

## THE PROTESTANT LITURGY AND THE WORKING CLASSES

Sociologists and theologians alike have put forward various theories to explain the absence of the working classes from our churches; most of their theories have been sociologically based – they have dealt with sociological data such as groupings, attitudes to organizations, socio-economic factors, educational attainment and the like. It is the purpose of this paper to propose that as well as these sociological explanations, there may also be a theological-liturgical one. This is, of course, not to deny that sociological, or indeed any other, explanations have a place in explaining the absence of the working classes from our churches: I do not believe that there is one single reason for this phenomenon – there are many. Nevertheless, it does seem to me that few writers have tried to explain this fact from a theological or liturgical angle, and this is what I propose to do in this essay.<sup>1</sup>

### **1. The Protestant Liturgy**

The great figures of the Reformation wished to reform the liturgy of the church for a number of reasons: firstly because they felt that there were errors in the Roman conception of the eucharist which led to idolatry and a denial of the atonement, and secondly because they felt that people had come to rely too much on external action and ceremonial, to the detriment of the inward spiritual worship of the true Christian believer. They also objected to a Mass said in a language which the people could not understand. It is to the second aspect that I wish to direct our attention.

In the middle ages many ceremonies and rites had come to be attached to the liturgy of the church: at Christmas small children would come to pray to the image in the crib; at Candlemas the congregation would march around the church with candles, remembering Simeon and honouring him who is the Light of the World; ashes were used on Ash Wednesday so that the people might understand the need for humiliation over man's sin; on Maundy Thursday the great men would wash the feet of the poor; on Good Friday men would creep to the cross in penitence; at Rogationtide the parson would bless the surrounding fields. Such rites, however, could easily be misunderstood and perverted by both clergy and laity alike. The bread of the communion service was often used as a charm, and holy water was believed to possess the power to cleanse a person from venial sin. Some ceremonies had meanings that had

long since been forgotten: there was a ceremony that was performed in St. Paul's Cathedral, in which a stag's head set on a spear was brought into the church accompanied by the blowing of hunting horns, when it would be taken and placed on the high altar. The origin of the ceremony lay in a gift of land to the church, but the ceremony had come to be a thing in itself, and was enjoyed in and for itself. Other ceremonies were often outrightly profaned: at the Palm Sunday service processions would be given light relief by a comic character on a wooden horse; singers in the passion drama would be provided with wine and beer.

The Mass, in many cases, had become a spectacle to be gaped at by the laity; the idea of a church celebrating the eucharist had been replaced by that of a priest alone celebrating, while the people looked on. The increased importance of the clergy, and the language barrier provided by the celebration of the Mass in Latin, effectively excluded the laity from any participation whatsoever. 'The christian brotherhood has been reduced in fact (and, therefore, rapidly, in theory also) to the pre-christian situation in which the common herd stood afar off, while the "holy men", the cultic officials carried out the acts of ritual worship.'<sup>2</sup> In many places the people only partook of communion at Easter (and, incidentally, only in one kind).

It was against such perversions and misunderstandings of the liturgy that the reformers cried. For them the accent had to be removed from the ceremonial and placed on the true inward nature of christian worship. First and foremost, this meant that the whole congregation should participate in the liturgy, which should not be a spectacle performed by the priest alone. In the early church the people had taken a full part in the services, and the aspect of christian fellowship had been a prominent feature; thus the people would join in the prayer of thanksgiving given to us by Hippolytus:

'Bishop: The Lord be with you.

People: And with your spirit.

Bishop: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

Bishop: Let us give thanks to the Lord.

People: It is meet and right.'<sup>3</sup>

In the early church the fellowship of believers was also emphasized by the kiss of peace, a practice that died out during the middle ages. It was in the actual communion itself, however, that the people came fully to participate – the elements were for them to receive, the communion was the communion of the people with their risen Lord. The elements themselves would be brought by the members of the congregation, and Jerome cites the custom of reciting the names of those who had brought the elements.<sup>4</sup> The mentioning of

the names of individual christians in the liturgy also occurred in the prayers of the church, and it was the formalization of this practice that led to the lists of names or diptychs which are first mentioned by Cyril of Alexandria. All these ancient practices led to the sense of fellowship among the people, the fellowship of the body of Christ, the church. The reformers, stressing the 'priesthood of all believers', sought to bring the people back into the eucharist, making it once again the celebration of the whole church, a celebration in fellowship.

Just as some of the ceremonial had been misunderstood and abused to become a thing in itself, so had some of the other liturgical trappings, against which the reformers also raised their voices. Images in the churches came in for much criticism; the general critique that was made was that God himself could never be portrayed in a tangible form, and that images led to veneration and idolatry.<sup>5</sup> In Reformed churches all over Europe images were torn down and smashed; in 1523 Leo Jud thundered against the use of images when he preached in the pulpit of St. Peter's Zurich: shortly afterwards pictures that belonged to the church were found smashed on the floor of the chancel; the same thing happened at the Church of Our Lady, Zurich, and, to the great consternation of the town officials, the grand carved crucifix which had stood above the gate of Oberdorf was torn down by reforming protestants. Often the followers of the reformers went further in their objections to religious art than the reformers themselves; Luther did not object to crucifixes; Calvin, writing in the *Institutes*, only objects to statues of God himself, and Zwingli said that images were to be removed only if acts of worship were rendered to them. Many English churches had a good deal of visual splendour that came in for attack during the Reformation period: many possessed elaborate wall paintings, such as the cathedrals of Canterbury, Norwich, Rochester and St. Albans; many had good collections of plate: silver vessels were common, gold was not rare, and jewels were frequently added. Crosses, censers, candlesticks and book covers were also made of expensive metals. Much of this visual splendour was done away with during the Reformation; Article 28 of the Royal Injunctions of 1547 ran: 'Also, that they shall take away utterly extinct and destroy all shrines, covering of shrines, all tables, candlesticks, trindles or rolls of wax, pictures, paintings, and all other monuments of feigned miracles, pilgrimages, idolatry, and superstition.'<sup>6</sup> Artistic elaboration had, of course, been used in the early church: the biblical scenes of Adam and Eve, the sacrifice of Isaac, Moses striking water from the rock, the baptism of Christ, the raising of Lazarus, had all been depicted by the christians in the catacombs in Rome; the earliest actual church known to have paintings is the third-century church at Dura on the

Euphrates. By the fourth century clergy had begun to wear ornate vestments. The church of Sancta Sophia built by Justinian in the sixth century had a curtain before its altar, with a figure of Christ Pantokrator blessing his people, a figure that was embroidered in gold. The enrichment of vessels used in church had become popular by the fourth century, and at Antioch in the time of John Chrysostom we hear of finely wrought chalices, candelabra, silk veils and ornate vestments. Beautiful worship was not unknown to the early church, but the reformers, wishing to rid the church of all unnecessary and dangerous externals, saw it as a corruption of that true inward worship.

Of all the art forms the reformers placed most value on music; in particular it was useful as a way in which the whole congregational fellowship could express their praise to the Lord. In 1524 Luther wrote in his preface to Walther's first collection of hymns: 'I am not of the opinion that all the arts should be stricken down by the Gospel and disappear, as certain zealots would have it: on the contrary, I would see all the arts, and particularly music, at the service of Him who created them and gave them to us.'<sup>7</sup> The Lutheran church in particular was famed for its hymns: '. . . it is a special glory of the Lutheran church that it preserves the ancient Gregorian tradition and unites with it a collection of chorales and melodies inspired with the same churchly dignity, and not inferior in nobility.'<sup>8</sup> In most Reformed churches, however, and in England, only the psalms were sung; Calvin himself published a book of metrical psalms, set to music by Bourgeois, Gretier and Franc. Cranmer required that the singing of metrical psalms be done with harmony note for note, and not involved and intricate as the older polyphonic harmony had been; this was, in part, an attempt to make the words more easily understandable. Archbishop Holgate of York, and Bishops Ridley of London and Hooper of Gloucester all thought that choral and instrumental music had little value in christian worship, and reduced it where they could. In the old Latin Mass there had been much chanting: in the first Prayer Book of 1549 the *Introit*, the *Gloria in Excelsis*, the *Creed*, the *Offertory*, the *O Lamb of God*, and the *Post Communion Prayer* all had to be sung; protestant reforming criticism reduced this requirement in the second Prayer Book to the *Gloria in Excelsis* alone. On the whole, the reformers frowned upon an actual sung liturgy. In the Zurich rite singing was banned altogether, although there was some antiphonal reciting between the minister and the people, for example in the *Gloria in Excelsis* and in the *Creed*. As late as 1640 four out of eleven churches in Zurich had no congregational singing, and in Lutheran Sweden singing was rare until the seventeenth century. Organs were abolished in many Reformed churches, and in England they were

abolished for a time in 1644. Whilst most reformers, then, tended to frown upon a sung liturgy, the Lutheran tradition was, on the whole, more favourable toward music than was the Reformed tradition of Calvin and Zwingli.

The reformers' main concern in the liturgy was that the people should understand, and that what they understood should be biblically based. We have already mentioned the fact that the reformers insisted upon a vernacular liturgy so that the congregation should understand the service;<sup>9</sup> they were also concerned that the people should be able to hear the biblical word of God in their own language. Cranmer himself wrote that in the first Prayer Book there '... is ordeyned nothing to be read, but the very pure worde of God, the holy scriptures, or that whiche is evidently grounded upon the same; and that in such a language and ordre, as is most easy and plain for the understandyng, both of the readers and hearers'.<sup>10</sup> That the world should hear the word of God in all its power was the fundamental aim of all the reformers. One of the first vernacular Masses was that written by Carlstadt and celebrated in Wittenberg at Christmas in 1521; by 1522 the Carmelite brothers at Nördlingen had a vernacular liturgy, and in 1523 came Thomas Müntzer's rite and Oecolampadius' *Das Testament Jesu Christi*. In England the epistle and gospel read in the eucharist had to be read in English as from 1547; by the middle of the same year Compline had been sung in English at the King's Chapel, and in November the Mass said at the opening of parliament had the *Gloria in Excelsis*, the *Creed* and the *Agnus Dei* in English. The 1549 Prayer Book forbade all private prayers said by the minister, except for the *Lord's Prayer* and the *Collect* which were said during the introit. Nothing in the service was to be 'secret', either by virtue of language or by virtue of the minister saying or performing some part of the liturgy on his own. The service was the service of worship by the people, and as such should be enacted by and understood by that people. By 1660 all liturgies were in the vernacular, save those of the Roman and Eastern churches.

As I have said, the reformers were anxious that christians should understand their faith, and the sermon was one of the chief methods of achieving this understanding. Strict protestants insisted that on Sundays two services with sermons were obligatory; in England the first Prayer Book required that a sermon be preached or homily read at every service of Holy Communion. The sermons would often be theological in character, and would not avoid controversy – they might even fasten directly on to the sins of some of the members of the congregation. Strasbourg cathedral had sermons every morning and evening, and in the city of Rostock there were no fewer than 1500 sermons preached in 1640. Most churches demanded that sermons

should be at least an hour, and a three-hour exposition was quite common. The Reformation pulpit replaced the medieval altar, and it is not insignificant that the Lutheran church at Lauenburg had its pulpit placed in front of the altar, as did that in the palace church at Schmalkald. It is not insignificant too, that the pulpits in Calvinist churches tended to be taller than those in Lutheran ones:<sup>11</sup> the Reformed churches concerned themselves more with weighty biblical exposition and dogma than did the Lutheran. In England it was the puritans who were most favourable to the ideas of the Reformed church; they intensely disliked the homilies of the Church of England, much preferring a 'live performance' from a minister who had thoroughly worked at his sermon. Most Puritan ministers would prepare at least two sermons a week, as well as leading a bible study. They would spend many a long hour in their studies poring over their commentaries, whereas their less reformist brethren would spend more time on administration and in visiting their flock. The Puritan family, on returning home after divine service, were expected to discuss the sermon they had heard, and the children would be expected to recall the main points of the sermon to their parents. There is a large amount of truth in Davies' statement that '... for the Anglican the sacramental was the primary mode of God's presence, but for the Puritan the primary mode of Christ's presence was kerygmatic'.<sup>12</sup> In the Lutheran strand too, there was a desire for theological understanding: Luther said that people could receive communion only if they '... can give an account of their faith, and answer questions such as whether they understand what the Holy Communion is, what it bestows, and for what purpose they desire to partake of it. . . .'<sup>13</sup> In the Lutheran baptismal and confirmation services there were long catachetical affirmations of faith, and during the communion, marked by didactic and hortatory features, the *Strasbourg Confession* was used. Some of the prayers even required a fair amount of intellectual understanding, especially in the Reformed tradition; Hooker criticized the Puritan prayers, complaining that the average man could not attend for the length of time that they lasted. On the other side, the Puritans retorted that the normal Anglican prayers were far too short. It is not perhaps insignificant that Calvin saw prayers as a means of 'edification': '... it plainly appears that the public prayers must be couched not in Greek among the Latins, nor in Latin among the French or English, as has heretofore been the custom, but in the language of the people, which can be generally understood by the whole assembly. For this ought to be done *for the edification* of the whole church. . . .'<sup>14</sup> (my italics). Through prayer, through sermons, through the reading of the word of God, and through the vernacular liturgy, the Christians were to understand their faith.

## 2. The Working Classes

It is common knowledge that the working classes figure less prominently in our churches than any other social group. In industrial towns and on new housing estates Sunday attendance figures are low when compared with the number of inhabitants; and not only are the figures for Sunday attendance low, but the figures for those who 'never go' to church are high – in the working-class area of Dagenham it is as high as 83 per cent. Small working-class towns average a church attendance of 7·8 per cent each week, and where figures are higher, as in Billingham (15 per cent) and Bolton (20 per cent), a large Roman Catholic population is indicated. In the middle-class areas church attendance is higher, and in Woodford Green 34 per cent of the middle classes attend.<sup>15</sup>

It is without doubt undeniable that the church has failed to reach the working classes: there is a distinct absence of lorry drivers, steelworkers, bus drivers, electricians and factory workers from our congregations; yet it remains true, however, that the working classes are more willing than any other class to assent to the major tenets of christian belief.<sup>16</sup> There are probably many reasons for this phenomenon, and I shall suggest later that there is one which has been overlooked by sociologists and theologians alike. Meanwhile, I want to point out three characteristics of the working classes that are examined by J. Benington in his short study *Culture, Class, and Christian Beliefs*.<sup>17</sup>

The first characteristic is that of a group mentality: young people in particular desire to be in groups, and this is accentuated in the working classes where family and neighbourhood ties are often strong. A traditional picture of the attachment of the working classes to their families is presented in Young and Willmott's classic study of families in Bethnal Green. The mother-daughter attachment is particularly strong, and the mother serves as a focal point for the family; it is through the mother that the family group is cemented together.<sup>18</sup> With the advance of modern industrial society, the nuclear family has become increasingly important, although ties with the extended family are still maintained, albeit to a lesser extent.<sup>19</sup> Traditional working-class attachment to relatives might seem to militate against attachment to others outside the family, but in fact the family itself often acts as a means of promoting such an attachment. There is frequently a strong neighbourhood feeling, each neighbourhood having its own corner shop, its own pub and its own Christmas party. When there is trouble or distress, neighbours will not hesitate to offer their services. This traditional picture, however, is gradually being eroded: when some of the residents of Bethnal Green in Young and Willmott's study moved out to Greenleigh,

they found the old life of the neighbourhood gone; ‘. . . busy sociable life is now a memory. Shopping in the mornings amidst the chromium and tiles of the Parade is a lonely business compared with the familiar faces and sights of the old street market. The evenings are quieter too: “It’s the television most nights and the garden in the summer.”’<sup>20</sup> The deterioration in the ‘neighbourhood group’ means that the family group will become of decisive importance.

The second characteristic of the working classes is a liking for what they can see and handle; their senses (including their emotions) are very real and important to them. Ask a working-class man whether he would rather watch the television or read a book, and he will usually choose to watch the television, because the television meets him at the level of the senses, in this case visual and auditory. McLuhan has labelled this sensory communication ‘cool’, and the more senses a medium ‘uses’ the ‘cooler’ it becomes. The working classes tend to opt for the ‘cooler’ forms of communication because they require less intellectual effort. Because of this, and especially owing to the influence of television, the working classes have become used to being spectators rather than participants; ‘cool’ media lead to non-participating spectators, whilst ‘hot’ media entail, by their very nature, participation.

Conjoined with this second characteristic is the third that Benington singles out: a stress on the concrete as opposed to the abstract. Any facts that are to be meaningful to the working classes must be presented in the realm of the five senses: abstract philosophizing will just not do – for them this is unreal and divorced from real life. R. A. Buchanan has given us a reason for this aspect of working-class life: ‘This culture, conditioned by the perpetual struggle to maintain a livelihood by wage labour in an urban society, has emphasized the concrete, particular and personal aspects of life, and has discounted the stress on the abstract thinking and individualism which are the dominant features of middle class attitudes.’<sup>21</sup> For the working-class man religion is not primarily a metaphysical belief, but a system of morals; there is concern for action, not for theory. Working-class language therefore tends towards the descriptive rather than the analytical.<sup>22</sup>

### **3. The Protestant Liturgy and the Working Classes**

Many reasons have been advanced as to why the working man is absent from our congregations: because our ministers are drawn from the middle classes; because the working classes want the ‘here and now’ solutions of politics rather than the ‘hereafter’ ones of religion; because of the moralism of the churches; because the church has failed to move with the times. These and other explana-

tions have all been offered. Now I would like to propose another reason: the working classes are absent because the main developments in the reformation of the liturgy conflict with the characteristics of the working classes. (This does not supplant, but rather supplements, the other reasons outlined.)

The first characteristic that we noted about the working classes was their group mentality: they enjoy being in a closely knit kin or friendship group. Such groups are essentially small, where everyone knows everyone else and no one has to 'act a part'; in the working-class group one is oneself. In our churches, however, we have seen the large congregation as the ideal, and in the evangelical churches nothing is more sought after than to 'bring in the outsiders'. Success is often seen in terms of filled pews. Large congregations, however, are alien to the working-class man, for he is unable to know everyone in the group, and cannot feel at home because he cannot be himself in the face of so many. I do not propose that we should abandon our churches and go away into little groups – I can think of nothing worse. I do propose that entry into the church for the working classes be not through the church door, but through the front door of a house group. Here, in informal surroundings, the working-class man can feel more at home, and can be himself. The future of the church for the working classes at least, lies not in the large mission meetings but in the Christian home.<sup>23</sup> At the other extreme, protestantism has emphasized the individual: one of the main themes of reformation theology is the justification of the individual christian by grace through faith. Conversion is essentially something that is individualistic. Again, I do not propose that we abandon that which is a fundamental part of the christian faith; nevertheless, if we are to retain the working classes we must apply the conversion of the individual to corporate action, and not leave it in what for the working-class man is the cloud-cuckoo-land of individual pietism. For the working man salvation must be related to life in the family and friendship group.

The second characteristic we noted was the liking for that which is mediated through the senses. The Reformation did away with much of this: images were smashed, paintings on the walls of churches painted over, colourful vestments replaced by drab academic robes, glittering chalices and patens reduced to plain wooden cups and platters, stained-glass windows were often smashed, and much beautiful music was left unsung and unplayed. In England worship according to the Prayer Book must have seemed artistically dull to many in the congregation, for all visual aids had been done away with. At the time of the Reformation Harding criticized Bishop Jewell for the visual paucity of the services and churches: he said that pictures and statues were instructors of ' . . . the simple and

unlearned people, which be utterly ignorant of letters [who] in pictures doo as it were reade and see nolesse than others doo in bookes, the mysteries of christen Religion, the actes and worthy dedes of Christ and of his Sainctes'.<sup>24</sup> When it comes to visual splendour in the liturgy, protestants are far too ready to take the attitude of Judas Iscariot who thought it a waste of time and money to consecrate things of beauty to Christ (John 12:1ff). Liturgy must to *some extent* be the presentation of a spectacle; liturgy is like a play – it is to be watched.<sup>25</sup> Paul himself said that the eucharistic actions had a kerygmatic value (I Cor. 11:26): the pouring of the wine and the breaking of the bread *proclaim* our Lord's death. If the church is to speak to the working classes it must be prepared to speak through the senses; it is no accident that a denomination which does attract the working class to some extent – the Roman church – has much in the way of visual and auditory presentation. The Roman church, indeed, capitalized on this in the counter-reformation, and gave the world the magnificence of Michaelangelo's St. Peter's, the glorious polyphony of Palestrina, the rich sculptures of Bernini. The counter-reformation appealed to the working classes because it ' . . . gave ordinary people a means of satisfying, through ritual, images and symbols, their deepest impulses . . .'.<sup>26</sup> I am not suggesting that we immediately don our sensuous vestments and perform works by Palestrina in our liturgy – that would be to some extent inappropriate in our day and age. Nevertheless, liturgy needs to be beautiful, and the congregation must be able to watch and to listen to parts of our worship of him who is the creator of all magnificence.

The final working-class trait that was pointed out by Benington was the stress on the concrete as opposed to the abstract; this has two main applications to the realm of the liturgy. Firstly it means that the reformers' stress on the written word of God must somehow be translated into terms that the working class can grasp; at present protestantism appeals to the middle classes because they are literary minded – they are prepared to study the written word of God on their own, and are quite content to listen to long expositions on scripture. The Reformation's reliance on the sermon, with its stress on cognitive ability, and its appeal to the verbalized and literary-minded middle classes, is totally antithetical to the working man, used to 'instant tell', 'cool' media. The printed book (and the sermon) presents facts in a reasoned, logical, sequential and linear fashion to which the working man's mind is not accustomed, nor indeed, in many cases, is it able to comprehend. Having already stressed the group mentality of the working classes, it must also be pointed out that this verbal presentation is also a presentation that is directed toward an individual rather than a group; a book is

read by an individual and understood by him as such: a book is not a mode of presenting information to a group. Today's non-literary man must be reached through other means than the written book (be it the Bible or any other book) and the sermon, valuable and essential though both are.<sup>27</sup> Secondly, the stress on the concrete as opposed to the abstract means that the laity must take part in the liturgy in a practical way. Protestant liturgical reforms tried to bring about a church as a true fellowship of believers, tried to construct a liturgy that would be a liturgy of the people, yet their stress on the ministry of the word, the ministry of preaching, led to a minister-centred trend that is totally opposed to congregational participation in the liturgy. The congregation, if the church is to appeal to the working man, must participate fully in the liturgy, and participate actively; I am thinking of such liturgical actions as distributing the bread and the wine, kneeling for prayer, giving the handshake of peace, bringing up the offertory and the bread and wine, leading the prayers, reading the scriptures. At present, in many churches where the reformation theology is strongest, action in the liturgy, what little action there is, is left to the select few; such a practice hardly leads to a true worshipping fellowship. In fact, it would seem that the protestant tradition has always been afraid of liturgical action lest it be a mask of hypocrisy; 'To be sure, the attitude, the gesture, the movement can be devoid of content (just as doctrine can be devoid of faith); but without the attitude, the gesture, the movement, Church worship also risks becoming emptied of its content, for it has no longer a vessel to contain it, or has one that belies the content . . . this concord and harmony between liturgical feeling (faith, repentance, thanksgiving, supplication and adoration) and the kinetic expression of that feeling is not necessarily a source of hypocrisy (although hypocrisy may make use of these kinetic expressions), it is rather a liturgical necessity and it is time that we learnt this truth afresh.'<sup>28</sup> Indeed, many reformers regarded the liturgy as purely something that was said, both by the minister and the congregation; action of any kind was seen as valueless. Such a verbal conception of the liturgy would fit in with the verbalistic traits of protestantism that we have already noted above. Against this idea, however, Dix has reminded us that in the early church the liturgy was something that was done as well as something that was said.<sup>29</sup> If we are to adopt liturgical actions then, would it help to reconsider the liturgical actions of the Oxford Movement – bowing, crossing oneself, and so on? Newman said: 'I considered . . . that the Anglican Church must have a ceremonial, a ritual, a fulness of doctrine and devotion, which it had not at present, if it were to compete with the Roman Church with any prospect of success.'<sup>30</sup> Such ritual, however, is nevertheless alien to the working man: it is

based on a too pietistic, individualistic concept of religion to which, we have already concluded, he is unsuited.<sup>31</sup>

My thesis is then, that certain trends in the liturgy at the time of the Reformation have helped to alienate the working classes from our churches: the abolition of visual and auditory splendour, the stress on the preaching of the biblical word, the importance of abstract thinking in protestant theology, the notion of the large congregation, the minister-centredness of many reformed churches which has led to the exclusion of the laity from true participation, the lack of action in the liturgy.<sup>32</sup> I am not saying that the Reformation was a bad thing – I do not believe it was: what I am saying is that we do need to recover certain liturgical aspects which were present in pre-reformation times and to which protestants may have sometimes over-reacted. We have already seen that some of the reformation of the liturgy, especially in the field of visual splendour, was brought about not by the reformers themselves but by their more extreme followers. Many aspects of the liturgy that were present from the days of the early church, but corrupted in the times before the Reformation, were disposed of *in toto* by over-zealous reformers; in so doing they have helped to alienate the working classes from the churches, and from christianity. In seeking to create a liturgy that can involve visual and auditory beauty, a liturgy that can be easily understood, and one which invites the full participation of the laity, it would seem that the Series Three Communion Service of the Church of England is an admirable step in the right direction.<sup>33</sup>

#### NOTES

1. I am indebted to Miss J. Rose of St. George's Church, Leeds, and Mr. R. T. Beckwith of Latimer House, Oxford, for their help in the preparation of this paper.
2. N. Lash, *His Presence in the World* (Sheed and Ward, London and Sydney, 1968), p. 98.
3. Quoted in H. Chadwick, *The Early Church* (Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1967), p. 263.
4. Cf. J. H. Srawley, *The Early History of the Liturgy* (C.U.P., London, 1949), pp. 68-9.
5. Cf., e.g., J. Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Bk. I, ch. 11.
6. Quoted in H. Davies, *Worship and Theology in England: from Cranmer to Hooker, 1534-1603* (Princeton Univ. Press, Princeton, 1970), p. 354.
7. *Ibid.* p. 378.
8. Y. Brilioth, *Eucharistic Faith and Practice, Evangelical and Catholic* (S.P.C.K., London, 1930), p. 124.
9. S. Tugwell makes the interesting observation that there is in people a need at times to pray in an unknown language; this may be done by the use of the gift of tongues, but it may also be effected through the use of a Latin liturgy. Cf. S. Tugwell, *Did You Receive the Spirit?* (D.L.T., London, 1972), p. 124.
10. Quoted in H. Davies, *op. cit.* p. 36.

11. O. Chadwick, *The Reformation* (Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1968), p. 422.
12. H. Davies, op. cit. p. 64.
13. Quoted in Y. Brilioth, op. cit. p. 116.
14. J. Calvin, op. cit. Bk. III, ch. 20, xxxiii.
15. All the previous figures are taken from D. Martin, *A Sociology of English Religion* (Heinemann, London, 1967), p. 46. For an important recent Scottish survey producing the same conclusions cf. P. L. Sissons, *The Social Significance of Church Membership in the Burgh of Falkirk* (The Church of Scotland, Edinburgh, 1972).
16. Cf. E. R. Wickham, *Church and People in an Industrial City* (Lutterworth, London, 1957), p. 111; R. Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy* (Chatto and Windus, London, 1957), pp. 94-7.
17. J. Benington, *Culture, Class, and Christian Beliefs* (Scripture Union, London, 1973).
18. M. Young and P. Willmott, *Family and Kinship in East London* (Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1962); cf. espec. chaps. 3 and 6.
19. Cf. T. Parsons, 'The Family in Urban Industrial America, 1', and B. N. Adams, 'The Social Significance of Kinship, 2', in M. Anderson (ed.), *Sociology of the Family* (Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1971).
20. M. Young and P. Willmott, op. cit. p. 132.
21. R. A. Buchanan, 'Religion and the Working Classes', *Theology*, LXI (1958), p. 186.
22. The concrete centred thinking of the working classes has led to a different language system from that of the middle classes which tends to be more abstract. This has been fully worked out by Prof. B. Bernstein; for a useful summary cf. his paper, 'Education Cannot Compensate for Society', in D. Rubenstein and C. Stoneman (eds.), *Education for Democracy* (Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1972).
23. This has been pointed out by, e.g., G. Reid, *The Gagging of God* (Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1969), p. 111. However, it must be remembered that an initial contact *outside* the home may be necessary for the working classes, as the idea of an invitation into the home is a middle-class concept. The working classes tend to meet in the street, in the pub, in the shop or in the club, rather than in the home which is a place for the family alone.
24. Quoted in H. Davies, op. cit. p. 352f.
25. Cf. F. H. Brabant in W. Lowther Clarke (ed.), *Liturgy and Worship* (S.P.C.K., London, 1964), p. 29ff; also D. L. Frost, *The Language of Series Three* (Grove Books, Bramcote, 1973), pp. 28-9.
26. K. Clark, *Civilisation* (John Murray/B.B.C., London, 1969), p. 115.
27. For a full treatment of this topic, cf. G. Reid, op. cit.; cf. also M. Botting, *Evangelistic Services: Their Value and Limitations* (Grove Books, Bramcote, 1973), esp. pp. 12-16.
28. J.-J. von Allmen, *Worship: Its Theology and Practice* (Lutterworth, London, 1965), p. 94.
29. G. Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (Dacre/A. & C. Black, London, 1945), p. 12ff.
30. J. H. Newman, *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* (O.U.P., London, 1964), p. 17.
31. An interesting point raised by Dix comes to mind here: the stress on the verbal and the abstract, both themselves individualistic concepts, was, as we have noted, strong in reformation theology. Such individualism (and hence subjectivism to some extent) meant that any notion of corporate worship, which the reformers tried to encourage, had to fall to the ground, because worship in this subjective atmosphere is worship by a number of private individuals and not worship by a corporate body. Such an emphasis also meant that worship was non-eucharistic, for eucharistic worship is both active and objective, and

not subjective and individualistic; the reformers, therefore, had as little place for the eucharist as did medieval subjective piety. I think that Dix has overstressed his point, but there is some truth in this analysis. (Cf. G. Dix, *op. cit.* pp. 598-612.)

32. It might be objected to this whole thesis that the alienation of the working classes from the church dates only from the Industrial Revolution, and that it did not show itself in a marked way until the middle of the nineteenth century: the reformation, however, occurred three hundred years before. I do not deny that the working classes only left the church at the time of the Revolution, but I would hold that the seeds of alienation had been planted to some extent by certain factors in the reformation. In similar fashion the figures and events of the sixteenth century were not the sole cause of the reformation; the events of the preceding centuries lent their weight to the reformation movement.
33. For an excellent appraisal of Series Three, cf. D. L. Frost, *op. cit.*.

DAVID G. KIBBLE, Leeds