[86] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 73.

[87] See chapter 2 above. In short, Bradshaw argued that the 'coercive' strategy depended on a more uncompromising 'Augustinian anthropology', whereby spiritual education depended on the sword's prior capacity to inculcate obedience. The 'persuasive' strategy, by contrast, harnessed a more 'liberal' or accommodating Erasmian humanism that privileged education as the means by which obedience was produced. Such a portrait, however, while correctly noting the differential roles of education, law, and obedience, paints an overly rigid picture that misrepresents the character of either approach, not to mention the theologies they were rooted in, which were not so mutually exclusive. Brendan Bradshaw, Sword, word and strategy in the Reformation in Ireland', in *HJ*, 21, 3 (1978), pp 475-502. On the theologies of 'reform', see Mark A. Hutchinson, *Calvinism, reform, and the absolutist state in Elizabethan Ireland* (Routledge, 2015).

[88] Brady, *The chief governors*; Maginn and Ellis, *The Tudor discovery of Ireland*.

conquest.[89] Persuasion, in other words, or the languages of moderation and restraint that they deployed, were coercive and masked the violence at the heart of the quest for stability and order.[90] If we situate such systemic violence more squarely within the ambit of Augustinian theology, the Aristotelian metaphysics of becoming it harnessed, and the Atlantic and Mediterranean horizons within which they unfolded, we can now see, too, that 'persuasion' and 'coercion' were animated by a deeper ontology common to both, and the goal in either instance was to cultivate 'civility' and obedience through either education, law, or the sword and to *create* 'English' subjects.

Thus, on the one hand, Henry's contorted vision of the Irish relationship to law saw Irish obstinacy as an effect of their 'beastly' condition when they were not living under a regime of reasonable law. On the other hand, Irish rebelliousness and violence, for Surrey, was a feature of the pride that an inadequately tailored crown policy had fostered. Both the king and his lord lieutenant never questioned the superiority of Tudor rule, its identity with law and its reflection of God's ordering of the world. The difference between them lay more precisely in the arrangement between order, law, and 'civility'. 'Politique persuasion' for Henry was intrinsically reasonable, a mirror-reflection of Tudor rule and governance as the receptacle through which 'wanton' Irishmen could slowly and by secret design be drawn into the Tudor fold. For Surrey, by contrast, 'politique persuasion' could never effectively manage to bring men that had been so corrupted by their customs to conformity if they were not first compelled to submit through violent force. Surrey clearly thought mere submissions insufficient: if the countries won through force were not then partially peopled by the king's 'natural subjects', Surrey warned, all would be lost, 'for if these country people, of the Irish, should inhabit, undoubtedly they would return to their old ill-rooted customs, when so ever they might see any time to take their advantage'.[91] In short, discrete, politique ways sufficed for Henry to make the Irish see the error of their ways and accept their

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[89] David Edwards, 'The escalation of violence in sixteenth-century Ireland', in David Edwards et al (ed.), *Age of atrocity: violence and political conflict in early modern Ireland* (Dublin, 2007); David Edwards, 'Tudor Ireland: Anglicization, mass killing, and security', in Cathie Carmichael and Richard C. Maguire (ed.), *The Routledge history of genocide* (London and New York, 2015), pp 23-37; Fiona Fitzsimons, 'Cardinal Wolsey, the native affinities, and the failure of reform in Henrician Ireland', in David Edwards (ed.), *Regions and rulers in Ireland, 1100-1650. Essays for Kenneth Nicholls* (Dublin, 2004), pp 78-121; Heffernan, *Debating Tudor.*
[90] The 'rule of moderation', as Ethan Shagan has referred to it, is a useful device for thinking through this problem. As a tool for the consolidation of state power England, the language of moderation and restraint, Shagan argues, obscured the violence embedded in the pursuit of order. Ethan Shagan, *The rule of moderation: violence, religion, and the politics of restraint in early modern England* (New York, 2011).
[91] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 74.

natural duty of allegiance; for Surrey, by contrast, only brute strength could resolve Irish obstinacy, with politique discretion only being useful for those already far ahead in the conformity game.

Yet Surrey and Henry VIII's attitudes were not so diametrically opposed. If God willed that wrongs be made right, those who acted in accordance to God's will and furthered God's design acted not as instigators of violence but as those responding to prior, *illegitimate* violence in order to re-establish the godly and lawful order of things. This was a recurring formula in which the terms of English and Irish violence were inscribed across the century: English violence was righteous and retributory; Irish violence was lawless savagery.[92] Similarly – and just as how, as we saw in chapter two, a refusal to abide to the crown's exhortations could incur the just invasion with 'God's grace' of one's territory – the gentle persuasions and displays of charity lauded by Henry carried with them the threat of overt violence, for if the rebels persisted in their ways and refused 'to conform themselves to our exhortations', the crown 'shall have good ground, and can no less do, but…put our self in a readiness to subdue and exterminate them for ever'.[93] In all scenarios, then, violence committed as well as its perennial threat were present; the promise of violence remained.

Yet, if 'Englishness' was the norm, what did it mean to *be* 'English'? On 3 November 1520, he commended to Henry VIII Cormack Oge and McCarthy Reagh, who had given him their pledges and who wished to sit in parliament and the council 'as Englishmen' and hold their titles and lands from the crown. The two Irish lords were wise and, in Surrey's words, 'more conformable to good order than some Englishmen here'.[94] If 'Englishmen' could 'decay' yet be brought back to the folds of their 'Englishness', however, would, say, McCarthy Reagh ever completely cease to be 'Irish'? Or did the possibility of reverting back to one's prior 'Irishness' forever lurk behind the scenes? Both 'Englishness' and 'Irishness', indeed, were fixed, yet mutable, but how this was so, as we shall now see, differed for each.

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[92] On this theme, see Patricia Palmer, *The severed head and the grafted tongue: literature, translation and violence in early modern Ireland* (Cambridge, 2014), chap. 1.
[93] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 60.
[94] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 57-8.

3.4: The Tudor discourse of 'civility' II: the metaphysics of becoming and the anomalous moral subjects of Tudor political theology

It is difficult to overestimate the significance of Henry VIII and Surrey's epistolary exchanges: the primary contours of Tudor 'civility' are present therein or gestured at in some form, from the ambiguities of identity and the ambivalent link between God, 'nature', 'reason', 'savagery', and 'reform' to the anomalous legal-cultural status of the 'Irish' and the violence of English order. The principal consequence of this discursive dispensation was that epistemic violence in the form of a chauvinistic and colonial conceit pervaded the edifice of 'Englishness' as the standard of divinely ordained, natural order. Such was the fulcrum governing the determinations of and affinities between the divided moral subjects of Tudor political theology – and pivotal, here, was the distinction between 'enemy' and 'subject', a distinction that, funnelling the constitutional-legal planes of *imperium* in Ireland, provides the key to unlocking the edifice of 'civility' as a mechanism and effect of Tudor sovereignty.

It was the earl of Kildare who first followed the path charted in the 'State of Ireland' and by Henry VIII when, in 1526, he spoke to Cardinal Thomas Wolsey of the 'king's disobedient Irish subjects', a phrase the king himself would again approximate two years later in his instructions to the council of Ireland over how to deal with his 'rebellious subjects of the wild Irishry'.[95] Henry then explicitly linked 'Irish subject-hood' with the task of inculcating 'civility' in 1541, when he addressed the council on how to advance 'the commenced civility of subjects of the Irishry'.[96] Yet, the 'Wild Irishmen being the king's mortal enemies' could also be the 'Irish rebels' who lived on the lands of the earls of Kildare, Ossory, and Desmond, where the king's revenues were not collected nor the king's laws kept, the inhabitants were oppressed by extortionate exactions, English gentlemen, freeholders, and husbandmen were exiled, and the English tongue and habit had 'decayed'.[97] Indeed, the line between 'rebel' and 'Irish enemy' was a fine one that offered little security or future legal protection to Gaelic lords in the face of crown expansion.[98] While English law did distinguish between

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[95] T.N.A., 60/1, f. 101r; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 147-50.
[96] *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 336.
[97] B.L., Lansdowne MS 159/7, f. 36v; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 182-6.
[98] Maginn, '*Civilizing' Gaelic Leinster*, pp 12-4. For an extensive discussion of the ambiguity between 'king's Irish enemies' and 'loyal English subjects', see Bradshaw, *The Irish constitutional revolution*, pp 187-257. See also Christopher Maginn, 'Continuity and change: 1470-1550', in Brendan Smith (ed.), *The Cambridge history of Ireland, vol. 1, 600-1550* (Cambridge, 2018), pp 304-7, 324-5.

'Irishmen' (inhabitants of 'Irish blood' living among the Englishry; by-laws were passed in Dublin in the 1450s and 1460s making it illegal for 'all manner of men of Irish blood and women' to reside within the Pale) and 'Irish enemies' as representatives of recognizably Gaelic 'political' units (Gaelic septs such as the O'Byrnes and the O'Tooles),[99] the Irish 'rebel', the 'Irish enemy', and that of 'Irish blood' were denied the rights due to an English subject.

If the Irish could be crown subjects, as implied when they were referred to not only as 'rebels' but when their 'natural duty of allegiance' was invoked (the implications were particularly flagrant when in the mid-1530s, one commentator referred to 'wild Irish rebellers'),[100] and although they still could become apprentices and citizens despite continued statutory proscriptions, they were also designated outsiders akin to the English legal category of 'alien enemies'.[101] In March 1536, the mayor and council of Youghal worried that the threat of ongoing rebellion pushed their defensive capacities to the brink. Hearing 'sundry reports' that 'certain aliens' were preparing to invade the land, they begged Cromwell for ordnance and powder.[102] It is not clear here who these 'aliens' were. Perhaps the mayor was referring to the 'mere Irish' of the surrounding hinterland – who were, as we noted above, deprived of the rights of native-born English subjects – or to the Spanish 'aliens' allied with the earl of Desmond, in light of the widely known rumours since 1534 of an imminent invasion.[103] One report from 1543, however, best exemplified the trinity 'Irishmen'-'outward enemy'-'foreigner', noting how those having 'more respect for their private commodity than for the public weal of his grace's said subjects' sold munitions, guns, and artillery to 'Irishmen *and other foreign persons*' ('if percase any sudden invasions should happen by outward enemies') to 'the great strengthening and encouragement also of other ill-disposed persons here at home'.[104]

'Irish subject-hood', then, was fragile and precarious. It required support and confirmation in the guise of pledges and indentures for 'Irish rebels' which then needed

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[99] Booker, *Cultural exchange and identity in late medieval Ireland*; Maginn, *'Civilising' Gaelic Leinster*.
[100] L.P.L., Carew MS 602, f. 120.
[101] On 'citizenship' and 'civility' in late medieval Ireland, see Steven G. Ellis, 'Citizenship and the state in Ireland: from medieval lordship to early modern kingdom', *Enfranchising Ireland? Identity, citizenship, and state* (Dublin, 2018), pp 20-2. On citizenship and the Irish in the corporation of Dublin, see Peadar Slattery, *Social life in pre-Reformation Dublin, 1450-1540* (Dublin, 2019), pp 46, 65, and chap. 4, esp. pp 122-3.
[102] T.N.A., SP 60/3, ff 27r-28v.
[103] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 198-9.
[104] Emphasis added. T.N.A., SP 60/11, f. 53r.

to be enrolled in the Exchequer.[105] It also required the threat of violence, for it was difficult to trust Irishmen, many alleged, if the 'sword' or the 'King's Majesty's forces' were not over them.[106] Along with pledges, moreover, if Irish lords wanted to be assigned to the lands they now claimed, it required consistent performance of the trappings of 'Englishness', such as the wearing of English apparel and being conformable to the king's laws.[107] Even when 'Irish subject-hood' was formally recognised, such as when the Irish were acknowledged for serving militarily with the lord deputy, this service, performed as it was by untrustworthy 'enemies', as Justice Thomas Luttrell put it in 1537, was occasionally considered less 'faithful and earnest' than that performed by the English for their own defence.[108] And while several dozen Irishmen and women were granted charters of English liberty throughout the 1530s and 1540s,[109] even after the Act of Kingly Title, the regime remained highly inconsistent regarding whom among Irish lords it granted such charters to – for decades, in fact, the Irish continued to purchase charters in order to be legally recognised as English.[110]

Pivotal to Tudor strategies 'reform' and violence is how 'Englishness' or 'English order' was the *telos* of 'Irish civility'. Consider the Englishman Stephen ap Parry's report to his master Cromwell from October 1535.[111] Parry seemed first and foremost concerned with who could and could not speak English and with who did and did not abide by English order. More specifically, informing Cromwell on the activities of McCarthy Reagh, Cormack Oge, and Donough O'Brien, Parry put into play a series of opposites to contrast 'ordered' and 'unruly' Irishmen. If Cormack Oge and O'Brien were conformable to English demands, McCarthy Reagh, who objected to the crown's dictates, was obstinate: he refused to do service to the crown, refused the arbitration and mediation of the lord deputy and council of Ireland, and insisted on retaining with force

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[105] See for instance the king's instructions from 1534: *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 190

[106] *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 166; T.N.A., SP 60/12, f. 158r.

[107] See, for instance, *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 268. As we shall see in chapter five, the phrase 'further to come Your Grace's subjects' Henry VIII used vis-à-vis the O'Tooles was one of the pivotal elements of the post-Reformation inflection and transformation of Tudor 'reform' and 'civility'.

[108] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 506.

[109] The *patent and close rolls* for Henry VIII's reign make it clear that many of the Irish within the Pale were successful in their appeals to the Exchequer to become naturalised English subjects.

[110] According to Christopher Maginn, such an 'arbitrary methodology' suggests perhaps that 'the crown was not prepared to begin enfranchising Gaelic lordships wholesale into the Tudor state at this juncture', being more inclined instead to strategically 'grant the distinction to subordinate figures' as part of their efforts to destabilise the Irish lordships. Maginn, *'Civilizing' Gaelic* Leinster, pp 51-2. On the persistence of such issues after 1542, see Maginn and Ellis, *The Tudor discovery of Ireland*, p. 173 and S.J. Connolly, *Contested island: Ireland, 1460-1630* (Oxford, 2007); Christopher Maginn, *William Cecil, Ireland, and the Tudor state* (Oxford, 2012), pp 143-7.

[111] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 281-6.

the territories he had acquired by the sword. By contrast, O'Brien – who according to Parry, referred to his own, unruly family as the 'wild Irish' and the 'king's enemies' – handed his pledges as a promise of future good will and service, which here entailed harming no Englishmen but Irishmen only. He vouched, moreover, to hold from the king all lands he had conquered – which in Parry's account, also served to highlight the distinction between 'Irish usurpation' of crown rights and territories and its unlawful retention by the sword (as exemplified by McCarthy Reagh's obstinacy), and the rightful recovery of illegitimately usurped land in the service of the king, as embodied in O'Brien's promises. O'Brien even alleged to renounce all 'Irish fashions' and declared he would henceforth 'order himself according to English laws'. If McCarthy Reagh and O'Brien's family represented the unruly 'wild Irishmen' and the king's enemies, then O'Brien was the ideal 'Irishman' who pegged his struggles against his Irish rivals to his crown service and the king's 'reformist' cause in Ireland. Ultimately, if an Irishman conducted himself well, it was because he behaved and was serviceable, obedient, and conformable like an Englishman was – or at least, should be. Lord Deputy Leonard Grey in July 1538 assured the king 'that in all my proceedings with the Irishmen in the said journey, O'Connor stake as fast unto Your Grace, and of your part against every of them, even as he had been one of your English subjects, and followed mine advice in every point'.[112] There could hardly be a more ideal and promising Irishman in the eyes of the English.

The same epistemic violence intrinsic to Henry VIII's calls for 'politique persuasion' and the rigorous 'reform' of Irish laws governed the Irish administration's conciliatory attitudes and policies. In early 1541, St Leger informed Henry VIII that he perceived the Irish lords with whom he was dealing 'to be men of such nature, that they will much sooner be brought to honest conformity by small gifts, honest persuasions, and nothing taking of them, then by great rigour. And, God willing, when Your Majesty once hath their obedience, profit will soon follow'.[113] Crown officials could speak of 'honest persuasions' and the profits the Irish would yield from such charitable overtures if they complied as a gift ('nothing taking of them'). Yet something *was* taken, and it was precisely what many Gaels refused to wholly abandon: their name, their inheritance practices, their forms of rulership and law. If in September 1541, Henry VIII commended the use of 'great dexterity and persuasion' to win over Irish lords, it was

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[112] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 62-3.
[113] *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 290.

because 'we be desirous once again to experiment their faiths', and if he ordered his Irish council to 'not overmuch press them in any vigorous sort, but only to persuade them discretely' about the benefits of submitting to English order and tenurial practises, discrete persuasion also entailed informing them of 'what danger may come to them, if they embrace not this our special grace showed unto them.[114] The corollary was that any resort to the sword could be blamed on the Irish themselves: as Henry declared, echoing his statement from 1521, we be 'of our own nature disposed rather to win our subjects to the knowledge of their bounden duties, and to an honest kind of life, by the extension of our mercy and liberality towards them, than by the just persecution of them by the sword, where their own willfulness and disloyal behaviour shall not enforce us to the contrary'.[115]

Henry's invocation of 'nature', here, is revealing. For the English, their law was coterminous with 'English nature' – accordingly, the exclusion of the Irish from English common law was intrinsic to that tradition.[116] And as with the Spanish theologians debating the merits and legitimacy of Habsburg rule in the 'New World' for whom forms of 'spiritual' and 'civil' rule reflected the quality of those being ruled,[117] so, too, in Tudor Ireland, did 'English habit, tongue, and order' and 'Irish habit, tongue, and order' or 'rule', as contemporaries referred to them, map onto 'civility' and if not full 'barbarousness', than something less than full 'civility'.[118] The correlate to such terms was 'nature'. How Tudor commentators appealed to and invoked 'nature' or 'natural' inclinations to describe the Irish, diagnose the ills of the land, and propose suitable remedies is key, and the basic structure of the discussion had been accounted for three centuries earlier in none other than Giraldus Cambrensis's *Expugnatio Hibernica*.

As Giraldus related, after the Anglo-Normans had conquered Ireland, they deliberated over what to do with its subjugated people. Two positions were declared,

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[114] *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 333.
[115] *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 324.
[116] As Brian Lockey put it, it was the 'very generative principle' of the common law which 'linked it to the English nature'. 'Conquest and English legal identity in Renaissance Ireland', p. 554. In his *A discovery of the true causes of the failure of the English conquest of Ireland* (1612), John Davies would later identify the fact that, under English common law, the Irish had always been treated as 'aliens' as one the reasons England never managed to effectively conquer Ireland. Lockey, 'Conquest and English legal identity', p. 552.
[117] Pagden, *The fall of natural man*, pp 53-4.
[118] See the king's instructions from 1534, Luttrell's 'book' from 1537, and Archbishop Browne's complaints from 1546, for instance: *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 191; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 508; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 557.

the first by a certain Raymond, a man from Henry II's retinue, and the second by Hervey of Montmorency. Giraldus had his interlocutors say as follows. 'We must consider', pronounced Raymond, 'what action we should take concerning our prisoners. For I would not by any means insist that we should spare our enemies. However, these are not enemies, but fellow human beings; they are not rebels, but beaten and vanquished opponents, men who, in consequence of the remorseless will of fate, have been defeated by us while they were defending their country'. Having been taken prisoner, they 'have been granted their lives and, from being classed as enemies have, so to say, now reverted to the category of human beings' so that, deserving as they are of mercy, 'any sentence of death passed on them in the future would tend to bring infamy and shame upon us'. Hervey of Montmorency assertedly disagreed. 'As if any foreign country is to be conquered by acts of mercy rather than by fire and slaughter!', he pounced. 'While peoples are still proud and rebellious they must be subdued by all possible means and clemency must take a back seat. But when they have been subdued, when they are ready to be obedient, then and only then are they to be treated with all possible clemency, without prejudice to good government'.[119] The stakes, then, were to determine when a subdued, 'proud', and 'rebellious' people, ceased being an 'enemy' and was once again fully 'human'. How one answered this fundamental question dictated whether mercy or brute force were needed to inculcate obedience and subsequently maintain 'good government'.

The aforementioned fifteenth-century developments in the languages of 'reform' and conquest (see section 3.1 above) in fact provided a bridge between Geraldus's claims and those advanced during Henry VIII's reign, preconditioning the peculiar forms exclusionary rhetoric and policies acquired therein. The language of enmity, and the category of 'enemy', here, were key, as 'ethnicity' and 'enmity' became intertwined in buttressing justifications for constant warfare. As Peter Crooks has shown, the 'language of enmity served … a double purpose in demonstrating the necessity for the prosecution of sustained warfare against the native population, while also proving its just cause'. Consider the famous *The Libel of English policy* (c. 1436), which not only affirmed 'the standard position that the king's dominium embraced the whole island of

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[119] Giraldus Cambrensis, *Expugnatio Hibernica*, pp 59, 61, 63. John Yonge took this approach in his translation and adaptation of the pseudo-Aristotelian *Secreta sectrorum* (1422), when he wrote: a 'prince should execute the dint of sword on his enemy, especially on false people, and that he should not postpone the hour of fortune, these following [from the Old Testament] stories show'. *Secreta secretorm*, p. 45.

Ireland and should command the allegiance or obedience of all the island's population' but which also presented the 'contrast between the securely ruled ground and what lay beyond was cast in Manichean terms as a social chasm separating the "wild" from the "tame"'. As the *Libel* described the two forms of governance that prevailed: 'the abominable conditions and inhuman manners of the Irish enemies of our sovereign lord the King' as against the 'the honourable conduct and orderly government of his English subjects'.[120]

In the reign of Henry VIII, no one so categorically contrasted the 'enemy' with the 'human' but the basic ontological structure within which 'civility', the metaphysics of becoming, and the role of violence in imposing or maintaining order, operated was the same.[121] It was the same Aristotelian metaphysics in Christian Augustinian guise. 'Beastliness' and 'civility' existed on a continuum of nature, and in a Tudor context, the 'Irish' was imprisoned in a precarious state that, if not still one of wanton 'incivility', perennially risked returning to it – although, if the potential for relapse into a prior condition of 'incivility' was a common theme in Tudor political-theological thought, both the 'Irish' and the 'English of Ireland' were at risk.

There was since the very inception of the Anglo-Norman colony a tension between the binaries of colonial discourse and the socio-historical realities they were entangled in but which they never adequately captured. For although the usual privileging of ancestry in the determination of 'ethnic identity' – where a person could speak Irish, wear Irish clothing, don an Irish-style moustache or haircut, and ride a horse like an Irishman and see themselves and be considered by others as 'English' – remained, greater cultural hybridisation and exchange between the 'Englishry' and the 'Irishry' had made increasingly difficult what was consequently and overtime deemed evermore important: enshrining 'English/Irish' difference in law.[122] When the Tudors ascended the English throne, then, calls to enforce 'English habit, tongue, and order' in the colony had a long colonial pedigree, eventually receiving a new parliamentary endorsement in 1537.[123] 'Englishness' may have been the standard for Tudor sovereignty, and from the 1540s onward, exposure to English law, military personnel, and culture may have increasingly been seen as a pedagogical tool to inculcate the

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[120] Crooks, 'The structure of politics in theory and practise, 1210-1541', pp 461, 465-7.
[121] Of course, the simultaneous avowal and disavowal of the humanity of the Irish had long been a feature of insular discourse. Cohen, *Hybridity, identity, and monstrosity in medieval Britain*, p. 87.
[122] Booker, *Cultural exchange and identity in late medieval Ireland*, pp 250, 254.
[123] T.N.A., SP 60/3, ff 4r-5v.

norms of 'civility' among the Irishry,[124] but the king's English subjects nevertheless did not always comport themselves as they were expected to. Robert Cowley's strategy for the reformation of Ireland in 1536 rested on the necessity of first 'reforming' the Englishry of Ireland, who, as he put it, 'are, or ought to be, the king's true subjects'.[125] The gentlemen and commoners of the county and town of Kilkenny claimed in October 1537, that while they were anxious to obey the king's laws and live in 'civility', such laws were void and the country would only prosper and be able to defend itself once the abuses of the earl Ossory and others were eliminated.[126] The English-Irish and Irish soldiers in the king's army, too, were a particularly troublesome bunch (see chapter six), and here, the distinction between 'friend' and 'enemy' could be decisive. Revealing a deep distrust and suspicion of soldiers, Grey informed Cromwell in mid-1536 of the 'Mutiny and insurrection in the field' – 'Wherefore, good my Lord, for the Passion of God look upon me, that I be not cast away, by them that I ought to trust as my friends. I promise you, on mine honesty I am in more dread of my life among them that be the soldiers, then I am of them that be the King's Irish enemies'.[127] Others, too, considered some Irishmen to be more loyal, ordered, and serviceable than Englishmen, their service, noteworthy and profitable, their moral ordering occasionally even superior to that of the king's English subjects. As the master of the rolls, John Alen, put it in 1537: Whosoever 'regardeth not the hearts and service of Irishmen', accordingly, 'shall do the king but slender service' for 'the King's dominion, this many years, hath been defended much by the strength of Irishmen' who have been 'more conformable to good order, than diverse of the King's subjects, and kept their truths better, which in the Earl of Kildare's time was proved true. I pray God it be otherwise now'.[128] Thus, 'reformers' spoke of imposing 'English habit, tongue, and order' on the marchers, to have all English lords and gentlemen send their children to the towns, these bulwarks against invasion and promoters of 'civility',[129] to be raised in the English language and

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[124] See chapter 5.
[125] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 322.
[126] L&P, xii (ii), 859.3.
[127] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 355-6.
[128] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 490-1.
[129] As Alen put it in 1537, towns were not only great sites of defence against invasions; they were also a 'great inducement to bring the rude country to civil fashion and manners'. It was 'therefore necessity that they be maintained with all laudable liberties' and that – indeed, as environmental signs of 'civility' – the king appointed commissioners yearly to ensure that the towns were properly fortified and the streets adequately paved. *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 483. See also *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 191; L.P.L., Carew MS 611, f. 43 (*SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 310).

manners, to compel all to use English courts and law, to outlaw certain articles of clothing and the riding of a horse without a saddle.

The corollary to such initiatives was a more pronounced concern to deal with the Irish, and multiple routes were proposed. In the early 1530s, Cowley recommended that Irish judges have no jurisdiction or authority or meddling among the king's subjects – a particularly persistent issue that continued to plague 'reformers' and commentators.[130] Other proposals included: outlawing the Irish – especially bards, rhymers, and so forth – and their customs and law, calls to have them exiled, displaced by the English of Ireland, the Irish of England, or English settlers, proscriptions of any and all associations between them and the English of Ireland, and, especially from 1541 onward, to have Irish lords agree to anglicizing their lands upon submitting to the crown.[131]

By the 1530s, 'reform' was more explicitly broached as an incremental 'process', and most agreed with Cowley that the reformation needed to start with the English of Ireland, or Leinster more generally, before proceeding with the 'Irish'.[132] More specifically, 'reformers' evinced the same corporal and hierarchical understanding of the body politic and commonweal that pervaded moral-governmental thought of the time, whereby change and the task of 'civilising' or 'making English' began at the Head and extended to the Body for both the English and Irish, across households in the earldoms, the borders, and the towns.[133] If commentators prioritised top-down strategies of 'reform' for both the English and the Irish, however, important distinctions rooted in the differential designations and expectations attributed to 'Englishness' and 'Irishness' and their respective 'natures' nevertheless remained. The case of Robert Cowley is illustrative of the dynamics at work; considering his 'reform' tracts and ideas between 1533 and 1541 alongside other 'reformist' perspectives and proposals reveals many of the fault lines of the political theology of 'reform' and 'civility' in Henrician Ireland.

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[130] B.L., Lansdowne MS 159/2, f. 2. Consider, too, the situation as it was revealed by the royal commissioners mission in 1537, when they obtained sworn testimonies from jurors and gentlemen over the course of their rounds through Kilkenny, Irishtown, Waterford, Dungarvan, Wexford (shire, county, and town), Ross, Clonmel, and Tipperary. L&P, xii (ii), no. 859.2.

[131] See for instance, *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 502; L&P, xii (ii), no. 859; L&P, xii (ii), no. 893.3. On the submission of Irish lords and the anglicisation of their lands, see chapters 5.

[132] Heffernan, *Debating Tudor policy*, chap. 1.

[133] For examples of 'reform' as a top-down strategy', see *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 170; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 187; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 373-4; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 501-4.

Cowley hopped from one strategy of 'reform' to another. At times, he called for exiling the Irish from the Pale and the mid-lands (or the eastern side of the Shannon).[134] Other times, the picture was more ambiguous. Most curiously, in one proposal from 1536, he outlined what he felt were the proper stages and means of 'reforming' Ireland. First, he opined that all those within the Pale who confederated with the traitor Lord Offaly in the recent revolt should be punished with the utmost severity to serve as an example in 'terror' for all others who would dare do likewise. He then noted how 'good order' and the king's laws could not take effect among the 'English marchers' without first the Irishry being 'enfeebled, brought to pass, or exiled'. Yet, 'these extremities', he suggested, needed to be pursued in 'a mean way' in order to bring 'English subjects to better conformity', at least 'till such time as extremity be executed against the Irishry'. For the English must be convinced that the king only intended to retake his 'manors, lordships, and revenues, within and amongst all his English subjects' 'by lawful title'. Once achieved, the Irish were to be subjected to a brutal policy of forced starvation and exile to reduce them to the barest of states. Yet just before journeying down this road, Cowley played a more 'conciliatory' tune that at first glance appears to contradict the thrust of his proposal: if the crown wished to extend and consolidate its authority beyond the Pale, while it was necessary to build walled towns and fortifications manned and inhabited by men 'of the King's blood' who hate the Irishry and who will war against them, such countries, he conceded, shall 'not need to be all inhabited with Englishmen but may be mixed with diverse born in the English Pale, in the cities and boroughs towns, and in the earl of Ossory's country'.[135] Who were these 'diverse born'? A mix of English-Irish and Irish, or solely the former? Only the adequately 'English'? How to make sense of Cowley's apparent 'reformist' gymnastics?

Initially, Cowley's proposal appeared closer to other calls between the mid-1530s and 1541 for banishing or destroying the Irish – or specific septs, such as the O'Tooles, O'Byrnes, and McMurroughs – and peopling people the land of with 'good Englishmen' or others the king would personally appoint.[136] The apparent contradictions, too, can perhaps be resolved if we consider whom specifically contemporaries targeted when speaking of 'conquest' or 'exile'. In October 1538, Lord Deputy Grey and the council entertained the following qualification: 'Neither do we

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[134] B.L., Lansdowne MS 159/2, f. 10; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 452.
[135] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp. 323-9.
[136] L.P.L., Carew MS 602, f. 87; T.N.A., SP 60/6, ff 15rv; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp. 535-6; T.N.A., SP 60/10, f. 130r.

mean, when we speak or motion to conquest or exile these men, that we would banish all the inhabitants there, but the gentlemen, and men of war; and, having garrisons of men of war in certain principal places, to retain still the most of the poor earth tillers there, which be good inhabitants'.[137] Perhaps Cowley, too, then, did not always envision the *total* displacement of the Irishry from whatever region he happened to focus on. He certainly spoke differently of, say, the Ormond lordship than he did the immediate boundaries of the Pale and the midlands – although, Cowley was after all a Butler client, and while he consistently lambasted the 'English-Irish' of the Pale, he had remarkably little to say about the inhabitants of his own lord's territories despite ample cries of disorder among its inhabitants. At no point, moreover, did he target the English-Irish for exile or banishment, whatever lamentable lot he believed they were in.

Yet, the 'Irish' were not all so unreasonable as to require physical displacement; some were seen to potentially grasp what their 'true interests' were, and these were the ones that Cowley, as he expressed in his 'Device for the reformation of Ireland' (1538), the harshest indictment of the 'English of Ireland' in Henry VIII's reign (see below), could expect to wilfully eschew what made them 'uncivil' and submit to a 'civil order' for their 'own weales' and 'quiet living' – but only if discrete and earnest Englishmen sent among them managed to persuade them.[138] This, indeed, was a crucial strategy of Tudor 'persuasion' and rule, the argument being that their dominions would prosper more under English princely jurisdiction.[139] All the same, the king, Cowley wrote, demanded only that they recognize him as their sovereign lord and conform to the demands of the same kinds of anglicisation programmes discussed above. He would then not only accept them 'as his true subjects but also at all times defend them as any other his subjects of the English pale' as 'reconciled and denizens'.[140] Similar polarities held in delicate balance prevailed in his 'device' from 1541, in which – and similar to Surrey's point from 1520 – he argued that the Irish could not be brought to submit through war, for they were too accustomed to living in squalor and misery for war to deter them. Yet they were also naturally witty and eloquent, and possessed 'marvellous natural comynaunce'. They simply needed to be relieved of all doubt that the king wished to exile, banish, or destroy them and which convinced them that he would

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[137] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 100.
[138] T.N.A., SP 60/7, f. 35r.
[139] For example, see Cowley's report from 1533, B.L., Lansdowne MS 159/2, ff 7-8.
[140] T.N.A., SP 60/7, ff 35r-36r.

defend them as his own subjects if they all enjoyed their possessions as royal grants, and thus become his true English subjects.[141]

With that said, note, however, that if plans to have the 'English of Ireland' educated in English manners was conceived as a remedy to their current state of 'disorder', for the 'Irish', 'discrete training' was a mode of education in the knowledge of God and prince that further implied that the return to a former state of 'incivility' was not merely a slip like it was for the 'English', but, as Henry VIII put it, a 'revolt' 'to their former beastliness'.[142] The only time the 'degeneracy' of the 'English of Ireland' could conceivably be viewed as a 'revolt' against Christian order was when they actively rebelled against the crown or became traitors, and it is here, revealingly, that the same equivocation between 'Englishness' and 'Irishness' occurred: in the midst of ongoing skirmishes and rebel activity in June 1536, Dublin Castle advised the king that he should immediately settle his possessions in those areas currently without defence, for otherwise, the crown's rebels would 'break and prostrate the fortresses and conquest the same, converting it to such a wild fashion' that, without great cost, would remain disobedient for a 'long season after'.[143] It was the 'ethnically' ambiguous 'crown rebel' who, by making the fortresses 'wild', posed a threat to 'civil order'.

What then to make of Cowley's proposals? How should we make sense of Tudor invocations of Irish 'savagery' and its oft-invoked proximity to 'decayed' English-Irish comportment? The distinction between those of 'Irish blood' within the Englishry and the king's 'Irish enemies' is ultimately too shaky to serve as a reliable guide. The pivotal explanatory concept, rather, is Nature. A few overlapping developments were at work, here.

To begin, just as with the Spanish debates regarding 'New World' 'savages' and the justifications for Habsburg imperial rule overseas, the same ambivalence 'nature' as an immutable reflection of God's will, law, and creation possessed relative to environmental conditioning, prefigured Tudor commentary on the Irish and English of Ireland. In 1536, the council admonished the earl of Desmond, declaring that 'in respect of an honest man's life' he could 'by no natural nor civil reason' say that 'he liveth like a Christian man or reasonable creature, but having, as it were, a shadow of a man's life, passing the time brutely, be yet ever in fear, which your noble antecessors did not'.

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[141] *SP Henry VIII*, iii, pp 347-8.
[142] *SP Henry VIII*, iii, pp 331, 333.
[143] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 338-9.

Appealing to the commonplace trope that one's environment was pivotal to their form of life, the council then added that the current condition of his lands were sufficient to move him 'to follow the steps of your noble ancestors, and so consequently to obey your Prince according the commandment of God'.[144] Of course, not all Irishmen had the 'advantage' of living in such a propitious conditions; for the rest, environmental 'deficiencies' – perceived 'nomadic barbarism' and lack of agricultural cultivation, and an absence of roads, fences, and settlements – were pivotal to classically-inflected English impressions of Irish 'incivility'.[145] Thus, while journeying through the land of the Kavanaghs in November 1540, St Leger and the council ordered them in writing that they 'should not only submit themselves to Your Majesty's obedience, but also leave the country wherein they inhabited, in which is, for the most part, nothing but woods, rocks, greet, bogs, and barren ground, being unmanured or tilled, which was a great occasion to them to live like wild and savage persons, only living by stealth, and robbing their neighbours'.[146] 'Incivility', here, was not a stain intrinsic to nature, but an exterior quality that nature, once elevated to a state of perfection, would forego. The idea was axiomatically expressed in a 1533 report: the author related how he had from time to time heard that the king should not regard his land of Ireland with any estimation on account of the 'incivility and bruteness of the people'. Such a view, however, was misguided, for 'no doubt, if there were justice used among them, they would be found as civil, wise, politique, and active, as any other nation'.[147]

Yet if nature as a language to be read was central to English imperial and colonial thought, as John Patrick Montaño argues, 'English' and 'Irish' 'nature' were substantively different, occupying different positions on the bestial-civil continuum – or, the matrix triangulating God, Nature, the metaphysics of becoming, and 'civility'. The principal paradox was that Nature, while an immutable reflection of God's perfect creation that required reason to realise its intrinsic potential, was individuated into 'English' and 'Irish' variants where only the latter became a mark of one's

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[144] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 406.
[145] The most forceful proponent of this argument remains Montaño. Focusing on the prevalence of Roman law, colonial thought, and attendant paradigms of 'civility', Montaño has argued that underpinning the diversity of reform programs, administrative procedures, and approaches to government proposed, developed, or applied by Tudor officials and the Dublin administration was a remarkably consistent colonial attitude that saw the Irish as culturally inferior and identified their relationship to land and their settlement patterns and forms as the source of Irish barbarity and, ultimately, the problem of government in Ireland. Montaño, *The roots of English colonialism*, esp. chaps. 1-3, 5-7.
[146] *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 266.
[147] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 173.

irredeemable savageness. Hence how the 'Irish' were both simultaneously inside and outside the law, within the bounds of 'order' and 'disorder', and capable of 'civility' and 'barbarousness', the two poles assimilated to an elastic 'nature' both mutable and fixed, inviting either gentle persuasion or brute force to 'reduce' it to a 'civil' state. If the environment of the Kavanagh's encouraged them 'to live like wild and savage persons', St Leger and the council could also speak in September 1540 of how the Irish, 'considering their frail promises and oaths', were 'prone and ready at all times, when the opportunity and time to execute *their cankard and natural malice*, to persecute Your Grace's subject, having no respect to God, truth, promise, or honesty, living by ravine, spoils, and tributes, occupying neither earyng nor sewing, and daily encroaching upon Your Grace's subjects'. The administration could, moreover, two years later consider the need to undo O'Neill's naturally savage inclinations: to 'the intent he should continue Your Majesty's servant, and not revert to his former obstinacy and rebellion, according to the *perverse inclination and savage nature of them*', they offered to petition on his behalf in order 'to allure and win him to know the duty of his allegiance, and to savour Your Highness's most princely goodness'.[148] As far as those of 'English descent' were concerned, however, it is clear that 'English nature' survived the assault of 'savagery', even if only as a memory and reminder of what had been lost. In the spring of 1541, the king wrote to MacWilliam Burke, whom he perceived to 'be descended of so noble a parentage' that 'as We think your nature cannot be satisfied with the continuance of so vile a trade of living, as both offendeth God and Us your Sovereign Lord, and all others which smell anything of honesty'.[149] These were also essentially the terms in which St Leger and Henry VIII invoked 'English' and 'Irish' 'nature' when commenting on the benefits of a strategy of 'persuasion' (see above). The 'nature' of Irishmen made them more amenable to 'honest persuasions' while the 'nature' of the English lent itself to the pursuit of a conciliatory route of 'politique' or 'discrete' 'persuasion'. And if violence, destruction, and coercion were used to reduce Ireland to order and 'civility', it marked not a reflection of 'English savagery' but a 'natural' and redemptive response to the obstinate 'barbarousness' and 'savage nature' of the Irish. The recognition of Irish 'savagery', then, served two purposes: as the reason for proceeding with either righteous terror or discrete and politique caution, and to highlight the crown's majesty by enlisting it as the only source of authority that could

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[148] Emphasis added in both. *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 242; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 386.
[149] *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 301.

whip the Irish into a 'civil' state or prevent them from reverting to their 'former obstinacy and rebellion'. The crown's majesty, after all, could not but reflect 'English nature', that purported *telos* of Irish 'civility'.

Ultimately, despite harbouring the potential for ascending to a higher state of 'civility', 'Irishness' itself could serve as a stand-in for a 'savage nature' in a way that 'Englishness' never could. If the Pale 'reformer' Patrick Finglas noted that 'Irishmen be and ever have been enemies to good order and law,[150] others reiterated the point but more emphatically tied it to a 'natural disposition'. Archbishop of Armagh, John Kite, spoke in 1514 of how 'the people of this land be variable, subtle and crafty, naturally; in whom is little confidence or trust to be taken, otherwise than for their proper advantages; and be people of fair promises and words, and marvellous vainglorious and covetous'.[151] The Irish 'are of this nature', Alen wrote three decades later in his 'Device for Ireland' (1546), 'when so ever they be kept, in awe and see the sword over them, they will speak fear, and make many behests, but note when so ever an Irishman is out of fear and have strength, no reason taketh pleace with him, but his own will, greater tyrants be there none than they, where so ever they have the upper hand'. The earl of Desmond, by contrast, being English, should by nature be better than them, but his 'truth' – like the Irish – was tethered to 'his own will'.[152] In transgressing his own 'English nature', he grew closer to the Irish.

Brehon law, too, proved to many a poignant symbol of Irish 'incivility' and 'disorder', one that also carried over the ambivalent rapport between nature, reason, and proper order. If in 1543, John Travers acknowledged that 'the King's laws soundeth somewhat difficile and strange for people newly reclaimed' so that 'it may therefore be ordered that all unlawful customs among them [the Irish] be utterly abolished, and the moderation of the King's laws to be remitted to the Lord Deputy and Council here',[153] not all commentators were so 'generous'. Many considered the 'Irishry' a lawless land where princely jurisdiction had been usurped and law was nothing but the tyrannical will of lords pursuing their own personal advantage.[154] Gone here was Henry VIII's earlier willingness to concede that not all Irish laws were unreasonable. In 1537, Alen

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[150] B.L., Lansdowne MS 255/39, f. 204.
[151] T.N.A., SP 60/1, f. 4r.
[152] T.N.A., SP 60/11, ff 156rv.
[153] *SP Henry VIII*, iii, pp 431-2.
[154] See for instance, *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 502 (Luttrell reiterates the point on p. 504, with reference to the marchers); *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 269. On the distinction between 'self-interest' or 'appetite' and the common good, see chapter 4.

counselled the royal commissioners that Brehon law, the very sign of the 'wild Irishman' himself, should be proscribed among any of the king's subjects.[155] A decade later, he penned a fuller *exposé* on the problem in his aforementioned 'device': if all Irish lands were disordered, he opined, as far as English lands were concerned, the more lawless things became the further one got from the Pale. Alen, moreover, thought it perilous to tolerate the presence of so many galloglass in areas targeted for 'reform', since none, 'for they be Irishmen, will be obedient to law'.[156]

A few conclusions can now be laid out. Tudor 'reform' defined both the capacity to 'become civil' and the means by which this could be achieved in different ways according to the differential 'natures' of 'English' and 'Irish' and how such 'natures' were embodied in their respective laws. If both the 'Irish' and the 'English of Ireland' were thought of as possessing the capacity to change and 'become civil', or lead a life that conformed to the dictates of divine, civil, and natural law, such perspectives operationalised metaphysics of becoming that prescribed a state in which reason was not being fully used. This was precisely how the Salamanca theologians spoke of the purported rationality of 'New World' Indigenous peoples: it was not absent, they claimed, but merely *in potentia*.[157] Yet the 'Irish' existed in this state of potential; it was their lot. The 'English of Ireland', by contrast, had reverted from a condition in which their nature had been fully actualised through reason back into a state of mere potential, or forgetfulness.

There is one exception to this. In a 1543 tract wholly unrestrained in its moral condemnation of *all* the kingdom's inhabitants, John Travers curiously envisioned the 'becoming-civil' of the Irish on the same terms as that of the English: as a restoration. Since the king's laws 'could sound somewhat difficile and strange for people newly *re*claimed', he admitted, all 'unlawful customs' should be abolished and the 'moderation of the king's laws' remitted to the administration when required.[158] All the same, Travers nevertheless re-affirmed the tensions at the heart of the political theology of difference by characterising the 'reform' of the 'Irish' in a manner usually reserved for the 'English of Ireland'. Only two paragraphs later, after all, the denounced the

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[155] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 501.
[156] T.N.A., SP 60/11, ff 156rv, 157v.
[157] Pagden, *The fall of natural man*, pp 55, 94.
[158] Emphasis mine. *SP Henry VIII*, iii, pp 431-2. The wording is unclear: the remark about being 'newly reclaimed' may in fact refer only to the Gaelicised English, in which case, only they would benefit from the moderation of the king's laws. This seems unlikely, especially, too, given the overall thrust and rhetoric of his short tract.

'Irish Scots' seeking to populate the island as 'as being the most vile in their living of any nation, next Irishmen'.[159]

When commentators viewed the 'English' or 'Irish' as hopelessly unredeemable, it was generally by virtue of extenuating circumstances: either they were incorrigible rebels or traitors, addicted to their own self-appetite, or driven by a lust for power. Yet, for the 'Irish', these qualities, while circumstantial, were also an outcome and reflection of their 'Irishness'. Their 'nature' was a hybrid monster, internally divided, comprising qualities both intrinsic and external to it – and here, a specific classificatory scheme and ontology was at work. What had potential to improve or become 'civil' was not that which was specifically designated 'Irish' but the part of their being that was universal to all humanity and which accorded with Nature: their participation in the *telos* of reason. Becoming 'civil' required overcoming their 'Irishness'. From the perspective of their 'humanity', such 'Irishness' was nothing short of – in Aristotelian terms – a 'secondary' or accidental cause, an emblem of 'incivility' that clouded the kernels of reasonableness hidden deep within their Being as imperfect members of the community of *humanitas*, and which, galvanised by unsavoury environmental conditions, prevented the *telos* of their humanity from fully realising itself. And the *telos* of humanity, the *telos* of Nature and reason, of course, was 'Englishness'. The end 'reform' was to re-designate the 'Irish' as 'English'.

But could this really be achieved without compromising the ethos of English colonial superiority? After all, an English colonial mission and identity anchored in the civil and spiritual 'reform' of the country was made self-defeating and redundant once relayed through the centralizing, integrative, and expansionist thrusts of the Act of Kingly Title.[160] The major Henrician work on Ireland that from the 1550s onward was to supplant the *Topographia* as the standard Continental reference on Irish history drove the point home. In his *Anglica Historia* (written by 1513; printed 1534), Polydore Vergil reasserted and confirmed English *imperium* on the island and their 'civilising'

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[159] *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 432.

[160] Ciaran Brady and James Murray, 'Sir Henry Sidney and the Reformation in Ireland', in Elizabethanne Boran and C. Gribben (ed.), *Enforcing reformation in Ireland and Scotland, 1550-1700* (Aldershot, 2006), pp 14-39. Nicholas Canny has made a similar observation regarding the 'Anglo-Irish' in the seventeenth century. The 'very success of the English settlers in becoming the dominant group in Ireland', he notes, 'marked their failure because' the 'mission was defined as one of advancing the existing population to such a point of civility that it would no longer be necessary to rule over it'. Nicholas Canny, 'Identity formation in Ireland: the emergence of the Anglo-Irish', in Nicholas Canny and Anthony Pagden (ed.), *Colonial identity in the Atlantic world, 1500-1800* (Princeton, 1987), pp 159-212.

role by casting the battle between 'civility' and 'barbarousness' in world-historical terms. 'Civility' as the direction in which history moved, prescribed a just origin, purpose, and end for sovereignty: the triumph over 'barbarousness'. Such a humanist framing of history, however, presented the 'civilising mission' with a paradox: if it was meant to promote the distinction between 'friends' and 'enemies', it also relied on perennially maintaining that distinction lest the very *raison d'être* and source of English *imperium* in Ireland wither away to irrelevancy. A history that waltzed to the tune of 'civilisation', in other words, must remain *in potentia*, for, as Eric Haywood put it, if 'the Irish became English, what, then, would be the point of being English?'.[161]

Indeed, if towns were symbols and incubators of 'English civility' threatened by the 'foreigner', 'outward enemy', and the 'Irishmen', what would happen to them once the 'Irish' sent in their midst became 'English subjects'? Consider, too, parliament: if after 1541 it became, as it was in England, a 'forum for consensus within a new constitutional framework', as Colm Lennon put it,[162] as the highest court of law and therefore as emblematic of English order and 'civility', its new role illustrates the self-defeating animus of colonial rule by foregrounding how it could proliferate the porous and unstable delineations of 'identity', subject-hood, and Christian order in Henrician Ireland. As a hallmark of English governance, law, and 'civility', it also, after 1541 when all Irish and English inhabitants of the island were in theory subjects of the king, became an instrument of Tudor 'civilizing' power, but at a cost. For parliament, as a theatre of Tudor power and sovereignty, rendered even more complicated the fault-lines of Tudor subject-hood and 'civility' by further institutionalising what should have been erased: 'English'/'Irish' difference.

In the summer of 1541, parliament was prorogued until November, to be continued in autumn in the city of Limerick, 'where it is thought it should be good for the continuation of the obedience of the earl of Desmond and the reducing of those parts to civility'.[163] Initial reports were promising. After years of constituting an especially troublesome offender, the earl of Desmond had finally entered parliament and promised to live after an English sort.[164] Although not all recently ennobled

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[161] Haywood, 'Humanism's priorities and empire's prerogatives', pp 201-18.
[162] Lennon, *Sixteenth-century* Ireland, p. 156.
[163] T.N.A., SP 60/10, f. 103r.
[164] T.N.A., SP 60/10, ff 127r, 130r.

Irishmen – like Conn Bacach O'Neill – proved similarly compliant,[165] the following
year, Manus O'Donnell's chief counsellor requested St Leger send his master
appropriate apparel; the lord deputy complied, offering him parliamentary robes: 'Me
thought it strange to see him so honourable in apparel', St Leger noted, 'and all the rest
of his nation, that I have seen as yet, so vile'.[166] To be well-ordered meant crown
governance was properly operational; in the case of O'Donnell or O'Neill, it also meant
adhering to the terms of 'civility' and displaying the qualities of a man capable of
governing – or, conversely, seeing the need to portray themselves in a certain way in
order to be perceived as such by the English. What, however, became of the *English*
parliament, when, as an agent of 'civility', the recently created members of the Irish
peerage took their seats in the Upper House, and who, while ostensibly eschewing the
trappings of 'Englishness' in their lives, occasionally required an Irish translator to
understand parliamentary proceedings?

The culminative fulfilment of the Tudor discourse of 'civility', then, was not
only the 'becoming English' of the Irish, but was also the *explicit* figurative re-
designation of the English of Ireland as 'Irish', or the 'becoming Irish' of the 'English'.
If a report from the 1490s listed men of English descent in Connacht 'who were of no
better condition than Irishmen', and if William Darcy in 1515 spoke of how the king's
subjects be in 'no better case than the wild Irish', by 1533, the proximity was more than
just a resemblance: Alen, for instance, complained that the country was being 'made
Irish' as it was 'without trust and security of defence, good order, or hospitality'.[167] The
phrase, indeed, is significant and was the cognate of another phrase: 'Irish order' as the
ever-present threat that haunted the Englishry of Ireland. It was a phrase whose most
poignant iteration was Patrick Finglas's in 1533, when the Pale 'reformer' referred to
how the Anglo-Irish earls '*fell* to Irish order'.[168] All the same, Finglas was certainly not
alone. Luttrell essentially expressed the same view when he feared that Dublin, Kildare,
and Meath, 'which unto this time have used English order, resembling partly to the
good order of England', were being made 'like Munster, Connaught, and Ulster,
wherein there is but a feigned obeisance to our Prince' and 'no laws used, but such as

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[165] Consider the case of Conn Bacach O'Neill, who, according to Alen in 1546, only wore a gown of silk
when he was summoned to Dublin on governmental business, otherwise choosing to leave it either there
or at his residence in Drogheda until he was due to return. T.N.A., SP 60/11, f. 155r.
[166] *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 320.
[167] L.P.L., Carew MS 635, f. 188; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 163. For the report from the 1490s, see Steven G.
Ellis, 'The collapse of the Gaelic world, 1450-1650', in *IHS*, 31, 124 (1999), p. 458.
[168] Emphasis added. B.L., Lansdowne MS 255/39, f. 204.

the rulers thereof orderith after their own sensual appetites'.[169] The distinction between those of 'Irish blood' and 'English blood', too, indeed, was not always so clear, as the Dublin administration's remark in mid-1536 that the 'English blood, of the English conquest, is in a manner worn out of this land' while 'the Irish blood ever more and more, without such decays, increaseth', highlights.[170] A less direct but equally decisive instance of this 'process' occurred with the 'becoming Kildare' of Lord Deputy Grey in the late 1530s, whereby the virtual 'becoming Irish' of the lord deputy amounted to his acquiring the vices of tyranny that this implied. This will be explored in chapter six as will how law itself, to the lamentations and anxiety of many, grew decayed. For now, note that what was at stake was the 'purity' of the law as an object of awe, fear, and respect – in a word, majesty. As a set of instructions on conduct and 'reform' from March 1538 counselled, the great hall of Dublin Castle must be repaired, otherwise the justices would need to sit on top of hills like Irishmen, and the majesty of the law would suffer as a result.[171] Nevertheless, inconsistencies continued, such as when the Court of Chancery of Ireland and other courts recognised the dictates of Brehon law when the occasion called for it, so that law could be deployed as an instrument to expand royal jurisdiction on the island.[172]

The most unique transferal of the language of 'civility' to 'Englishness', however, is undoubtedly that performed by Robert Cowley in two 'reform' tracts from 1533 and 1538, which, significantly, seemed to have brought him closer to some English-born commentators' perceptions of Ireland, for whom appearance occasionally prevailed over ancestry in defining identity.[173] In the first, Cowley began with what eventually crystallised into a commonplace of Tudor 'reform' thought, but with an especially vociferous and significant twist: before the king could commence the general reformation of Ireland, his English subjects, who were now 'savage', must be 'brought to reconciliation'. 'And surely such of the Englishry, as were in Munster', he added, 'were furthest from good order or obedience, so that no difference is betwixt them and the mere Irishmen, but all only the very surname'.[174] Cowley was even harsher in 1538.

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[169] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 502.
[170] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 338.
[171] *L&P*, xiii (i), no. 641.
[172] On the Tudor administration's resort to Brehons and Brehon law, see Nicholls, *Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland*, pp 55-7.
[173] In 1536, for instance, the 3rd Baron of Trimselstown and the council of Ireland were quick to point out the good service performed by 'those of the Englishry which he [the Englishman, Edward Colley] calleth Irishmen'. T.N.A., 60/3, ff 89r-91v.
[174] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 172.

Although the tenor was initially the same (those that 'call[ed] themselves Englishmen' lamentably continued 'in disobeisance after Irish laws and habits, marrying and knitting alliances with Irishmen'), the tone and rhetoric soon shifted, and what followed, aside from resembling ongoing and future debates over the problem of 'authenticity' and the debasement – or corrosive simulation of – 'Spanishness' by Jews, Moors, and Moriscos in Atlantic and Mediterranean Habsburg worlds,[175] was the severest indictment of the 'English of Ireland' in the reign of Henry VIII. If the crown pursued the conquest of any one Irishmen, Cowley opined, the 'counterfeited Englishmen' would combine with the Irish rather than support and 'revenge' the crown. The deputy could 'subdue or yet reform the mere Irish which were never under obeisance and suffer the wild counterfeit Englishmen', but this would be akin to a man seeing his own house on fire running out to help a stranger's. Wardens and justices, he then counselled, were to be appointed to proceed with the reduction of the 'wild disobedient Englishmen with fair persuasions' 'to their duties of allegiance'. If any refused, crown forces were to proceed with 'all extremity' to make them an example for others who would dare 'repugn' against their reduction to allegiance – for it would make both the 'wild English as well as mere Irish to conform them to obey the king's majesty'.[176] The discourse of 'civility' had gone full circle: the 'wild Irish' and the 'wild English' were one.

3.5: Conclusion

The Tudor discourse of 'civility' took shape transregionally through a pivotal set of events, traditions, and discursive *topoi* that either structured or were reflected in the terms of Tudor moral and legal subject-hood: the Aristotelian-Augustinian onto-theology of becoming, the tradition inaugurated by Giraldus Cambrensis, the 'Discovery' of the 'New World', and the looming spectre of the 'Turk'. Forms of 'imperial' rule and royal and colonial sovereignty in Ireland at times approximated and other times departed from Continental and Atlantic norms, with Ireland constituting a 'site' of order, power, law, governance, and discourse anchored both deep in insular and Continental pasts as well as the convulsions wrought by imperial and dynastic strife that linked the 'New World', the North Atlantic, and the Mediterranean.

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[175] Barbara Fuchs, *Exotic nation: Maurophilia and the construction of early modern Spain* (Pennsylvania, 2009); Fuchs, *Mimesis and empire: the New World, Islam, and European identities* (Cambridge, 2001).
[176] T.N.A., SP 60/7, ff 133r, 134v.

Tudor 'reform' was internally fractured, its various shards refracted in the constitutional complexities and anomalies of Tudor *imperium*, aspirations, and colonial mindsets, not to mention the ambiguities of 'English' and 'Irish' subject-hood. If for the Irish, the matter of 'becoming civil' involved ascending to a state they had never enjoyed, and if for the English-Irish, it concerned overturning the process by which they were 'becoming Irish' and roping them back into the folds of their forgotten 'Englishness', 'Irishness' retained a different sort of elasticity than 'Englishness'. For within the terms of Tudor political theology, the epistemological and social status of 'Irishness' was anomalous: it at once designated that which could be both inside and outside the law, potentially conformable, obedient, 'civil', or trustworthy, but often failing to reach the mark. 'Englishness', by contrast, was less mutable. Although 'cultural' practises deemed 'Irish' or 'uncivil' were a problem, the legal status of Englishmen and women was never suspended or doubted nor were their moral transgressions simultaneously intrinsic to their nature as well as a mere product of environmental conditioning, like they were for the Irish. The differentiated modes and signification of 'Irishness' and 'Englishness' along with the dual expectations they produced which governed much of Tudor commentary on and policy toward Ireland's inhabitants, was the substance of Tudor 'reform'. If the Same proliferated difference just as the Other harboured common ground,[177] the interplay and the historical modalities of similarity and difference was the site of colonial power, consolidation, and expansion.[178]

So, it is certainly true, as Brendan Kane suggests, that the 'story of sixteenth-century Anglo-Irish relations' was 'not simply one of the painful working out of cultural encounter' but 'also one of two societies losing touch with significant points of contact'. Yet it remains the case that if 'active forgetting' of common horizons 'allowed the language of barbarity to dominate the relationship',[179] then 'civility' as the pivot around which difference was negotiated through efforts to create what remained designated as an *English* order in Ireland was a testament to how and with what effects such 'active forgetting' was always already embedded in the strictures of Tudor order

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[177] Cohen, *Hybridity, identity, and monstrosity in medieval Britain*, p. 101.

[178] M.A. Faletra, *Wales and the medieval colonial imagination* (New York, 2004), p. 137.

[179] Kane, *The politics and culture of honour in Britain and Ireland,* p. 43. Faletra makes a similar point in his exploration of the colonial dynamics of similitude and difference in the corpus of Giraldus Cambrensis, outlining how an apparent overture to the non-hegemonic consistently collapsed under the persisting weight of an ambivalence skewed in the direction of a support for 'civility' threatened by ambiguous hybridity. Faletra, *Wales and the medieval colonial imagination*, p. 159.

and power as a scalar potentiality – like the ambivalent interplay between difference and similarity, between Being and being in Aristotelian Christian metaphysics, or in the structure of the vanishing presence of 'the enemy'. It was not just a case of active forgetting; it was simultaneously one of constitutive silencing.[180] The disavowal of acknowledged similarity was Tudor 'reform' and conquest. It was, in the end, Tudor sovereignty in Ireland.

Of course, crucial to how Tudor sovereignty and the boundaries between 'Englishness' and 'Irishness' were affirmed and destabilised, was the wavering space of moral determination of 'office' – or, the malleability of the moral parameters of order, truth, and subject-hood that characterised the political theology of office. To such problem, our investigation now turns.

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[180] Palmer, *Language and conquest in early modern Ireland*.

Chapter 4:

The serviceable Christian crown subject and Henrician *vitae activae*

True, faithful, and obedient Christian crown subject-hood and service depended on a number of qualities and imperatives: the remembrance and performance of one's 'duties of allegiance', living in a 'civil' fashion in accordance with reason, God, and law, possessing 'truth', and being an honest, humble, and self-effacing servant who laboured for the honour and profit of God and king. Important studies of the Irish nobility in early modernity have recently shed new light on noble service and relations with London and Irish administrations in their intersections with social, legal, and religious life and the dynamics of 'reform' and conquest in European context.[1] More, however, remains to be said about the terms and socio-discursive edifices of service in Ireland – especially when it comes to theology.[2] The creation of a 'king's party' entailed reorganising the Pale and then the island's networks of authority and power around allegiance and service to Henry VIII. But how, exactly, was this service talked about? What were its languages, its terms, its obligations and requirements under God and prince? To get at these against the European intellectual worlds they were a part of, we should consider the constellation of imperatives concerned with virtue, the good, and Christian living as indices of the *vita activa* – or, in line with Aristotelian and Ciceronian philosophies, the life embroiled in civil affairs as the highest end of human dignity and happiness, as opposed to, following Plato and the Stoics, the life lived beyond the realms of civic involvement as the only true pursuit of the good and happiness.[3] Much has been written on the medieval and early modern Platonic and Ciceronian languages of virtue and duty, and the Aristotelian, Machiavellian, Stoicist,

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[1] Vincent Carey, *Surviving the Tudors: the 'wizard' earl of Kildare and English rule in Ireland, 1537-1586* (Dublin, 2002); David Edward, *The Ormond lordship in county Kilkenny, 1515-1642: the rise and fall of Butler feudal power* (Dublin, 2003); Anthony M. McCormack, *The earldom of Desmond, 1463-1583: the decline and crisis of a feudal lordship* (Dublin, 2005); Valerie McGowan-Doyle, *The Book of Howth: The Elizabethan re-conquest of Ireland and the Old English* (Cork, 2011); Gerald Power, *A European frontier elite: the nobility of the English pale in Tudor Ireland, 1496-1566* (Hannover, 2012); Jane Ohlmeyer, *Making Ireland English: the Irish aristocracy in the seventeenth century* (Yale, 2012).

[2] According to Rory Rapple, for instance, honour and wealth for military captains travelling to Ireland during Elizabeth's reign became flashpoints for wavering service, allegiance, and loyalty, but religious commitment, in so far as it was ever articulated, was usually alluded to so that their progress towards wealth and honour would be facilitated and not hindered'. Yet was 'religion' truly the hollow phenomenon Rapple contends? What can a perspective from Henrician Ireland add to the discussion? Rory Rapple, *Martial power and Elizabethan political culture: military men in England and Ireland, 1558-1594* (Cambridge, 2009), pp 125-6, 161.

[3] Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of modern political thought, vol i* (Cambridge, 1978); Nannerl O Keohane, *Philosophy and the state in France: The Renaissance to the Enlightenment* (Princeton, 1980).

and later Tacitean junctures of philosophy and government, through which the modalities of 'self-care' in relation to truth were correlated and indexed to divine and civil order.[4] Yet while studies of Elizabethan and Stuart Ireland have begun to broach these questions, Henrician Ireland remains a historiographical lacuna.[5]

This chapter proposes we view crown service as a variant of the classical-Christian *vita activa*. At a time when not only religious but, increasingly, secular vocations were seen as divine callings, when hitherto monastic forms of ascetic discipline began to provide a basis for worldly Christian forms of life,[6] and when Tudor theocratic kingship was redefining the parameters of spiritual and civil life,[7] what was crown service if not some iteration of the 'active life'? With Tudor crown service we are confronted with a life that, as an index of the moral-governmental question of the well-ordered polity, common weal, and servant, constituted a form of the *vita activa* under prince and God.

In addition to the parameters of governance and providence highlighted in chapter two, service had multiple other political-theological faces: office and counsel. Crucial, here, is what Conal Condren has shown was the 'presupposition of office', or the elastic language of office pervaded all social discourse in early modern England. The same is true of Ireland. An 'office' delimited a moral *persona* whose moral obligations and duties were set by the parameters of the office in question, parameters which were themselves defined casuistically by prescribing the terms of proper and transgressive conduct in relation to all offices, thereby establishing the limits, boundaries, and overlap of different 'offices'. The result was a 'world construed officially' in which understandings of authority, conduct, legitimacy, and their limits, or

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[4] See for example J.G.A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian moment. Florentine political thought and the Atlantic republican tradition* (Princeton, 1975); Quentin Skinner, *The foundations of modern political thought* (2 vols. Cambridge, 1978); Anthony Pagden, (ed.), *The languages of political theory in early modern Europe* (Cambridge, 1987); Margo Todd, *Christian humanism and the puritan social order* (Cambridge, 1987); Peter Burke, 'Tacitism, Scepticism, and reason of state' in J.H. Burns and M. Goldie (eds), *Cambridge history of political thought* (Cambridge 1991), pp 479-98; Maurizio Viroli, *From politics to reason of state: the acquisition and transformation of the language of politics, 1250-1600* (Cambridge, 1992); Richard Tuck, *Philosophy and government, 1572-1651* (Cambridge, 1993); Paul Slack, *From reformation to improvement: Public welfare in early modern England* (Oxford, 1999).

[5] Markku Peltonen, *Classical humanism and republicanism in English political thought, 1570-1640* (Cambridge, 1995); Vincent Carey, 'The Irish face of Machiavelli: Richard Beacon's Solon his follie (1594) and republican ideology in the conquest of Ireland', in Hiram Morgan (ed.), *Political ideology in Ireland, 1541-1641* (Dublin, 1999), pp 83-109; Andrew Hadfield, 'Tacitus and the reform of Ireland in the 1590s', in Jennifer Richards (ed.), *Early modern civil discourses* (London, 2003), pp 115-30; Mark A. Hutchinson, *Calvinism, reform, and the absolutist state in Elizabethan Ireland* (Routledge, 2015).

[6] These issues and their relation to Tudor government, state-formation, and secular power will be fleshed out in the conclusion of this study.

[7] See chapter 1, esp. section 1.2.

'disputes over office, who might rightly claim it, or suffer its imposition, and how its vocabularies of justification and accusation might be deployed', were all fluttering intimations of a deeper dispensation held together by the 'epitome of office': God as Creator and supreme judge to whom all obligations and duties referred back to.[8] A focus on service as a Christian form of life operable through the horizons of 'office' then, can add depth to how we understand the operations of God's government of the world in Henrician Ireland.

Concerns over one's truth, over the humility of a subject's *persona*-in-office and of their service and counsel permeate the moral-governmental and commonweal valences of Anglo-Irish correspondence and writing. And coordinating all of these as its pivot, was 'truth' as an index of divine and civil order in its intersections with fiction of the 'Crown' and the imperatives of Tudor political theology. If Ernst Kantorowicz has investigated the relevance of 'office' in the political theology of the corporate Crown,[9] we observe here how the fiction in Ireland consisted of the imperatives of service and counsel as indexed to the well-ordered common weal under obedience to and the governance of God, king, and lord deputy, providing the rhetorical resources to grapple with the problems of allegiance, obedience, and, ultimately, of governing Ireland. If the Tudor languages of crown subject-hood and service were a distinctly political-theological variation on the nexus correlating truth, government, sovereignty, and morality into a Christian form of life, it was one that defined 'truth' through the evolving fixtures of Henrician political theology and its attendant paradigm of delegation and mediation of majesty. From this premise, and as far as *personae* as vessels for divine and human will and command are concerned, we can grasp the interplay between transcendent and immanent majesty in God, king, and their ministers through the service they performed and the Henrician *vita activa* they thus enacted. Gathering the threads of truth, humility, and service together in the office-based rhetoric of order and subject-hood in action, only against this providential canvas can we understand how contemporaries delineated spiritual and temporal domains in everyday institutional, governmental, and moral life.

4.1: The political theology of office

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[8] Conal Condren, *Argument and authority in early modern England: the presupposition of oaths and offices* (Cambridge, 2006), passim, quotes on pp 22, 136, 139.
[9] Ernst Kantorowicz, *The king's two bodies: a study of medieval political theology* (Princeton, 1957).

Rooted in Platonic and Ciceronian philosophy and morality,[10] the early modern universe of office was kaleidoscopic: obligations, duties, and responsibilities intersected, overlapped, refracted through each other, all unfolding within the parameters of morality and its limits as dictated by the supreme office, God, and through God, church and prince. As the crucible for divine and human action in the world that defined the parameters of good governance and conduct, allegiance, service, 'civility', duty, and conformity were themselves, in other words, 'offices', as were prudence (which the oft-appealed to virtue of 'politique' invoked)[11], charity, wisdom, and a well-ordered will, not to mention duty, hospitality, gratitude, and fortitude, as two English-Irish tracts a century apart – James Yonge's *Secreta secretorum* (1430) and Edward's Walshe's *The office and duty of fighting for one's native country* (1546) – make clear.[12]

While God and Nature were closely correlated, what one's 'natural duty of allegiance' was or what constituted a 'natural' bond or subject or enemy, moreover, were construed through the moral-ontological parameters of office.[13] Consider, first, how allegiance, in setting the parameters of rightful and wrongful conduct and 'truth', was construed 'officially'. Service belonged to a social superior, as Henry VII's disgraced counsellor Edmund Dudley reminded his readers in his *The tree of the commonwealth*.[14] It was owed to them, just as obedience and 'truth' were owed to princes, as 'unto their natural lords', as the explanation of the Fifth and Sixth Commandments in the *Bishop's Book* (1537) put it,[15] because God ordained it. This was

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[10] Specifically, Plato's characterisation of ruling as involving specific skills, qualities, character, and responsibility, 'the over-extension of which is unjust and tyrannous', and Cicero's deployment of '*officium*' as duty and his view that being a shepherd was 'to hold an office in the same way that to be a ruler, rhetorician or citizen is to hold one'. Condren, *Argument and authority*, chap. 1, quotes on p. 18.

[11] Peter Crooks, 'The structure of politics in theory and practise, 1210-1541', in Brendan Smith (ed.), *The Cambridge history of Ireland, vol. 1, 600-1550* (Cambridge, 2018), p. 455.

[12] Lin Kerns (ed.), *The secret of secrets (Secreta Secretorum), a modern translation, with introduction, of the Governance of princes* (Lewiston, 2008), pp 28, 30, 42; Edward Walshe, *The office and duty in fighting for our country* (London, 1545), sigs. Aiiii, Bviii-Ci. For a more extensive engagement with Walshe's text, see the Interlude below, between chaps. 4 and 5.

[13] The link between 'nature' and 'office' was, in an Irish context, perhaps most clearly expressed by the Dubliner Richard Stanihurst in the 1580s. He had this to add on the 'spark of fire' that was nature's rule: 'Without this fire the sun would not be able to impart heat to anything. For this heat does not…emanate from the fact that rays of the sun are reflected, but the natural heat – which is at its strongest in the sun – performs this office'. John Barry and Hiram Morgan (eds), *Great deeds in Ireland: Richard Stanihurst's De rebus in Hibernia gestis* (Cork, 2013), p. 129.

[14] D.M Brodie (ed.), *The tree of commonwealth: a treatise written by Edmund Dudley*, p. 86.

[15] Charles Lloyd (ed.), *Formularies of faith, put forth by authority during the reign of Henry VIII* (London, 1825), p. 153.

the obligation, the truth and 'bounden duty of allegiance' of the dutiful, conformable, obedient subject to God and their sovereign lord and his command according to which they ordered themselves or others to conformity.[16] If one was 'true' when abiding by their allegiance to the king in their service, one's subject-hood or service was 'false' when that same allegiance was transgressed or forgotten, an act deserving the punishment of 'God and King', with the 'aid of his true subjects' 'to the example of all other transgressors of their allegiance', as William Wise, the mayor of Waterford put it in the early 1530s in reference to the earl of Desmond and all his traitorous allies.[17] If one's 'bounden duty of allegiance' was also appealed to as an alibi of one's service and as an appeal to the king's mercy,[18] one could also be reconciled to their 'duty of allegiance and due obedience' to the king, and it is in this wavering site of reconciliation that conformity, perfection of service, and moral *personae* were determined – and the threat of punishment hovered.[19]

It is revealing that being a Christian itself was an office with the same malleability between moral righteousness and moral transgression: as the *Bishop's Book* and the *King's Book* (1543) put it, the 'profession and office of a good Christian man' entailed ordering one's life according to the commandments of God and the requirements of salvation, 'for the ordering of himself in this life, agreeably to the will and pleasure of Almighty God'.[20] In the universe of office, indeed, and within the orbit of God's providence, the very delineations between 'spirit' and 'world' were determined, divided as these were between spiritual and bodily rest, between spiritual and carnal existence. Life should be oriented to avoid 'pride, disobedience, ire, hate, covetousness, and all such corrupt and carnal appetites' in order to 'commit ourselves wholly to God, that he may work in us all things that be to his will and pleasure'. The

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[16] See for instance, *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 133-34; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 172; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 530; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 563-64; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 10; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 59; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 95; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, pp. 376, 380; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 508;

[17] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 198-9. See also the Act of Attainder against Kildare, B.L., Lansdowne MS 159/7, f. 36, and Robert Cowley's complaint about Lord Deputy Grey's abetting of James of Desmond, L.P.L., Carew MS 602, f. 67. See also the submissions of O'Neill (1542), and William Burke and MacGilliopadraig (1543): T.N.A., 60/10, f. 268r and T.N.A., 60/10, f. 271r; T.N.A., SP 60/11, f. 39r; *L&P,* xviii (i), no. 636.2.

[18] For instance, the earl of Desmond in 1532, two years after his father was executed for treason, and in the midst of on-going troubles with a crown regime who considered his allegiance flimsy and who assumed would readily revert to his old ways at any moment's chance, wrote to the king about his 'bounden duty of allegiance', according to which he 'fulfilled all his promises to his power, except one, for which he desire's the king's pardon'. *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 160-1.

[19] See Robert Cowley's advice to the king regarding, again, the 'pretended' earl of Desmond in 1536. *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 367.

[20] *Formularies of faith*, pp 128, 215-6.

'spiritual' and the 'temporal', in other words, were themselves states of being governed by the Ten Commandments: the first four commandments outlined how Christians needed to 'order' themselves 'inwardly, in the heart, unto God', whereas the final six referred to inward and outward ordering towards one's neighbour; together, they comprised 'our whole office and duty, as well to God as to our neighbour, standeth in heart, word, and deed'.[21]

Thus, within such 'office', salvific, and providential horizons, crown subject-hood became the index of a distinctly Tudor Christian form of life. Although the post-Reformation dimensions of this arrangement will be explored in depth in chapter five, especially the relations between inner disposition and outward conduct, for now, note that, if it was justice, wisdom, prudence, temperance, gravity, and fortitude that peppered Stoic and Christian scholastic and humanist conduct manuals,[22] in Anglo-Irish correspondence and writing, the prevailing and recurring themes were truth and fidelity, honesty, sincerity, humility, love, amity, concord, and 'poverty' of heart and service. Indeed, service was a self-effacing language of order in which the benefit and profit of prince, commonweal, and subject were mutually reinforcing. As an 'office-based' language of self-effacement, service required a wilful and true heart that was not tainted by any 'singular advantage' or 'self-interest' – it entailed, in other words, the evacuation of all appetite, malice, and other attributes of the flesh contrary to virtue. This is what a 'true' or 'poor' heart or service was. 'And for my part', Lord Butler told Cromwell in October 1535, for instance, 'God and the king knoweth my true heart, to whom I humble commit the construction of my poor service'.[23]. It was imperative that the general good, or common or public weal, always took priority over 'private and singular advantage' or 'appetite',[24] although it was not about separating 'public' and 'private' spheres in a modern liberal secular sense; one's immediate relation to prince and God, after all, was a private one.[25] As far as service was concerned, 'private' 'interest' was morally counterpoised to 'public' benefit or profit: the dutiful and conformable subject was a *persona*-in-office from whom all that was contrary to the king or common weal's profit needed to be eliminated lest he become disordered. An

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[21] *Formularies of faith*, pp. 143, 173-4.
[22] Todd, *Christian humanism and the puritan social order*, p. 28; Quentin Skinner, *The foundations of modern political thought*, i (Cambridge, 1978) pp 228-36.
[23] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 291.
[24] See for instance Henry VIII's justification of the royal commission of 1537, *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 453.
[25] On early modern understandings of the 'public' and the 'private', see Condren, *Argument and authority*, pp 72-8.

individual, isolated and untethered, paying no heed to duty, was a transgression, a disordered aberration that required re-ordering, for this individual's concern with their own 'singularity' rather than with the 'common wealth' posed a grave danger to the community. As Master George Paulet told Cromwell in 1535, 'every man is not displeased for the common wealth but for his own singularity, and such men is not be in this land for that singularity hath destroyed all together for men say and write their minds'.[26] Christian subject-hood, then, was internally split, encompassing both 'private' and 'public' dimensions in their dutiful, voluntary, and obliging submission to both God and prince.

Yet it was *serviceable* subject-hood that provided the crux for the elaboration of different – particularly masculine-gendered – Henrician *vitae activa*e. For 'serviceability' constituted the pluralist fount for different kinds of crown service, providing a range of possible scopes for the degree to which 'life' and crown service coincided. A councillor or official in the king's pay, or a sheriff or priest, or a lord tasked with Anglicizing his lordship, or a marcher and landowner charged with defending his land against the king's enemies – all marked not only different kinds of royal service but distinct 'regimes' of service entangled in an array of different social stations and ways to live. A crown subject as a mere subject, was not always in a position of service: service could be something one only occasionally performed, such as when a mere landowner or tenant, a 'respectable man' of 'true' and 'honest' living not officially in the king's service, was called upon by the royal commissioners of 1537-8 to assist them in ordering the affairs of the land, or when they provided testimony about the state of law and order in the lands of the earls of Kildare and Ormond.[27] A subject became *serviceable* as soon as they complied with the dictates of 'reform', of proclamations and statutes, and of the law: anyone abiding by the numerous calls for adhering to the English tongue, customs, and habits, for instance, was a serviceable subject when doing so. This suggests that, practically, the boundaries between 'mere subject-hood' and 'serviceable subject-hood' as well as those between 'public' and 'private' were shifting and permeable: the 'king's cause' in Ireland constituted a capacious moral-governmental horizon, and many things could at different times enter its orbit.

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[26] L.P.L., Carew MS f. 134r.
[27] T.N.A., SP 60/5 ff 79-110b; B.L., Add. MS 4763, f. 442.

Consider the following examples. The Dublin administration lamented to the English Privy Council in summer 1542 that those who lived on the border could not do anything without money 'as they may have within the country, where they lie only because they may be trusted and yet they lying there doeth no service'.[28] The marcher, in other words, only became serviceable when he had the money to defend his territory against the Irish. Consider, too, the master of the rolls, John Alen's discussion of soldiers' pay. The 'office' of soldier entailed behavioural limits beyond which one became disordered, decayed, and in need of 'reform' or ordering; the abundance of calls from the mid-1530s onward to order the king's army makes this clear. Alen suggested limiting foot soldiers and bowmen to one hundred, paying them five pence a day 'when they *do service*'.[29] The soldier when not at war, was a mere subject (contrary to, say, the galloglass of Gaelic Ireland, these professional soldiers, many of which came from hereditary military families); it was when they 'do service' that new terms of conduct entered the fray. Serviceable subject-hood, then, was a matter of princely command, whether direct or indirect.[30] And it was God and prince who granted one their serviceable qualities, as St Leger's praise of William Brabazon, 'a man that can endure all pains, and of so frank a heart to spend that God and Your Majesty hath given him', highlights.[31]

As for the delimitations and statuses of the 'public' and the 'private', consider the terms Alen expressed to Henry VIII in 1536: Upon 'my fidelity, I bear to Your Grace as my prince and sovereign, and again for the private affection and unfeigned love, I bear your person, having all my living by Your Highness, Your Majesty and your heirs ever after.'[32] 'Private affection' was indissociably entangled with the duties and service of a true subject, but it was in opposition to what a later report on the munitions of Irishmen referred to as one's 'private commodity', which was distinguished from the 'public weal' of the king's subjects.[33] Butler client, James White, also implied the distinction between 'public' and 'private' in his report to

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[28] T.N.A., SP 60/10, f. 251v.
[29] Italics my own. T.N.A., SP 60/11, f. 158r.
[30] Consider these two cases from 1545: Sir Osborne Ichingham, marshal of the king's army, wrote, for 'according my most bounden duty at your high pleasure and commandment as he that hath none other desire but to be where I might to that service that might best content your princely expectation', while St Leger and the council told the English Privy Council that, for defraying the charges for 'his highness's service we shall at any time hereafter be commanded unto'. T.N.A., SP 60/12, f. 9r and T.N.A., SP 60/12, f. 46r.
[31] *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 485.
[32] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 373.
[33] T.N.A., 60/11, f. 53r.

Cromwell, yet he seemingly reversed their terms, the crux being the category of 'appetite': 'It is a pity to hear the common voice speaking of the discrepancy and division between the Lord Deputy and King's Council, saying that he followeth not their advices, and they his unstable appetites. His inventions and proceedings is supposed to be such, conforming himself much to the counsel of those that were great about the earl of Kildare and his sister, that he hath, in manner, alienated from him the appetite of the King's most true and faithful subjects'.[34] The king's truest subjects, whose self-effacement typically depended on their service being devoid of 'appetite', in this case had 'good' 'appetites' he directly counterpoised to the 'unstable appetites' of the lord deputy.

When the boundaries between 'public' and 'private', 'mere' and 'serviceable' subject-hood, were eroded, it marked the 'highest' Tudor Christian form of life, service, and subject-hood, wherein all three coincided. The point is well illustrated in crown official and Butler servant, Robert Cowley's supplicatory declaration to Cromwell in September 1539 that he 'be not spared for my part, but of free will … will spend all that I have in the world, to serve my Prince', or St Leger's statement four years later that he prayed to 'Immortal God' that he may end his life in the service of the king.[35] If alderman Francis Herbert, too, envisioned service as manly living for prince and God (he recalled Cromwell's words to him that 'if he died in his prince's service, he died in the service of God, and if he lived doing him service, he needed not to doubt that he should thereby be made a man'),[36] St. Leger would make much the same point to the king in 1541, but with a greater providence-inflected stress on grace as the prime mover of his own service: 'I beseech Almighty God to give me the grace, that I may, for my part, serve Your Majesty according your expectation, as my bounden duty is to do. There shall, God willing, lack no good will in me'.[37]

Service, then, was itself an 'office' that operationalised the different qualities of a 'serviceable subject-hood' distinct from mere subject-hood under God or prince, or the state or condition of being a subject of a prince and being a Christian under God. One became a *serviceable* subject when they entered the domain of the common weal or the king's cause, whose end was the good – or, in the ubiquitous language of Anglo-

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[34] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 562.
[35] *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 148; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, pp 484-5.
[36] T.N.A., SP 60/3, ff 77r-78v.
[37] *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 290.

Irish correspondence, the king's honour and benefit, the profit of the land or common weal, or the true knowledge of God and allegiance to one's prince.

Through this discursive world, Tudor Christian crown subject-hood and service was adapted, subverted, and contested at the thresholds of Anglo-Irish encounter; it was, indeed, a world by no means foreign to the Gaels, who, while having their own traditions of service, also participated in those more specific to English rule and order. Not only the moral parameters of 'office', but the structures of delegation and mediation more generally in the Gaelic world were to a significant degree bound to a world of hereditary office-holding. The legal, administrative, bardic, and ecclesiastical moral cultures the Gaelic world of 'office' was part of will be explored in more depth in chapters six and eight. For our purposes here, it was the dynamics of corporate personhood in Irish law and lordship that provided a point of contact between the corporate 'Crown' as a locus for an (English) understanding of sovereignty that united, on the one hand, God, prince, and Christian in cascading mediatory relations, and on the other, Gaelic forms of power and authority removed from such notions of unitary sovereignty and attendant modalities of delegation and mediation.[38]

So, if the Irish had a long tradition of military vocations in the service of God that, as Katherine Simms notes, competed 'successfully against the romances of King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table during the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries not only in the courts of the Gaelic chieftains but among the Anglo-Irish barons and earls as well',[39] what did 'corporatised' forms of mediation and vassalage look like in Gaelic and Gaelicised Ireland? Gaelic rule, administration, and the exercise of power were since at least the fourteenth century gradually loosened from hereditary and honour ties and were transformed by monetized and 'professionalised'

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[38] As Katherine Simms has notes, 'In this society, it seems clear, the king was far from occupying the role of the emperor in Roman civil law as the 'fount of justice', delegating his powers to the local rulers as to his agents and representatives. Here, jurisdiction over a particular locality was the customary right of its own hereditary chieftain, and it would appear from what follows that the king's supervisory powers were based on his lordship over the chieftain himself through a personal contract of vassalage'. Katherine Simms, *From kings to warlords: the changing political structure of Gaelic Ireland in the later middle ages* (Woodbridge, 1987), p. 66. On the limitations of English frameworks of law and sovereignty, see Kenneth Nicholls, 'Worlds apart? The Ellis two-nation theory on late medieval Ireland', in *History Ireland*, 7, 2 (1999), pp 22-6; Patrick J. Duffy, David Edwards, and Elizabeth FitzPatrick, 'Introduction: Recovering Gaelic Ireland, c. 1250-c.1650', in Patrick J. Duffy, David Edwards, and Elizabeth FitzPatrick (eds), *Gaelic Ireland, c.1250-c.1650* (Dublin, 2001), p. 43; Jane Dawson, *The politics of religion in the age of Mary, Queen of Scots: the earl of Argyll and the struggle for Britain and Ireland* (Cambridge, 2002), pp 214-5; R.A Houston, 'People, space, and law in late medieval and early modern Britain and Ireland', in *P&P*, 230 (2016), pp 47-89.

[39] Katherine Simms, 'Gaelic warfare in the middle ages', in Thomas Bartlett and Keith Jeffery (eds), *A military history of Ireland* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 104.

relations of honour, service, and obedience.[40] This meant that the modalities of mediation in Gaelic forms of service were also beholden to a hierarchical world of money-based relations of exactions, fines, and *sláinte* – or the buying of protection – whereby the injury done to a person who had purchased the protection of another lord amounted to a personal injury to the latter. If marshals of a great lord – an often hereditary office – not only had sub-marshals beneath them to execute their office for them, but were also entitled to various exactions or surcharges on fines by virtue of their office; if the defining governmental feature in post-Norman Ireland was the lordship, or the *oireacht* or *pobal*, as both the territory and the people under the rule of a lord, with *flaitheas/flaith* carrying the meaning of 'sovereignty' or 'power'; and if a fundamental principle of Irish law was that the corporate family was legally responsible for the acts of its members, by the late medieval period, the corporate notion of public offence and justice added a new element in the mix so that the greatest portion of the *eraic* (blood-price for homicide) was paid to the victim's lord rather than the victim in question.[41] Indeed, Gaels understood physical bodies or persons as both agents of their own merit and vessels for an 'abstract' sovereignty: in 1544, annalists lamented the death of Niall, son of O'Neill, a 'vessel worthy of the sovereignty of Cenel-Eoghain, if he [had] attained it'.[42]

Gaelic notions of good lordly conduct and governance were also embroiled in 'office-talk' – and here, an entry in the *Annals of Connacht* provides an exemplary snapshot of the Gaelic political theology of lordship and office. The annalist described Ruadh O'Donnell as the most virtuous and noble of lords, unequaled in his lifetime in the 'qualities of lordship', a conqueror and patron of the arts and the church, worthy of the greatest kings the land has seen and equal in them in lineage, bounty, fidelity, knowledge, war, and 'destroying rebels and lawless men'.[43] What he had was given to him by God in this life, and so his soul now rested in the Kingdom of God after having

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[40] Simms, *From kings to warlords*; Colm Lennon, *Sixteenth-century Ireland: the incomplete conquest* (2nd edition, Dublin, 2005), pp 53-5.

[41] On offices and their responsibilities and place in the Gaelic world, see Kenneth W. Nicholls, *Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland in the middle ages* (Dublin, 1972), pp 44-7. On the *oireacht* as a corporate and legal and entity and authority, see Simms, *From kings to warlords*, pp 68-70, 73; Duffy, Edwards, and FitzPatrick, 'Introduction: Recovering Gaelic Ireland, c. 1250-c.1650', p. 39. On 'public' justice, see Nicholls, *Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland*, pp 61, 63-4; Simms, *From kings to warlords*, pp 89-90. I thank Brendan Kane for clarification on *flaitheas/flaith*.

[42] *ALC*, p. 345. On merit, see an entry from 1539 in the *Annals of Connacht*, for instance, refers to Murdach son of Toirrdelbach son of Tadc who was 'made king in his stead, as by his actions and merit up till then he had deserved'. *AC*, p. 711

[43] *AC*, pp 703, 705.

departed from this life following Unction and Penance 'as prescribed the Church'. Balanced in 'wisdom and honour, charitableness and humanity, law and governance, repressing of vice and exalting of virtue' – these, along with the maintenance of power, the conquering of foes, the taking of their hostages and pledges unopposed, were the signs of God's proper ordering of the world.

Within this world – and as alluded to above with the point about serviceability and Irish lords tasked with Anglicizing their lordships – engagements with the crown attest to Gaelic participations in Tudor horizons of Christian serviceable subject-hood and living. In August 1538, O'Connor complained of Grey's alleged slander, declaring, 'What a dishonour is this to his Lordship, and how absonant is it from the duty of Christian man, and his authority, to invent such surmises against any man?'.[44] On another occasion, when Grey invaded O'Byrne's territory despite the Irish lord having submitted to the king and 'covenanted' to give him some galloglass, O'Byrne charged the council with failing to conserve 'their truths and honesty'.[45] Any instance, moreover, when Irish lords joined the lord deputy on his hostings partially constituted moments of lordly serviceable subject-hood.

Irish lords also appealed to the imperatives of royal governance and 'civility' when, for instance, they sought a royal pardon or an arrangement with the crown, or when, as we saw in chapter three, Manus O'Donnell requested parliamentary robes in 1542. This made the 'office' of 'governance' a fulcrum for dialogue across 'English' and 'Irish' worlds – and especially so after 1541, when Henry VIII becoming king of Ireland created not only duties of allegiance and obedience on the part of new Irish subjects, but also princely obligations on the part of the crown, which became a matter of royal honour. Central to such obligations were the need for and promise of protection and defence.[46] Governance as a fulcrum of cross-cultural relations and 'civility' entailed proper moral living; it was a shared pivot inflected by similar markers – virtue, honour, nobility and their transgressions – and a sensibility for the lavishes and ceremony of power through which service, obedience, and crown subject-hood and their terms

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[44] *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 91.
[45] *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 41.
[46] Brendan Kane, *The politics of honour in Britain and Ireland, 1541-1641* (Cambridge, 2009), pp 13, 21-2. See for instance, captain of Laois, Rory O'More's appeal for aid to the king in August 1544, T.N.A., SP 60/11, f. 145v. on the cultures of honour, see Kane, 'From Irish Eineach to British honor? noble honor and high politics in early modern Ireland, 1500–1650', in *History Compass*, 7/2 (2009), pp 414–430; Kane, 'Making the Irish European: Gaelic honour politics and its continental contexts', in *Renaissance Quarterly*, 61 (2008), pp 1139-1166; Ohlmeyer, *Making Ireland English*, pp 71-83

became a leverage to be wielded for and against the crown and its subjects when evaluating their obedience, conformity, and 'civility' – or, their service and truth – across encounters between the crown, the Irish, and the English-Irish during war, occasions for parleys, truces, and submissions and, after 1541, in the Irish parliament where both Irish and English-lords sat as members of the English peerage of Ireland.

An amorphous and plural site of contestation, nothing, however, captures the slippery haziness of the moral universe of 'office' more than a series of disputes involving Lord Deputy Grey in 1536-7 in which the governor's rhetorical moves penetrated to the heart of the tension intrinsic to 'office-talk'. In August 1536, he pleaded to Cromwell that he refrain from quickly judging his conduct on the basis of the reports he received, for any man may have 'a servant which may offend'.[47] By November, this stance morphed and blossomed into a set of consequential rhetorical strategies that threw into full relief important, 'office-based' strands of Tudor political theology.

Grey's strategy was to make invisible all divisions within the council and administration by demoting their status to petty differences beyond the orbit of obedience and conformity indexed to the advancement of the king's cause. Reporting on the state and order of the Irish administration, Grey explained that 'I never could perceive any such contrarity or variety, in working or opinion, among them, or any severing in two parts, but in the King's service and the common affairs of the land they join in one conformity, without checking or taunting, like wise men and honest men'.[48] Yet Grey then lamented that his fellow councillors called him their enemy, and drew a portrait of himself as the indifferent servant, judge, and office-holder who was above the petty quibbles of divisive, self-interested 'servants' and who, therefore, could fairly and justly identify who the true sewers of division were – in this case, Cromwell's servant, Thomas Agard. Although Grey had 'made a full agreement on every side' and restored amity, when Agard, returned from England, he allegedly endeavoured to undo what Grey had achieved.[49] But the lord deputy also feared that Cromwell may think him unkind to complain about one of his servants, so he assumed the mantle of the paragon of virtuous, humble, and honest indifference: 'If I hated them as my mortal enemies, I assure you I could not, saying truly, say otherwise by them, but to my knowledge they

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[47] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 389.
[48] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 397.
[49] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 399, 401-2.

be honest men, having done the King high service, for the which I love them'.[50] Revealingly, the 'honest man' that he claimed to be was itself construed as an 'office': 'And doubt not, my Lord, what so ever sinister report hath been made unto you of me, but I shall fulfill the office and duty of an honest man'.[51]

Grey, in other words, described obedience as the abode of honesty and wisdom in office, which effectively instilled a wedge between 'unity' and 'disunity' along a binary of 'self-in-office' and 'self-outside-of-office'. Honesty and wisdom were features of unity in conformity, while 'disunity' appeared only on the level of personality as grudges between councillors. Grey's point was that there was unity where it mattered: in crown service and advancement of the king's cause. Conformity as an index of order explicitly left out mere personal differences which had nothing to do with the properly '*politicus*', or the moral-governmental universe of office.[52] This effectively delineated two spheres of moral action, allowing Grey to concede without any contradiction that they were both honest *and* dishonest men: dishonest in the sphere that lay outside royal service, but honest in the king's high service. Obedience and conformity became abstractions of royal service and power, distinct from the transgressions of individual officeholders, whose offices were now split along lines determining what fell properly within its orbit, duties, and *personae*, and what was a mere 'personal' grudge, inessential to the substance of the office – and it did so, indeed, just like efforts to distinguish between matters essential to salvation and those that were not, or *adiaphora* (see chapter one). Yet such moves paradoxically reinstated the very distinction between failing in one's duty and indulging in petty differences – for while their service may not have compromised the unity-in-conformity and therefore obedience of the council, it nevertheless shored up the difference between his immaculate conduct as a true servant who was above such quibbles and the poor conduct of his fellow councillors and officials who were by implication less than ideal crown servants.

And just like what was essential to salvation and what was mere *adiaphora* was hotly debated, Grey's distinction between conformity in the king's cause and petty grudges was certainly not a distinction others adhered to. Alen, for instance, advised the

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[50] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 402.
[51] *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 194.
[52] On the history of the concept of the 'political', see Maurizio Viroli, *From politics to reason of state: the acquisition and transformation of the language of politics, 1250-1600* (Cambridge, 1992); Nicolai Rubinstein, 'The history of the word *politicus* in early-modern Europe', in Anthony Pagden (ed.), *The languages of political theory in early-modern Europe* (Cambridge, 1987), pp 41-56.

royal commissioners in 1537 that councillors must be 'uniform, without dissension or grudges among themselves, as you be. For else hard it shall be to them to use the parties of good councillors, to reform and amend others, which cannot agree themselves together, but one to disdain another'. The consequences were moral and of dire proportions: if there be any 'rancor' between them, it must be extinguished immediately 'for if the same shall continue, the King shall be evil served, and the country sore hindered'.[53] The council, similarly, adopted the mirror-image of Grey's language in late 1538 when criticizing the lord deputy: 'if his Lordship have any displeasure to any of us, it can arise of no private occasion, but for out plainly speaking to him in the King's cause. Otherwise we have no business with him. But, how so ever he shall taunt or mishandle us, we shall suffer it patiently, rather than to repugn in any thing, whereby the King's cause might in any wise be hindered'.[54] Duty explicitly required one to overcome their perceived failings of office. As Alen put it to Cromwell in November 1538 upon having been recommended for the office of lord chancellor: 'God knoweth the room is not more animate for me then I am for it; and considering my own imperfections and inabilities thereto first if it were not for accomplishment of my duty I would not take the same'.[55]

At stake, ultimately, was the porous boundaries between 'inside' and 'outside' of 'office' as a holistic moral-governmental horizon of life. For the disagreement between Grey and Alen hinged on whether distinctions between greater and lesser qualities were 'inside' or 'outside' the *persona*-in-office and the duty to the king it was tethered to. That duty compelled the effacement of all that was inimical to a specific *persona*-in-office by reference to another office only highlights the radical gesture performed by Grey; just like *adiaphora*, it effectively created a space of moral neutrality albeit one defined by the unequivocally moral determination of crown service under God.

Overall, it was not, then, only the moral subjects of Tudor political theology – 'Irish' and 'English' – that were internally divided.[56] In contemporary understanding, the 'self' was also split (for Grey) along '*personae*-in-office' and the subject outside of office, as was (for everyone else) agency split between myriad *personae*: not a single, wholesome or autonomous 'self' pervading all domains of worldly action, but multiple

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[53] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 496-7.
[54] *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 109.
[55] T.N.A., SP 60/7, f. 163r.
[56] See chapter 3, sections 3.3 and 3.4.

'selves' defined by the moral terms of the office they inhabited either as mere subjects or serviceable subjects – husband, wife, governor, preacher, and so forth. These overlapped yet could be distinguished; the space of overlap was defined by their being crown subjects, Christians under God, and the duty of obedience that both obliged, while distinctions between them depended on separating the separate titles or offices in question: a husband or wife, after all, was not the same as a councillor or preacher, although certain tropes or metaphors, such as paternity, were common to many. Office, in other words, incessantly bound and separated different spheres of moral action under prince and God, their scope shifting depending on the obligations, duties, and conduct focused on.[57] If commonality and difference, or overlap and distinction, were themselves correlated and mutually referential, however, it suggests even more consequentially that the discourse of 'civility' and 'office' coincided: if 'Irishness' and 'Englishness' depended on each other, the latter always carrying the potential to slip into the former, being English was itself construed in office-based terms, with all transgressions of the 'office' of 'Englishness' constituting 'degeneration' into 'Irishness'.

4.2: Office and 'civility'

The terms of subject-hood took shape within the orbit of 'civility' and its imperatives so that 'Englishness' being an office and 'Irishness' its transgression carried implications for how 'self-hood', action, and Christian subject-hood, service, and order were understood. Consider how 'civility' coalesced with a series of offices.

First, the 'office' of the marcher. In his report from September 1537 on the abuses of marcher lords, Grey noted that it 'may well be perceived by the persuasions, policies, and distress by the great captains of this country, that they rather covet their own promotions, lucre, and profit, then they do their duties to God and to the King's Majesty, or yet regard his gracious honour and profit, or the common wealth of his subjects; for they go about to fickle with the Irish men, after such a sort that they reckon to wary His Grace, and all such other, as would His Grace's honour or common wealth

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[57] More generally, the political-theological metaphor of marriage, too, is illustrative of how office incessantly bound and separated different spheres of moral action under prince and God. Indeed, it was a capacious metaphor, encompassing not only the relation between husband and wife, but that between Christ and the church, and a sovereign to their people.

here'.[58] Serviceability was a function of protection and security indexed to the king's honour and his and his subjects' common wealth, and required, if not absolute separation of 'English' and 'Irish' per se, than at least the *regulation* of their relations as a means of neutralising the king's enemies.

The dynamic was even more unequivocal in the office of nobility and was clearly expressed in the Irish submissions to the crown that were part of St. Leger's 'surrender and regrant' scheme in the 1540s, which outlined what was required of newly minted 'English' crown subjects. The formal 'surrender and regrant' submission of Conn Bacach O'Neill is a case in point.[59] The king's mercy for which he pleaded, as we shall see in more detail in chapter five, was redemptive: it redeemed one by granting entry into one office ('English', embodied in the 'name, state, title, land, or living' it would please the king by his clemency to grant) from the embodiment of its violation ('Irish', here encapsulated by 'ignorance' and 'lack of knowledge' implied in O'Neill's old 'name and state' which he, 'having usurped upon you Grace against my duty', promised to renounce). If the former was associated with allegiance and duty, the latter marked their transgression.

As for 'civility's' relation to the vicegerential office, officer Master Paulet's report to Cromwell in 1537 on the state of Ireland is exemplary.[60] The decay of the lordship, according to Paulet, would continue as the principal rulers of the land were not native Englishmen. After all, the lords of the Irishry could more easily rob the English Pale when the rulers themselves were born of 'this country', for the Irish lords and such deputies were often friends. Paulet's point was simple: there must be no common rulers or connections of amity among the English Pale and the Irish lords. Otherwise the king's 'poor subjects' were left at the mercy of the disorder that inevitably ensued. This meant that the lord deputy, treasurer, and others should be in 'one assent' above all others', the meaning of which conveyed the extent to which the relationship between 'English-born' and 'Irish-born' was understood in the vocabulary of office: English-born on the one hand, and Irish-born on the other, neither of which should come together in the ruling of the land, in the office of governor and the council, which should be 'abstracted' from all local networks of power. Herein coincided the discourse

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[58] B.L., Add. MS 48017, f. 165b (*SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 478).
[59] B.L., Cotton MS Titan B XI, f. 381. On this point, see chapter 5.
[60] L.P.L., Carew MS 602, f. 135.

of 'civility' – here in the form of the absolute separation of English and Irish – and the political-theological abstractions of 'reform'.[61]

Although the peculiarly Reformation dynamics at play will be examined in the following chapter, consider, too, for now one case from 1536 involving James fitz John Fitzgerald, the 13th earl of Desmond *de facto*, that illustrates how the strands of 'civility', theologies of the will, and the substantive parameters of office coalesced in governmental 'reform' and the consolidation of Tudor sovereignty. In his written submission to the crown, the earl committed his 'true service' to the king, to be 'whole and true unto the King's Highness's Majesty' and to accompany the lord deputy at the latter's 'pleasure and commandment' on hostings against the king's enemies.[62] The council responded: since 'truth and honesty excelleth all riches and other worldly things' and were the 'foundation of nobility', the council warned the earl never to make a promise he could not follow. Reputation, honour, and fame followed obedience to the sovereign; when the earl's ancestors digressed from such obedience, it precipitated the 'decay of all the Munster' and the erosion of honour, riches, knowledge, and all other conditions and qualities that make nobility. An honest man, then, lived like a 'Christian man or reasonable creature', which entailed obeying the prince as was commanded by God, conforming oneself and self-effacingly putting oneself providentially into the hands of God who gave one the grace to conduct themselves properly.[63] Without truth, there was no honour and allegiance; without these, there was no obedience; without all, there was no order – and in the earl's case, it was not he, but God's grace acting through him as he obeyed the king that could turn 'disorder' into 'order. The casuistical and providential parameters of office as paradigmatic of order could not be in fuller relief.

4.3: Order and the rhetoric of counsel

If the parameters of 'office' were fluid and unstable, crucial to their operational dynamics in relation to serviceable subject-hood and 'reform' – and therefore to

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[61] On political-theological abstractions and their relation to 'reform' and sovereignty, see chapter 6, sections 6.2 and 6.5.
[62] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 404-5.
[63] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 405-6.

Henrician *vitae activae* more generally – was counsel.[64] If the end of government was 'the good', counsel was its means, for across Europe, the end of consultation was the good governance of both the individual and the public weal.[65] In England, as an integral part of the royal office and 'common weal talk', the rhetoric of counsel had a long historical pedigree, having both classical and native English roots,[66] and it took three forms: classical-humanist, baronial-feudal, and ecclesiastical.[67] For our purposes, only the first two are relevant. The first, native to England, was of the 'feudal-baronial' variety, wherein counsel was hinged to a contract between king and leading subjects to secure mutual obligations in governance, whereas 'classical-humanist' depended upon the terms of *amicitia*, or friendship, to safeguard proper conduct in rule and service that mitigated tyranny and misrule. The 'classical-humanist' model appealed especially to reason and the need to avoid flattery while the 'baronial-feudal' model emphasized the need of kings to listen to its natural advisors and to not fall prey to evil counsellors.[68]

If the topic, however, remains entirely neglected in an early Tudor Irish context, Valerie McGowan-Doyle's exploration of the uses of counsel among the Old English in Elizabethan Ireland is an instructive point of departure.[69] As she observes, the division between the 'classical-humanist' and 'baronial-feudal' does not apply to Old English practises in Elizabethan Ireland, for both the community's aristocracy and gentry were educated at the London Inns of Court.[70] The rhetoric of counsel in Henrician Ireland similarly conflated both models, with nobles, clergy, and gentry performing their dutiful

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[64] On the languages of counsel, see John Guy, 'The rhetoric of counsel in early modern England', in Dale Hoak (ed.), *Tudor political culture* (Cambridge, 1995), pp 292-310; F.W. Conrad, 'The problem of counsel reconsidered: the case of Sir Thomas Elyot', in Paul A. Fideler and T.F. Mayer (eds), *Political thought and the Tudor commonwealth* (London and New York, 1992), pp 75-108; Jacqueline Rose, 'Kingship and counsel in early modern England', in *HJ* 54 (2011), pp 47-71.

[65] John Guy, 'The Henrician age', in J.G.A. Pocock (ed.), *The varieties of British political thought, 1500-1800* (Cambridge, 1993), pp 16-7; Guy, 'The rhetoric of counsel in early modern England', pp 292-310, quotation on p. 292.

[66] Conrad, 'The problem of counsel reconsidered: the case of Sir Thomas Elyot', pp 76-9, 91-2.

[67] Guy, 'The rhetoric of counsel in early modern England'. Jacqueline Rose amends Guy's analysis by adding the third, ecclesiastical language, and by substituting 'parliamentary' for 'baronial-feudal'. Rose, 'Kingship and counsel in early modern England', pp 48-9.

[68] Guy, 'The rhetoric of counsel in early modern England', pp 292-310.

[69] Valerie McGowan-Doyle, 'Elizabeth I, the Old English, and the rhetoric of counsel', in Valerie McGowan-Doyle and Brendan Kane (eds), *Elizabeth I and Ireland* (Cambridge, 2014), pp 163-83. See also McGowan-Doyle, *The Book of Howth: the Elizabethan re-conquest of Ireland and the Old English* (Cork, 2011), pp 100-1; Andrew Hadfield, 'War poetry and counsel in early modern Ireland', in Valerie McGowan-Doyle and Brendan Kane (eds), *Elizabeth I and Ireland* (Cambridge, 2014), pp 239-60; Ruth A. Canning, *The Old English in early modern Ireland: the Palesmen and the Nine Years' War, 1594-1603* (Woodbridge, 2019), chap. 6, esp. pp 172-8, 190-2.

[70] As McGowan-Doyle puts it, thus, co-ordinating 'their efforts in utilising counsel, they elided what would otherwise have represented different positions within interpretations of the rhetoric of counsel'. McGowan-Doyle, 'Elizabeth I, the Old English, and the rhetoric of counsel', p. 179.

service by counselling each other and Whitehall on Irish affairs; however, it was deployed in much different circumstances than those explored by McGowan-Doyle.[71] What, then, did the rhetoric of counsel look like in Henrician Ireland? Although counsel and deferential appeals to public authority in Ireland had long prominently figured in the dynamics of incorporation as expressed through ideas of polity and community,[72] it remains to be seen what political-theological forms or strategies it was part and parcel of in this period, and what this can tell us about, first, the terms of Tudor Christian crown subject-hood; second, relations between God, sovereign, and subject; and third, an *Irish* political-theological culture in the early sixteenth century and its wider transregional dimensions. If contemporaries saw '*imperium* and *consilium*' as symbiotic,[73] 'political' contestation was often indissociable from rhetorical battles in which self-representation through office and commonplace ideas regarding the well-ordered common weal and subject and sovereign, were key weapons of choice. Counsel, moreover – and just like strategies of 'reform' (see chapter three) – was an activity akin to how 'spiritual' power and law were understood. For Thomas Cranmer, archbishop of Canterbury, for instance, it was a non-coercive activity, a matter of advice and strategy of persuasion for wise men to sway un-coercively the minds and hearts of others, to whose counsel and advice they would consent. When the ministers of God's word were appointed or sent by the apostles, 'the people of their own voluntary will with thanks did accept them; not for the supremity, impery, or dominion that the apostles had over them to command, as their princes or masters; but as good people, ready to obey the advice of good counsellors, and to accept any thing that was necessary for their edification and benefit'.[74] Yet, just as the polarities of 'persuasion'

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[71] Not least of which was, in the general context of Old English displacement at the hands of the New English, the beleaguered Palesmen appeal to counsel as a constitutional right and Elizabeth's main concern, namely, the perceived threat counsel posed to the royal prerogative. As McGowan-Doyle notes, although the English Privy Council would in 1596 advise the Irish administration to heed the counsel of the Old English, Elizabeth's prior indexing of counsel in England and Ireland to her prerogative power to sanction who could offer advice, and the Irish council's later hostility towards including Palesmen in any consultation, both played decisive roles in the Tudor reconquest of Ireland. McGowan-Doyle, 'Elizabeth I, the Old English, and the rhetoric of counsel', pp 177-83. See also Canning, *The Old English in early modern Ireland*, pp 173, 175, 192.

[72] Crooks, 'The structure of politics in theory and practise, 1210-1541', pp. 445, 450-1.

[73] Guy, 'The rhetoric of counsel in early modern England', pp 292-3; Rose, 'Kingship and counsel in early modern England', pp 53, 69.

[74] John Redmund Cox (ed.), *Miscellaneous writings and letters of Thomas Cranmer, archbishop of Canterbury* (Cambridge, 1856), pp 116-7. The Protestant William Perkins would at the end of the sixteenth century discuss counsel in similar terms. He described a husband's wife as 'the associate, not only in office and authority, but also in advice, and counsel' of her husband, 'and one of the ways in which she was to govern the household was 'by ordering her children and servants in wisdom, partly by

and 'coercion' were not absolute opposites in Tudor 'reform' and 'civility', so too were they mutually enfolded terms in the rhetoric of counsel, for advice could quickly become a coercive leverage and point of division within the administration.

It was the duty of a good subject to request counsel when needed just as it was to humbly offer it with a 'poor heart' and 'true mind' in accordance with one's 'bounden duty of allegiance'.[75] In early 1537, with the lordship's revenues in disarray, Henry VIII reminded his councillors what their duties ought to be: 'Good councillors should, before their own private gains, have respect to their prince's honour, and to the publique weal of the country whereof they have charge'.[76] The oath St Leger swore in Christ's Church before the chancellor and council in July 1541 similarly stipulated the duty to faithfully 'maintain and defend the laws of God and the Christian faith, to observe the usage, rights, ceremonies, and liberties of Holy Church, give faithful counsel for the King's people, and keep the King's counsel'.[77] Meanwhile, so important did the English Privy Council perceive the matter to be that they recommended sending the Irish administration a discourse on the duty of good councillors, the articles of which they would debate and offer advice on.[78] The 'perfect counsellor', in other words, required grooming, and the first step to achieving this was to offer counsel on the practise of counselling.

Counsel, then, was itself an 'office' invested with a *persona* – the counsellor, the dutiful subject or servant – and moral protocols of use that defined one's obligations and the limit beyond which it became 'evil'. A handful of illuminating cases from the 1530s-40s suffice to demonstrate the dynamics at work. These leave out two crucial nodes: the lord deputy and the problem of 'evil counsel' and counsellors in the midst of heated factional strife, and counsel's transregional dimensions as a site of Tudor political-theological polarisation; both, in their post-Kildare Rebellion and Reformation dimensions, will be treated in chapters six and eight, respectively. For now, consider the facets of 'counsel' these examples reveal: an expansive transregional imaginary at the thresholds of the composite parts of the fiction of the 'Crown'; the structures of delegation and mediation, and the precise functions of advice, knowledge, and requests, in their intersection with the languages of humility, supplication, and self-effacement;

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instruction, partly by admonition, when there is need'. Todd, *Christian humanism and the puritan social order*, p. 113.
[75] See for instance *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 95; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 249; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 373.
[76] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 422.
[77] *Patent and close rolls.*, no. 2, p. 66.
[78] T.N.A., SP 60/10, ff 127r-132v.

the presence of 'common-weal' rhetorical tropes; and the ways counsel and the duties of councillors could be leveraged by both sovereign and subject to advance their respective aims.

To begin, if Henry VIII's involvement in his lordship after 1515 was in part the fruits of Cardinal Thomas Wolsey's counselling and strategy to deflect the king's attention away from dreams of glory in continental wars,[79] it also revealed Ireland's place in Tudor policy and, by implication and effect, in interpolity diplomacy to hinge upon the horizons of office. By the 1520s, Ireland had already receded to the background of Henry's priorities: the Tudor monarch considered Scotland a more formidable threat than Ireland, and more importantly, he was far more preoccupied with his newfound and considerable more honourable role of intermediary between Latin Christendom's most powerful princes, Charles V and Francis I.[80] In 1528, Thomas Howard, now duke of Norfolk, appealed to this honour, but it now had a distinctly Irish inflection and also expressed the coordination of the composite parts of the 'Crown'. As he wrote to Wolsey,

> Your Grace, by your great wisdom, hath done so much, that I trust
> peace shall ensue among Christian Princes, to the great laud off our
> Master, your Grace, and this realm. Most humble beseeching your
> Grace, as well for the honour of His Highness, your Grace, and of this
> realm, now in this time of great need, so to look upon the poor land of
> Ireland, that is take not more hurt this year, than it hath done in any
> year, since the first conquest.[81]

While perhaps a mundane phrase, it nevertheless illuminates an ambivalent space between the figures of the sovereign and the counsellor, a space constituted by 'honour' which in turn coordinated the 'sovereign' and 'counsellor' as enfolded within a corporate entity, the realm. It is within these political-theological folds of glory-laden kingship that Ireland acquired its place in Norfolk's 'international' imaginary.

Consider, too, the king's sergeant in the Common Bench, Christopher Barnewall's efforts in mid-1538 to persuade Henry to have him retain the jurisdiction of

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[79] Christopher Maginn and Steven G. Ellis, *The Tudor discovery of Ireland* (Dublin, 2015), p. 140.
[80] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 65-70. On Henry's role as intermediary and broker of peace in Christendom, and Ireland's place within the diplomatic nexus and imaginaries of Henrician policy, see chapter 9 below.
[81] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 135.

his office as it was then defined. As royal commissioners pondered better defining the tasks of the king's lawyers and courts (between, say, the king's attorney and the king's serjeant), Barnewall humbly beseeched Cromwell not to transfer the maintenance and collections of fees and pleas for the king to the king's attorney's but to keep the responsibility within the orbit of the serjeant.[82] Although not a firm request, it was a recommendation made obediently that, if entertained, represented the crown's ordering of Barnewall in his affairs 'God willing'.

Both episodes triangulated two different sets of coordinates: for Norfolk, 'king', 'counsellor', and 'realm', for Barnewall, 'king', 'counsellor', and 'subject'; both involved a supplication, albeit from men of radically different social stations, and both throw into relief the structures of counsel at the threshold of two interrelated, semantic layers of 'order' within the fiction of the 'Crown'. In Norfolk's recommendation, there was the general ordering of the realm, whereby all its component parts fulfilled their functions within their proper place; in Barnewall's plea, there was the ordering of an individual subject at the king's command through an intermediary: Cromwell. With the governmental system of 'king-in-parliament' in mind, and recalling, too, how the terms of service included the meeting out of judicious, self-effacing, and wise advice, we can now combine these areas of Tudor political theology and identify them as features of how the corporate fiction of the 'Crown' operated practically. If the king and the body politic, while one, could in theory be divided, how this worked out often involved counselling. Thus, the decision regarding whether more resources and attention should be paid to Ireland in 1528 and an apparently mundane jurisdictional quibble that the royal commissioners sought to resolve in 1538, were left to the king's will, both, on the one hand, as it could be swayed by Cardinal Wolsey and as it was embodied in Cromwell, and, on the other, as an ordering power itself that was a conduit for God's will, where royal power, weaving together a transcendent source with an immanent distribution, also left room for a language of supplication that accommodated differing degrees of displays of deference and humility.

'Reform' treaties are a good example of how deference and humility were put into play, with the added dimensions of expertise and experience in consultation and counsel, although historians have rarely explicitly framed such tracts as components of

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[82] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 570-2.

counsel.[83] That these became vital outlets for counsel owed much to Poyning's Law (1494), which had earlier deprived the English of Ireland of the parliamentary address, their traditional means for petitioning the crown.[84] The Act spawned a distinct practise of counsel through which subjects expressed their fears, aspirations, and advice on all aspects of governmental affair in Ireland, from the reformation of the land to what the qualities of the king's officials and governor should be.[85]

Robert Cowley provides an illustrative case study for the intersections of 'reform' treatises and office, counsel, and the common weal. In his *A discourse on the evil state of Ireland* (1526), he offered advice on crucial areas of royal policy, counselling the king to reach agreements with the French and Portuguese kings in an effort to control ports and trading in Ireland; he implored the necessity of the constable of the army to heed the counsel ('advice') of the lieutenant and council; and he asserted that to advance the 'general reformation', the governor needed to be 'a noble, active, politique man having experience of the land'.[86] In a subsequent report, he assured the reader that his book came not from any 'corrupt mind or malice', 'but for the duty and love I bear my sovereign lord the king and the weal of that land, where some time I bear office'.[87] Twice more in 1537-8, Cowley presented a proposal for 'reform', first, as the self-described most accurate diagnosis of the causes of decay in Ireland and attendant remedies, succeeding where others before him had failed, and, afterwards, as a solitary, courageous statement of truth in the face of adversity and tyranny perpetrated by the late earl of Kildare when no one else dared advertise the king of his 'heinous abuses'.[88] Cowley made it clear, however, that he was not one of these cowardly men.[89] Being the

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[83] The exceptions being, again, McGowan-Doyle, who points out that Rowland White opened his 'Discors touching Ireland' (1569) with the dictum concerning one's duty to offer counsel (McGowan-Doyle, 'Elizabeth I, the Old English, and the rhetoric of counsel', pp 177-8) and David Heffernan, who refers to 'papers offering counsel' (David Heffernan, *Debating policy in Tudor Ireland: 'reform' treatises and political discourse* (Manchester, 2018), p. 16).

[84] Maginn and Ellis, *The Tudor discovery of Ireland*, p. 140.

[85] And although how Ireland was approached as a problem of government changed throughout the century, that 'reform' literature provided a channel for dutiful advertisement on Irish affairs became all the more central to the dynamics of what Ciaran Brady has called the rule and governance of the 'programmatic governors'. Brady, *The chief governors*. On the changing content and uses of 'reform' treatises, see Heffernan, *Debating policy in Tudor Ireland*.

[86] B.L., Lansdowne MS 159/2, ff 3-4, 6-7.

[87] T.N.A., SP 60/6, f. Christopher Maginn and Steven G. Ellis, in their *The Tudor discovery of Ireland*, ascribe the book to Cowley (p. 159), but Ellis and James Murray suggest in the *Calendar of State Papers, Henry VIII*, that the authorship of the book is inconclusive, and could have been written by either Cowley or Alen.

[88] T.N.A., SP 60/7, f. 133r; L.P.L., Carew MS 602, f. 150.

[89] T.N.A., SP 60/6, f. 46r.

true subject that he was, nothing would impede his obligation and duty to tell the truth to his sovereign.

Two other letters from the late 1530s by Walter Wellesely, the bishop of Kildare, and George Browne, archbishop of Dublin, are also instructive. Wellesley was concerned with the fate of the monastery of the Blessed Lady of Conall, of which he was also Great Prior, and wrote to Cromwell to save it. Through humble counsel and supplication, Wellesley's strategy was two-fold. First, he appealed to Henry VIII's predecessor, the 'most redoubted prince of remembrance Henry II' who established the possession. Second, he appealed to anti-Irish sentiment, stating that no brother was elected in this monastery 'unless he be of a very English nation in consideration thereof the wild Irish rebellers doth daily ensue all their extremities for the impoverishment of the said monastery'. Following a commonplace practise, he then signed the letter as 'your daily orator', a role – or 'office' – connoting the rhetorical dimensions of counselling.[90] Similarly, Browne humbly beseeched the king, in supplicatory and self-effacing language, that the king not grant an office of constableship to a layman as it would erode Saint Patrick's Cathedral's finances.[91] The archbishop's epistolary prostration ended on a deferential note of having heeded the king's prerogative in ecclesiastical appointments, as he humbly explained the precarious poverty spiritual ministers in the Pale were forced to endure to deter the king from acceding to other laymen's requests. As it was for Barnewall, such language was deployed in a request to sway the king; it was constitutive of the language of counsel itself.

Such humility, indeed, along with Cowley's 'courageous' efforts to speak the truth in the face of danger, were key elements that connected, however loosely, ancient forms of 'truth-telling' to distinctly sixteenth-century Christian forms of life: *parrhesia*, or frank-speech to power.[92] The official James Sherlock, for instance, justified himself in providing counsel to Cromwell by claiming that 'as much as it becometh not me being indigent of orators faculty to encumber your discrete wisdom… I therefore most humbly beseech your lordship to way and have respect unto the true meaning thereof not regarding my rude and simple auditing'. St Leger, when writing to Cromwell in 1538 as a royal commissioner, went as far as apologising for even writing, and asked

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[90] L.P.L., Carew MS 602, f. 120. Councillors and officers writing to Henry, Wolsey, Cromwell, or others very frequently referred to themselves or signed their correspondence with some variant of 'your humble and obedient orators'.

[91] L.P.L., Carew MS 602, f. 54v.

[92] Rose, 'The rhetoric of counsel in early modern England', p. 50.

for the king's pardon 'in counselling [him] on how to handle O'Neill'.[93] Even the language occasionally used in Irish moral-governmental discourse was loosely reminiscent of the 'classical-humanist' model. If by the sixteenth century in England, 'friendship' had come to be a 'bond cementing lordship and affinity' with the result that 'the rhetoric of friendship' and that of service frequently coincided,[94] the same was true in English Ireland. In 1537-8, councillors referred to the 'unity' and 'one conformity' that, thanks to God, prevailed among them as comprising one 'love' and 'amity', or to how Grey and Ormond 'had friendly and lovingly joined themselves together in one conformity, to serve their Sovereign'.[95]

Of course, such affinities had their limits. As Jacqueline Rose writes, the 'transalpine humanists whose milieu was the princely court found counsel to be a way to fulfil the Ciceronian *vita activa*. If their ancient guide was Cicero, their contemporary one was Erasmus's *Education of a Christian prince* (1516), which insisted that frank counsel kept kingship from deteriorating into flattery'. If the praise of reason (the true vessel of counsel) and a fear of flattery (which appealed to passions) were two hallmarks of the classically-inflected language of counsel, and if English humanists such as Thomas More and Thomas Starkey were preoccupied with either counsel's utility or with the impact counsel had on the one who advised rather than on the recipient,[96] such themes only found attenuated expression in Anglo-Irish correspondence and 'reform' literature. The same kinds of substantive differences between 'humanist themes' in Ireland and in England explored at the end of chapter two, in other words, also prevailed with the rhetoric of culture.

Nevertheless, it remains the case that a *vita activa* was enacted through counsel. If, just like elsewhere, one's 'truth' here was paramount, God, of course, was never far from the fray as a 'father' of spiritual self-care through the prism of service and counsel in office: as Cromwell's informant, the Palesman William Wise informed his master in July 1536, 'A great many of us in this land … are apter of nature to complain, and confess our misery, than charitably and wisely to consult and provide for remedy of our harms. God amend us'.[97] Grey, who frequently appealed to God's power and presence in the world, too, roped counsel into the Creator's providential designs. When

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[93] T.N.A., SP 60/8, f. 8r; L.P.L., Carew MS 602, f. 107v; T.N.A., SP 60/10, ff 260rv.
[94] Conrad, 'The problem of counsel reconsidered: the case of Sir Thomas Elyot', p. 92.
[95] T.N.A., SP 60/7, f. 130r; T.N.A., SP 60/7, f. 165r; T.N.A., SP 60/7, f. 166r; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, 322; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 69; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 81.
[96] Rose, 'Kingship and counsel in early modern England', pp 49, 68.
[97] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 343.

defending himself against the string of accusations of improper conduct in mid-1536, he informed Cromwell that he most 'entierliest desire your Mastership, as he, next God, and my said Sovereign Lord, that I am most bounden unto of any in this world, that ye will not give credence unto any such untrue surmises'. He trusted in God that it was his own acts that would 'try' him 'at every point', vying to never forget Cromwell's counsel, by which and 'by the help of God', should 'have little need to fear the setting forth of false tongues'.[98] The remembrance of counsel offered and given was the guarantor of divinely abetted allegiance and service to a hierarchy whose celestial head, God, removed the threat of liars.

The memory of one's duties, indeed, was an intimate component of counsel. If the forgetting of one's duties, as we noted at the beginning of the chapter, was often invoked as the cause for which one had fallen into disobedience, appeals to one's 'duty remembered', accordingly, were ubiquitous in Anglo-Irish correspondence, petitions, and reports.[99] Once again, we see the Augustinian orientation of Tudor political theology, this time from the perspective of the rhetoric of counsel.[100] For Augustine, 'memory' was where 'our implicit grasp of what we are resides'. Memory moved the soul, this unitary locus of all our thoughts and activities, toward God; it included not only events from the past, but also the principles of rational order, guiding 'us as we move from our original self-ignorance and grievous self-misdescription to true self-knowledge'.[101] Put otherwise, memory in Tudor political theology was important in the 'office'-based constitution of the 'self'. It provided access to one's truth as a Christian crown subject, a recourse by which the truth of their obedience, allegiance, conformity, and service was enacted and affirmed. As the bishop of Meath, Edward Staples, complained to Cromwell in 1538, Archbishop Browne 'now boosteth himself to rule all the clergy' under the king and that 'every honest man is not only weary' of him, 'but reckoneth that pride and arrogance hath ravished him from the right remembrance of himself'.[102] To remember one's duty-bound allegiance conditioned the consultation process so that serviceable subject-hood was constituted at the juncture of truth,

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[98] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 315.

[99] Master Paulet's formulation was commonplace in this regard: 'Right honourable, my humble duty remembered, pleaseth it your honourable lordship to be advertised that…'. L.P.L., Carew MS 602, f. 133.

[100] On Augustinian theology and Tudor political theology, see chapter 2, sections 2.1 and 2.2, and chapter 3, section 3.2.

[101] Charles Taylor, *Sources of the self: the making of the modern identity* (Cambridge, Mass., 1988), p. 135.

[102] *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 29.

memory, God, and prince; what was remembered was one's inner-most truth as 'posited' by God and uncovered in allegiance, obedience, conformity, and service to the prince. In the words of the *King's Book*, the commandments called all Christians and 'put' them 'in remembrance what God would have' them do.[103]

But there was a limit to counsel's capacity to operationalize that truth. In September 1539, Grey assured Cromwell that according to the king's

> pleasure and commandment to me, and your good Lordship's advice
> and counsel, for the advancement and setting forth, at this time, of his
> most gracious intended purpose by his said commissioners, I shall not
> only wholly agree thereto my self, but also earnestly advance the
> same with my heart, good will, study, and labours, to the uttermost of
> my power, and am sorry not a little in my heart that I neither am,
> have, nor ever shall be, able to do unto His Majesty such service as
> my poor heart doth covet and desire, as to him that I am most bound
> unto, under God, on earth.[104]

Cromwell's counsel facilitated Grey's heartfelt and good-willed commitment to advancing the 'king's cause', but the lord deputy's 'poor heart' was also the limits of counsel's efficacy, for it prevented him from serving the king. If counsel engendered the furtherance of the 'king's cause' under God, it was also powerless to overcome the true crown subject's weaknesses or limitations.

Sometimes, indeed, counsel *was* that very weakness: the age-old couching of one's transgressions as an issue of improper counsel was common. Declaring one had been under the spell of 'evil counsel' or advised by the wrong people ('light people', or those who 'did nothing, but after their mind', for instance), was a strategy – used by the English and Irish of Ireland alike – for leveraging the king's mercy and making promises of future obedience and service, as the cases of Lord Offaly, Conor O'Brien, and Conn O'Neill illustrate.[105] Of course, if counsel could be leveraged to receive the king's mercy, and if counsel prescribed not only mutual obligations between king and councillor but also provided a resource to strategically appeal to in the furtherance of

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[103] *Formularies of faith*, p. 259.
[104] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 474.
[105] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 273; *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 287-8; *SP Henry VIII*, iii, pp 351-2. See chapter 6 for a more extensive discussion of this problem.

specific claims, the king, too, could wield the obligations and expectations not only of counsel per se but of crown subject-hood and service more generally to enforce his will. If good service was recognised, it was also expected, and it was this expectation that created the navigable space within which both sovereign and subject hashed out their mutual obligations.[106]

4.4: A paragon of serviceable crown subject-hood: the case of the Butlers, 1528-38

In his magisterial study of the Ormond lordship, David Edwards contends that the 'feudal power of the Ormond Butlers was not just about land; it entailed a whole political culture, a cosmology that embraced principles of lordship, service and mutual protection that could not be easily discarded when the land was taken away'.[107] This 'cosmology', I suggest, was primarily defined by the 'office'-based terms of true crown subject-hood, from the truth of service in the king's godly cause to the modalities of proper counsel. The Butlers' rise to prominence, as we shall see in chapter six, owed much to extenuating circumstances. All the same, the Butler affinity – as intimated above with Cowley – was most adept at operationalizing the languages of Tudor crown serviceable subject-hood. If nothing else, Piers Ruadh and his son, Lord James, portrayed themselves – and their clients portrayed them – as the king's men, or 'true Christian crown subject', *par excellence*, the best instrument, with God at their side, for enforcing the royal will, performing the fixtures of a distinctly Henrician *vita activa* in Ireland.

The Butlers and their clients well understood that good service needed to be humble, heartfelt, and poor, that it existed within the parameters set by allegiance to the crown, and that its demands were steep but honourable. Robert Cowley reminded Cardinal Wolsey in 1528 that Lord James 'undoubtedly will jeopardize his life, lands, and goods to do your Grace service, above all living men, next the King'.[108] Soon after, when Lord James himself wrote to Wolsey, he charged Kildare and his followers with

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[106] See, for instance, Henry VIII's letters to William Brabazon, the under-treasurer, the commons, and then the lords of the clergy assembled in parliament, from 1535, in which he appealed to the duties of office, the necessity of keeping the revenues in order, and the fidelity of the true subjects the crown defended during Offaly's revolt, to either whip a subject into better shape (Brabazon), or to justify unpopular measures to increase revenues (the commons and lords). L.P.L., Carew MS 611, f. 26; L.P.L., Carew MS 611, f. 27 (*SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 403); L.P.L., Carew MS 611, f. 28.
[107] Edwards, *The Ormond lordship*, p. 78.
[108] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 142.

having passed 'the limits of their allegiance, to the sore decay and impoverishing of all the King's true subjects here, and pernicious example to like malefactors': 'Therefore, in as humble manner, as heart can think, I beseech your Grace, at your goodness be so showed at this time, that the hope I have in the King's high favours and speedy assistance, and the good expectation His Grace hath of my poor service, may be concordant to his laud and glory, next God to your honour, and finally for the commonwealth of his poor subjects here'.[109] The 'office' of allegiance, in other words, and 'poor service' to the 'laud and glory' of the king that was part of it, was the limit beyond which lay the ruin of the 'commonwealth of his poor subjects'.

Piers and James poised as those best disposed to, first, resolve disputes between the crown and its magnate – such as the earl of Desmond – and Irish offenders, and, second, to pursue initiatives that were 'honourable and profitable to the King's Highness, and an universal common weal'.[110] In 1536, Lord James suitability to mediate between O'Brien and the council and to break the alliance between the former and Sir John of Desmond even prevented him from going to see Cromwell directly: after the wars in Munster and the land now being 'in such stay', many of his friends and old acquaintances requested he remained in Ireland, which 'God shall judge me, is more for to see, as my duty is, the King and your Lordship, that I am so much for ever unto, and for to prefer both the King's causes here, and the weale of the poor land, then for any other earthly cause'.[111] Consider, as well, the gentry of Kilkenny and Tipperary's defence of earl James in 1543.[112] The gentry described themselves as true subjects who had been loyal throughout all the recent crises, from the Lambert Simnel and Perkin Warbeck fiascos, to the more recent rebellion in 1534-35. They wrote to the king to counter the allegedly false claims some in Ireland made about James. These subjects alleged that he had oppressed and aggrieved them, compelling them against their will to provide the earl with money. All such claims, however, the gentry charged, were false. To the contrary, the earl was just and generous, he had reduced their burden and their charge, and he was held by the Irish as the principle deviser of all reformation in the land and as such, was the main object of their hate. He ensured that English custom, language, and law was observed within his domains and laboured to extinguish all Irish

[109] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 144.
[110] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 557. See also Cowley's belief that his master would take the king's part against all others: T.N.A., SP 60/6, f.
[111] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, pp 357-8.
[112] *HMC Ormond*, i, no. 1.

law and custom. In a short appeal to the king, then, diverse strands of Tudor political theology and their 'office-based' moral qualifications – from the ideal of leadership and its relation to 'civility' and the 'reformation' of Ireland, to the virtues of the good aristocratic ruler and the importance of 'truth' as a barometer of legitimacy – came together in a glowing portrait of earl James.

The Butlers, of course, were no strangers to opposition. Indeed, factional resentment between the Butlers and, first, Kildare and then Sir William Skeffington, Leonard Grey, and Anthony St Leger was the ready-made foil against which they refined their self-representation as ideal, serviceable crown subjects. Such issues will be explored in detail in chapters six and eight. For now, note the following. In 1532, the prior of Kilmainham, while admitting that Lord Deputy Skeffington and Piers Ruadh supported Kildare's brethren against him, also attenuated his criticism in an apologetics for Ossory's conduct: it was his disposition against Kildare, they claimed, that had led him to serve his deputy not as well as he knew he should.[113] The tone soon shifted, however: three years later, it was Piers himself who complained that had Skeffington only followed his counsel, Thomas of Kildare would have been kept with O'Brien, 'O'Connor's pledges in keeping', and Offaly would have had no succor in O'Connor's country. Skeffington, he charged, 'followith the counsel of such as have nether strength, activity, practise, or yet good will to further the King's most necessary affairs'.[114] His son made a similar point two months later, subtly appealing to the cosmic hierarchy that had God as its head to underscore Skeffington's faults: he complained to Cromwell that had Skeffington 'spared me one of the battery pieces (God being my leader) undoubtedly such service might have been done with so little charge, that the king's highness should have been therewith pleased, and well contended'.[115] Spats with the lord deputy continued under Grey's rule. Even shortly after having been reconciled with the lord deputy in 1538, Lord James underhandedly turned criticism against him into Grey's own shortcomings by leveraging the structures of delegation of an office-based viceregal order. Defending himself against having attacked the king's subjects, Butler declared he had never intended to 'send his own bailey' upon the king's subjects, 'but only upon mere disobeisance Irishmen', against which he also wanted to avenge the wrongs they committed to him, but from which he desisted on Grey's commandment.

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[113] T.N.A., SP 60/1, ff 150-152.
[114] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 272.
[115] *SP Henry VIII*, ii, p. 290.

Butler then ingeniously turned Grey's charge of factional favouritism on its head, claiming the love they had for each other was emblematic of their coordinated service to the king, 'which is the commandment of God and of our said master'; it was Grey, it was implied, who fostered division, for they served Grey 'as we would and should to the king's own majesty'.[116]

The affinities' self-representation as ideal Christian crown subjects aligned themselves with the king's 'godly and princely' cause and further fuelled its capacity to portray itself as the malleable instrument of Tudor 'reform', as we shall see in chapter five. For now, note that, in 1538, after the royal commissioners' circuit had exposed Butler rule, which the gentry, landowners, and townsmen of especially Waterford and Wexford described as near-tyrannical, the Butlers nevertheless displayed a willingness to accommodate and adapt to the regime's will and criticisms.[117] And again, the correlation of 'truth', governance and command, and 'civility', the 'commonweal', and 'reform' were in full relief. Henry VIII would be pleased, Ormond wrote, that he had consulted regarding the 'reformation of enormities and abuses' in his lands; as an 'example to others to suffer the same I have conformed me to devise and establish in the proximities of Kilkenny, Waterford, and Tipperary which your highness committed to my governance' the extirpation of such enormities, the planting of good subjects, all to the 'profit and the common weal' of his subjects. His and his son 'true and faithful promise' would 'never fail'.[118]

The 'moral manoeuvrability' of office, however, was no where best expressed than with William Brabazon, who, while acknowledging Piers Ruadh and James' abuses, ultimately downplayed their significance by appealing to their fundamental 'reformability' and the need for a politique attitude toward such abuses in times of need. If Brabazon acknowledged their shortcomings, he, on the basis of their and 'their antecessors' 'continued truths to the Crown of England', prioritised their 'reputation in honour, force, and strength' and the necessity of tolerating their abuses given the disorder in the land.[119] With Brabazon's reasoning, we are confronted with the paradox of the Butlers as agents of 'truth' whose strengths and shortcomings were simultaneously affirmed not as qualities or transgressions that exemplified or undermined their 'truth' but, to the contrary, as *internal* to their 'truth'. The situation

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[116] T.N.A., SP 60/7, ff 145rv.
[117] Edwards, *The Ormond lordship*, p. 166.
[118] T.N.A., SP 60/6, f. 76r.
[119] *SP Henry VIII*, iii, pp 91-2.

rendered 'truth' in its relation to service and 'reform' an elastic virtue, adaptable selectively by the sheer force of circumstance, and necessitating a toleration of its erosion – or its internal split – in the name of order and 'reform'. This, in effect, resembled Grey's move noted above, in which two moral spheres produced internal divisions within 'office' itself. The strategy, here, involved counselling Cromwell on policy and what to avoid; it was a piece of counsel that harnessed history, or the pedigree of one's 'truth' and allegiance (or lack thereof), as alibis to the unwavering yet glaringly missing 'truth' of two camps: the Butlers and their opponents. It perfectly captured, in other words, the form, internal tensions, and moveable fault lines of the 'office' of serviceable subject-hood as it found itself enfolded in counsel, 'reform', and the problem of Tudor sovereignty in Ireland.

4.4: Conclusion

In the universe of 'office', we are confronted with the moral horizons of Christian living under God and King, the 'space' in which the scope of serviceable Christian crown subject-hood expanded and contracted. It was a 'space' characterised by a capacious fluidity, a porousness of different moral horizons of subject-hood and service within which sovereignty, allegiance, and the other imperatives of Tudor political theology were renegotiated and defined. The moral-governmental 'site' of office, moreover, overlapped with that of the 'Crown' in which Christian order was enacted, thought, and its terms determined and contested. In this entanglement lay the site for serviceable subject-hood and kingship as the two correlated poles of the well-ordered Crown and common weal. Of course, such parameters of order also intersected with worlds beyond: a common world of 'corporate' legalism and responsibility bridged Gaelic and English Ireland as an integral part of the juncture of 'office', despite all other differences. Such horizons of 'office' and the 'Crown' was the harvest ground in which 'true Christian crown subject-hood and service' was enacted and coincided to differing degrees with the spiritual and earthly stations and vocations of the world. But it was when the two coincided to their greatest extent, in a world of service dominated by men, where life was coterminous with royal service, that one could speak of a veritable Henrician *vita activa*.

What submitting to the royal will entailed for Christian crown subjects, of course, was being radically redefined in the wake of the Reformation. A life of service

as a newly reinvigorated spiritual-civil affair was precisely what the royal supremacy re-problematised and turned into a newly defined political-theological imperative. Thus, while the jurisdictional horizons of civil and ecclesiastical power and delegated authority were transformed by the break with Rome, the very terms of 'self', 'office', and action in the world changed, confounding the status of holiness, and cumulatively providing a new vector for competing allegiances and sovereignties at the thresholds of God, princes, and popes. That Offaly could declare during his rebellion in 1534 that Henry had lost the right to rule Ireland, that the regime could proclaim the pope and his machinations across Western Europe the root cause of all disorder in Ireland, or that friars could preach in 1538 that kings had no authority to sacrilege churches – all represented competing visions of the offices of earthly ruler, spiritual or civil, under God. In this turmoil, a new figure of the 'true Christian crown subject' crystalized – and at its heart, was what the bishop of Winchester, Stephen Gardiner, in his *De vera obedientia* (1535), called the 'office of true obedience': to 'obey truly is nothing else but to obey unto the truth. And God is the truth', for 'it is only he that giveth us the wholesome water of the truth whereof he that drinketh in obeying the faith which Jesus Christ hath published, he shall also bring forth the fruit of true obedience so that he shall never be thirsty'.[120] What its forms, contours, and impact, were, and what the Tudor political-theological order it helped forge in the final tumultuous decades of Henrician rule in Ireland, is the focus of the second part of this study.

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[120] Pierre Janelle (ed.), *Obedience in church and state: three political tracts by Stephen Gardiner* (Cambridge, 1930), pp 79, 73.

Interlude:

Edward Walshe, Walter Cowley, and the *vitae activae* of Henrician

political theology, 1545-6

This brief interlude serves two purposes: summarising what we have covered so far in two exemplary accounts of Henrician *vitae activae* that simultaneously point to what comes next in the following chapters. We have looked so far at the salvific structures of rulership and the obligations it placed on crown subject-hood; we have explored the providential horizons of 'reform' and the common weal as indices of moral governance, examined the contortions of the discourse of 'civility', and laid out the political theology of office and counsel as key elements of the Henrician life of Christian crown service. Nowhere did all these come together in a Christian form of life, however, more than in Edward Walshe's *The office and duty in fighting for our country* (1545) and the case Walter Cowley mounted for his release while imprisoned in the Tower of London in April 1546. What is especially significant about both is how they distilled the theological, doctrinal, moral-governmental strands of Christian service, life, and order, and threw into clear relief two ways a Christian life of service – or its rhetorical instantiation – could look like. In Walshe and Walter's cases, in other words, we get two emphatically clear expressions of post-Reformation crown service as a Tudor Christian form of life and variant of the *vita activa* of Christian moral-governmental thought.

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A Waterford man who entered St Leger's service as a soldier around 1537, Edward Walshe was part of the 1,000-strong contingent sent to France in 1544 during Henry VIII's campaign to conquer Boulogne. Although published in London in 1545, *The office and duty in fight for our country* was composed in France and was delivered in several orations by Walshe himself while there. Dedicated to St Leger, and, having been written for an English-Irish audience in support of the lord deputy's policies in Ireland, it was subsequently circulated within the Pale.[121] As noted in chapter two, Walshe's main premise was fairly straight forward: one owed everything they had to their native country, and the obligation to serve it honourably and to sacrifice one's life and body in

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[121] Terry Clavin and Anthony M. McCormack, 'Edward Walshe', *DIB*; Hiram Morgan, 'Faith and fatherland in sixteenth-century Ireland', *History Ireland*, 2, 3 (1995).

its service if necessary were rooted in natural law, perfected by the Gospel. Peppered with a panoply of classical examples and biblical precepts, his pamphlet was a great example of Henrician humanism and biblicism, indeed.[122] The classical meaning of *officium* as 'duty', moreover, pervades the oration. If the tract sought to promote loyalty to the crown and the necessity of supporting the king against his enemies, it was also an incisive piece of Henrician political-theological thought that, emblematic of a distinctly Henrician Christianity, delineated the contours of a *vita activa* rooted in military service, honour, and duty toward one's native country.

To begin, the tract's political-theological *coup de grace* came on three fronts, once at the beginning in a sacramental invocation that cast a shadow on the rest of the piece, in the middle in the salvific linking of Christ, country, duty, and life, and at the end, in the setting of this life within the folds of theocratic kingship. So, correlating vocation, bodily health, and the sacrament of baptism, Walshe explicitly tied all to the blessed fruits of one's native country. If it was by the 'benefit' of one's native land that all 'live together and are served together in their vocation with the necessities of their body', it was also the case that 'of her womb did evaluate and spring the water wherewith the most heavenly ceremony through we are called Christian was in us performed'.[123] Walshe then elaborated a unique doctrine of obedience that triangulated providence, one's native country as the highest of transitory things, and the biblical precept to 'live under' earthly rulers. The 'office-based' poles of order and disorder were clear, the stakes for the Henrician life of service being the maintenance of 'humanity', 'gratitude', 'liberty', and divine providence – or their transgression: 'who so ever offendeth' God's ordination to 'live under the powers of the earth' 'not only breaketh the bound of humanity and gratitude, falleth from the high degree of liberty, renegeth for ever to run in the race of honour, but also transgresseth the high institution and providence of God'.[124] A hierarchy of spiritual-temporal relations of possession then soteriologically linked Christ, common weal, and one's life, body, and native country. Just as Christ was the 'owner and redeemer of the world', one's native country 'possessed' them in so far as it 'may be well apperceived by this high providence of God that among all transitory things we are principally bound to our native country', which was the 'very first gift' of God, which by 'the words of the Roman orator Tully,

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[122] Lucy Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism in Reformation England* (Oxford, 2000); George Bernard, *The king's reformation: Henry VIII and the remaking of the English Church* (New Haven and London, 2005).
[123] Edward Walshe, *The office and duty in fighting for our country* (London, 1545), sigs. Av-Avi.
[124] Walshe, *The office and duty*, sig. Biiii.

appear to be true, where he sayeth that our birth is the possession of our native country'.[125] Those that 'knoweth their bodies and goods to be even the very possession of the common weal of their native country' had the 'immortal glory, and unspeakable reknown of the noble hearts that be of such humane, and officious ingene'.[126]

For Walshe, honour, self-sacrifice, and heartfelt and studious commitment to one's native country and commonweal were bound with 'humanity' as the virtuous expressions of the office of fighting for one's native land, and was distinguished from the transgression of both that said office and that of hospitality in avarice.[127] Walshe opined how specific examples from Greece made it 'plainly apparent how much difference is between them that take pains in the common weal of their country', or those whose service to their country was honourable and expressive of 'the very office of fortitude, which of all the virtues is the consummate perfection', and 'them that lie lurking at home like unprofitable ye rather unnatural and beastly people, that will not look to render mutual office and thank to so many and spontane pleasures, that their native country ministereth unto them'.[128] The application of 'ministereth' to 'native country' as an action it performed is intriguing given that the land, as we noted earlier, was the very source of the holy water used in baptism. Against the appeal to transgressions of natural law just mentioned, and in classic post-royal supremacy permutations of theocratic *imperium*, then, the tract seems to have uneasily correlated 'native country' and 'church and congregation' through the idea of ancestral preservation: 'I will exhort, that we who the foreknowledge of God hath destined to be of the noble church and congregation of England and Ireland: lack no courage to advance ourselves defending the worthy same which our fathers before us to long time have defended and preserved'.[129] The dutiful crown subject, in other words, was a vessel for 'humanity' as itself an 'office' that delineated the moral *persona* of the offices of duty, hospitality, gratitude, and fortitude in defending and preserving country and church, from the 'unnatural and beastly people' that violated God and natural law.

The 'office' of duty and the *vita activa* it was entangled in, then, was of an uncertainly spiritual and temporal status – a point made even clearer when Walshe introduced the question of Christ's salvific promise in contrast to 'infidel' sensibilities

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[125] Walshe, *The office and duty*, sigs. Bv-Bvi.
[126] Walshe, *The office and duty*, sig. Bviii.
[127] Walshe, *The office and duty*, sig. Aiiii.
[128] Walshe, *The office and duty*, sigs. Bviii-Ci.
[129] Walshe, *The office and duty*, sig. Ci.

and capacities: Christ 'further promised us that our bodies shall be raised again with greater perfection ye with incorruptible glory, the hope whereof only certis is no small joy and solace to our hearts, and an efficat remedy to put away from us the anxious and formidalous thoughts that might rise in us of our flesh, which we have above the infidels, and Ethnickis that want hope'.[130] Indeed, reiterating a centuries-old Christian European acknowledgement of 'Saracen' and 'Turk' capacity for 'a certain nobility of thought and purpose',[131] Walshe defined such a life directly against 'infidel' duty and honour and the love 'Turks' bore their native country, which, while laudable, remained unblessed by the light of the Gospel. The full title of the tract, after all, declared that 'the affection to the native country should much more rule in us Christians than in the Turks and infidels, who were therein so servant, as by the histories doth appear'.[132] Even more significantly, Walshe explicitly tied such a life to the Christian hope provided by the king, a hope that itself paralleled that which Christ promised and which distinguished Christians from 'infidels':

> Let not us therefore frustrate the hope that our Saviour Jesus Christ
> hath given to us for the recomfort of our hearts, as sayeth Saint Paul:
> lest we should lament and mourn like them that want hope. And if the
> infidels remembering the magnanimity of their princes were so
> animated: how much more should we be even enflamed beholding the
> princely clemency, fortitude, and magnanimity of our liege and
> natural king Henry VIII by the grace of God, king of England, France,
> and Ireland, defender of the faith in earth under God of the churches
> of England, Ireland, and supreme head.[133]

We should be 'determined', Walshe continued, 'like men to fight for life and death, rather then living to see that princely dignity, that evangelical governance defaced, which the very providence of God hath given to us' not to be crushed at the hands of

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[130] Walshe, *The office and duty*, sigs. Cii-Ciii.
[131] W. Mark Omrod, Bart Lambert, and Jonathan Mackman, *Immigrant England, 1300-1550* (Manchester, 2019), p. 188.
[132] The full title is: *The office and duty in fighting for our country. Set forth with diverse strong arguments gathered out of the holy scripture proving that the affection to the native country should much more rule in us Christians than in the Turks and infidels, who were therein so servant, as by the histories doth appear.*
[133] Walshe, *The office and duty*, sig. Ciii.

'our enemies' and 'brought to nought' but for which 'we should virtuously stand in the defence and maintenance thereof in all fidelity, truth, and singleness of mind as the law of nature, the bond of love wherewith our native country hath bound us'. It was, after all, what 'the very word of God in so many places' 'incite and persuade us to do'.[134]

<p style="text-align:center">*</p>

Son of Butler client and Dublin official, Robert Cowley, Walter followed a different career path than his father. As the Solicitor General of Ireland, he remained in England, providing a key point of contact between the Ormond and the English court while remaining more independent of Ormond patronage and loyalty than his father ever did from the 1520s onward. Nevertheless, by the mid-1540s, he got wrapped up in an attempted Ormond-led coup against St Leger, for which he was sent to languish in the Tower of London.[135] His letters from prison to the king and English council weave together an array of pre- and post-royal supremacy motifs in a remorseful longing that outlines the theological contours and obligations of a life of crown service that, harnessing the political theologies of repentance and atonement, was wholly dependent upon divine and especially princely forgiveness.

Cowley adamantly sought less to exonerate himself from responsibility or guilt than he did explain away his unfortunate involvement in the coup against the king's deputy in the hope of receiving the king's mercy as a – in his words – 'repentant wretch'.[136] Indeed, he fully accepted the error of his ways: 'I am a young most unhappy man and though I have most quietly [desired] hitherto to live here God ordaining me weal, I would I to tangle herein to punish me for my offences chiefly against him'.[137] He had had enough favours from Dublin Castle to prosper, but the evils and devilish temptations of the world intervened, in effect constituting the breach of his office: 'as God master which marks his edification so the devil seduceth him to evil…'.[138] God's punishment became an opportunity for atonement: '[I] thank God heartily for my imprisonment by whose grace I in this life…have learned more to edify my soul's

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[134] Walshe, *The office and duty*, sig. Ciiii.

[135] On the coup, see Ciaran Brady, *The chief governors: The rise and fall of reform government in Tudor Ireland, 1536-1588* (New York, 1994), pp 41-4; David Edwards, *The Ormond lordship in county Kilkenny, 1515-1642: The rise and fall of Butler feudal power* (Dublin, 2003), pp . See also chapter 6, section 6.4, below.

[136] TNA SP 60/11, f. 122r.

[137] TNA SP 60/11, f. 118r.

[138] TNA SP 60/11, f. 120r.

health than my spirit could find all my life in the vile prison of my carcass'.[139] Walter appealed to both God and king for repentance: it 'were a pity' that he would live even for one night as a prisoner if he had 'not there God and his prince in his heart'.[140] God, king, and repentance were wrapped up in what became a retroactive condemnation of a worldly, unduly devotional life characterised by insufficient caring for the health of the soul. Yet Walter's repentance and atonement was explicitly oriented towards a 're-tuning' of a spiritually rejuvenated life of service that he was eager to resume, and which he sought to persuade the king and his councillors in England could benefit the 'king's cause' in Ireland.

After begging to be relocated to Ireland with either the lord chancellor or some other councillor, he pegged his plea on his already-accumulated experience in Ireland and the profit the king may yield from it. If by his pleasure and clemency, the king allowed him to return to Ireland to serve, he would do so not only better than he had before, but – and bringing together the entwined threads of service, self-knowledge, and metaphysics – to do 'some services and to prove what I am'.[141] Then, Walter put into play God's punishment as an opportunity to know one self, princely virtue and tyranny, and a curious form of Tudor exceptionalism vis-à-vis divine and princely order across Christendom. As he wrote,

> In the end I love and praise almighty God in that I am this punished
> and have free grace here to know myself and yet bound I am to thank
> his [debt?] that hath sent such a council to our sovereign lord from
> whose hearts all cruelty and tyranny is utterly banished and in stead
> thereof is placed modesty and temperance tempered with mercy and
> composition *so that extremities beareth no rule* which form is
> universally spread over all Christendom and in especial…expression
> within his grace's realms.[142]

Walter's characterisation of the moral-governmental 'extremities' as cruel and tyrannical uncannily resembled Henry's own rhetoric of the *via media*, of charting a middle-path that would harmonise divisions and factions around common ground. The

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[139] TNA SP 60/11, f. 126v.
[140] TNA SP 60/11, f. 125r.
[141] TNA SP 60/11, ff 124v, 125rv.
[142] Italics my own. TNA SP 60/11, f. 125v.

year Cowley expressed this (1546) was precisely the year Henry gave a parliamentary speech lamenting religious polarisation in his realm.[143] Was this a commonplace appeal to the Aristotelian golden mean of moderation, or was it an appeal to the Henrician *via media* in a bid to garner the king's 'bountifulness' and receive his pardon? That this appears to be the only anything akin to a *via media* was invoked in (extant) Anglo-Irish correspondence would perhaps suggest the latter, but this cannot be conclusively proven.

Walter's reports are significant in another respect, too, and the linchpin in this context is counsel – or, more precisely, its reversal in his epistolary rhetoric, and it is here that the spiritual-civil status of Henrician kingship acquired its full theocratic garb. Consider, first, how his defence of his role took the opposite route of that of 'evil counsel'. If one fell under the sway of 'evil counsel', one acted out of ignorance and the machinations of others that perverted one's 'truth', duty, obedience, and will. In Cowley's case, however, he did not even properly transgress his office per se, for he fell afoul of the king's favour and of his duty and obedience precisely because he was such a good subject, that is, he was so tormented by the devastation two malicious reports wrought on the earl of Ormond – who was deeply sorrowed at the thought of falling out of the king's favour – that he became if not the 'principle deviser' of the plot against St Leger, then the man who furthered it. As Walter explained, 'they feared what would happen if the noblest man in Ireland, guiltless, was ruined, and the king's subjects left defenceless at the hands of the Irish'. Walter, in other words, had been trapped, made susceptible by his trust in others: 'Where misfortune has led me to this lewd enterprise by mal instigation', 'for the love of God consider that none is so soon trapped…as they that meaneth truly and do think others…meaning like'.[144] The woeful predicament he found himself in – or the 'unhapp', as he repeatedly referred to it – was simultaneously an outcome of his dutiful service (acting against a perceived injustice committed against such a noble and true a servant of the king as the earl of Ormond) and God's punishment.

The ultimate arbiter for his redemption, however, was the king's grace. When begging for the king's mercy, Walter pointed out how diverse, other offenders had been pardoned who now 'at this day truly serveth your grace whereby many filthy…hearts

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[143] See chapter 8, section 8.4.
[144] TNA SP 60/11, f. 126r; TNA SP 60/11, f. 122r; TNA SP 60/11, f. 125v.

are daily purified through his highness' most prudent clemency'.[145] If Walter's time in prison presented him with an opportunity to cultivate both God and prince in his heart, if it allowed him to care for his soul and undo the trappings of devilish temptation, the balance between God and prince tippled in favour of the latter when it came to the act of mercy that would relieve him of his wretchedness and allow him to once again serve the king. God's punishment, in other words, was the precondition for his heart to be purified by an act of royal mercy. God's 'salvific' promise of redemption had become that of the king in the domain of a life of service.

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Both these 'episodes', then, outline in different ways the providential, sacramental, and 'office-based' contours of 'true Christian crown subject-hood and service'. Both speak of love as a bond of unity, either in relation to one's native country and the life under God and prince devoted to its defence (Walshe) or as that which one's transgressions has violated (Cowley). And both make clear the spiritual, almost vocational, dimensions of service as something that has the good of one's soul and salvation at its heart. Walshe offers a clear window into the 'office'-defined confluence of 'civility' and nature, and commonweal and 'reform' outlined in previous chapters, but in a distinctly post-Reformation fashion. Cowley clearly conveys the intersections between the political theologies of office and service, those of repentance and atonement, and – just like Walshe albeit differently – sacramental kingship in late-Henrician Ireland, while his predicament also acutely throws into relief the alure of appeals to the language of devilry and evil and pitfalls of intrigue and faction, not to mention the precarity of service and counsel therein. All such themes, as we will now see, were central to the dynamics and convulsions of Christian order, crown subject-hood, and service in the turmoil of the final decades of the reign of Henry VIII in Ireland.

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[145] TNA SP 60/12, f. 122v. This was not the only occasion where a good or pure heart was seen as the fruits of a princely gift: St Leger had, in September 1543, for instance, vaunted Brabazon to the king, describing him as a man 'that can endure all pains, and of so frank a heart to spend that God and Your Majesty hath given him'. *SP Henry VIII*, iii, p. 485.