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Michael P. Gwaltney  
*University of Richmond*

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William Courtenay's England:  
An Aristocratic Bishop in  
the Fourteenth Century

by

Michael P. Gwaltney

Honors Thesis

in

Department of History

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Advisor: Dr. John Rilling

Despite religious controversy that threatened the church and endangered the state, William Courtenay, as an aristocratic bishop, succeeded in preserving the traditional structure of the medieval English Church. During the second half of the fourteenth century, England sustained reversals abroad in the renewed war with France. The military setbacks aggravated the domestic unrest, which existed under the uncertain leadership of senile Edward III and then young Richard II. Church and state in medieval society were so closely interwoven by means of a cohesive religion<sup>1</sup> that "any substantial alteration of the church system could have led to a revolution of a type for which the age was not prepared,"<sup>2</sup> The prospect of heavy and sustained expenses from the war effort caused the crown and parliament to look to the wealth and endowments of the church as a source of revenue.

However, repeated financial demands from the papacy provoked local clerical resistance to lay taxation. This angered and alarmed leading government officials, such as John of Gaunt. For clerical assistance in implementing his plans for dealing with the church, Gaunt turned to John Wyclif, a leading Oxford philosopher and theologian. Instead of rendering fundamental advice, Wyclif attempted to translate previously academic thinking in the matter of dominion into a question of disendowment of ecclesiastical riches. Courtenay was the first English prelate to recognize that Wyclif's divisive and dissentious ideology on the papacy and the priesthood would damage not only the church, but also the whole of society. A major social upheaval among the peasants in 1381 reenforced

2

Courtenay's aggressive denouncement of Wyclif's theories. Then the secular government joined the ecclesiastical hierarchy to remove Wycliffism from its Oxford stronghold. Thereby, in his "simple, sound, and effective"<sup>3</sup> way, Courtenay "proved to be the most valiant champion of the church in England during the last quarter of the fourteenth century."<sup>4</sup>

Earlier in the first half of the fourteenth century, events surrounding the demise of Edward II, such as the plot to kill him and the financial chaos of the country, had impaired the prestige of the crown. Edward II had "lowered the reputation of his country abroad and at home by bringing the monarchy into the most serious crisis that had faced it since 1066." The aftermath of his reign reached far beyond his immediate period. "It opened the way for dynamic conflict and the decline of the medieval monarchy."<sup>5</sup>

is this pertinent?

Edward III's efforts to prevent a repetition of the disasters that had crippled his father would be later stalemated by his senility and the war losses.

Overcoming the control of Isabella and Roger Mortimer, the young king, ruling with the aid of a council of regency, planned warfare abroad against France. "The lure of adventure and the hope of gain"... "drew Edward and his subjects into war."<sup>6</sup> Early military successes enhanced his popularity at home. Later, the fortunes of England began to deteriorate.<sup>7</sup> According to George M. Trevelyan, the naval alliance of France with the ruler of Castile impaired England's sea power, as well as her influence with other countries, the prosperity of her commerce, and the strength of her military hold over France. With the renewal of fighting, revenues from war gains decreased, and expenses from war losses increased.<sup>8</sup>

Despite minor administrative reforms at home to balance the nation's finances<sup>9</sup> and grants from the commons, war expenses drained the crown of money. Edward III's appeals to the rich nobles placed a restraint on the royal power because of the concessions they demanded in return for funds. At this time, clerical ministers controlled the greater offices of state, for example William Wykeham as chancellor and Thomas Brantingham as treasurer from 1363 to 1371.<sup>10</sup> The powers of the ecclesiastical ministers ranged from "parliamentary control of taxation to the domination of magnates in Edward's councils."<sup>11</sup> When the Black Prince returned mortally ill from the campaign in Castille, Gaunt planned to have his colleagues assume the positions of leadership held by the ecclesiastics.

*figures here*

Since the king's mental incapacity progressed insidiously and the law of monarchical government demanded that the king should rule, administrative chaos and confusion prevailed during the last years of Edward's reign. Lay politicians, under the leadership of Gaunt, sought to control the royal council, the center of royal power. Alleging mismanagement of the French war because of incompetent government, a group of politically active barons moved in the parliament of 1371 to replace all of the existing councillors with lay officials.<sup>12</sup> In Trevelyan's view, the takeover marked "the commencement of those political movements and party combinations which continued for the next fifteen years."<sup>13</sup> Both L. J. Daly and Bryce Lyon consider this assumption of leadership as more of a political ploy to gain control than a manifestation of any anticlerical feeling or desire to reform.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, K. B. McFarlane states that both the lords and the commons asked for the replacement of the clerics by laymen more in touch with the country's military needs.<sup>15</sup>

*A*  
*who were*  
*better informed*

During this time, William Courtenay, son of the earl of Devon and of the granddaughter of Edward I, began his career in 1367 with his election as chancellor of the University of Oxford. A graduate of Oxford in law, he was ordained to the priesthood in 1367. Later, as "Gaunt's persistent antagonist and as the prelate chiefly instrumental in the prosecution of John Wyclif,"<sup>16</sup> Courtenay entered politico-ecclesiastical affairs. With the close intermingling of church matters and state interests, the resulting common concern meant that no bishop could be only an ecclesiastic. Courtenay assumed an influential role in politics as an aristocratic bishop, a member of a new breed that bore little resemblance to the civil servants usually appointed to bishoprics as a reward for loyal service. Closely aligned with the crown, an aristocratic bishop agreed to use his family connections or social status to aid a faltering royal administration or to promote politically ambitious aristocrats.<sup>17</sup> In his career, Courtenay progressed rapidly from chancellor to Bishop of Hereford, next of London, and then to Archbishop of Canterbury.

Appointed to important secular posts, in addition to prominent church positions, because of their training, education, and proven reliability,<sup>18</sup> bishops like Wykeham and Courtenay organized the diplomatic, administrative, and financial affairs of the state. Additionally, they served as lords in parliament and frequently participated in disputes over judicial competence in criminal charges and jurisdiction in civil cases. Although John Stacey admits that the aristocratic bishop did his work more efficiently than anyone else could, all too often he became the eminent civil servant rather than the pastor of his people.<sup>19</sup> On the contrary, W. A. Pantin argues that "the state sought for and found its most competent ministers among the bishops and clergy." Such exploitation of the church "was part of a price paid for a noble conception of Christian society in which, church and state were

interwoven and identified."<sup>20</sup>

~~Since~~ <sup>Became</sup> the church in England remained a part of the Catholic Church during the fourteenth century, the English clergy answered to both the pope and the king.<sup>21</sup> In the first half of the century, papal centralization and jurisdiction reached their height in appeals to the pope as the universal judge who exercised greater influence than local episcopal authority.<sup>22</sup> Around the middle of the century, with the growth of English as the national language, nationalism flourished in England. The victories of Crécy, Calais, and Poitiers stirred the patriotism of the English people. All classes began to feel resentment at the interference of the pope in local ecclesiastical affairs. Gradually, much of the jurisdiction from church courts with their loyalty to Rome was transferred to the courts of the crown. During the Hundred Years War, antipapal feelings reached new heights because of the supposed favoritism shown by the Avignonese papacy to the French.<sup>23</sup>

Accordingly, most Englishmen thought that their revenues, which the pope and papal nominees received, benefited only England's enemies. Although protesting to the people the papal provisions, Edward III in reality negotiated with the pope to obtain his share of the booty.<sup>24</sup> Nevertheless, the laity, especially those whose ancestors had endowed the English benefices, would not tolerate the support of absentee papal nominees. Meanwhile, the crown's expenses from a protracted war and the papacy's expenses from his residence in Avignon induced both the king and the pope to look to the wealth and patronage of the English Church as a source of revenue.<sup>25</sup>

In response to the perceived exploitation of benefices and complaints of abuses attributed to papal policy, parliament had

passed the first Statutes of Provisors and Praemunire (1351 and 1353). In so doing, parliament permitted penalties against papal provisors and blocked appeals to the papal curia of matters over which the king's courts had jurisdiction.<sup>26</sup> Edward III used these statutes to bargain and compromise with the pope. "For both Edward III and Richard II, the friendship and co-operation of the pope was essential to the promotion of their own schemes, political as well as ecclesiastical."<sup>27</sup> Although bishops of the stature of Courtenay were rare, by the application of high standards, the recipients of benefices usually proved to be natives of good birth and education.<sup>28</sup> Pantin explains as follows:

...on the whole the episcopate of the fourteenth century, while it did not consist simply of corrupt 'Caesarian prelates', as it has so often been misrepresented, did suffer somewhat from the prevailing system of exploitation, patronage, and lay control.<sup>29</sup>

In a reaction to the antipapal feeling in England, in 1365 the pope decided to show the "feudal submission" of England by requesting the unpaid papal rent as arranged by King John. In response, the lords, including the prelates in parliament, denied that anyone could put the realm in such subjection without the assent of the people.<sup>30</sup> In 1369 parliament requested from the clergy a grant which the prelates refused without consent by convocation. Although eventually the bishops joined crown and parliament in urging payment,<sup>31</sup> the slowness of the agreement angered the laity, who reacted in the parliament of 1371.<sup>32</sup>

In other matters, with the Black Prince in failing health and Richard (II) still a child, John of Gaunt became the king's deputy. Conventional in everything, including his religious beliefs, Gaunt had achieved only transient triumphs as a soldier and minor victories as a diplomat. Despite H. B. Workman's claim that Gaunt intended



"to secure at home what he deemed best for the nation, provided that his own interests were not affected,"<sup>33</sup> McFarlane credits him with "unshakeable loyalty to his father, his elder brother, his nephew, and John Wyclif." Desiring only an "advantageous peace" and concerning himself mainly with the conduct of the war, Gaunt did not use his executive power until the mounting costs of the war caused a head-on quarrel with the church over the issue of money.<sup>34</sup>

Described by Sydney Armitage-Smith as being on the best of terms with the regular clergy, he maintained close ties with the Carmelite friars. Gaunt also subsidized his many employees through the use of ecclesiastical patronage. He promoted the power of excommunication as a political tool of the first importance and demanded that the church use it for mundane purposes. As a "man of expedients... not of principles," he held average religious views which he devoutly practiced. Although considered by his contemporaries ~~as~~<sup>to be</sup> anticlerical, he wanted to humble only a few aristocratic bishops, like Wykeham and Courtenay, for personal rather than political reasons.<sup>35</sup>

In the main, Gaunt willingly accepted the support of any person who might serve his ends. His clique included unsavory persons, such as the old king's mistress and the corrupt Richard Lyons.<sup>36</sup> Anthony Steel insists that Gaunt's birth, wealth, and fame made him the logical leader at court and that his early political inexperience accounted for his alliances.<sup>37</sup> Dahmus terms him a "politician of considerable merit" who never deliberately planned any major political objectives.<sup>38</sup> Despite Workman's statement that Gaunt led a "system of official robbery,"<sup>39</sup> no proof ever existed of his "having chartered a basely ambitious or sinister course."<sup>40</sup> Gaunt proved most generous toward established religion.

He is constantly giving gifts, not only the small marks of favour like timber and vinison from his forests, but gifts of land, solid endowments, manors, and the advowsons of churches and chapels.<sup>41</sup>

~~So~~ the parliament in 1371 not only entrusted the government to lay ministers as requested by Gaunt,<sup>42</sup> but also shifted one half of the cost of the war efforts to the church. In convocation, anti-clericalism arose for the time among the ecclesiastics when two Austin friars advocated for the church a return to the poverty of the apostles.<sup>43</sup> The prelates then passed the responsibility for payment to formerly exempt small parishes. Trevelyan sees in these actions "the hopes of the nation dampened."<sup>44</sup>

With Gaunt nominally in control of England, almost immediately the country discovered that the existing nine thousand parishes could not pay for the tax burden and that part of the cost would be transferred back to the villages. Elsewhere, the battle of Rochelle underscored England's inferiority in maritime power. Corruption in the civil service resulted from the malpractices of the nobles. Despair settled over England.<sup>45</sup>

Continuing on a course of "military disaster and economic exhaustion," England suffered from the self-serving lay officials.<sup>46</sup> At Avignon the papacy demanded in 1372 a "charitable subsidy," for which negotiations would last until 1377. When Gregory XI asked the prelates in 1372 to pay a tax for his wars in Italy, the laity intervened to stop payment.<sup>47</sup> Not willing themselves to make the necessary financial sacrifices for England's war, the aristocracy planned to force the church to pay.<sup>48</sup>

Therefore, in 1373 parliament granted further military aid and imposed part of the burden on the clergy, who reacted in convocation. Having heard that Gregory XI planned to revive routinely

the policy of taxing the clergy, William Courtenay headed the discontent. He arose and stated that neither he nor the clergy of his diocese would pay any tax until the king corrected certain areas of dissatisfaction. At a time when convocation tended to be a machine for meekly meeting the king's requirements, Courtenay precipitated political action by courageously protesting against "clerical taxation without redress of grievances."<sup>49</sup>

Not daring to openly oppose the government's subsidy, he accepted the crown's promise to seek concessions from the pope in the matter of the bishops' obligations. Some moderation of the pope's requirements was forthcoming with the negotiations at Bruges in 1374 and 1375.<sup>50</sup>

At Bruges papal envoys met with the king's representatives in 1374 and 1375 to resolve the prelates' complaints that they could not pay both royal and papal taxation. [Included as a royal representative only in 1374 was John Wyclif in the position of a diplomatic negotiator.]<sup>51</sup> The first conference ended without any notable agreements, and in 1375 the pope satisfied only the more pressing English claims because the crown was not prepared to break with tradition and defy him.<sup>51</sup>

Even though Wyclif achieved no distinction at Bruges, with his continuing lectures on theology at Oxford, he gathered ambitious young scholars about him. In Latin he wrote on the scholastic theory of dominion which would lead to his proposals for the disendowment of the church.<sup>52</sup> His purely academic philosophy, kept well within the restraints of orthodoxy acceptable in the free discussions of the schools.<sup>53</sup> Wyclif derived his concepts from his previous exposure to the works of earlier and contemporary scholars, philosophers, and theologians. For example, he directly appropriated many of the thoughts of Giles of Rome in his development of dominion as the state of being worthy

of possessing, of having, or of using temporal things.<sup>54</sup> Gregory XI mentioned Wyclif's obvious assimilation of the teachings of Marsilius of Padua, who regarded the church as a department of the state.<sup>55</sup>

Thus, early in his career at Oxford, Wyclif used his scholastically trained mind to provoke argumentative responses from his fellow students and other members of the academic community. In so doing, Wyclif rejected "rigid mechanical uniformity" in keeping with other staff members at Oxford.

There was never a time when some angel or demon was not stepping down into the pool of scholasticism and troubling its waters. In consequence the record of scholasticism is the record of all sorts of minor heretics, for differences of thought soon become differences in belief. But as a rule these minor heretics were unreal; their beliefs were mere matters of argument....<sup>56</sup>

However, Wyclif decisively abandoned the permissiveness of the lecture rooms and schools when he later published his views on the policy of the church and its rights to endowment in works like De dominio divino. He not only invited ecclesiastical censure, but he also promoted "social dislocation."<sup>57</sup>

Soon after his return from Bruges, Wyclif responded to the crown's request for the best means of forcing the clergy to submit to taxation. He was asked to reply to the clerical argument against the appropriation of the church's property for secular use because its authority was superior to that wielded by the state.<sup>58</sup> In this matter, Wyclif came into direct conflict with Courtenay, now the bishop of London. "Courtenay would not be remembered were it not that his name is associated with that of Wyclif."<sup>59</sup>

During this period the ~~government~~ <sup>English gov't</sup> of England rested in the hands of a council in whose membership lay interests predominated. <sup>Early in</sup> 1376 the Good Parliament met with the intention of correcting the many misdeeds of the king's advisers, such as the stealing of royal

income. With Peter de la Mare as speaker of the commons, parliament established, with its first act of impeachment, that royal ministers were also responsible to parliament.<sup>60</sup> The parliament forced the crown to dismiss a number of dishonest officials, like Richard Lyons and William Latimer, to banish the king's mistress, and to appoint an administrative council which would assist the crown in running the government.<sup>61</sup> Courtenay, as bishop of London, pledged to support the commons, an act which brought him into open conflict with Gaunt. The death of the Black Prince in June weakened parliament, which then <sup>was</sup> dissolved.

In the aftermath of the Good Parliament, Gaunt emerged as a powerful manipulator of public affairs. ~~Gaunt~~ <sup>he</sup> influenced Edward to cancel the previous parliamentary acts, including the orders affecting the corrupt associates and Alice Perrers. Next, ~~he~~ <sup>he</sup> persuaded the royal council to dissolve the newly formed administrative council.<sup>62</sup> As ~~Gaunt~~ <sup>he</sup> assumed more of the responsibility for directing the work of the government, ~~he~~ <sup>he</sup> recognized the need for additional clerical assistance. Therefore, Gaunt summoned Wyclif to come to Westminster from Oxford.

At Oxford Wyclif had been working on his writings about dominion and preparing them for publication.

Wyclif's doctrine of dominion founded on grace, c. 1376

[Bk. I, ch. I] I intend for the argument to demonstrate two truths which I shall use as principles for the argument. First, that no one who is in mortal sin has a simple right to the gift of God; secondly, that anyone who is in a state of saving grace not only has the right but in actual fact has all the possessions of God.

...anyone who is in a state of mortal sin lacks a righteous dominion in relation to God; therefore he cannot have a righteous lordship.

...as kings use civil laws for their government, so

spiritual rulers use the law of the Gospel.

...possession is the immediate effect or fruit of lordship, coming between the lordship of a thing and the use of it... whence it follows that possession is distinguished from lordship.<sup>63</sup>

In academic circles awareness had grown that Wyclif in his writings had announced the concept that when the institutional church, in the person of its representatives, falls from grace, <sup>then</sup> the secular power has the right and duty to disendow it.<sup>64</sup> Dahmus denies that any clear evidence exists that Gaunt summoned Wyclif for the purpose of implementing his theories to "secularize church property" or to drive any prelates out of the government.<sup>65</sup> Only seeking Wyclif's help as a talented scholar, Gaunt asked him to help state the case against Wykeham, who was being charged with corruption and mismanagement during his service in 1371. Although Courtenay appeared in Wykeham's defense, Gaunt's assembled council found the bishop of Winchester guilty of all charges.<sup>66</sup>

After the publication of Wyclif's theories, the laity welcomed them as a justification for parliament's goal of transferring the bulk of the tax burden to the ecclesiastics. The nobility accepted the propositions because it appeared that they would apply only to the church since the state did not claim to be a divine society.<sup>67</sup> Later in 1377 or 1378, when the crown asked Wyclif's opinion on the necessity of sending the pope his demanded payments at a time when the money was critically needed for defense, Wyclif espoused a more liberal interpretation of his ideas on dominion. Claiming that England sent money to the pope only for charity and that the papacy forfeited any right to the money because of the papacy's corruption,<sup>68</sup> he recommended that England keep the money. Additionally, he stated that if the church in sin insisted on serving God and on holding the wealth

of the world, the state should step in and confiscate the church's worldly possessions.<sup>69</sup> No documentary evidence exists of the government's actually acting on Wyclif's suggestions. It appears, according to Dahmus, that the king and royal council silenced him at this time.<sup>70</sup>

In the parliament of 1377 Gaunt worked to ensure the granting of money for war expenses.<sup>71</sup> Convocation turned into open revolt. Courtenay secured the attendance of Wykeham, who had been forbidden to come within twenty miles of the court. Wyclif's thesis that one in mortal sin forfeited dominion placed the bishops in a position of defending the church against "wholesale confiscation."<sup>72</sup> In the end convocation consented to heavy taxation, but

...it was impossible for the bishops and clergy of all of England, assembled in the city for convocation, to allow their authority to be defied with such publicity....<sup>73</sup>

According to Knowles, William Courtenay summoned Wyclif to St. Paul's Cathedral in London on February 19, 1377, to answer the charge of "heresy."<sup>74</sup> Although Wyclif had weathered previous attacks, such as those by the scholastic disputants and by the possessioners, those attacks had been oral and at Oxford.<sup>75</sup> Wyclif entered St. Paul's with Gaunt, Henry Percy, and four friars. Courtenay directed the prosecution. Almost immediately, the personal animosities between Gaunt and Courtenay surfaced. An altercation ensued and ended in confusion. Already incensed over proposed changes in parliament regarding the liberties of London, the citizens outside threatened to riot.<sup>76</sup> Without censuring Wyclif, the prelates left St. Paul's.<sup>77</sup> Later the Londoners besieged Savoy, Gaunt's home. In Cheapside they then hung up his arms reversed like those of a traitor.<sup>78</sup> Courtenay intervened to save Gaunt from the crowd.<sup>79</sup>

In June 1377 Edward III died. Richard thereafter revealed his good intentions to London and prepared for his coronation. The war situation deteriorated as the French on June 29 sacked Rye and attacked Winchelsea.<sup>80</sup> Also in 1377 Wyclif restated his case against the political power of the church and against ecclesiastical wealth. He also questioned the efficacy of papal excommunication.<sup>81</sup>

In early 1377 Pope Gregory XI learned of Wyclif's theories and became alarmed. After ~~an~~ <sup>ed</sup> evaluation ~~of~~ about fifty of Wyclif's conclusions ~~by~~ <sup>of</sup> a committee of cardinals, the pope selected eighteen as heretical.<sup>82</sup> The exact identity of the pope's informer never <sup>Not clear</sup> became known.<sup>83</sup> With no knowledge of the futile attempt to discipline Wyclif at St. Paul's, the pope issued five papal bulls in his plan to stop Wyclif. To Courtenay and Archbishop Sudbury Gregory wrote that

...he had heard with much concern on the information of several persons very worthy of credence that John Wyclif rector of Luttelworth professor of divinity-would that he were not a master of errors!-had rashly proceeded to such detestable degree of madness, as not to be afraid to assert, dogmatize, and publicly to preach propositions erroneous and false, and that threaten to weaken and overthrow the status of the whole church.<sup>84</sup>

Drawing his list of offensive propositions from Wyclif's Doctrine of Dominion, (De civili dominio), the pope concerned himself over more than just the matters of the wealth and political authority of the church. Even though Wyclif had not yet gone beyond ~~the~~ attacking ~~at~~ corrupt church practices, soon he would question the theological basis of the abused practices. From depreciation of an unworthy priesthood, Wyclif would move against the institution itself. The pope protested that the priest derived his jurisdiction from the office, and not from the personal qualities of the individual who filled the office. If only God could pronounce absolution on the sins of the contrite man, the pope would lose the power to excommunicate,



and he would cease to have a function.<sup>85</sup>

More important than the immediate consequences, the pope feared most the catastrophic long term effects. For example, the barons would have the right to seize the wealth of any church official whom the barons deemed unworthy. Wyclif also had speculated that Christ and the early apostles had taught that the clergy as Christians <sup>was</sup> ~~were~~ <sup>subject</sup> to temporal powers and that they should not wield power of any kind over the secular authorities. In the papal bulls sent to Courtenay and Sudbury, the pope directed them to take steps to indicate to the English government the danger of the views being developed in its midst. The condemned conclusions were not only theologically erroneous, but, if properly understood, threatened to destroy the whole state.<sup>86</sup> Particular attention was drawn to the following:

God cannot give civil dominion to man for himself and his heirs, in perpetuity.

Charters of human invention concerning perpetual civil inheritance are impossible.<sup>87</sup>

As mentioned in the papal bull, the laity could easily read into Wyclif's philosophy the grounds for a program of devastating revolution. If property could be removed from a delinquent church in time of need, the same argument equally could be applied to private owners.<sup>88</sup> The pope instructed the bishops to convince the secular authorities that Wyclif's

conclusions are not only erroneous with respect to the faith; but that they infer an utter destruction of all polity and government.<sup>89</sup>

Terming Wyclif's opinions "detestable madness,"<sup>90</sup> the pope directed the bishops also to investigate privately the validity of the charges. If found guilty, Wyclif was to be seized and held in prison. Afraid of reviving antipapal sentiments in England and

aware of Wyclif's service to the crown, Gregory suggested to Edward that the prelates would need royal assistance in the suppression of Wyclif's dangerous doctrines. The bishops could do nothing without the king's help because of the "helplessness of the church against heretics."<sup>91</sup> It appeared that Edward would have cooperated because the government did order Wyclif to be silent on the question of withholding money from the pope. Edward's death in June changed the entire political situation and slowed the response of the bishops to the pope's bulls.<sup>92</sup>

The pope had also addressed a bull to the chancellor at the University of Oxford that directed him to inhibit Wyclif's teachings, to have the learned scholars review Wyclif's works, and to arrest Wyclif.<sup>93</sup> Resisting the pope because of the fear of the loss of Oxford's "preeminence" in matters of theology, the officials decided to have Wyclif "keep himself in the Black Hall."<sup>94</sup> The secular authorities rejected even the informal confinement of an English subject at the direction of the pope and arrested the vice chancellor. After reviewing the eighteen propositions for heresy, the masters decided that "while the propositions sounded poorly to the ear, they were orthodox."<sup>95</sup>

In England during the political crisis that followed Edward's death, Richard was a minor and would have no voice of his own before 1381. Since the summer of 1376 Gaunt had "had everything under his own control" and was de facto regent.<sup>96</sup> ~~Since~~ <sup>Because</sup> Richard did not qualify to be head of state, serving in his place in the government was the "continual council," so-called because it had been set up by parliament to remain always in session and to pass upon all important business of state. According to N. B. Lewis, it functioned as the "virtual

governing body of the kingdom" until its disappearance in December 1379. Courtenay served on the original council and kept his position until October 1378. However, Gaunt, though not a member, took the lead and handicapped the members. The composition of the continual council consisted of diverse groups of the hierarchy and of the upper and lower nobility. Most represented rival political factions with self interests. These factions conspired to produce the confusion and political incompetence characteristic of the early years of Richard's minority.<sup>97</sup> As for parliament, it was "irresistible while sitting, but "helpless after it had broken up."<sup>98</sup>

In the midst of the political disorganization, the actual trial of Wyclif, as requested by the pope, did not take place until early 1378 at Lambeth. Londoners intruded to express their support of Wyclif. Sir Lewis Clifford, an emissary from the queen mother, "forbade" Courtenay and the other prelates to pass judgment against Wyclif. The trial lost momentum, and the church used the report of the Oxford theologians to save gracefully its prestige. Wyclif modified his position on several of the propositions so that they would be more in line with the "scripture and the writings of the church fathers." As a result, the bishops dismissed Wyclif with instructions "that he was not to discuss such propositions any longer in the schools or in sermons, for fear of scandalizing the laity...."<sup>99</sup>

However, Wyclif's views on issues, like papal excommunication and ecclesiastical wealth, had attracted the attention of the public with a resulting disruption of routine religious practices. The polarization of England produced a fear of civil war among the secular authorities. Consequently, the government imposed an injunction on even Wyclif's opponents to calm the waters and to silence any hint of controversy

for the good of the country.<sup>100</sup> Nevertheless, Wyclif did serve the government one last time at Gloucester in the question of the right to sanctuary.

In the Haulay-Shakyl affair, which concerned the status of sanctuary in England, Wyclid prepared a defense for Gaunt. Escaping from imprisonment for refusal to turn over a Spanish hostage to Gaunt and the government, Robert Haulay and John Shakyl sought sanctuary in Westminister Abbey. The crown's efforts to capture the two men resulted in a bloody and violent desecration of the abbey. Courtenay effectively incriminated Gaunt as one of the offenders by printing specifically that Gaunt had had no part in the incident. As a consequence, the ordinary people held Gaunt responsible.<sup>101</sup> The chronicler in The Anonimalle Chronicle stated that the final opinion of Wyclif in the matter was that

*not clear  
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the king and his council could safely and with a good conscience drag esquires out of holy church for debt or for treason, and that even God could not dispense for debt. ...therefore the king and his council were greatly heartened....<sup>102</sup>

Thus, Wyclif's views cleared Gaunt of any personal responsibility for the outrage. Thereafter, Courtenay no longer faced Gaunt as an opponent in any matter concerning either the church or the state.<sup>103</sup>

During the intervening years of 1378 to 1381, government mismanagement, fiscal irresponsibility, and military failures predominated. The continuing council lost its authority with the inclusion of incompetent members. Extravagant spending at home emptied the national coffers. The landed classes, the normal tax payers, tired of voting tax increases for an ineffective government and a war that produced no victories. On three occasions the commons voted poll taxes. In 1380 the poll tax hit the poorest the hardest.

Wide spread resistance developed into revolt.<sup>104</sup>

TRANSITION  
needed  
we too should

In the late seventies the clergy regained the prominence and control that they had enjoyed in 1371. For example, the treasurer from 1377 to 1381 was a bishop, and the chancery was under the direction of a bishop for about two years. With the election of Pope Urban and with the ensuing Great Schism, England supported the Roman papacy with the eradication of all antipapal sentiment in court circles. No longer needed to advise the government in theological matters, Wyclif reacted to the schism by denying the central theological doctrines of the church. He turned to the scriptures as a source of authority, contemplated the translation of the Bible into the English language, and encouraged the establishment of an order of poor preachers to take biblical truths to the people.<sup>105</sup>

Wyclif began to air his views on transubstantiation at Oxford around 1380. Among his statements, he suggested that

...if a friar blesses a cask in the cellar he turn it into accidents without substance....

Furthermore, the eucharist was a "new heresie" which failed to prove that the bread was really Christ's body, but instead showed the bread to be an "accident withouten suggestt or noght," a denial of "holy writt."<sup>106</sup> To this the friars, Wyclif's strongest supporters, reacted with a denial of Wyclif's novel ideas. Overall, Margaret Aston believes that Wyclif's "disrespect for the efficacy of the eucharist tended to destroy respect for all law and authority, and thereby to undermine the unity of the state."<sup>107</sup>

Upon learning of Wyclif's views on the eucharist, the chancellor of the university, William Barton, with the leading doctors of theology and civil law, called the teachings heretical. Barton issued an order that condemned Wyclif's theses. Refusing to accept

this, Wyclif appealed to Richard II. Gaunt responded for the king. As a devout church member, Gaunt asked Wyclif to speak no more on the subject. Clarifying his position in further writings, Wyclif instead slowly won the support of the majority at Oxford. Barton then forwarded a copy of Wyclif's condemnation to Archbishop Sudbury, whom the peasant rebels killed in 1381 before action could be taken.<sup>108</sup>

In 1381 in both city and country the discontent of the people merged into general revolt. Precipitated by the poll tax and the inefficiency of the government, the revolt gained momentum from the ideas of the poor itinerant preachers in the countryside.<sup>109</sup> Believing them to be Wyclif's followers, the public abused them as "lollards."<sup>110</sup> Later, Wyclif blamed the clergy in general for the uprisings. Since the temporal lords had also offended the masses, they received "too severe, but not undeserved" punishment.<sup>111</sup>

When the rebels killed Archbishop Sudbury, they created a vacancy for which Courtenay qualified. Gaunt, Courtenay's only opposition in the government, had spent the summer of 1381 in Scotland, but he still sustained heavy property damage in the revolt. Gaunt offered no resistance to the elevation of Courtenay. Since Richard II regarded Courtenay favorably, "there was probably no bishop in England who wielded greater political influence."<sup>112</sup> Also, Urban supported Courtenay's candidacy. After the monks unanimously elected him, Richard II approved of Courtenay's assuming the position of Archbishop of Canterbury.<sup>113</sup>

Shortly after becoming archbishop, Courtenay performed his "greatest work" with the suppression of Wycliffism at Oxford and the condemnation of Wyclif's doctrines which the Lollards espoused.<sup>114</sup>

Trevelyan believes that the death of Sudbury and the peasants' uprising resulted in a "Holy Alliance" between church and state. From now on Courtenay could count on the power of the crown to crush the followers of Wyclif.<sup>115</sup> To prevent a recurrence of catastrophe, parliament in 1382 passed legislation to give statutory authority for bishops to certify the issuance of commissions to sheriffs and other local officials to arrest and imprison certain preachers.<sup>116</sup>

Even after the peasants' revolt, Wyclif relentlessly insisted on the disendowment of the church to restore church property to the heirs of defrauded almsgivers and to relieve the commoners of taxation.

No wondur thanne thof ther ben grete discencouns in tyme of suche pristis bishipsis as risyngis of the puple and comunes agen hem and the lordis, as doolfully we sawen late.

Such inflammatory rhetoric stirred secular authorities to assume that they could lawfully remove the possessions of kings, dukes, and their lay superiors whenever they offended.

Thei seyen that seculer lordshipis asken degrees, for yif alle weren oon, ther weren noon ordre, but ilche man mygte ylyche comanunde to other, and so seculer lordship wer fully destroyed.<sup>117</sup>

Wyclif's views on tithes especially alarmed both church and state. Defining tithes as pure alms, he encouraged parishioners to withhold them from sinning curates. In their logic, the people envisioned his approval of the withholding of rent from offending landlords.

But yit summe men that ben out of charite sclaudren pore prestis with this errour, that servauntis or tenauntis may lawefully witholde rentis & servyce fro here lordis whanne lordis ben opynly wickid in here lyvynges & thei maken this false lesyngis upon pore prestis to make lordis to hate hem... & this is a feyned word of antichristis clerkis that, yif sugetis may lefffully withdrawe tithes & offryngis fro curatis that openly lyven in lecherie or grete othere synnes & don not here office, than servauntis & tenauntis may withdrawe here servyce & rentis fro here lordis that lyven opynly a cursed lif.<sup>118</sup>

Thus, Wyclif's writings magnified the reaction to the uprising in 1381. Receiving approval from church and secular authorities, Courtenay began his campaign in May 1382. He summoned a council of bishops and theologians to meet at the Blackfriars' convent in London. In light of Gaunt's personal loyalty to Wyclif, no mention of even Wyclif's name could be made. In Courtenay's opinion, Wyclif's writings, and those usually assumed to have been written by Wyclif, were "heretical and erroneous doctrines which threatened to subvert the position of the entire church and of our province of Canterbury and the peace of the realm."<sup>119</sup>

In the later course of the deliberations, an earthquake disrupted the proceedings. Courtenay urged the frightened members of council to continue and to pass formal judgment. Subsequently, they condemned certain conclusions, ten as heretical and fourteen as erroneous.

Exerpts from the heretical conclusions are the following:

That the substance of material bread and wine remains after consecration in the sacrament of the altar,

That Christ is not in His own corporal presence in the sacrament of the altar identically, truly, and really,

That if a man is genuinely contrite, all outward confession is superfluous or useless to him,

The persistant assertion that it is not founded in the gospel, that Christ ordained the mass,

That after Urban VI no one is to be received as pope, but all peoples are to live, as the Greeks do, under their own laws....<sup>120</sup>

All of the conclusions contained much more revolutionary material than those that had alarmed Gregory XI in 1377. For the first time, a real and unmistakable danger to fundamental church doctrines prevailed. For example, the conclusions ~~discounted~~ <sup>denied</sup> transubstantiation, the divine institution of mass, the sacrament



of penance, the papacy, and the importance of religious orders. Although Courtenay never actually named Wyclif, Wyclif responded by declaring that of the propositions condemned by the council "some are catholic and some are plainly heretical."<sup>121</sup>

Reacting to Courtenay's warning that "those whose learning dethroned the pope might one day try to dethrone the king," parliament answered with condemnation of the propositions. Courtenay immediately issued mandates for the publishing of all twenty-four condemned propositions in all of the churches of the land. Therein, he prohibited either the accepting, preaching, or listening to the propositions.<sup>122</sup> At this time, Robert Rigge, as the new chancellor, permitted Wyclif's writings to be read at Oxford. He argued that Wyclif had been condemned for heretical articles on the eucharist and church, but not for philosophical errors.<sup>123</sup> Therefore, Courtenay sent his mandate not to Rigge, but to Peter Stokes, a Carmelite friar at Oxford.

While mouthing cooperation with Stokes, in actual practice Rigge began to "rage against him." Denying the existence of any power greater than the university's, even in cases of heresy, he allowed Philip Repingdon to deliver, on the day of the feast of Corpus Christi, a sermon of vigorous approval of Wyclif. Repingdon endorsed Wyclif in all concerns, including "rebellion and...the spoilation of the churches." Claiming the support of Gaunt, Repingdon joined the chancellor in a triumphant display of disrespect for Courtenay and established religion.

In retaliation Courtenay later brought Rigge to his knees in apology. He directed that Rigge publish the mandate condemning the twenty-four propositions, that he forbid anyone to teach or hold

Lollard doctrines at Oxford, and that he force adherents of Wyclif to clear themselves or seek absolution. When Rigge resisted, Courtenay obtained from the king's council a mandate that ordered Rigge to obey him.<sup>124</sup>

In this manner, Courtenay effectively "crushed" Wyclifism at Oxford. In Trevelyan's view, he "purged" Oxford with the aid of Richard II, ever faithful to the church.<sup>125</sup> In 1382 after being suspended by the chancellor at Oxford, Repingdon and Nicholas Hereford fled to Gaunt for his assistance. After being informed by an independent group of doctors of theology on the views that Wyclif's friends held on transubstantiation, Gaunt indignantly reproached them for their transgressions.<sup>126</sup> Thereafter, Repingdon, Hereford, John Aston, and other followers showed only minor resistance. Eventually, all recanted and conformed to "orthodox corrections as based upon sacred scripture, the teachings of the church, and the statements of the holy doctors."<sup>127</sup> At Oxford the friars joined the possessioners "to engage for more than thirty years all the academic talents of the religious orders on the attack on Lollardy."<sup>128</sup>

Wyclif left Oxford at the close of 1381 to resume living at Lutterworth in Leicestershire. Courtenay's "adroit handling of the matter" severed the ties of the university to Wyclif. "By swift and energetic action, " Courtenay "struck at the handful of Wyclif's followers at the university and cut off Lollardy from such academic roots as it had," without allowing it to become a real threat to the orthodoxy of the university.<sup>129</sup>

The importance of the Oxford condemnation in the series of events in 1381 and 1382 has frequently been underestimated. This condemnatory judgment represented the official voice of the English professional theologians, the most important faculty of Oxford. Wyclif knew the

force and value of the theologians' approval; his life had been spent amongst them; his world had now closed its doors against him.<sup>130</sup>

Since the medieval church did not condemn Wyclif formally or personally as a heretic, Wyclif, in the remaining years of his life, produced "reams of publication."<sup>131</sup> Knowles considers Wyclif a master of "mere abuse" and his works "a sour legacy of hatred." He left "a mass of seed' to be drawn upon and broadcast by his disciples after his death."<sup>132</sup> In the treatises and pamphlets of his later years, Wyclif discredited the pope and denounced the papacy's selling of indulgences as follows:

Cristis enemye...poison under calour of Holynesse,  
 ...it is plain that no manne shud be Pope unlis he  
 is a sunne of Christie and of Petir,<sup>133</sup>  
 ...bat be pope selliz indulgence. An ober, bat he  
 may zef non indulgence noiber to man in purgatori,  
 neiber to hem bat are prescit, bat is to sey bat  
 are to be dampnid, or are now dampnid.<sup>134</sup>

Wyclif continued without pause in his bitter and vindictive description of the church hierarchy and priesthood. For example, he portrayed politically active bishops "that press to be chancellor and treasurer and governors of all worldly offices in the kingdom" as "traitors of God and his people." For their criticism of him, he called the friars "ypocritis," the "Hatid and cursid of God." He disclaimed excommunication and advocated that the wicked clergy must be the first to be cast out.

...Hatid and cursid of God Almite shud not sitte  
 on God's rite hand, but on his lefte in helle.

He went on to explain that priests should preach and read the gospel.<sup>135</sup> "Ilk prest is holdun to preche." He urged the people not to hear the mass from a priest guilty of sin. *Don't miss*

If ani zere be messe of a priest bat levib in lechery,  
 and knowib him to be swilk, [he] synnib dedely.<sup>136</sup>

Until Wyclif's death in 1384, John Purvey remained with him to undertake with Wyclif's guidance the translation of the Bible into English. Since Wyclif "found the Christ he was seeking in the gospels and missed him in the church,"<sup>137</sup> he wanted to provide the individual reader with the means of personal interpretation of the scriptures. Although many of his sympathizers deserted him, as Lollards his followers spread his views everywhere in England. Throughout its course, Lollardy remained primarily a theological movement among the poor and mostly uneducated citizenry. After the Peasants' Revolt in 1381, the laity joined Courtenay in his attempts to eradicate Lollardy from the rural regions. Before Wyclif's death the ecclesiastical hierarchy had issued injunctions against Lollards over a wide area of the country.<sup>138</sup>

WRONG word  
see

After his efforts to restore orthodoxy at Oxford, Courtenay worked diligently to improve and protect the church in practical ways. Determining to undertake a visitation of the province of Canterbury, he intended to correct any possible abuses and irregularities in the dioceses of his province. For example, he learned of the fraudulent exchanges of benefices by those who had secured the positions through private simoniacal contracts.<sup>139</sup> The scandalous practices of the so-called "'choppe-churches'" had forced the dispossessed persons to turn to begging for a living. Learned and worthy priests were deprived of livelihoods. Neglecting divine worship and forgetting the care of souls, the guilty clerics administered to their churches only for their own enrichment. Courtenay wrote to his bishops that he could tolerate such malpractices no longer because they endangered the church. Additionally, he dealt with routine matters like the equal distribution of tithes among the parishes. Devoting his energies

to the care of souls as his chief concern, Courtenay actively practiced his religion.<sup>140</sup>

During Courtenay's fifteen years as archbishop, he also served as the pope's spokesman in the competitive rivalry between crown and papacy. He discharged his responsibility for convening convocation and directing its deliberations. Mostly he engaged in constant conflicts with Richard II over the granting and collecting of funds. In 1388 he divorced himself from political affairs except for those that involved the church.<sup>141</sup> The question of papal provisions brought him back into the political arena. In 1393 in the form of a second Statute of Praemunire, parliament aimed to bar punitive papal bulls that infringed upon the king's right to present to certain benefices. In reality, the statute lacked any "great significance,"<sup>142</sup> but in his impartial judgment, Courtenay supported the crown against the pope. In this and most other official matters, Courtenay acted with fairness and for the good of England. As an indication of his esteem for Courtenay, Richard II, upon learning of the archbishop's death in 1396, ordered the body brought to Canterbury for interment near the feet of the Black Prince "in the presence of the king, nobility, clergy, and ten thousand people."<sup>143</sup>

In general, during the seventies in fourteenth-century England, John Wyclif, John of Gaunt, and William Courtenay emerged as personages whose careers and destinies overlapped and interfaced. When Wyclif brought his opinions on theological doctrines, such as transubstantiation, from the academic confines of Oxford to the practical plane with the publication of his writings for public consumption, he stirred up trouble and controversy. He alienated

his supporters and frightened the authorities, who recognized the schismatic possibilities in his polemics. Only Gaunt's friendship and patronage guaranteed his freedom. Significantly, Gaunt, "the biggest man in England,"<sup>144</sup> protected him from physical harm. Although some historians<sup>145</sup> credit Wyclif with the goal of reform, during his lifetime he demonstrated such "inconsistencies"<sup>146</sup> in his teachings that no effective pattern of revival emerged.<sup>147</sup> At best, Wyclif may be called a "prophet of the Reformation."<sup>148</sup>

Handwritten notes: "B. Adams" and "50" with a double underline.

As for Gaunt, Steel clarifies that "the contemporary charge that he was aiming for the English throne is groundless."<sup>149</sup> His motivation throughout appeared to be mostly patriotism. Greed and the personal desire for the wealth of the church played no major part in his actions. McFarlane explains Gaunt's friendship with Wyclif as follows:

Those who served Gaunt could look with confidence to his protection. It was a point of honour no less than of policy with him to maintain their quarrels as his own.

It remained for William Courtenay to recognize the subversive nature of Wyclif's ideology and to wage against him a campaign that culminated in the suppression of his teachings at Oxford and the control of the Lollards in the countryside. Described by McFarlane as "one of the ablest and most honourable of English medieval churchmen,"<sup>150</sup> Courtenay succeeded in averting a potential schism in the medieval church that, if carried to its possible social and political outcomes, could have led to the downfall of England.

~~In conclusion,~~ though not a theologian, Courtenay served both his country and his church, (as an aristocratic bishop), in his defense of the established church doctrines, hierarchy, and practices against the explosive tenets of Wyclif. During the second

half of the fourteenth century, chaos in the leadership of secular government prevailed because of Edward III's failing mental health and Richard II's youth. Complications arose with the pressing need for money to continue the prolonged war with France. Additionally, the people had genuine grievances, such as the persistence of serfdom, the need for low rents and freedom of trade for peasants, and the passage of oppressive poll taxes.<sup>151</sup>

The inability of the laity to understand the reluctance of the clergy to assume a share of the burden for war expenses added to the discontent. Although the church in England remained a part of the Roman Catholic Church, the increased national consciousness of the people precipitated a resentment of the papacy's demands for money, both from the clergy and the laity. Englishmen resisted sending funds to the pope in Avignon, probably for the benefit of the French. After assuming a dominant role in government leadership, Gaunt brought Wyclif from Oxford for routine clerical assistance in dealing with administrative problems. *AWK*

Instead, Wyclif introduced the added factor of religious unrest to the general disorder with his positions on ecclesiastical wealth, on the involvement of prelates in civil affairs, and on the pope's power of excommunication. Digressing into the realm of the sacraments, he shook the very foundation of the church. The abortive efforts by Courtenay at St. Paul's and Lambeth could not control Wyclif because of the protection he received from Gaunt. The papal schism stimulated Wyclif to greater departures from orthodoxy in his *AWK* stressing the Bible as the single source of authority. Advocating a return to purity in religion and denying any historical basis for the common catholic religious practices, Wyclif rejected special

prayers, images, pilgrimages, indulgences, and all worldly display in church. His plans for the translation of the Bible and for an order of poor preachers to take the biblical message to the people would make the word of God available to everyone as the ultimate authority in both ecclesiastical and secular affairs.<sup>152</sup>

Originally considered a "nuisance" to the crown,<sup>153</sup> Wyclif transformed into a danger to the ruling class after the social anarchy of the Peasants' Revolt. Now the crown joined Courtenay to uproot Wycliffism and all its attendant connotations from Oxford, the center of Wyclif's power. In so doing, Courtenay protected the religious life and the whole framework of the church.<sup>154</sup> Subsequently, the episcopate became even more closely aligned with the government. The people benefited from the harmony. For stability and tranquility in England, "the hold of traditional catholicism on the minds and spirits of ordinary Englishmen was as strong at the end of the fourteenth century as in any earlier century."<sup>155</sup>

Some of the background - pgs 2-3 is unnecessary -

(A) should have noted that in citing Wyclif's writings the author retained original spelling - only

There are many Awk. constructions - all a few places where the transition is to Awk -

Excellent handling of the complex pd. sit.:

1370-1400 -

Good course of the religious ideas - might have noted that part of W's theology goes back to 3rd century Donatism



## Footnotes

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- <sup>2</sup>May McKisack, The Fourteenth Century 1307-1399 (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1959) 291.
- <sup>3</sup>Dom David Knowles, The Religious Orders in England Vol. II (Cambridge: At the University press, 1957) 147.
- <sup>4</sup>Joseph Dahmus, "John Wyclif and the English Government," Speculum XXXV (1960): 55.
- <sup>5</sup>McKisack 95-6.
- <sup>6</sup>McKisack 125-6.
- <sup>7</sup>A. R. Myers, ed. English Historical Documents 1327-1485 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969) 5-10.
- <sup>8</sup>George Trevelyan, England in the Age of Wycliffe (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1900) 2, 3.
- <sup>9</sup>L. J. Daly, The Political Theory of John Wyclif (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1962) 35.
- <sup>10</sup>K. B. McFarlane, John Wycliffe and English Non-Conformity (London: English Universities Press, LTD, 1952) 45.
- <sup>11</sup>Myers 11.
- <sup>12</sup>Bryce Lyon, A Constitutional and Legal History of Medieval England (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1960) 508-9.
- <sup>13</sup>Trevelyan 4.
- <sup>14</sup>Daly 35.  
Lyon 509-13.
- <sup>15</sup>McFarlane 45.

<sup>16</sup>Joseph Dahmus, The Prosecution of John Wyclif (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952) 10.

<sup>17</sup>McKisack 20.

W. A. Pantin, The English Church in the Fourteenth Century (Cambridge: At the University press, 1955) 22-25.

<sup>18</sup>Pantin, English 11.

<sup>19</sup>John Stacey, John Wyclif and Reform (Philadelphia: The Westminister Press, 1964) 37.

<sup>20</sup>Pantin, English 13, 44.

<sup>21</sup>McFarlane 43.

<sup>22</sup>C. H. Lawrence, ed. The English Church and the Papacy in the Middle Ages (New York: Fordham University Press, 1965) 175.

<sup>23</sup>Myers 655-6.

<sup>24</sup>McFarlane 49.

<sup>25</sup>McKisack 272.

<sup>26</sup>Lawrence 186.

<sup>27</sup>McKisack 274.

<sup>28</sup>McFarlane 57.

<sup>29</sup>Pantin, English 101.

<sup>30</sup>Myers 653.

<sup>31</sup>Pantin, English 128.

<sup>32</sup>McFarlane 50.

<sup>33</sup>H. B. Workman, John Wyclif (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1966) II, 216.

<sup>34</sup>McFarlane 46-7.

<sup>35</sup>Workman I 276-8.

Sydney Armitage-Smith, John of Gaunt (London: Constable & Company, Ltd., 1904) 172-4.

- 36 Timothy Baker, Medieval London (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1970) 119.
- 37 Anthony Steel, Richard II (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1962) 119.
- 38 Dahmus, Prosecution V, 10.
- 39 Workman II 217.
- 40 Steel 21.
- 41 Armitage-Smith 405-6, 168.
- 42 Myers 444.
- 43 Knowles 95.
- 44 Trevelyan 6.
- 45 Trevelyan 7-9.
- 46 Steel 9, 17-8.
- 47 Lawrence 159, 162.
- 48 McFarlane 53.
- 49 Pantin, English 10.
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<sup>98</sup>Steel 28-9.

<sup>99</sup>Dahmus, William 54-7.

<sup>100</sup>W. A. Pantin, "A Benedictine Opponent of John Wyclif,"

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<sup>101</sup>Steel 34-7.

<sup>102</sup>Myers 124-5.

<sup>103</sup>Dahmus, William 64-7.

<sup>104</sup>McKisack 405-8.

<sup>105</sup>John wyclif, F. D. Matthew ed. The English Works of Wyclif  
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<sup>106</sup>Wyclif, Select III 376.

<sup>107</sup>Margaret Aston, Lollards and Reformers (London: The  
Hambleton Press, 1984) 14.

<sup>108</sup>Armitage-Smith 160-3.

<sup>109</sup>McKisack 330.

<sup>110</sup>Workman I 327.

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<sup>111</sup>Wyclif, English 190.

<sup>112</sup>Dahmus, William 78.

<sup>113</sup>Steel 64.

<sup>114</sup>Dahmus, William 78.

<sup>115</sup>Trevelyan 292-3.

<sup>116</sup>Dahmus, William 81-3.

<sup>117</sup>Wyclif, Select III 515-6, 434.

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*intelligent  
use of U.S. sources*



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Thomas Arnold edited these writings from the original manuscripts. Workman notes that "Wyclif never refers" to these writings except for the Sermons. However, Workman believes that "the writings are genuine enough so far as the matter goes; the voice is the voice of Wyclif though the hand is not always his" (331).
- Wyclif, John. ed. Anne Hudson. Selections from English Wycliffite Writings. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978).  
Anne Hudson presents texts attributed both to John Wyclif and his followers in the original English with a glossary. Her accompanying explanations greatly aid in the understanding of the presented material.
- Wyclif, John. ed. F. D. Matthew. The English Works of Wyclif Hitherto Unprinted. Millwood, New York: Kraus Reprint Co., 1973).

Wyclif, John. ed. James H. Todd. Three Treatises by John Wycklyffe, D. D. (Dublin: Hodges and Smith, 1851).

Wyclif, John. ed. Wm. M. Engles. Writings of the Reverend and Learned John Wickliff, D. D. (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1842).

The object of this book is "to present the Reformers as they appeared in their own writings...with the obsolete spelling...laid aside" ( $\dot{\tau}$ ,  $\frac{u}{u}$ ), consequently this edition provides easier reading than those of Matthew or Arnold.

## Secondary Material

Armitage - Smith, Sydney. John of Gaunt. (London: Constable & Company, Ltd., 1904).

This book details John of Gaunt's role in the military and political spheres of his time. The clear understanding of Gaunt as a functioning patriot and devout member of the church dispels the appellation of villain.

Aston, Margaret. Lollards and Reformers. (London: The Hambledon Press, 1984).

The reading of the opinions and activities of Wyclif's followers promotes an appreciation of the long term effects of his writings.

Baker, Timothy. Medieval London. (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1970).

Beautifully illustrated, the book clarifies the role of London and its inhabitants during this period.

Coulton, G. G. The Medieval Village. (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1931).

Dahmus, Joseph. "John Wyclif and the English Government."

Speculum XXXV (1960) 51-68.

In this article Dahmus clarifies that it was not the government which befriended Wyclif, but rather only Gaunt.

Dahmus, Joseph. The Prosecution of John Wyclif. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952).

In this book Dahmus gives a detailed and complete account of the relationship between Wyclif and Courtenay.

Dahmus, Joseph. William Courtenay Archbishop of Canterbury 1381-1396.

(University Press: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1966).

This book is a complete biography of William Courtenay with particular attention to his career in its entirety. Despite Dahmus's admiration for Courtenay, he maintains objectivity

in most instances.

Dahmus, Joseph. "Wyclif was a Negligent Puralist." Speculum XXVIII (1953): 378-81.

Herein Dahmus documents that Wyclif was guilty of absenteeism and of the holding of more than one benefice at a time.

Daly, L. J. The Political Theory of John Wyclif. (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1962).

Comprehension of the material in this book proves difficult without a background in political philosophy.

Hall, Louis B. The Perilous Vision of John Wyclif. (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1983.

Describing himself as a "reporter of the Middle Ages," Hall presents a complimentary portrait of Wyclif.

Knowles, Dom David. The Religious Orders in England. Volume II. (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1957).

This informative book shows not only the author's thorough knowledge of his subject, but also his genuine love for it. It is well presented and easy to read, while it affords an encompassing view.

Lawrence, C. H. ed. The English Church and the Papacy in the Middle Ages. (New York: Fordham University Press, 1965).

An attempt to study the relations of the papacy to England, this book defines the difference between secular and religious authority in the fourteenth century.

Lewis, John. The History of the Life and Sufferings of the Reverend and Learned John Wiclif. (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1973).

Originally printed in 1820, this book contains original material in the form of excerpts from Wyclif's papers.

Lewis, N. B. "The 'Continual Council' in the Early Years of Richard II 1377-80." English Historical Review 41 (1926) 246-51.

Lewis documents from primary sources the presence of Courtenay as a member of this powerful council.

Loserth, J. "The Beginnings of Wyclif's Activity in Ecclesiastical Politics." English Historical Review 11 (1896) 319-28.

Lyon, Bryce. A Constitutional and Legal History of Medieval England. (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1960).

This book is singularly well documented and thoroughly researched to provide the reader with a wealth of interrelated information about medieval England.

Manning, B. L. The People's Faith in the Time of Wyclif. (England: Redwood Press Limited, 1975).

Manning drifts from the fourteenth century in theological interpretations, for which he makes "no apologies."

Matthew, F.D. "The Date of Wyclif's Attack on Transubstantiation." English Historical Review 5 (1890) 328-30.

McFarlane, K. B. John Wycliffe and English Non-Conformity. (London: English Universities Press, LTD, 1952).

McKisack, May. The Fourteenth Century 1307-1399. (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1959).

This is an excellent survey of the period, of which McKisack says that "the age was genuinely religious" (311).

Mudroch, Vaclav. The Wyclif Tradition. (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1979).

Although V. Mudroch was primarily concerned with Wyclif historiography, in this book he confined himself to other writers' interests in John Wyclif in the centuries following Wyclif's death, such as John Foxe. This writing discusses

the many misunderstandings and discrepancies concerning the life and value of John Wyclif.

Pantin, W. A. "A Benedictine Opponent of John Wyclif."

English Historical Review 43 (1928) 74-7.

Pantin tells of the government's attempt to silence Wyclif and his opponent to minimize the public's awareness of the conflict.

Pantin, W. A. The English Church in the Fourteenth Century.

(Cambridge: At the University Press, 1955).

In great detail, the author explains the medieval church in every aspect, such as structure, purpose, and function.

Poole, R. L. Wycliffe and Movements for Reform. (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1902).

Originally written in 1888, this book presents John Wyclif in relation to other historical events, such as the papal schism and Lollardy.

Richardson, H. G. "Heresy and the Lay Power under Richard II."

English Historical Review Volume LI (1936) 1-28.

No suppression or eradication of heresy during this period could be accomplished without the full support of the government.

Robson, J. A. Wyclif and the Oxford Schools. Cambridge:

At the University Press, 1961).

Stacey, John. John Wyclif and Reform. (Philadelphia:

The Westminster Press, 1964).

Salter, H. E. "John Wyclif, Canon of Lincoln." English Historical Review 30 (1920) 98.

Sergeant, Lewis. John Wyclif. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1893.

Lewis Sergeant fully recounts Wyclif's life so as to praise Wyclif profusely and discredit his opponents (including Courtenay) completely.

Steel, Anthony. Richard II. (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1962).

Trevelyan terms this book a "critical and coherent narrative" (vii), the reading of which reveals a full and complete account of Richard II.

Trevelyan, George M. England in the Age of Wycliffe. (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1900).

Of all of the sources, this book proved to be the most enjoyable and fascinating in its style, form, and content.

Waugh, W. T. "The Great Statute of Praemunire." English Historical Review XXXVII (1922) 173-205.

Waugh informs the reader that this statute in no way was intended to limit the pope's jurisdiction in spiritual matters.

Wedgwood, J. C. "John of Gaunt and the Packing of Parliament."

English Historical Review 45 (1930) 623-5.

Gaunt did not pack the parliament in 1377 with his friends, but rather he "unpacked" it of his enemies by having the sheriffs refuse to seat them.

Workman, Herbert B. John Wyclif. Volume 1 & 2 (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1966).

Most historians acknowledge this book as the definitive biography on Wyclif's life because Workman "sought by direct study, especially of Wycliff's Latin writings, to ascertain the facts" (viii).

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