

The Henrician Reformation(s)

1. Interpreting the *via media*
 - a. Church of England (C of E), a middle way?
 - i. between Roman Catholics and radical Protestants?
 - b. Henrician *via media*?
 - i. execution of both Lutherans and Catholics
2. Religious Change in 1530s, why so little resistance?:
 - a. there was some resistance:
 - b. but overall, there was little. Why?
 - i. state of church in early Tudor England
 - ii. perhaps, in part, because of complacency among the clergy
 - iii. minimal nature of Henrician Reform
3. Divorce and Supremacy, 1529-1534
 - a. importance of divorce from Catherine of Aragon and marriage to Anne Boleyn
 - i. Why? problem of male heir
 - (1) (and the recent past of the Wars of Roses)
 - ii. Archbishop Wolsey prepared to grant divorce (though hampered by his own ambition to become pope himself, eventually forced out and executed over this issue)
 - (1) but problem of appeal to Rome
 - b. Henry VIII's response, through law courts and through Parliament
 - i. 1529-31, through *Praemunire* (attack on "King's regality"), clergy charged with taking cases out of king's courts to other courts, little used before, attempt to frighten Rome
 - ii. turns to Parliament
 - (1) (meets for 7 years from 1529)
 - iii. 1533, climax, Anne now pregnant; Henry VIII and Anne married end of Jan. (birth of Elizabeth in Sept.)
 - (1) new archbishop (Th. Cranmer) declares marriage to Catherine null and void , May 1533
 - iv. 1534, Act of Supremacy, Henry head of C. of E.
 - (1) but Church still Catholic in doctrine
 - v. The wives and the search for an heir
 - (1) Divorced, beheaded, died; Divorced, beheaded, survived
4. Dissolution of the Monasteries
 - a. Henry VIII's supremacy (esp. the management of it by his new chief councillor, Thomas Cromwell) gives new look and outlook to the Church
 - i. Act of Dissolving the monasteries (1536 [lesser monasteries], 1538-39 [greater monasteries])
 - b. Cromwell conducts ecclesiastical census, 1535 (first since 1086)
 - i. Was divine service observed?; What lands did houses possess?; What rents?; Who were the benefactors?
 - ii. Why dissolution?
 - c. Consequences
 - i. Destruction of art and learning: altar cloths removed, crucifixes melted, libraries dispersed
 - ii. Some resistance to Henrician Reformation.
 - (1) Pilgrimage of Grace, 1536, protest after first phase of Dissolution
 - iii. Massive wealth (£132,00 p.a.) pours into King's coffers. But most sold.
 - iv. Some benefits: Henry VIII est. several new dioceses with the lands (rentals) and endowed new chairs and a college at Cambridge
 - v. Overall, a decline in clergy morale. Fear that Henry has no spiritual interest in reforming the Church, but only sees it as a source of money.
5. Cromwell, Parliament, and Henry VIII

- a. Historian Geoffrey Elton, author of phrase "Tudor Revolution in Government," saw the political/administrative changes associated with the Reformation as a good thing and saw them as brought on by Thomas Cromwell: "When Thomas Cromwell died, the state and Kingship in England were very different from what they had been at the fall of Wolsey."
 - i. change between 1529 and 1540
- b. Thomas Cromwell (1485-1540)
 - i. clothworker son, possibly a soldier and trader in Netherlands and Italy (his own description "a ruffian")
 - ii. c. 1516, in Wolsey's household, c. 1519 a common law lawyer
 - iii. self-taught, interested in analysis of political structures
 - iv. connections with intellectuals employed in drafting bills for Parliament by 1531
 - v. Cromwell's role? Developed a principle from and gave substance to Henry VIII's desire for a divorce and for jurisdictional supremacy in his church and State. Elton calls the Act of Appeals (1533) "The Great Statute"
- c. Statutory change, 1532-1540 (the revolution through statute)
 - i. Centralized power made a reality
 - ii. Revolution through **statute**: "Parliamentary statute cannot create the supremacy [which is derived from God]..., but it alone can make the supremacy enforceable at law, in the law courts" (Elton)
- d. C. of E. at death of Henry in 1547
 - i. Henry VIII's will: commends his soul to the Virgin and the Saints; leaves money for Masses for his soul; and notes that man is justified by works "if he have leisure."
 - ii. little absolute break with Catholic practice
 - iii. more erastian than Lutheran