

Queries concerning the Etcaetera Oath (1640)

Norfolk Ministers

Transcript

British Library, Harley MS 4931, ff. 60r–60v

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Quæries concerning this new Oath. From Norfolke:/.

[*Left margin: 1*] Whether it be not an unreasonable unheard of practise in any church to cause Clergy, and laity (as in this cause is done) not only to assent, submitt, & subscribe unto, but to sweare solemnly and directly not only to the doctrine, but also to the perticular discipline of the Church they liue under, not on^ely for obedience thereunto, but to the compleatnes, and necessity therof unto salvation.

[*Left margin: 2*] Whether the word Discipline or Gouverment in this oath be all one? and whether the word Gouverment, in the first clause, and in the third clause of the oath be to be taken in the same sence? And whether thereby be meant the species of gouernours as seemeth to be imported in the latter clause, by the inumeration of some of them with an &c? or 2dly the lawes and rules of gouernment, vix Rubrick & Canons Canon Law, and Civil law still in force (though some of them for present practise be dormant)? or 3dly the proceedings of these gouernours in the exercise of their gouernment according to these rules? If in the first sence, then the words are not literally, and gram[m]atically to be understood, but tropically for *disciplina*, and *disciplinatores*, *gubernatio*, and *gubernatores* are not the same gram[m]atically, but onely tropically which is against the last clause in this oath. If in the second sence then it is required that wee sweare neuer to consent to the least mutation of Rubrick Canon ^{former} later Civill, and Canon Law by what power soever. If in the third sence then worse consequences will follow in cause the gouernours err in the exercise of their power.

[*Left margin: 3*] Whether a man may sweare *de futuro* to bind his judgment to any tenet, or tenets especially in matters of discipline, seing wee know but in part and the light breaking forth dayly a man may see cause to alter his present judgm[en]t, especially in things so controverted, not by a few private men, but the contrary holden by most of the reformed Churches of the world.

[*Left margin: 4*] Whether assenting, & consenting be acts of the mind ([th]e later alwayes implying [th]e former though not alwayes *e contra*) the taker of this oath doth not bind his mind so that he shall be guilty of perjury by assent in judgm[en]t, or will to any mutation in the Government, or any particle thereof in any of the three forenamed sences, which soever those words ought to be taken in, though he never expresse the same externally to further the mutation therof? nor liue under it, to yeild submission therunto?

[*Left margin: 5*] Whether the consent heere mentioned be antecedent to the mutation, or subsequent in case it be done by lawfull Authority? If Antecedent

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then all the members of all following Convocations, and a greate part of future parliamentary men shall heereby præclude themselues by oath from giuing free votes for altering any

particle about Church gouern[en]t though it be found never so needfull. If subsequent, then wee ^{sweare} to disobey the authority, and com[m]ands of King, and state in cause they should make any alteration.

[*Left margin: 6*] Whether this oath doe not impløy that all these gouernours specified, & contained under [th]e &c be *jure divino*? because the oath makes them all [*Left margin: Articles of Religion. :7: 34: Hook: pol. 1:3: p.111.*] alike im[m]utable; & in a copulatiue axiome if any one particular be false [th]e whole axiome is to be denyed: but if that be not intended [the]n whether may a man bind himselfe by oath to make that for ever immutable, and necessary, w[hi]ch in its owne nature is mutable, & indifferent standing only by humane pr[e]script, as all men grant most of [th]em doe.

[*Left margin: 7*] Whether (And) in these wordes (And as by right it ought to stand) be copulatiue, or aggregative? And whether the right be divine, humane, or common æquity? & whether it be opposite to the practises of some men in their ill exercise of their gouernment, or to other formes of gouernment in other Churches which is most probable.

[*Left margin: 8*] What is meant by popery? whether onely the Pope's supreamacy, or the doctrine of the Church of Rome differing from oures? and where that is defined that wee may know against what wee sweare?

[*Left margin: 9*] How any man can sweare he taketh his oath willingly when (there be so many quæries, and difficulties in it) he would not take it if he could avoid it, and when it is enforced by so greivous censure./.