The Liturgical Journey of Thomas Cranmer

By: Ryan M. Kocak
Introduction

There is an English proverb that says, “Every path has its puddle.” The path chosen by Thomas Cranmer in his liturgical reforms within sixteenth century England certainly had its share of puddles. However, he did not hastily create new paths to avoid the puddles of the old religion like the other Reformers, but slowly and methodically attempted to fill in the puddles of the old paths. Cranmer’s bequeath to the Reformation is not a robust systematic theological work like John Calvin’s *Institutes*, nor is it hundreds of theological treatises like Martin Luther, but his contribution is best remembered for the “liturgical skills that powered an essentially pastoral theology” evidenced in *The Book of Common Prayer*. The judges at his trial during the reign of Mary accused Cranmer of having three different doctrines at various times (Papist, Lutheran, and Zwinglian). In this paper I am interested in the unhurried liturgical journey of Thomas Cranmer, a shifting path whose shapes and puddles at times are akin to Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and Zwinglian theology. To examine this thesis, I will explore the liturgical developments of the late medieval church, the reign of Henry VIII, the first prayer book of 1549, and the second prayer book of 1552.

Late Medieval Eucharistic Theology and Spirituality

Before considering the liturgical developments that took place during the life of Thomas Cranmer, it is important to understand the theological developments and role of liturgy in late medieval England. Dom Gregory Dix argues that:

> The real background of these sixteenth century controversies is not the New Testament, isolated texts from which were wrested by both sides; still less was it the practice of the primitive church, of which both sides were about equally ignorant. It is the mediaeval

---

Western rite, as it was in use c. A.D. 1500, the only liturgy which either party had ever used.\textsuperscript{3}

The principle liturgy that the Reformers themselves had ever actually used prior to the 16\textsuperscript{th} century was a medieval Western rite. The late medieval Western rite (specifically the low mass) had seen many liturgical and theological changes since the early medieval period that shaped the spirituality of England prior to Cranmer.

Three main liturgical developments during the medieval period are the passivity of the laity, the multiple sacerdotal offerings of the clergy, and the loss of any eschatological sense of the Eucharist. No longer is the offertory and fraction a corporate act that includes the orders of laity and deacons, but the entire action is now dependent upon the celebrant. This sacerdotal understanding of the Eucharist leads to the celebrant being able to communicate alone or on the behalf of others as well as to apply the efficacy of each mass to those it was offered for. With each one of these individual offerings there was an understanding of a “separate efficacy and value of its own, each dependent on that of Calvary, but separate from one another.”\textsuperscript{4} Eamon Duffy admits that, “The priest had access to mysteries forbidden to others: only he might utter the words which transformed bread and wine into the flesh and blood of God incarnate… no layman or woman might even touch the sacred vessels with their bare hands.”\textsuperscript{5}

Contributing to the passivity of the laity is the sole use of Latin in the mass and the increased emphasis on seeing the elevation of the host. The origin of the sole use of Latin in low mass can be traced back to the eighth century with the adoption of the ‘local Roman’ \textit{Gregorian Sacramentary} as the core of the Western rite.\textsuperscript{6} The Eucharist of the old church in England thus

\textsuperscript{3} Ibid., 615.
\textsuperscript{4} Ibid., 616.
\textsuperscript{6} Dix, 618.
became “a drama linking Christ to his followers, pulling them back to his mysterious union with the physical world … It was such a sacred and powerful thing that by the twelfth century in the western Church, the laity dared approach the Lord’s Table only very infrequently.” The participation of the laity in the actual mass became something qualitatively different than it had been in the early Church and was limited to “kneel quietly without idle chatter, saying Paters and Aves, to respond to certain key gestures or phrases by changing posture, above all at the sacring to kneel with both hands raised in adoration, to gaze on the Host, and to greet their Lord with an elevation prayer.”

The passivity of the laity and the multiple sacerdotal offerings of the priest necessitate a historical view of the Eucharist. The medieval Western rite had come to lose the primitive eschatological thought that permeated the Eucharistic liturgy of the early church. The focus shifted from the passion, resurrection, ascension, and parousia to being predominately concerned with relating the Eucharist solely to the passion. An eschatological understanding unfortunately is not recovered fully realized with the liturgical reformation of Cranmer as Dix points out, “Cranmer’s rite of 1552 has not one single mention of the resurrection and ascension outside the creed.” Restricting the focus of the Eucharistic to the passion that occurred only in history, means the action is restricted to being wholly a past action. This historical view presents the church with either two options to enter completely within the action of the Eucharist, “Either purely mentally by remembering and imagining it; or else, if the entering into it is to have any objective reality outside the mind, by way of some sort of repetition or iteration of the redeeming

---

8 Duffy, 117.
9 Dix, 623.
act of Christ.” The old religion of England took the later and Cranmer and the new religion of England chose the former.

There has been much talk amongst historians about the state of the English church before Cranmer came to power under Henry VIII. The majority of historians have observed that “the gap that always exists between the highly educated intellectual elite and the great mass of the people was an enormous chasm in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.” But more recent scholarship like Eamon Duffy argues quite the opposite, “No substantial gulf existed between the religion of the clergy and the educated elite on the one hand and that of the people at large on the other. I do not believe that it is helpful or accurate to talk of the religion of the average fifteenth-century parishioner as magical, superstitious, or semi-pagan.” Duffy fails to make a distinction here between the appearance and intention of actions. For instance the appearance of the population in late medieval Christianity has been described as being “swept up into feverish religious activity. Old religious practices were revived and embraced with new fervor. New forms of religious expression were devised with astonishing ingenuity.” While the spirituality of traditional religion can appear to be “magical, superstitious, or semi-pagan” at times, the intention of the people and most clergy were not to worship idols of bread, but Christ. In one of his propositions, John Wycliffe argues, “That the religious who live in private religions are not of the Christian religion.” Thomas Cranmer when he comes to power chooses to wean the

---

10 Ibid., 623
12 Duffy, 2-4.
13 Spitz, 47.
English people off of the breast of the old religion by slowly, methodically, and precisely introducing liturgical reform that spanned the course of twenty years.

**The Rise of Thomas Cranmer Under Henry VIII**

Before considering the 1549 and 1552 prayer books, it is important to see how crucial the reign of Henry VIII was to Thomas Cranmer’s liturgical reforms and his later recapitulation of Eucharistic worship. While Henry VIII was the first king of England to officially sever relationship with the Pope, he resisted severing relationship to Roman Catholic spirituality. As Bard Thompson put it, “Although he abolished the pope in England, Henry VIII was scarcely a hot gospeler.”\(^{15}\) None the less, the English Reformation was “largely, from its outset, imposed, “from above” by successive governments on the English people, who were generally unsympathetic to the official “new religion.”\(^{16}\) Cranmer during the reign of Henry prepared the English soil for his Edwardian prayer books by introducing an English version of the Bible and an English litany.

The time under Henry VIII provided Cranmer the opportunity to further refine his theological views and begin to experiment with liturgical reforms privately. Part of his duty was as an ambassador for Henry aboard. It was during one of these ambassadorial trips to Nuremberg in 1532 that “provided every opportunity for him not merely to flirt with, but seriously to study the new ‘Martinism’. That he was impressed is clear from his readiness to marry into the Osiander family.”\(^{17}\) As early as 1538 there is evidence that Cranmer had begun experimenting with liturgical revision. In two surviving versions of reforming the divine office, Cranmer “drew

\(^{17}\) Brooks, *Reformation Theology*, 153.
on ideas from the Lutheran reforms, as well as from the semiofficial Roman Catholic reform of
the breviary carried out by Cardinal Quinones at papal request.”

One of the greatest achievements of reform for Cranmer during the reign of Henry came
with the appearance of the Great Bible in 1539. The Great Bible came as a revision to an earlier
Matthew’s Bible, and was called “great” because of its size of pages, designed to be used on the
lectern during service. There was great fear by some Bishops over Cranmer’s push for an English
Bible, “I marvel what my Lord of Canterbury meaneth, that thus abuseth the people in giving
them liberty to read the scriptures, which doeth nothing else but infect them with heresies.” In
his Preface to the second edition of the Great Bible in 1540, Cranmer poetically writes, “In the
scriptures be the fat pastures of the soul; therein is no venomous meat, no unwholesome thing;
they be the very dainty and pure feeding. He that is ignorant, shall find there what he should
learn.” While there were seven editions of the Great Bible (sometimes referred to after the
second printing as Cranmer’s Bible), Parliament in 1543 forbade reading the Bible, even at
home, “by women and ignorant people.”

Despite this attempt to restrict the lively word of God, later in 1543, “Convocation
required the English Scriptures to be read “in course” after the Te Deum and Magnificat on
Sundays and holy days. Thus, the first step was taken in the reform of worship and the way
opened for the further use of English in the liturgy.” In June of 1544 Cranmer with the King’s
assent created a “procession” or litany to be used in all parish churches, “it was to be sung or

---

21 Ibid., 93
22 Thompson, 227.
said, as the number of the quire shall serve… It is undoubtedly Cranmer’s own composition.”

The litany reflects a form that will be seen again in the later *Book of Common Prayer*:

> From ligtening and tempest, from lage, pestilence and famine, from battaile and murther, and from sodaine death. Good Lorde deliuer us.

> That it may please thee to geue to all nacions unitie, peace, and concorde. We beseche thee to heare us good lorde.

> That it may please thee to succoure, helpe and coumforte all that be in daunger, necessitie and tribulacion: we beseche thee to heare us good lorde.

These are no minor liturgical revisions that would have been lost on the average church member. No longer was the prayer life of laity restricted to silent intercession and saying Paters and Aves in isolation from one another, but was heard and agreed upon in English. It was during these periods that Cranmer begins to move deliberately in the direction of less conservative Protestant convictions, “Cranmer’s theological views moved by gradual stages form a position close to Luther’s, on the sacrament, for example, to Swiss interpretations close to those of Oecolampadius.” While Cranmer was a careful and diplomatic person (trained by none other than Cardinal Wolsey), it was Henry VIII’s rigid Catholicism that provided the drag to slowly introduce reform and prepare the English people for the suddenness of the Edwardian reforms to come.

With the death of Henry VIII in January of 1547, the child king Edward VI under the protection of the Duke of Somerset came to power. In an attempt to raise the standard of preaching and sermon quality, Cranmer released the first *Book of Homilies* in July of 1547. These were tracts for troubled times rather than Protestant propaganda. Cranmer’s enemy Bishop Gardiner protested against them saying “they taught justification by faith alone, against the

---

23 Hutchinson, 94.
24 Ibid.
Later that same year, the first acts of Parliament repealed Henry VIII’s *Six Articles* and the heresy laws under the Treason act. This opened the door for delivery of “the Sacrament of the altar and for the receiving thereof under both kinds.” Cranmer in 1548 issued an English supplement to the Latin missal, an interim *Order of the Communion* which consisted of:

An invitation to communion, a general confession and absolution, the “comfortable words” of Scripture, and a prayer of humble access preceded the administration, all in English. An exhortation, to be used on the Sunday preceding, urged the duty of intending communicants to prepare themselves either by secret confession to the priest or by the use do the general confession now provided.

This supplement was another radical step to an entire English service and undermined the sacerdotal understanding of the priest in absolution of sins and the efficacy of the Eucharist. This *Order* was heavily inspired by (if not borrowed from) the liturgy of Cologne that Bucer and Melanchthon created, but it was only meant to be a bridge until the first *Book of Common Prayer* would be released a year later.

**The First Book of Common Prayer – 1549**

On Pentecost of 1549 the *Order* was officially replaced with the first *Book of Common Prayer*. F.E. Hutchins attributes Cranmer’s greatest service to the English Church as holding strong to *lex orandi*, “The regulation of public worship together with a wide circulation of the Bible, would do more to affect the character of the religion of English people for ages to come than definitions of doctrine reflection the controversies of the time.” The process of an entire service in English had been slowly coming to fruition over the past decade with the introduction

---

27 Hutchinson, 100.
28 Ibid., 101.
29 Thompson, 229-230.
30 Hutchinson, 104.
of the English Bible and the sure and steady incorporation of the English vernacular into the service; however, the *Book of Common Prayer’s* introduction to English parishes was not without controversy.

Part of the reason for the controversy was the ambiguous and compromising nature in which Cranmer compiled the first book. In his compilation and editing, Cranmer consulted with groups of bishops and divines that represented both the old and new religions. It was quite a feat, none-the-less, to even attempt to gather into one volume what used to be tomes of varying shapes, and size in the liturgical forms of the medieval church: the *Missal, Breviary, Manual* (sometimes referred to as the *Sacerdotal*, *Potifical*, and *Processional*). A.G. Dickens also shows the first prayer book is influenced by Quignon’s Breviary, by the Luther Church Orders and by the *Consultatio* of Hermann Von Wied. Cranmer tends to be a hybrid between a politician, theologian, and editor. When dealing with the reformation of how people worship (how they have always worshiped), these three traits become essential.

In his preface to the first *Book of Common Prayer*, Cranmer writes:

> That the Clergy, and specifically such as were *Ministers* of the congregation, should (by often reading and meditating of God’s word) be stirred up to godliness themselves … and further, that the people (by daily hearing of holy scripture read in the Church) should continually profit more and more in the knowledge of God, and be the more inflamed with the love of his true religion.

This is a significant statement to make, because it holds both the clergy and the laity accountable to the Word of God. It is no longer the sacrifice offered in the mass, but the Word of God that is the source of godliness and of profit. Cranmer urges both laity and clergy to be both “hearers and doers” of the Word of God. But how can the laity (and some clergy) be doers of the Word, when

---

33 Qtd. in Brooks, *Cranmer in Context*, 64.
it is in another language. Cranmer adds in his preface, “The service in this Church of England (these many years) hath been read in Latin to the people, which they understood not; so that they have heard with their ears only; and their hearts, spirit, and mind, have not been edified thereby.” In addition to these two purposes expressed by Cranmer himself in the preface, Thompson suggests three others that were implicit in the nature of the first book: it was meant to be as comprehensive as possible, no concessions were made to the papists, and the liturgy was meant to be a congregational instrument.

During the Communion service, the structure for the most part kept to the late medieval structure of the Introit, Kyrie eleison, Gloria in excelsis, Collect, Epistle, Gospel, Creed, and Sermon. Instead of just deleting aspects of the Latin rite (as Luther tended to do), Cranmer skillfully adapted them to rid them of “popish doctrine.” While retaining the forms of the Latin rite (set out in the Sarum Missal) as his skeleton, Cranmer clearly adapts the sacrificial language that would have occurred. For instance, in the Canon portion, instead of prayer being made for the blessing of the oblation that it may “become the body and blood of Christ,” Cranmer’s form emphasizes the unique nature and perfection of Calvary’s sacrifice:

O God heavenly Father, which of thy tender mercy didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ, to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption, who mad there (by his one oblation, once offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world, and did institute, and in his holy Gospel command us to celebrate, a perpetual memory of that his precious death, until his coming again.

Another major action that was managed by the first book of prayer (that may at first appear to be a minor act) is the elevation of the host. The rubric instructs the priest after the Qui pridie (now from 1 Cor.11:23), “These wordes before rehearsed are to be saied, turning still to the Altar,

---

34 Ibid.
35 Thompson, 231-232.
36 Ibid., 234-236.
without any elevation, or shewing the Sacrament to the people.”

The hiding of the host and avoiding its elevation was intended to free people from the errors of transubstantiation, but in the medieval religious experience, they were being denied a vital part of what they understood worship to consist of. Thompson describes succinctly the condition of the first prayer book, “a reverent adaptation of the Latin rite, possessed of liturgical fitness and a deep Eucharistic piety. But it was not scrupulously clear.”

Part of what was not clear in the 1549 Book of Common Prayer was what view of the real presence of Christ was Cranmer suggesting during Holy Communion? Was he suggesting the transubstantiation view of Rome, the consubstantiation view of Luther, the memorialsit view of Zwingli, or some sort of combination? I have read a variety of arguments that suggest it was a Lutheran view (McGrath), Roman Catholic (Gardiner), or Zwinglian (Dix). It is interesting how Gardiner (Cranmer’s conservative nemesis) attempts to solicit a response from Cranmer that attempts to commend the 1549 prayerbook’s Eucharistic doctrine as “not distant from the Catholic faith, and demonstrated the possibility of producing Catholic readings of the new liturgy.”

While his conservative rivals were congratulating the new prayer book for its catholicity, fellow Protestants like John Hooper were outraged over the “manifestly impious order, insisting that unless its residual popery was removed, ‘I neither can nor will communicate with the Church in the administration of the Supper.’”

Some parties in England believed that Cranmer and the first Book of Common Prayer didn’t go far enough with the Reformation. The first prayer book still reeked of Rome and Popery. Cranmer’s first version of the Book of Common Prayer according to Spitz was “a

---

38 The First and Second Prayer Books of Kingd Edward VI in Thompson, 258.
39 Ibid., 236
41 Ibid.
brilliant piece of studied ambiguity, sufficiently traditional in form to pacify the Henrician Catholics – although in English, of course – and yet so phrased, even in respect to the Eucharist, as to allow its use in good conscience by Protestants." However, Dix suggests that Cranmer “did not consider his own book of 1549 to be only a vernacular translation or adaption of that ‘abomination’, or even a half-way house to it; but something radically different from it and essentially consistent with the doctrine of ‘justification by faith alone’.”

The subsequent edition of the prayer book in 1552 tends to diminish the radical discontinuity of the 1549 prayer book with the traditional religion. Although in an obvious way while the basic pattern of worship was kept, the new book began the process of eliminating all that had been vital to lay Eucharistic piety: “the parish procession, the elevation at the sacring, the pax, the sharing of holy bread.” There were some who rebelled in Western England over some of the measures in the new book. These rebels “demanded that every preacher in his sermon and every priest at his Mass should ‘praye specially by name for the soules in purgatory, as oure forefathers dyd.'” Bard Thompson describes the reception of the first *Book of Common Prayer* (as only he can), “It had a bad reception all around. The laity mocked it as a frivolous novelty. The parish priests took every means to make it a Mass, even though it was of necessity celebrated in English … Cranmer himself indicated that it was a temporary arrangement.”

**The Second Book of Common Prayer – 1552**

If the first prayer book attempted to micromanage Catholic doctrines, the new book of 1552 “vigorously condemned the Catholic doctrines on transubstantiation, purgatory, invocation of saints and the efficacy of good works. On the issues that divided Protestants, however, there

---

42 Spitz, Vol. 2, 460.
43 Dix, 647.
44 Duffy, 464.
46 Thompson, 263.
was theological compromise and determined ambiguity.” Before the second version of the *Book of Common Prayer* was released by another Act of Uniformity in 1552, Cranmer sets out his mature view of the Eucharist in his *Defence of the True and Catholic Doctrine of the Sacrament* in 1550. Cranmer highlights the three main functions in his *Defense*: as a memorial of Christ’s sacrifice, as representing a ‘sacrifice of praise’ for that sacrifice, and stressing the importance of ‘spiritually feeding upon Christ.’ Cranmer describes the feeding he intended to describe in his *Defense*:

> The spiritual meat of Christ’s body and blood is not received in the mouth, and digested in the stomach, (as corporal meats and drinks commonly be,) but it is received with a pure heart and a sincere faith. And the true eating and drinking of the said body and blood of Christ is, with a constant and lively faith to believe, that Christ gave his body, and shed his blood upon the cross for us, and that he doth so join and incorporate himself to us, that he is our head, and we his members, and flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bones, having him dwelling in us, and we in him.

Cranmer is attempting to clarify the nature of the 1549 prayerbooks’s words that were spoken to receive communion, “The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life.” This phrase allowed for the misunderstanding that the bread and wine that were to be given to the communicant during communion was still the literal body and blood of Jesus Christ. Cranmer is arguing much like Calvin that there is a prerequisite of faith and that Holy Communion could not be received on the behalf of another. Cranmer came to see the mass as not another sacrifice (though there is offered a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving), but as an act of communion.

The concept of communion in Eucharist becomes apparent with the release of the 1552 *Book of Common Prayer*. No longer is the Eucharist referred to as it was in 1549 as “The Svpper

47 Haigh, 180-181.
of the Lorde, and the holy Communion, commonly called the Masse”, but in the 1552 version, “The order for the administracion of the Lord’s Supper or holye Communion.” Besides amending the title of the Lord’s Supper, Cranmer also edited other antiquated words like “altar” and “in these holy Mysteries.” The main purpose for a lot of these revisions was to avoid any language or practice that would appear to support Roman Catholic views of the mass as sacrifice or of transubstantiation. The words of administration were changed form the form of 1549 – “The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for thee preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life” – to a form with which Zwingli himself could scarcely have quarreled – “Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart by faith with thanksgiving.”

Other major differences include the removal of the sung items of the service: instead of the introit psalm and Kyries (both were deleted) and the Gloria (moved to the end of the service), the Ten Commandments were added and recited by the minister, with responses by the people. The rest of the service was radically transformed, so as not to be confused with traditional theology or spirituality. After the intercessions came the confession, absolution, and Comfortable Words; then the Sursum corda, preface, Sanctus (with an emphasis on lifting hearts to heaven), and then the Prayer of Humble Access. The Prayer of Humble Access, was intentionally moved to this position, before the consecration (though this may be a misnomer in the 1552 version), in order to overrule Gardiner’s inference that the prayer for adoration was over the transubstantiated elements. After the Prayer of Humble Access came the Consecration, words of institution (as a warrant and remembrance), communion, Lord’s Prayer, prayer offering, the

50 Dickens, 277 – these two phrases were added in 1559 under Elizabeth in a compromise to reach a wider range of people.
52 Thompson, 241.
singing of *Gloria*, and the final blessing. The prayer of “Consecration” as it was later called was more of a prayer for invocation for the communicants rather than a prayer of blessing of the bread and wine.\(^5\)

Added also to the 1552 prayer book was guidance that the Curate can have any bread or wine that was left over after the Eucharistic service. This addition was to show that after the service, the bread and wine were just that, bread and wine. It was an attempt to, “take away the superstition, which any person hath, … it shall suffice that the bread be such, as is usual to be eaten at the Table with other meats, but the best and purest wheat bread, that conveniently may be gotten.”\(^5\) Despite the overhaul of the 1552 *Book of Common Prayer*, there were still Protestants like Hooper and John Knox who urged Cranmer to go further with the reform and abandon the ancient practice of the communicant kneeling to receive the sacrament. To this Cranmer responded:

> They say that kneeling is not commanded in Scripture, and what is not commanded in Scripture is unlawful. There is the root of the errors of the sects! If that be true, take away the whole Book of Service; and let us have no more trouble in setting forth an order in religion, or indeed in common policy. If kneeling be not expressly enjoined in Holy Scripture, neither is standing or sitting.\(^5\)

In this response we see Cranmer’s legendary pithiness with words and comments, but also his theological understanding that would be akin to Luther and Melanchthon, diaphora/adiaphora.

In the 1552 version of the *Book of Common Prayer* the mature and clear view of Cranmer concerning the real presence of Christ is revealed. In Peter Newman Brooks’ book, *Thomas Cranmer’s Doctrine of the Eucharist*, he suggests that Cranmer went through two distinct phases: “From Roman Transubstantiation to a Scriptural Notion of the Real Presence” and from


\(^5\) Hutchinson, 130.
a “Real” to a “True Presence.” Christ is really, carnally and corporally absent from his Supper, for when he is locally circumscribed at God’s right hand in heaven, the Lord’s presence at the Eucharist is after a “True” and “spiritual” manner.\textsuperscript{56} This spiritual and true sense is best seen in the administration of the Sacrament to the communicants, “Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart by faith with thanksgiving.” No longer does Cranmer allow this spiritual or mental act to be plagued by Roman Catholic (or Lutheran) concepts of a localized real presence in the elements. The \textit{anamnesis} or the “Remembering, Representing” became not a repetition of the historical act as with the old religion, but became a purely mental act of remember and imagining Christ’s sacrifice. As Dix suggests in a critique to this view, “The new conception is of a strictly personal mental reflection upon His action in the past. We cannot enter into it, since as a matter of history the passion is unique and finished.”\textsuperscript{57}

But Cranmer did not believe that a “spiritual” or “true” presence made the consecrated bread and wine a bare sign (like Zwingli), “The sacramental bread and wine be not bare and naked figures, but so pithy and effectuous, that whosoever worthily eateth them, eateth spiritually Christ’s flesh and blood, and hath by them everlasting life.”\textsuperscript{58} The real and true presence for Cranmer isn’t in the bread and blood, but in the hearts of the communicate who eats of Christ spiritually by faith.

\textbf{Conclusion}

The opening trial of Ridley, Latimer, and Cranmer after Mary became Queen of England consisted of three questions about the mass: “was the natural body of Christ really in the elements by virtue of the words spoken by the priest, did any other substance remain after the words of consecration, and was there a propitiatory sacrifice in the mass for the sins of the quick

\textsuperscript{57}Dix, 624.
\textsuperscript{58}Mitchell, 326.
and the dead?" Cranmer was being held accountable for the very liturgical changes he had slowly introduced over the past twenty years as archbishop of Canterbury. These liturgical changes successfully transitioned the English Church from a medieval spirituality characterized by the priest’s multiple sacerdotal offerings (with separate efficacy and value of their own), the use of the Latin language, emphasis on seeing the host, and the doctrine of transubstantiation as dogma. As Haigh observes, “In 1548, when the first Prayer book was finalized, almost all serious theological opinion in England supported a real presence; by 1551, when a new version was under consideration, this was no longer so, and transubstantiation was virtually a prescribed opinion.”

In this paper, I demonstrated how revolutionary each succeeding liturgical development was compared to the old religion in England. During this journey with Thomas Cranmer, I examined each piece of major liturgical work theologically, structurally, and culturally. While other Reformers concentrated their efforts on theological treatises, Doctrines, and systematic theologies, Thomas Cranmer focused his efforts not only reforming the English liturgies, but reforming English worship. The Book of Common Prayer, Cranmer’s lasting bequeath to us today, echoes still in the worship of over seventy-seven million Anglicans worldwide.

60 Haigh, 179.
Appendix I

The Great Tradition : A Chart to illustrate the Sources of Thomas Cranmer’s inspiration in compiling *The Books of Common Prayer*

Founded in Holy Scripture

*Novum Instrumentum* (Erasmus), 1516; Tyndale, 1526-34; Coverdale, 1535; ‘Matthew’, 1537

The Great Bible 1539 (Preface by Cranmer 1540)


**Bibliography**


