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A STUDY OF THE ORIGIN OF

SCOTTISH PRESBYTERIANISM (1560-1638)

BY

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And to University of Glasgow for the degree of Master of Theology**

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Declaration

I declare that I have composed this thesis, *A Study of the Origin of Scottish Presbyterianism (1560-1638)*, and that it is my own work, that it has not been submitted in whole or in part for any other degree or professional qualification, and that all sources used or quoted have been indicated and specifically acknowledged.

KOJI HARADA

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ABBREVIATIONS

Atlas   *Atlas of Scottish History to 1707*. (Edited by Peter G B McNeil and Hector L MacQueen, Cartgrapher: Anona May Lyons, University of Edinburgh, 1996).

Calderwood   *The History of the Kirk of Scotland by Mr. David Calderwood, some time minister of Crailing*, 8 Vols. (Edited by Thomas Thomson. Edinburgh: Wodrow Society, 1842-49).

DSCHT   *Dictionary Scottish Church History and Theology*., (Organizing editor: Nigel M. de S. Cameron , and General editors: David F. Wright, David C. Lachman, and Donald E. Meek. InterVarsity Press, 1993).

DHT   *The Dictionary of Historical Theology*. (Edited by Trevor A. Hart, Richard Bauckham, Authentic Media, 2000).

FBD   *The First Book of Discipline* (Edited by James K. Cameron. Edinburgh: The Saint Andrew Press, 1972).

OER   *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*. 4 vols. (Edited by Hans J. Hillerbrand, Oxford University Press, 1996)

RSCHS   *Records of Scottish Church History Society*

SBD   *The Second Book of Discipline* (Edited by James Kirk. Edinburgh: The Saint Andrew Press, 1980).

SJT   *Scottish Journal of Theology*

Works   *The Works of John Knox*. 6vols. (Edited by David Laing. Edinburgh: Bannatyne Club, 1846).

Introduction

'The presbytery', says McKim, 'is a governing body in a Presbyterian denomination that is comprised of all churches and ministers of Word and Sacraments in a certain area... Presbyteries are a core unit of the Presbyterian church government system.'[1] Presbyterianism is the form of church government by the office bearers of ministers and elders (commonly called 'presbyters').[2]

This dissertation seeks to explore the origin of Presbyterianism in Scotland. Hence, every effort has been made to describe the process of the emergence of the Presbyterian government and its development during the period from the 1520s to the point before the Second Reformation of 1638.[3] This study covers the following main aspects: first, the goals of the Scottish Reformation; secondly, the grounds on which the General Assembly championed the Presbyterian system; thirdly, the process of how the *Second Book of Discipline* was formed; fourthly, the contents of the *Second Book of Discipline*; and fifthly, how presbyteries developed between 1581 and 1638. It should be remembered, of course, that as a result of the government's overall preference for an Episcopalian system, the General Assembly's desire for Presbyterianism met with resistance and on occasions, substantial setbacks until final success was achieved in 1690.

This study aims to trace the emergence and development of Presbyterianism in Scotland. As such, chapters follow an essentially chronological pattern, covering the key persons, pressures, struggles and events which deeply affected the way in which the

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[1] Donald K. McKim, *Presbyterian Questions, Presbyterian Answers: Exploring Christian Faith*, 107-8.
[2] James Kirk, 'Presbyterianism', *DSCHT*, 672.
[3] Gordon Donaldson, 'The Polity of the Scottish Church, 1560-1600', 225. Here Donaldson states that: 'true presbyterian government cannot have existed until after 1638.'

Reformation succeeded after several attempts to overcome the problems for introducing the Presbyterian system in the Church.

Several approaches are employed in our study. The modern approach to the Scottish Reformation is various indeed. W. Ian P. Hazlett offers the best useful summary concerning its method of approach classified into eight types: first, Catholic perspectives on the Scottish Reformation; secondly, Lutheran roots and emphasis on the Scottish Reformation; thirdly, influence of Calvinism on Presbyterian church polity; fourthly, the simple political motivation for the Reformation; fifthly, Queen Mary's religious policy; sixthly, re-examination from contemporary local and urban contexts; seventhly, the Gaelic perspective on the Scottish Reformation; and eighthly, application of Max Weber's thesis of the pairing of Calvinism and Capitalism for the Scottish Reformation.[4] This study attempts to synthesize the third, fourth and sixth approaches mentioned in Hazlett's classification.

Primary sources concerning early Presbyterianism in Scotland as an ecclesiastical entity, along with various works or movements which tried to negate it during the period between 1560 and 1638, are examined. The main primary sources consulted are the *First Book of Discipline* edited by James K. Cameron and *Second Book of Discipline* by James Kirk. Furthermore, David Calderwood's *The History of the Kirk of Scotland*, and the *Stirling Presbytery Records* edited by Kirk are important source materials appealed to as well. Careful examination of these historical documents forms the basic backbone of this dissertation.

Furthermore, we use several secondary sources which offer different critical analyses on the situation of the Church during the period between the 1520s and 1638. The analyses of Gordon Donaldson and James Kirk are especially helpful, but they arrive at different conclusions on various points. For example, while Donaldson considers that 'later

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[4] W. Ian P. Hazlett, *The Reformation in Britain and Ireland*, 121-133.

Presbyterian churchmen ....hijacked the mentality of the official Reformation Church in its early decades' from the Episcopalian perspective, Kirk maintains that 'at least the notions of ministerial parity and presbyterial discipline were central to the thinking of the 1560 Reformers' from the reformed one.[5] W. R. Foster offers a useful overview from Episcopalian perspectives on the practice of ecclesiastical polity during the early seventeenth century.[6] Furthermore, D. G. Mullan gives useful insights on Episcopacy in the Scottish Reformation as well.[7] On the other hand, many studies on Presbyterianism in Scotland from such Reformed perspectives as represented by G. D. Henderson and James Kirk should not be missed. Synthetic analysis of these various modern studies on the Scottish Reformation becomes the nerve of this dissertation.

Although it may be necessary to look at the theoretical development of Presbyterianism like *Jus Divinum* (Divine Right of Presbytery) advanced by George Gillespie[8] and Samuel Rutherford[9], this study cannot deal in detail with such aspect because the dissertation focuses on the formative process of the establishment of Presbyterianism in Scotland.

In the study of church polity, we have to identify what were the 'means' and 'ends' of that polity. These are inevitably related to each other, as the form of church government (such as its 'system' or 'construction') is designed as a means to accomplish particular ends. It is important therefore, to identify the goals of the Reformation before we proceed to discuss the

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[5] Ibid, 127.

[6] Walter R Foster, *The Church Before the Covenants: The Church of Scotland 1596-1638* (Scottish Academic Press, 1975).

[7] David George Mullan. *Episcopacy in Scotland: the History of an Idea, 1560-1638* (Edinburgh, 1986). Moreover, *Religious controversy in Scotland 1625-1639* (Edinburgh, 1998), edited by Mullan is important as well in considering the dispute over church government during the 1620s and 1630s.

[8] George Gillespie, *An Assertion of The Government of Church of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1641); *Aaron's Rod Blossoming* (London, 1646).

[9] Samuel Rutherford, *The Divine Right of Church-government and Excommunication* (London, 1646). J. R. DeWitt, *Jus Divinum: The Westminster Assembly and the Divine Right of Church Government* (Kampen, 1969) is also an important source which leans on theoretical development of Presbyterianism in the middle of 17th century.

form of Presbyterian church government which grew out of it. Hence, chapter one deals with the primary goals at the time of the Reformation in connection with the church government which the Reformers introduced. Subsequently, chapter two describes the process of how the *Second Book of Discipline* was formed and what its contents were. The third chapter focuses on the process of the institution of the Presbyterian government after its approval by the General Assembly in 1578. Finally, chapter four focuses on the development of the presbyteries between 1581 and 1638.

This study will synthesize various views on early Presbyterianism in Scotland up to 1638 to provide a historically reliable account of this formative period in Scottish church history.

CHAPTER ONE

The Eve of Scottish Presbyterianism

I. Religious Situations of the pre-1560 period in Scotland

In the study of church government, we have to put our mind to what were the 'means' and 'ends' of that polity. These are inevitably related, as the form of church government (such as its 'system' or 'construction') is designed as a means to accomplish particular ends.

This chapter seeks to explore what the Scottish Reformers designed in the beginning of the Reformation. The Reformers' ends seem to become clear from what church government they instituted in Scotland. It is important therefore, to identify the goals of the Reformation before we proceed to discuss the form of Presbyterian church government which grew out of it.

The goals of the Reformation may be identified through a study of the process of the Reformation. In examining the situation of the pre-1560 period, the goals of Presbyterian polity will become evident too, because the polity of the church was designed to address certain concerns occasioned by the pre-1560 context. In this chapter, we will explore the concerns which grew out of the pre-Reformation context in Scotland.

There were some reactions against the Reformation movement in Scotland during the 1520s. The Scottish Parliament prohibited the circulation of 'heretical' Lutheran books in 1525, suggesting that Lutheran theology had already been

introduced in Scotland by that year at the latest. A series of martyrdoms followed in the wake, beginning with Patrick Hamilton in 1528. One of the reasons Hamilton was burned at the stake was because 'he advocated open access to the Word of God by the means of vernacularized Scripture',[10] and 'taught that ''it is lawful for any man to read the word of God, and in special the New Testament'''.[11]

The people who were influenced by Lutheran teachings also saw the necessity for ordinary people to have access to a 'vernacularized Scripture' in order that they may read and understand the true meaning of the Gospel. This however, had been prohibited in Scotland. In 1536, Parliament ordered a ban on English Bibles in Scotland. Subsequently, an Augustinian canon who flouted the ban was burned alive at Edinburgh in 1539. He was found to have possessed a New Testament in English translation.[12] Although Parliament abolished this legislation in 1543, announcing that it was 'free to all man and woman to reid the Scriptures in thair awin toung, or in the Engliss toung'[13], the Scottish bishops ruled that only the Latin Vulgate was to be read, and that Bible possession by the laity would remain felonious in 1546.[14] After this, John Knox, the leading Reformer, circulated a tract entitled *'A most wholesome counsel, how to behave ourselves in the midst of this wicked generation, touching the daily exercise of Gods most holy and sacred worde'* (1556). In it, Knox recommended that the bible should be read daily by the people in the vernacular, and indicated some methods of bible interpretation.[15]

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[10] Hazlett, op. cit., 36. Here Hazlett offers a useful summary concerning the 'vernacularized Scripture' (this explanation is his own) in Scotland.
[11] Ellingworth, P. 'Bible (Versions, English) in Scotland', *DSCHT*, 73.
[12] Hazlett, op. cit., 137.
[13] John Knox, *Works,* vol. I, 100. This phrase was also cited in the essay of David F. Wright, 'The Commoun Buke of the Kirk': The Bible in the Scottish Reformation' in David F. Wright (ed)*, The Bible in Scottish Life and Literature*, 167.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Knox, *Works*, vol. IV, 129-140.

These historical cases indicate a great concern among the Reformers to make the Word of God readily accessible to the common people even in a context where a 'vernacularized Scripture' was prohibited by the state. It is clear that in this pre-Reformation context, the ministry of the Word of God was a main concern which later carried over into the Scottish Reformation. So, if we bear in mind such conditions just before the Reformation in Scotland, we can see the importance of the ministry of the Word of God for the Scottish Reformation.

Besides limited access to Scripture in the vernacular, the Scots also had limited access to Bible commentaries in comparison to other countries during the time of the Reformation. The Reformers on the Continent were engaged not only in the work of bible translation, but also in the writing of bible commentaries and the instruction of the laity on the proper methods of bible interpretation. For example, Philip Melanchthon (1497-1560), the German Reformer and the first professor of Greek at the University of Wittenberg (1518), lectured on the subject of biblical interpretation, and published several commentaries. Under the influence of Martin Luther, Melanchthon published the *Loci communes theologici* in 1521. This work was regarded as a kind of guide book to interpret the Bible. Melanchthon rewrote the text twice, once in 1535 and subsequently in 1543.[16] Furthermore during his time at Wittenberg, he and his colleagues designed to publish commentaries on all texts of the New Testament.

Heinrich Bullinger (1504-1575) began his duties as head lecturer at the Cistercian monastery at Kappel with a series of lectures on biblical interpretation as well.[17] Bullinger is frequently noted for his work on the *Second Helvetic Confession*

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[16] Timothy J. Wengert, 'Melanchthon, Philip (1497-1560)', *DHT*, 363-64.
[17] Carl R. Trueman, 'Bullinger, Heinrich (1504-75)', *DHT*, 90-91.

(1566). However, we should also bear in mind his significance as a bible commentator. Bullinger published commentaries on all the books of New Testament by 1546, except the Gospel according to John. He began this work in December of 1532 when he succeeded Ulrich Zwingli as chief pastor in Zurich.

Other Reformers, Martin Bucer (1491-1551) as well as Martin Luther (1483-1546) and John Calvin (1509-64), also wrote and published commentaries on Scriptures. In the Reformed tradition, the most famous consolidation of the Protestant system of faith is Calvin's definitive version of the *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (1559). In the preface of the work, Calvin mentioned that the *Institutes* was 'a key opening up to all the children of God a right and ready access to the understanding of the sacred volume [Holy Scripture]'.[18] Clearly, Calvin hoped that this book would become an effective guide for people to interpret the Bible rightly.[19]

In contrast, when we turn our attention to the Scottish context, we find that Scotland produced little of note in terms of biblical commentaries and translations during the Reformation era.[20] Knox did not write commentaries like Calvin, Melanchthon and the other Reformers. It might be said that Robert Rollock (c1555-99), the first principal of Edinburgh University, was the first Scot who published bible commentaries in Scotland during the time of the Reformation.[21] His first commentary *In Epistolam ad Ephesios* was published in Scotland in 1591.

When we compare the level of engagement in the activity of commentary writing among countries during the Reformation, Scotland was undoubtedly lagging

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[18] John Calvin, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 30.
[19] Alister E. McGrath, *Reformation Thought; An introduction*, 223.
[20] F.F. Bruce and M.D. Peat, 'Exegesis, Biblical', *DSCHT*, 309.
[21] Ibid; See also S. Isbell, 'Robert Rollock', *DSCHT*, 726. Here Isbell lists all works which Robert Rollock published in the last part of his entry.

considerably behind the other countries. Nevertheless, the Scottish Reformers maintained a high estimate of the Bible as the supreme authority in their rule of faith. Henderson puts it:

> It was to the Bible Knox turned for all his inspiration and guidance. ...With him the purpose of the Reformation was to return to beliefs and practices prescribed in the Bible and characteristic of the primitive Church. ... He speaks of Scripture as the food of the soul. Just as necessary to the spiritual life as meat and drink and the light of the sun are to the bodily life.[22]

The Reformers faced the challenge of interpreting the Bible rightly for themselves, and the further task of effectively instructing the clergy and laity in the acquisition of a right knowledge of the Bible. These conditions in Scotland, in the middle of the sixteenth century as outlined above, are reflected in the concerns of the new church polity prescribed by the *First Book of Discipline,* which 'was designed as a blue print for the organization of the Reformed Church'.[23]

Subsequently in this chapter, we shall consider how the concerns highlighted above are reflected in the institution of the office of superintendent and the practice of the 'exercise'.[24] These two elements were first introduced into the polity of the church during the Reformation in 1561 by the *First Book of Discipline*. While these two provisions had organisational functions and purposes, they were also introduced with spiritual ends in mind.

On the one hand, these two provisions were clearly designed to facilitate inter-congregational relationships in the Scottish church prior to the introduction of the Presbyterian system. The Scottish Reformers estimated that such relationships were

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[22] G.D. Henderson, *The Scottish Ruling Elder*, 34.
[23] James Kirk, 'Scottish Books of Discipline', *OER* vol. 4, 31.
[24] Although the 'eldership' is also important when we examine the church polity of Scottish Reformation, it will be discussed later at the same time when we analyse the eldership of the *Second Book of Discipline.*

important as an expression of the living visible church on earth and reflected their high ideals for the Reformation of not just cities, but of the entire nation as well.

On the other hand, the two provisions were introduced to accomplish the spiritual ends of educating the nation in the Scriptures as well. Because the Reformation was concerned with the recovery of the authority of the Bible as the Word of God, according to the principle of *sola scriptura*, biblical education was a main concern for the Reformation in Scotland. The institutions of both the office of superintendent and the practice of the exercise were hence related to the goals of biblical education. This will be demonstrated in our discussion of the two elements in the following sections.

II. The 'Superintendent'

The Reformers drafted the *First Book of Discipline* as 'a statement on polity and discipline' for the Reformed Church in Scotland.[25] Brown claims that the *First Book of Discipline* was 'setting forth the Presbyterian form of Church Government in its leading features.'[26] This may be partly true when we consider only the institution of the three-fold offices of ministers, elders and deacons, according to the Genevan style of government. However, such a view would be inadequate when we consider the office of superintendents, in the context of the Scottish Reformation prior to the introduction of Presbyterian polity. This office, which was one of the outstanding features of the Scottish context, existed from 1560 until 1581 when the Presbyterian

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[25] Kirk, 'First Book of Discipline (1560)', *DSCHT*, 321.
[26] Thomas Brown, *Church and State in Scotland: A Narrative of the Struggle for Independence from 1560 to 1843*, 8.

polity was established in Scotland.[27] Knox's form of church polity might be suspect of not being strictly Presbyterian, because the office of superintendent was inconsistent with the Presbyterian principle of 'parity among ministers'.[28] Donaldson describes the character of the polity instituted by the Scottish Reformers as 'congregationalism with a dash of episcopacy'.[29] He notes that: 'it was Melville and not Knox who was the originator of Scottish Presbyterianism'.[30] At any rate, we will avoid entering into the vexed question of whether Knox was a Presbyterian or not. Instead we will analyse what roles the superintendent played in the Reformed Church in Scotland at that time, comparing it with some recent views in order to identify the features of pre-Presbyterian polity in the Scottish Reformation.

1. The Purpose of the Office of Superintendents

To know the purpose of this institution, we must first pay attention to the text of the *First Book of Discipline*. The reason for instituting the office is clearly stated in the second paragraph of the chapter entitled 'Of the Superintendent'. This states that:

> We consider that if the Ministers whom God hath endowed with his singular graces amongst us should be appointed to several places there to make their continuall residence, that then the greatest part of the Realme should be destitute of all doctrine: ... And therefore we have thought it a thing most expedient at this time, that from the whole number of godly and learned men, now presently in this realm, be selected ten or twelve to whom charge and commandment should be given, to plant and erect Kirkes, set, order, and appoint Ministers, as the former order prescribes ... And by their means, your love and common care over all Inhabitants of this Realme, to whom you are equally debtors, shall evidently apper, as also the simple and ignorant, who perchance have never heard Jesus Christ truely preached, shall come to some

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[27] Kirk, 'Superintendent'*, DSCHT*, 806-7. It is difficult to specify the rigid date of the abolition of the office of superintendent, because it was an incomplete system from the beginning. Kirk indicates that 'the original five superintendents had no successors, and with their deaths the office fell into disuse. Thus, he concludes that the office of superintendents disappeared automatically.

[28] Donaldson, *Scotland : Church and Nation through Sixteen Centuries*, 63.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Ibid., 71.

knowledge:...and therefore nothing we desire more earnestly then that Christ Jesus bee universally once preached throughout this Realme.[31]

What the Reformers thought in instituting the office of superintendent was described clearly in these sentences. First, it was 'to plant and erect Kirkes, set, order, and appoint Ministers'. Secondly, it was to preach throughout the realm in order to make people know the true Jesus Christ. Clearly, the superintendents were instituted to fulfil these two purposes.

> Relating to the purpose of its institution, Kirk states briefly that the superintendent was:

> designed to remedy the shortage of ministers and to further the work of evangelization throughout the land. Repudiating the traditional ecclesiastical hierarchy, the Reformers placed their emphasis on the pastoral ministry which, they considered, might be exercised within the context of a congregation or more widely over a whole district.[32]

Hazlett similarly notes: 'the office of superintendent was essentially a transitional expedient, a pragmatic, provisional manoeuvre for the sake of the immediate well-being of the Church.'[33] Both scholars in common highlight that the superintendent was intentionally instituted as an evangelical and pastoral office to cover the emergency that the church faced at that time – that of shortage of minsters.

> Furthermore, citing from *The Election of Superintendent* in the *First Book of Discipline*, Kirk mentions the nature of the office of superintendents succinctly:

> the superintendent was obliged to affirm that he undertook the office not for 'wardly commoditie, riches or glory', that as 'a man subject to infirmity, and ane that hes neid of correctioun and admonitioun', he remained 'subject to the Discipline of the Kirk, as the rest of your Brethrein', for, as he was required to acknowledge aloud, 'the vocatioun of God to bear charge within his Kirk makethe not men tyrantes, nor lordis, but appoynteth thame Servandis, Watchemen, and Pastoris of the Flock'. Thereafter, the process of admission

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[31] James K. Cameron, *FBD*, 115.
[32] Kirk, 'Superintendent', *DSCHT*, 806-807.
[33] Hazlett, op. cit., 127.

was concluded with an exhortation to the superintendent to act as a 'trew servand' and 'usurpe not dominioun nor tyrranicall impyre over thy brethrein'.[34]

Thus, Kirk emphasizes its pastoral and evangelical roles. He indicates that the superintendent was therefore not to be a tyrannical office but a 'true servant' for the church. The Reformers decided not to restrict the competent ministers to individual congregations, but to distribute their ministry across the districts and the nation.

2. Functions of Superintendent

Henderson amply enumerates the roles of superintendents according to both the *First Book of Discipline* and later Assembly minutes: preaching, visitation of parishes, supervision of the life of Churches, conduct and diligence of ministers and the behaviour of the people, to eradicate superstition, to plant and erect churches, appoint or transfer ministers or readers, advise and admonish as might be required, investigate serious discipline cases, hold half-yearly synods, deal with matrimonial and divorce cases, report regularly to Assembly and promulgate decisions of Assembly, encourage ministers to attend the exercise of prophesying, supervise education, watch over the state of Church and Manse fabric and treat with landowners in that connection, manage the repair of ruined churches, settle finance and stipend problems, treat with Government on major ecclesiastical questions, etc.[35] All these were expected to be fulfilled by all superintendents as their roles and responsibilities. Furthermore, on the one hand, Kirk summarizes these functions in five parts in terms of their character: preaching, appointing ministers and elders, examining

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[34] Kirk, *Patterns of Reform*, 163. The last phrase, 'usurpe not dominioun nor tyrranicall impyre over thy brethrein', is cited from *John Knox, the Works of John Knox*, vol. II, 144.
[35] Henderson, *Presbyterianism*, 48.

congregations, selecting certain categories of commissioner to the general assembly, and giving collation to benefices.[36] On the other hand, Donaldson emphasizes mainly the superior functions of the superintendent over other ministers: admission, supervision, suspension and deprivation, and judicial functions.[37] When we compare the aspects stressed by Kirk and Donaldson, it is apparent that there are different emphases between them. While Kirk emphasizes the evangelical and ministerial roles of superintendents, Donaldson tends to emphasize their supreme function over other ministers.[38]

(1) Preacher of the Gospel

The superintendents were expected to be preachers of the Gospel. This was in keeping with what the Reformers affirmed in the eighteenth chapter of the *Scots Confession of Faith* (1560): 'The notes therefore of the trew Kirk of God we believe, confesse, and avow to be, first, the trew preaching of the Worde of God'.[39] Considering that the 'vernacularized bible' was prohibited before the Reformation, the Word of God did not spread well throughout Scotland at the time. It is plainly stated in the *First Book of Discipline* that: 'therefore nothing we desire more earnestly then that

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[36] Kirk, 'Superintendent', *DSCHT*, 806-807.
[37] Donaldson, 'The Polity of the Scottish Church 1560-1600', *RSCHS,* vol. XI, part iii, 214-215,
[38] Concerning this matter, Tadataka Maruyama's study gives useful insight from the theoretical aspect through highlighting the dispute between Saravia and Beza about the bishops in church government (Tadataka Maruyama, *The Ecclesiology of Theodore Beza: The Reform of the True Church*. Librairie Droz, 1978, 180-7). Tadataka points out that, while Saravia confused 'ordo' and 'gradus' in ecclesiastical polity, Beza clearly made a distinction between the two. Tadataka suggests: 'Beza uses the term 'ordo (order)' in two distinctive senses. In a general sense, it means a system of the ministry established by God in the church which he elsewhere calls 'the inviolable order' of the New Testament ministry. This order, which is described in Eph. 4:11, includes the different offices and functions of the Apostles, the Prophets, the Evangelists, pastors and doctors. But when it is used in connection with another term, 'gradus' (degree or grade), in a specific sense, it usually mans an orderly relationship which can be established within a certain ministerial office. Though the foundation of this relationship is the equality of all ministers within that office, one of them can assume a place of honor and dignity due to the particular function assigned to him. In this sense he is prior to the rest 'in order,' that is in honor and dignity, but not 'in degree', that is in power and authority. On the other hand, however, the term 'gradus' means a degree of pre-eminence in power and authority existing within a certain office'(184-5). Tadataka's analysis on the discussion between Saravia and Beza seems to apply also to the discussion between Donaldson and Kirk.
[39] Henderson(ed), *Scots Confession of Faith and Negative Confession with introduction*, 75.

Christ Jesus bee universally once preached throughout this Realme'.[40] Although the role of preacher was attributed not only to superintendents but to all ministers, there were few ministers who could truly preach biblically at the start of the Reformation in Scotland. The number of reformed ministers was particularly lacking. Therefore, some competent ministers were nominated to be superintendents to meet the practical needs of preaching and other evangelical ministries. Regarding this, the *First Book of Discipline* explains:

> We consider that if the Ministers whom God hath endowed with his singular graces amongst us should be appointed to severall places there to make their continuall residence, that then the greatest part of the Realme should be destitute of all doctrine.[41]

Thus, the superintendents were clearly expected to be 'itinerant preachers', going on rounds among local congregations in their district. They were required to keep on travelling, staying no longer than twenty or thirty days in one place, preaching at least three times per week, 'till they have passed through their whole bounds'.[42] Having completed their evangelising responsibilities, they could return to their principal town where they were allowed to stay for three or four months preaching and edifying the church, and after that, they had to go on the move again.[43] Therefore, Cameron explains: 'They must first and foremost be preachers and must be almost continually engaged in travelling through their diocese'.[44]

(2) Admission

The superintendents were expected to appoint and admit ministers. The *First Book of Discipline* affirmed that: 'The Admission of Ministers to their offices must

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[40] Cameron, *FBD*, 115.
[41] Ibid.
[42] Knox, *The History of the Church in Scotland,* vol. II, 292.
[43] Ibid., 293.
[44] Cameron, *FBD*, 52

consist in consent of the people, and Church whereto they shall be appointed and approbation of the learned Ministers appointed for their examination'. [45] The superintendents who were 'the learned Ministers' played the leading part in the examination and admission of the ministers as well as exhorters and readers. [46] When the Lords required the partial approval of the *First Book of Discipline* in January 1561, they recommended that: 'none be admitted to preach, but they that are qualified therefore, but rather be retained readers; and such as are preachers already, not found qualified therefore by the superintendent, be placed to be readers'. [47] On December 1562, the General Assembly gave every superintendent the authority to translate minister from one congregation to another (with consent from the ministers and elders of the congregation) and commanded ministers to obey the decision of superintendents. [48] Donaldson asserts in regards to such powers of superintendents:

> The evidence suggests that the superintendent could by his sole authority suspend ministers and readers but that deprivation certainly of ministers and perhaps even of readers required action by the superintendent along with his court.... It was at one stage proposed that the power to translate ministers should lie with the superintendent and synod, but it seems that the superintendent could translate by his sole authority. [49]

However, it is wrong to think that the superintendent could decide everything by himself. While the examination and admission were attributed to the hand of the superintendent in the diocese, the election or call of ministers was attributed to each individual congregation. [50] So the superintendents could not arbitrarily decide an attachment of ministers. Therefore Kirk asserts that: 'Ministers appointed to Reformed

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[45] Ibid., 101.
[46] Ibid., 22. These offices were temporarily instituted to help the evangelical ministries. According to Cameron's explanation, 'the reformers were prepared to allow for a progression from the position of reader to that of exhorter and finally to that of a minister'.
[47] Knox, op. cit, 288.
[48] David Calderwood, *History of the Kirk of Scotland*, vol. II, 208.
[49] Donaldson, *The Scottish Reformation*, 121-22,
[50] Cameron, *FBD*, 101.

congregations were first to be elected with congregational approval'.[51] Although the election of the minister pertained to each congregation, if Kirk Sessions chose their own minister by themselves within a short term, the congregations would probably make a mistake. Hence the right of admission and appointment was attributed to the superintendent and his council.[52] Furthermore admission consisted in consent of the church members and approbation by the learned ministers appointed for examination of the suitability of the candidate.

(3) Oversight

Oversight was also an important role of the superintendent, connected to the role of admission. This role is related to the third note of the true church raised in the *Scots Confession* where 'ecclesiastical discipline' was affirmed. When a Christian person errs, another might redress the wrongs according to Word of God. The superintendent was clearly to be subject to such discipline. Hence they could be censured by other ministers and office-bearers in their district.[53]

In the medieval church system, the means of supervising and disciplining the lives and works of parochial clergies were attributed to the Archdeacons.[54] The Archdeacon's main duty was to supervise the clergy and churches in his diocese. The Archdeacon was responsible for reporting to the bishop with regard to the benefices and properties of the churches in the diocese as well as the diligence and behaviour of the clergy.[55] Thus he had large powers and managed a court for the trial of offenders.

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[51] Kirk, 'Scottish Books of Discipline', *OER,* vol. 4, 31.
[52] Donaldson, op. cit, 119.
[53] Cameron, *FBD*, 53.
[54] Ivo M. Clark*, A History of Church Discipline in Scotland*, 86.
[55] Ibid., 87.

This office was abolished at the Reformation due to its secondary character. Nevertheless the roles and functions attached to this office were still necessary for the life of the Church. They were hence transferred to the office of the superintendent during the period of the Reformation. Clark affirms that: 'under the different officers the continuity of this Discipline was not broken by the Reformation'.[56] Clark's study establishes that there was a continuity of Church discipline in Scotland across the pre-Reformation and Reformation periods. This indicates that disciplinary oversight was of great importance for the Church in Scotland.

Concerning the function of oversight by superintendents, Cameron introduces a case exercised by the superintendent of Lothian, according to the minutes of the Canongate's kirk session:

> In order to provide for effective evangelisation and supervision of areas that otherwise would have been without an effective ministry the power of episcope is assigned to a responsible minister who would be actively engaged in fulfilling his task. At the same time, in order to avoid any hierarchical tendency and to uphold the doctrine that those who exercise the ministry of Word and Sacraments are all alike preachers, it is carefully stated that the differences between them are of function and extent of responsibility and that both superintendents and ministers are equally subject to the same system of ecclesiastical discipline.[57]

What these passages make clear is that this authority of oversight attributed to the superintendent was not hierarchical but only functional, and both superintendents and ministers were commonly subjected to the same Discipline.

Kirk introduces another case of oversight exercised by the superintendent of Fife and Strathearn, John Winram.[58] Kirk summarizes: 'Yet, despite his old age,...Winram was by no means disposed to tarry in St Andrews and displayed

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[56] Ibid.
[57] Cameron, *FBD*, 54.
[58] John Winram(1492-1582) was one of the co-authors of the *Scots Confession of Faith* and the *First Book of Discipline*. He was elected as the Superintendent of Fife and Strathearn on April 1561, though he was 69-years-old at that time.

surprising energy and vigour in visiting churches in his province'[59]. These instances suggests that the superintendents tried to fulfil their duties of oversight.

3. Abolition of the Superintendent

Although the superintendents were expected to play central roles in the church and to fulfil numerous functions, the office was disappearing throughout the 1570's. Documental trace of the disappearance can first be detected in the discussions of the General Assembly in August 1573. There, the Assembly discussed the roles of the superintendents, answering a proposal submitted by the Lothian synod. It was confirmed that:

> the extracts of the superintendent's office, registred in the Booke of Discipline, may be givin to the minister of everie province, to the end that the superintendents may be tried thereby; and that, as they are found diligent, to be continued or changed.[60]

This shows that there was a gap between the works which the superintendent actually administered and what was expected of them in the *First Book of Discipline.* The General Assembly concluded that every minister should possess the copy of the *First Book of Discipline* and made it a standard whenever they examined whether the superintendents fulfilled their task or not. In March 1574, the General Assembly discussed a proposition regarding the resignation of three superintendents, though it was not passed.[61] This seems to be a turning point for the abolition of the office. From 1575, the General Assembly began discussions on the new polity. However, nothing

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[59] Kirk, *Patterns of Reform*, 178.

[60] Calderwood, III: 280. This is a part of articles submitted to the general assembly from the Lothian synod, held on 6th October 1573.

[61] Ibid., 304. It was argued that: 'The superintendent of Angus, of Lothian, and Stratherne, demitted their office of superintendentrie, purelie and simpliciter in the Assemblieis hand; yitt the Assemblie did not accept of their dimissioun, but continued them.'

was mentioned about the office of superintendent and consequently there was no mention of it either, in the *Second Book of Discipline* in 1578. Through this process, the office was removed from the new design of church government.

In thinking of the reason for the abolition, the defects concerning the Reformers' expectations of the superintendents should be examined. It was designed in the *First Book of Discipline* that there should be ten or twelve superintendents in total in Scotland. However, only five were appointed to be superintendents and the rest were vacant till the time of its abolition. From the beginning, the total design for the system of superintendents was never fully executed as the church was struggling with the problem of finding candidates for the office.

However the lack of suitable ministers for the office was not the only reason for the abolition of the superintendent. We proceed to discuss several other reasons for the abolition of this office.

First of all, the role was too heavy for one person to fulfil. It is clear that the superintendent was intended to lead a most active and hard life at that time[62]. Winram's case demonstrated that even a conscientious superintendent may nevertheless fail to meet the full demands of his office. The responsibilities attributed to the superintendent were clearly too great for one person to accomplish. After enumerating the roles of superintendent, Henderson remarks: 'It is not surprising to hear that all of them complained that they could not do the work'.[63] Evidently, the numerous roles and responsibilities of the superintendent were highly idealistic and were never fully performed from the beginning.

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[62] Cameron, *FBD*, 52.
[63] Henderson, op. cit., 48.

Secondly, due to a similarity of office between that of the superintendent and bishop, there was the ever present danger of the one being mistaken for the other. There was a fear that this might inadvertently result in the recovery of a hierarchical Episcopal system of church government in Scotland. John Erskine of Dun, the superintendent of Angus, declared in 1571 that 'I understand a bishop or superintendent to be but one office; and where the one is the other is.'[64] Erskine was probably not alone in holding such an opinion of the office. Thus it is arguable that the existence of the office of superintendent became a trigger for bishops recovering their power in the church because of their superior functions to other ministers.

Thirdly, there were financial constraints in sustaining the office of the superintendent. [65] Such financial concerns were raised in General Assembly discussions during the early 1560s.[66] Superintendents were required to go on rounds in their dioceses and were prohibited from staying in one place long term. To enable them to do so, they had to be financially supported with stipends. However a system for the management of patrimony and stipends had not yet been properly established at this time. During the time of Reformation, these were still in hands of landowners and under the control of Civil powers. In the first two decades following the Reformation in 1560, there was a great struggle between Church and Civil powers, the former insisting on transferring the management of church patrimonies to the Church, and the latter refusing to relinquish their right to control and manage money from the Church lands they possessed. Besides, Kirk raises other reasons such as political instability,[67]

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[64] Calderwood, III: 160.
[65] Kirk, *Patterns of Refo*rm, 168-173. Here, Kirk explained that the financial problem of providing benefices at that time was one of the serious reasons why the superintendents were not nominated after 1565.
[66] Calderwood, II: 226,
[67] Kirk, op. cit., 168-173.

while Cameron opines that another reason was that of the failure of the reconstruction of dioceses.[68]

In sum, the immediate need of the Scottish church during the time of the Reformation was clearly evangelical and ministerial: 'to erect and plant Churches'. Accordingly, the objective of the Reformation was to accomplish a 'total Reformation of Religion in the whole Realm'.[69] The final chapter of The *First Book of Discipline* summarizes the controlling purposes of the Reformers:

> And thereof there bee two sorts the one utterly necessarie, as that the Word be truly preached, the sacraments rightly administred, common prayers publickly made, that the children and rude persons be instructed in the chiefe points of religion and that offences be corrected and punished. These things be so necessarie that without the same there is no face of a visible kirk.[70]

These words highlight the primary goals and concerns of the Reformers, which were already explained as the 'notes of true kirk' in the eighteenth chapter of the *Scots Confession*. The roles and functions of the office of superintendent were clearly designed to address these goals and concerns. Therefore, the authors of *the First Book of Discipline* deemed 'it a thing most expedient at this time'[71], that an instrument responsible for evangelisation and supervision be found immediately. The reformers' thought was practical. However, it would be impossible for them to build a new system from nothing. Thus, they instituted a new office of superintendent in which the geographical arrangements of the existing Episcopal system was taken over almost as they were before.[72] But they added the spiritual functions of evangelization to the office. The Reformers might have deemed this as the most 'realistic' means to promote the work of evangelization. However, the functions which they expected of

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[68] Cameron, *FBD*, 125.
[69] Knox, *Works*, vol. II, 280; Burleigh, op. cit, 165.
[70] Cameron, *FBD*, 180. This is the ninth chapter entitled 'Concerning the Policie of the Kirk'; see also Burleigh, op. cit, 166.
[71] Cameron, *FBD*, 115.
[72] On Episcopacy in Scotland, see, e.g. D. F. Wright, 'Episcopacy', *DSCHT*, 295-6

the superintendents were too 'idealistic'. These were the primary challenges which the Reformers faced in the church at the beginning of the Reformation in 1560.

III. The Exercise

In studying the eve of Scottish Presbyterianism, the 'exercise' should not be missed, because it is often described with such various phrases as 'Proto-presbyterial gatherings'[73], 'the quasi-presbyterian *classes*'[74], 'the germ of the later presbytery'[75], 'the nucleus of the new presbyteries'[76], and 'a foreshadowing of the presbytery'[77], etc. These phrases clearly indicate a close relationship between the exercise and the origin of presbytery. The introduction of the exercise into Scotland clearly promoted cooperation and fellowship among adjacent churches in each local area. Hence followed the establishment of Presbyterian system. Consequently, the General Assembly in 1579 concluded concerning the exercise: 'The exercise may be judged a presbyterie'.[78] Thus, it is certain that the exercise had an inseparable relationship to the later presbytery.

In order to know what were the Reformers' designs concerning this practice, we turn again to their statements in the *First Book of Discipline*, concerning it. It was introduced:

> To the end that the Kirk of God may have a tryall of mens knowledge, judgements, graces and utterances, as also such that have somewhat profited in

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[73] Hazlett, op. cit, 65.
[74] Ibid., 70.
[75] Kirk, *SBD*, 149.
[76] Henderson, *The Church of Scotland – A Short History*, 61.
[77] Donaldson, 'The Polity of the Scottish Church 1560-1600', *RSCHS* 11, 222.
[78] Calderwood, III: 450. See also below p.83.

Gods word, may from time to time grow in more full perfection to serve the Kirk, as necessitie shall require, it is more expedient that in every towne where Schooles and repaire of learned men are, there be in one certain day every week appointed to that exercise which S.Paul calls prophecying; The order whereof is expressed by him in thir words : 'Let two or three Prophets speak, and let the rest judge. But if anything be revealed to him that sits by, let the former keep silence. Yee may one by one all prophesie that all may learne and all may receive consolation. And the spirit, that is, the judgements of the Prophets are subject to the Prophets. ...

This exercise is a thing most necessarie for the Kirk of God this day in Scotland. For thereby, as said is, shall the Kirk have judgement and knowledge of the graces, gifts, and utterances of every man within their body. The simple and such as have somewhat profited shall be encouraged daily to studie and to proceed in knowledge; the kirk shall be edified. For this exercise must be patent to such as list to heare and learne; and every man shall have liberty to utter and declare his minde and knowledge to the comfort and consolation of the Kirk.[79]

What the *First Book of Discipline* clearly affirms is that: 'This exercise is a thing most necessarie for the Kirk of God this day in Scotland'. Hence we have to consider why the Reformers thought it most necessary at that time and why the exercise was introduced in the first period of the Scottish Reformation.

1. Biblical Foundation of the 'Exercise'

When we consider the feature of the exercise, it is remarkable that the authors of the *First Book of Discipline* cited the biblical text of 1 Cor. 14: 29-32, where in their view, Paul described the practice. According to the words of Paul, believers were encouraged to engage in this exercise during the apostolic period. The Reformers read into this passage what were to become the practices of the exercise: firstly Scriptures are read, then someone comments on it. Subsequently a second speaker adds something to confirm, correct or supplement the comments. A third speaker is then allowed to add further comments if these do not bring confusion. Finally the

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[79] Cameron, *FBD*, 187-9.

participants discuss questions and doubts about the addressed comments and the Scripture text.

Although we don't have any means to prove that such meetings were held in the early church, Paul clearly exhorted the members of the Corinthian church to engage in such practice. Henderson interprets the importance of the biblical foundation in this manner:

> 'Knox was led to look for biblical support for the Exercise since it was an institution which appealed to him as in line with the doctrine of the Priesthood of all Believers and fitted in with the Calvinistic view of the superiority of reason over the sense, as that was'.[80]

It is clear that the practice of the exercise depended on how the Bible was understood in Scotland at the time.

2. Roots in the Reformed Tradition

When we look for the origin of the exercise in the Reformed tradition, it soon becomes clear that it was not designed originally by the Scottish Reformers. Since 1537 the Reformed churches in the Swiss territory, mainly Zurich and Geneva, had organized biblical study meetings, as an essential part of their organisation. Meetings were held weekly where the Scripture was studied in the original languages.[81] In Geneva, for example, the *Ecclesiastical Ordinance* (1541) states that: 'It will be expected that all the ministers, in order to conserve purity and harmony of doctrine among them, shall meet together on an appointed day in the week to discuss Scripture and none shall absent himself without proper excuse'.[82] This meeting would take place

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[80] Henderson, 'The Exercise', *RSCHS* 7, 15
[81] Cameron, *FBD*, 187.
[82] Henderson, op. cit, 16.

every Friday and was called 'congregationis coetus' in Latin.[83] Similar practices were also held at the English Congregation in Geneva where John Knox worshipped during his exile. According to the Form of Prayer used in the congregation; 'Every week once, the congregation assemble to hear some place of the Scriptures orderly expounded. At which time it is lawful for every man to speak or enquire, as God shall move his heart, and the text minister occasion'.[84] These phrases were also adopted in the *Book of Common Order* in Scotland in 1562.[85] Thus, something like the exercise had already been accepted widely in Geneva by early 1540s. Thereafter, such meetings prevailed among other reformed churches in Germany, France and England.

There is a discussion about the roots of the exercise in Scotland, in relation to its practice in other reformed countries, prior to the Scottish Reformation. Henderson raises three possible connections: firstly, the practice in Geneva as mentioned above; secondly, 'Colloquies' in the *Book of Order* in France; thirdly, 'Prophesying' directed by John á Lasco (or Jan Łaski) in London.[86] It is possible to trace a link with the Genevan exercise because Knox himself stayed there and participated in it. On the other hand, McGregor emphasizes that á Lasco's 'Prophesying' was more closely related to the exercise introduced into Scotland than others.[87] Henderson describes the manner of prophesying exercised by á Lasco: 'Every Thursday morning there was ''prophesyng''. A sermon was delivered by a minister, and the elders and certain qualified individual members were encouraged to bring forward points not correctly or not sufficiently explained in the exposition, and the preacher replied'.[88] These processes are very similar to Paul's instructions in 1 Corinthians. Regarding á Lasco's

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[83] Ibid.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Ibid., 16-20.
[87] Ibid., 19; See also Macgregor, *The Scottish Presbyterian polity*, 53-4.
[88] Henderson, op. cit., 19.

prophesying, some regard it as a copy of Zurich's, others as patterned after Geneva's. [89] Although Macgregor indicates that: 'Knox's Exercises were closely related to the prophesying of á Lasco rather than to the congregations of Calvin', her suggestion seems questionable because of the lack of recorded minutes for such an exercise.[90] Further we do not know the real conditions of how 'Knox's Exercise' was actually managed. Although there is no evidence that Knox was acquainted with á Lasco personally, it is possible that Knox had opportunities for making himself familiar with the practices of á Lasco's church before the accession of Mary Tudor drove Knox out of England. Possibly Knox was aware of the use of prophesying before he saw them at work in Geneva.[91]

We see, therefore, that the practice of exercises can be found in some reformed traditions prior to the Scottish Reformation. However, none of these afford conclusive evidence to enable us to decide the exact roots of the exercise in Scotland because each tradition had some relationship with the Scottish Reformers.

3. Purpose of its institution into Scotland

In considering the purpose of the 'exercise' in Scotland, we need to remember the religious condition of Scotland just before the Reformation. The distribution of the vernacularised Bible was prohibited and commentaries on the Bible were hardly available. As McGrath puts it: 'The idea of *scriptura sola*, ''by Scripture alone'', became one of the great slogans of the reformers as they sought to bring the practices

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[89] Ibid. According to Henderson, he mentions Van Schelven as one of the former, H.H. Kuyper as one of the later and Macgregor also supports the later.
[90] Ibid.
[91] Ibid.

and beliefs of the church back into line with those of the Golden Age of Christianity'.[92] This assertion is also true for the attitude of the Scottish Reformation to Scripture. If we turn to the *First Book of Discipline*, we can notice its emphasis on Scripture's importance. For example, it was mentioned foremost in the first chapter of the *First Book of Discipline*:

> we affirme that 'all Scripture inspired of God is profitable to instruct,' to reprove, and to exhort. In which bookes of old and new Testaments, we affirme that all thing necessary for the instruction of the Church, and to make the man of God perfect, is contained and sufficiently expressed.[93]

Furthermore this doctrine about the sufficiency of the Bible had been noted as well as in the eighteenth chapter of the *Scots Confession of Faith*;

> we the inhabitantis of the Realme of Scotland, professoris of Christ Jesus, professis our selfis to have in our cities, townes, and places reformed, for the doctrine taucht in our Kirkis, conteined in the writen Worde of God, to wit, in the buiks of the Auld and New Testamentis, in those buikis we meane quhilk of the ancient have been reputed canonicall. In the quhilk we affirme, that all thingis necessary to be believed for the salvation of mankind is sufficiently expressed. The interpretation quhairof, we confesse, neither appertaines to private nor publick persone, neither zit to ony Kirk, for ony preheminence or prerogative, personallie or locallie, quhilk ane hes above ane uther, bot apperteines to the Spirite of God, be the quhilk also the Scripture was written.[94]

Thus we can clearly detect similar tones concerning the sufficiency and authority of Scripture in both primary documents of the Scottish Reformation. The exercise was plainly to offer ministers opportunities to 'have somewhat profited in Gods word', and to make them recover the central position of the Bible in the Church order. It was necessary for ministers to be encouraged to study the Bible and its doctrine in order faithfully to fulfil their preaching ministry according to God's Word. The Reformers

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[92] McGrath, op. cit, 134.
[93] Cameron, *FBD*, 87.
[94] Philip Schaff (ed), *Creeds of the Evangelical Protestant Churches*, 462-3; Henderson, *Scots Confession,1560 and Negative Confession,1581 with Introduction*, 77.

must have intended that all ministers and office-bearers in Scotland come to true biblical knowledge through such meetings.

Bishops, superintendents and commissioners in particular, were expected to attend the exercise because they were responsible to the General Assembly for directing the exercise in which 'every effort was to be made to provide the Church with suitably qualified ministers'.[95] The attendance of some ministers at the exercise was even supported by their Kirk Sessions. According to existent documents called the *Peebles Charters*, the Peebles' Kirk Session arranged to pay their minister's expense in travelling to Edinburgh to attend the exercise for their theological training during the 1560s.[96]

It was not only ministers but also candidates for the ministry who were strongly recommended to attend the exercise. Cameron notes that: 'This exercise was considered particularly valuable for young men and others who might wish to become ministers. When the weekly exercise was set up in St Andrews, all masters and students in the three colleges were required to be present by a statute of the University dated 7th January 1562'.[97] This shows that the exercise was seen as having educational purposes, namely, the improvement of the biblical and theological understanding of candidates for the ministry. At the same time, it was regarded as an effective means of recruiting pastors.[98]

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[95] Cameron, *FBD*, 43.
[96] Kirk, *Patterns of Reform*, 113-4. This is a case where an individual church undertook the financial expenses for the minister's attendance at the exercise.
[97] Cameron, *FBD*, 187-8.
[98] Hazlett, 'Exercise or Prophesying', *DSCHT*, 311.

4. Transformation of the Functions of the 'Exercise'

(1) The Obligation of Attendance

Cameron suggests that the exercise wasn't necessarily welcomed by all ministers as the leaders of the Reformation experienced some difficulties in their efforts to encourage ministers from the surrounding parishes to attend the exercise regularly.[99]

At the General Assembly in June 1565, some ministers were tried and censured 'for not repairing to the exercise of prophecie'.[100] Moreover, at the Assembly in March 1573, Winram, the superintendent of Fife was accused by John Erskine of Dunn, the superintendent of Angus and Mernes, of letting the exercise decay.[101] Again at the General Assembly in 1574, attention was paid to the neglect of the exercise elsewhere as well as Fife. Subsequently the Assembly of March 1575 responded with enactment:

> For redressing of the neglect of the exercise of prophecie, and negligence of bishops, Superintendents, and commissioners not attending , the samine being so necessary a meane to the furtherance of sound doctrine, it is statuted and ordeanned, that all bishops, superintendents, and commissioners, within their bounds, be carefull and pointed thereto, and speciallie the Superintendent of Fife.[102]

In spite of this Act, Winram, the superintendent of Fife, neglected the exercise and was accused again in the Assembly in August 1575.[103] The obligation of attendance clearly had been imposed upon leaders like superintendents, bishops and

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[99] Cameron, *FBD*, 44; Kirk, op. cit., 86.
[100] Calderwood, II: 291.
[101] Calderwood, III: 273.
[102] Calderwood, III: 344.
[103] Calderwood, III: 349-50. However, John Winram, the superintendent of Fife, was 83-year-old at that time, so it would be clear that he could not fulfil his role as the superintendent at all.

commissioners, who were expected to play instructive roles in the exercise. However, the Assembly of April 1576 passed an Act stating:

> Forasmuche as the dishaunting and intermissioun of the exercise, almost everie where, is greatlie lamented, and the cheef occasioun is laike of punishment of such as ather sould prophecie themselves, or occupie the secund place of additioun; therefore, the Assemblie present hath thought meet, and ordeanned, that all ministers and readers within eight myles, or otherwise at the discretioun of the visiter, sall resort to the place of exercise eache day of exercise, and namelie, the ministers that sould prophecie and adde; ...[104]

Thus not only the leaders, but eventually, all ministers and readers were ordered to attend the exercise, for which penalties for absence were imposed. Thus it is no wonder that, as Henderson mentions: 'one infers that while the exercise was undoubtedly helpful it was looked upon rather as a matter of duty than as one of pleasure'.[105] These cases support Cameron's former suggestion that every minister did not necessarily welcome attendance at the exercise.

(2) **An Administrative Body**

During the 1560s, because not all the intended superintendents were appointed, and were not reappointed when superintendents left office, there was a clear need for an agent commissioned by the General Assembly to resolve problems in congregations. The General Assembly and the synod were basically held only twice a year, so there was a need for someone who could represent the church authoritatively and deal with the matters emerging in relation either to civil government or to local congregations. Then the superintendents were expected to be authorities in each district. However, by the early 1570s, there was an increasing recognition of the limitation of the

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[104] Calderwood, III: 375.
[105] Henderson, op. cit, 21.

superintendent and the potential for the exercises to play administrative functions. In spite of the fact that the exercise was started as a meeting mainly for the ministers to improve their biblical understanding, its character and functions were gradually changed so that it became a consistorial conference of ministers in the administrative districts.

Almost nothing is known about the operations of the exercise after 1561 owing to the lack of minutes. However there are some indications in the records of the General Assemblies that the exercise sometimes provided opportunities for ministers to discuss various matters concerning church polity such as synod or General Assembly businesses and disciplinary matters. For example, when the Lothian synod submitted ten proposals, which were discussed on 8th October 1572 for presenting to the next General Assembly on March 1573, the first and second of those concerned the exercise:

> Imprimis, The brethrein of the forsaid coventioun crave, that the copie of the Acts of the General Assemblie be given to everie exercise, to the end that everie minister may have knowledge what order to observe in their proceedings: for it is most certan that, through ignorance of the forsaid acts, manie faults are committed which otherwise would not be done.
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> Secundlie, It is craved by the brethrein, that such maters as fall out betwixt the synodall conventiouns and General Assemblies be headed and noted to everie exercise twentie days before the General Assemblie, that the brethrein may be rypelie advised with the samine;... [106]

These proposals of the Lothian synod were ratified by the General Assembly. Shaw describes the ratification: 'The synod of Lothian ...made the first move to have the exercise brought into the organisation of the Church as a court under the synod'.[107] This ratification means that the new function was officially added to the exercise.

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[106] Calderwood, III: 279.
[107] Shaw, *The General Assemblies of the Church of Scotland 1560-1600*, 176.

Then, as previously noted, the General Assembly in March 1574 discussed the matter of the three superintendents' resignation, though it was not approved this time. [108]

Clearly, the exercise was not being regarded merely as a study meeting by 1572 at the latest. Kirk also notes that: 'the exercise had already assumed administrative duties by the early 1570s; it acted as a convenient meeting point for conference and deliberation; and it offered a ready-made solution to the problem of substituting a common eldership for individual Kirk Sessions thereby forging closer links between neighbouring churches in each district'.[109] In the middle of the 1570s, as the importance of the exercise was realized, the role of the exercise became more administrative. As an administrative body, the exercise overlapped and came into competition with the office of superintendent to some degree. In this overlap, the exercise gained increasing importance as it gradually replaced and took over the functions which the superintendents could not adequately fulfil.

In sum, as we see above, the Reformers first aimed at evangelizing throughout the realms of Scotland and establishing the true church founded on the Scriptures. They instituted the office of superintendent and the practice of the exercise to spread and familiarize the Bible in Scotland. The preaching ministry was located at the centre of the Reformers' concern at the point of the Reformation.[110]

At the same time, the Reformers also designed to concentrate the administrative powers upon the superintendents instead of bishops. However, the obligation of superintendents was too huge to fulfil, so that their design had to be modified. The exercise substituted some superintendents' administrative functions as

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[108] Calderwood, III: 304; see above, p.15.
[109] Kirk, *SBD*, 105.
[110] Robert M. Healey, 'The Preaching Ministry in Scotland's First Book of Discipline', *Church History* 58, 351.

an interim means to cover the weakness of the church government. The tangible advantage of the exercise was that it promoted the relationship among ministers and knitted adjacent churches together in each local area as well as that it offered the opportunities to study the Scriptures together. By the middle of the 1570s, the office of superintendents had come to the end of the road, so that the importance of exercise increased. This condition is clearly reflected in the re-design of the church government during the middle of the 1570s, which introduced the Presbyterian system in Scotland.

CHAPTER TWO

Reconstruction of the System of Church Government

-The Formation of the *Second Book of Discipline* and its contents-

This chapter focuses on the *Second Book of Discipline* which is regarded as 'the first explicit statement of Scottish presbyterianism'.[111] Our discussion will cover: first, the reason why the *Book of Discipline* was revised from the First to the Second; secondly, the process by which it was formed; and thirdly, the contents of what it provided.

I. Reasons for Revision: A Post-Reformation Standstill

We briefly survey the post Reformation context of church government in Scotland before examining the reason for the revision undertaken by the *Second Book of Discipline*, because the reason was inevitably related to the political context at that time.

As we have seen above, the Church struggled with the organizational challenges posed by the office of superintendent. This constituted a turning point, necessitating and enabling reconsideration of its practices of church government and ecclesiastical policies. Two factors explain the change in the system of church

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[111] Kirk, *SBD*, vii.

government. The one factor arose from the existent Episcopal system, and the other from the financial situation of the Church at that time.

The church had been struggling against remaining episcopacy since 1560. Although the church decided to abolish the office of bishops in 1560, it had not necessarily been abolished entirely after the Scottish Reformation. Furthermore, the Episcopal system was re-established through the Leith Convention on January 1572 with a powerful intervention from the Regent Morton. The Concordat of Leith assigned to the Reformed church the ancient diocesan structure and introduced Protestant bishops, and infringed on a number of the principles of the Scottish Reformation concerning the ministry of the Church, such as:

> the rejection of state interference in matters of the church, the rejection of the formal involvement of a minister in civil affairs, the emphasis on ministerial parity which did not allow a minister to rule over fellow ministers, and the rejection of the Episcopal practice of the bishop being a minister at large, not attached to a particular congregation.[112]

The main struggle was the problem of whether the authority for the nomination or designation of bishops belonged to the church or to the temporal powers.[113] At that time, the office of bishops had been closer to the temporal power than to the church. They did not administer the ministry of the Word and Sacraments, so the works of bishops were separated from the ministry. This situation was never readily accepted by

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[112] Jurgens Johannes van Wyk, *The Historical Development of the Offices according to the Presbyterian Tradition of Scotland*, 42; Kirk, *SBD*, 79.

[113] H.R. Sefton, 'Tulchan Bishops', *DSCHT*, 830; G. D. Mullan, *Episcopacy in Scotland: the History of an Idea, 1560-1638*, 47. Mullan sums the main points of Beza's reply concerning the office of bishops to the letter from Lord Glamis: 'Beza's judgement was that there were three kinds of bishops- of God, of man, and of the devil. God's bishop was identical with the pastor, called to feed the church, and who helped to exercise authority in the church by meeting with the other ministers and elders or governors (as distinct from the pastors) in a body known as the eldership or seigniory. Perhaps remarkably, in view of Beza's radical political theory which included the possibility of tyrannicide, he counselled that the bishop of God was to be subject even to a profane magistrate. The bishop of man was he who held greater powers than the rest of the ministers, but who was 'limited with certain orders or rules provided against tyranny'. However, this enhancement of jurisdiction was not to be found in the church assembly. The devil's bishop was the second stage of deterioration from the original 'ordained of God'. These bishops had exceeded the bounds and entered upon a tyrannical regime, arrogating to themselves power to elect, depose, and excommunicate'. As Mullan suggests, the bishops in Scotland had not been regarded as 'bishops of God' at all, but 'of man', otherwise 'of the devil'.

the church. Although the church newly instituted the office of superintendents whom the church could nominate to the office by herself, the system of superintendents was at a standstill overall.

Moreover, the financial situation of the church was most unsatisfactory. The salaries for superintendents and funds to meet the expenses of itinerating parishes were simply not available. Furthermore, the existence of the bishops also brought serious financial problems into the Church. The existent bishops received their stipends not according to their works of ministry but because they owned the lands of their church. The reformed churches needed money to sustain the life and works of ministers and superintendents, to carry out the evangelical ministries of the churches, to support schools and hospitals, and to care for the poor. However they could not receive enough money because the bulk of the patrimony of the church had been sucked up by such bishops as their stipends. Further the nobility and the Crown who had nominated such bishops also received these monies. Therefore, as is well known, such bishops were called 'Tulchan Bishops' at that time.[114]

After the Leith Convention in January 1572, the General Assembly held in August declined to accept Episcopacy as part of a lasting settlement.[115] After that, successive General Assemblies repeatedly discussed whether 'the bishops, as they are now in the Kirk of Scotland, have their function in the Word of God'.[116] At last, the General Assembly in 1575 decided that: 'if anie bishop sall be found who thath not suche qualiteis as the Word of God requireth, that he be tried by the Generall

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[114] Ibid. Sefton explains that: 'A tulchan was a stuffed calf-skin placed beside a cow to persuade it to yield its milk and the Tulchan Bishops were a device to milk the ancient bishoprics of Scotland in the interests of the nobility'.
[115] Calderwood, III: 221-2.
[116] Calderwood, III: 355.

Assemblie *de novo*, and so deposed'.[117] Thus, the Assembly steered for the opposite of the Leith Convention in 1572. Therefore, Burleigh says that: 'The second Book of Discipline was in short a demand for a complete reversal of the ecclesiastical policy pursued by Morton since 1572, and successive General Assemblies sought to carry out the programme on their own authority.'[118] Kirk also puts the character of this book: 'The Book itself was largely the product of ecclesiastical dissatisfaction with the Leith agreement in 1572'.[119] From this decision of the General Assembly in 1575 against the Leith concordat, the church actually started to reform the system of ecclesiastical polity.

II. The Making of the *Second Book of Discipline* by the General Assembly

1. 1575 – Precursors to the reconstruction begun at the General Assembly of 1576

Kirk states that the reconstruction of the church government in the General Assembly started in April 1576.[120] Although Kirk's dating is correct, it is important to pay attention to the discussions which were held in the previous Assembly in August 1575. John Row records about this discussion:

> But now the General Assemblie of this Kirk began more seriouslie to speak of the Government of the Kirk; and thereore, in the yeare 1575, the question wes proponed in the Assemblie holden at Edinburgh, Augst 6, concerning Bishops, If their name Bishop, being appropriated to some few, and not to all the Ministers of the Gospell, and if their autoritie and jurisdiction over and above

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[117] Ibid.
[118] Burleigh, *A Church History of Scotland*, 201.
[119] Kirk, *Patterns of Reform*, 361.
[120] Kirk, *SBD*, 46. Here he writes about the Second Book of Discipline that: 'A start was made in April 1576'.

their brethren, and places whilk they at that tyme had in the Kirk, was lawfull and tolerable? [121]

Although this discussion was designed to make the meaning of the title of bishop clear, it inevitably dealt with not only the office of bishop but also the polity of the church as a whole. The first line of this citation states 'the General Assemblie of this Kirk began more seriouslie to speak of the *Government of the Kirk'*.[122] This Assembly appointed six persons, George Hay, John Row and David Lindsay, for the affirmation of the bishop, and John Craig, James Lawson and Andrew Melville for the negative, 'to reason, confer, treat and dispute upon the said question about the office of the bishop and to report the result of their disputes, their judgements and opinions to the Assembly.'[123] These appointed men reported their opinions in the tenth session of this Assembly. John Row summed up two points of consensus among them about the offices of bishop and superintendent:

> That the name of Bishop in Scripture is commone to all them that hes a particulare flock, over the whilk he hes a peculiar charge, to preach the word, administer the sacraments, and, with concurring of his elders, to exercise discipline.
>
> Out of this number may be chosen (understand especiallie *in ecclesia constituenda*) some who may have power to oversee and visite such a praecinct bounds, beyonde his awin flock, as the Generall Assemblie shall appoint ; and in these bounds to appoynt ministers, with consent of the ministers of that province, and of the flock to which they shall be appointed ; also to appoint elders and deacons in everie principall congregation, (wherein yet there is none) with consent of the people thereof ; and finallie, to suspend ministers for reasonable causes, with consent of the ministers of the province foresaid.[124]

Concerning this discussion, someone may say that it was unfair in some degree because all who were appointed to be on the affirmative side were not Episcopalians. As such, it seems to be only a one-sided discussion. Unfortunately we do not have

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[121] John Row, *The History of the Kirk of Scotland*, 54.
[122] Emphasis my own
[123] Calderwood, III: 355; Row, op. cit., 56-57.
[124] Row, op. cit., 56-57.

access to the contents of what was actually discussed by those nominated at that time. However, Row's summary clearly shows what kind of matters the ministers thought seriously about at that time and what consensus of opinions existed around the office of bishop. Furthermore, the consensus shows their consciousness that this was an urgent issue for the reformed Church in Scotland at that time. The first point clearly mentioned the consistency between the true office of bishop and the contents of chapter eighteen in the *Scots Confession of Faith* dealing with the notes of the true church. Then the second point also dealt with the practical matters of ministry in the Church, especially the work of oversight or supervision with consent of the ministers in each province. If the debate concerned nothing more than the narrow definition of the bishop, these conclusions would never have followed. The discussion was clearly related to an examination of the practical role of the ministry. Thus this discussion seems to have become a trigger for the reconstruction of church government in the General Assembly. Further, Bishop Spottiswoode,[125] an important Episcopalian church historian at that time, noted: 'In this Church this year [1575] began the innovations to break forth that to this day have kept it in continual unquietness. Mr. Andrew Melville, who was lately come from Geneva, ... labouring with a burning desire to bring into this Church the presbyterial discipline of Geneva.'[126] Thus Spottiswoode mentioned 'this year' as the start of 'unquietness' which indicates the struggle between presbyterinaism and episcopalianism, which was to continue in Scotland during the next half century.

As a result, the General Assembly of 1575 affirmed clearly that a bishop was essentially a pastor of one congregation. Any supervision which a pastor might

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[125] Kirk, 'Spottiswoode, John', *DSCHT*, 789. Spottiswoode (1565-1639) was Archbishop of Glasgow (1603-15) and St. Andrews (1615-38) and wrote *The History of the Church of Scotland* by the requirement of King James.
[126] Spottiswoode, *History of the Church of Scotland,* vol. II, 200.

exercise beyond his own congregation was considered a duty which had been entrusted to him by the authority of the Church, not by that of civil power or by any individual authority. Therefore the Assembly decided to call upon Morton's bishops to regularize their position by each taking upon themselves a particular church. This report would be debated again at the next Assembly held on April 1576. As we see above, the discussion on the office of bishop in the Assembly of 1575 became an important first step to reform the system of church government.

2. 1576 - Organization of the Special Committee to draft the New Church Government

In 1576, the General Assembly met twice a year in April and October. In the former Assembly, at first, they tried the bishops of Glasgow, Dunblane, Moray, Ross and Dunkeld because these had not fulfilled their role as bishops at all. These bishops were accused on the grounds that they had neither fulfilled their duties for any particular church nor repaired damaged churches within their district.[127] These kind of problems around the bishops had already been acknowledged and often discussed in former Assemblies. However, this Assembly decided to take specific countermeasures. One of the problems they recognized was that such bishops didn't fulfil their duty of oversight over their district at all. Therefore this Assembly spent much time discussing 'the office of visitor' which was involved in that of the bishop, superintendent and commissioner.[128] This Assembly re-emphasized the necessity for bishops to fulfil their duty of oversight and recognized that:

> Forasmuche as the great and intolerable furthein lying to the charge of bishops, superintendents, and commissioners of countries, is, and hath beene, the verie cause, that all the kirks within their bounds could not be duelie overseene, and

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[127] Calderwood, III: 358.
[128] Calderwood, III: 364.

consequentlie good discipline was neglected for lacke of visitatioun; therefore, it is thought meete, that suche bounds be appointed to everie commissioner or visiter, as may be duelie visited and overseene by everie one of them.[129]

Furthermore, when the visitors discovered some troubles in the dioceses, this Assembly agreed what they should deal with concrete procedures:

> As to the suspensioun or deposition of anie minister from his office, the samine sall be done by the visiter, and the ministerie in the said synodall Assembleis, the caus being there tried, particular intimatioun being made to his particular congregation to be present; exept some urgent caus occurred, that it be necessar to doe the same with short advice; as if the minister commit some notorious crime, whereby hi cannot longer be reteanned in his office. In the which caus, the visiter may convene these that are upon the exercise in that province, and they, with him and the sessioun of the particular kirk, to proceed to suspensioun, by lawfull triell of the offence.[130]

What is apparent in this extract is that this Assembly reconfirmed the role of the exercise to deal with urgent cases of discipline in the dioceses. As to the ministerial supervision which had been debated in the previous Assemblies, it was declared that the power of visitation belonged not to an individual such as a bishop, but to the Church herself.[131]

The Assembly, at the same time, organized a committee consisting of twenty-two members 'For making overture of the policie and jurisdiction of the Kirk, and uttering the plain and simple meaning of the Assemblie therein'.[132] Behind this, Kirk indicates there was also a requirement from the Regent to the Assembly: 'In 1576 the Regent Morton finally conceded to the Assembly that if the Church were not prepared to adhere to the Leith settlement of 1572 a revised formulation should be prepared'.[133] Therefore Kirk counts this institution of new committee as an actual starting point for

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[129] Ibid., 363.
[130] Ibid., 364.
[131] Kirk, *SBD*, 79.
[132] Calderwood, III: 362; Kirk, *SBD*, 46.
[133] Kirk, 'Second Book of Discipline', *DSCHT*, 765.

the composition of the *Second Book of Discipline.*[134] Furthermore this committee was well balanced geographically because 'six members came from north of the Tay, six from the area between Perth and Stirling, five from the Lothians and five from the west'[135].

After this Assembly, each nominated commissioner gathered at David Cunningham's house in Glasgow to discuss 'the heeds of policie'.[136] This committee was moderated by the host, namely Cunningham. Calderwood comments about this committee that: 'He (Cunningham) moderated the reasoning, gathered up the conclusiouns, and putt all in writ and order, to be reported to the Assemblie.'[137] Here, it is noteworthy that Calderwood indicated the important role played in this committee not only by Melville but also Cunningham. This committee formed a draft within almost a hundred days to submit to the next Assembly.

In the later Assembly held in October, the committee presented the draft 'upon the heeds of policie' as their judgements and conclusions. Although this became the main talking points in this Assembly, this draft was not approved at this time. Calderwood noted that:

> Because of the multitude of the books of the commissioners which are to be examined in the General Assemblies, and the large time spent therin; beside, suche as are deputed thereto know not the proceedings of the said commissioners so weill as their synodall assemblis:...[138]

The draft was composed within a few months after the last Assembly. Hence it had not yet been submitted to each synod when the Assembly met. As a result, the Assembly decided after long discussion that: 'the books of visitors or commissioners be tried and

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[134] Kirk, *SBD*, 46.
[135] Ibid., 47.
[136] Calderwood, III: 368. Unfortunately, nothing has survived by way of detail regarding this meeting, such as when and how many times they met together and what they discussed.
[137] Ibid.
[138] Ibid., 375.

surveyed in their synodall asemblie, and reported again to the General Assemblie by the commissioners'[139]. Thus the judgement on this draft of new ecclesiastical polity became a standing deliberation till next Assembly.

3. 1577 – Discussions in the General Assembly concerning the Draft

In 1577, the General Assembly was held twice, in April and October. In the former Assembly, the committee presented again the draft of a new church polity. Calderwood notes that: 'Forasmuch as the cheef and principall argument to be treated and reasoned upon in this generall conventioun is, the policie of the kirk'.[140] This citation shows that the discussion about this draft became a central subject of this Assembly again. It seems that, after the various synods had read the draft, as required by the previous general assembly, no compelling objections were raised against it.

The draft was read publicly in the second session, and in the third session each topic of 'the heids of the Policie' was explained by the authors of each topic in turn. John Row and James Lawson presented the first head of the book. Subsequently, Erskin of Dun, Andrew Hay, David Ferguson, Andrew Melville, Robert Pont, David Lindsay, and John Craig presented and explained the draft one after the other.[141] Calderwood summarized the situation of the third session like this:

> The whole labours of the brethrein takin upon the mater and argument of the policie, being red in public audience of the Assemblie, in the third sessioun, it was thought good and expedient, their whole travels, now divided, be revised

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[139] Ibid. We can see from the roles which the synod played in this judgement that it had already functioned as a church court. Unfortunately, we cannot confirm how the draft was discussed in each synod during this term because of absence of the documents.

[140] Ibid., 380.

[141] Ibid., 380-81; Kirk, *SBD*, 49.

and perused by some breathrein, digested and disposed in good and convenient order, to be therafter presented to the Assemblie.[142]

After this discussion, the Assembly thought it necessary to inform the Regent that 'the Assemblie is travelling in the mater and argument of the policie, and that his Grace sall receave advertisement of anie further proceeding'.[143] David Lindsay and John Duncanson were nominated as commissioners to convey the decision and ongoing process of the General Assembly to the Regent.

In the tenth session, the modified draft reflecting the discussion in the third session, which was corrected by the commissioners during the term of the forth session and ninth session, was discussed again. However they couldn't fully agree with the contents, mainly of 'thrie heids' concerning the diaconate and the problems of patronage and divorce. Hence they concluded that this draft would be dealt with again at the next Assembly.[144] Subsequently the Assembly commissioned eleven persons to finalize rearrangements of the book and asked them to convene together on 19th October before the next Assembly.[145]

In the later Assembly on 25th October, further attention was devoted to the revised draft which had been arranged thoroughly by commissioners. Although they were eager for the Regent to attend this Assembly, in the event he did not appear.[146] Some commissioners explained their works of revision, and 'After reading the generall heeds therof, the brethrein were required to advise with themselves, if they

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[142] Calderwood, III: 381.
[143] Ibid.
[144] Ibid., 382; Kirk, *SBD*, 48.
[145] Calderwood, III: 382. According to Calderwood, these members were Robert Pont, James Lawson, the Laird of Dun, Alexander Arbuthnot, Andrew Melville, John Craig, Andrew Hay, George Hay, John Row, David Lindsay and John Duncansone, as a whole.
[146] Kirk*, SBD*, 50.

found anie other heeds necessar to be disputed than these, and to signifie the samine to the Assemblie the morne.'[147]. After their explanation, the Assembly concluded:

> Forasmuche as the heeds concerning the policie and jurisdiction of the kirk being whollie read in audience of the whole Assemblie, and thought good and expedient that the samine sould be presented to my lord regent's Grace, as agreed upon, by reasoning among the brethrein, saving the heed, *De Diaconatu*, which is ordeanned to be givin in, with a note that the samine is agreed upon by the most part of the said Assemblie, without prejudice of farther reasoning;....[148]

Thus, it was decided to present the Regent with a copy of the revised draft concerning the new polity of the Church. Furthermore this Assembly required the copy to be checked and inspected thoroughly by John Duncanson, David Ferguson, John Brand, James Carmichael, and John Erskine of Dun.[149] We can see how careful they were in editing this Book through the process of their series of examinations.

Although Regent Morton did not appear, he sent Patrick Adamson and Alexander Hay, the Clerk of the Counsel, to this Assembly to present his forty-two questions on the matters concerning the church polity.[150] These questions, which had been 'conceaved apparentlie by advice of Patrick Adamson', were dealt with in the fifth session of this Assembly.[151] And then, seventeen members were specially nominated to answer these questions. Also, as Kirk indicates, these questions from the Regent would stimulate the works of the committee for new polity.[152] Consequently some points of the answers would be included in the *Second Book of Discipline.*[153]

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[147] Calderwood, III: 388.
[148] Ibid.
[149] Ibid.; Kirk, *SBD,* 50.
[150] Kirk, *SBD*, 48. Here Kirk itemizes the Morton's questions as concerning imparity among the ministers, the election of elders and deacons for life, the exercise of excommunication, the problem of oversight and the diocesan structure, the competence of church courts, the convening and composition of general assemblies, the confounding of the ecclesiastical and secular jurisdictions, ecclesiastical representation in parliament and privy council, the church's patrimony, benefices and the collection and distribution of revenues, and the work of the commissary courts.
[151] Calderwood, III: 393.
[152] Kirk. *SBD*, 48.
[153] Ibid.

4. 1578 - Approval for the revised Draft which was to be the '*Second Book of Discipline*'

In 1578, the General Assembly was summoned three times on 24th April, 11th June and 24th October. In the first Assembly in April, Andrew Melville was elected as the moderator. The revised book which had been checked by several ministers since last October was discussed in the fourth session of this Assembly. Calderwood records the result of the discussion:

> Forasmuche as the heeds of the policie being concluded and agreed upon in the last Assemblie, by the most part of the brethrein, certan of the brethrein found some difficultie in the heed, *De Diaconatu*, wherupon farther reasoning was reserved to this Assemblie, it is therefore required, that if anie of the brethrein have anie reasonable doubt or aragument to propone, that he be readie the morne, and then sall be heard and resolved.[154]

Thus, although some indicated their disagreements with the contents on the office of deacons, the process of making the new book of church polity which had continued since 1575 was accomplished at this time with most of the member's agreement. However, this was merely the first step to forming Presbyterian polity. The next task of the Assembly was to organize the government of the Church according to this new book.

In the eighth session of this Assembly, it was discussed and concluded that:

> Forasmuch as the Generall Assemblie hath thought meete, that the travells takin by them upon the policie be presented to the king's Majestie and his Hienesse' counsell, it was found good, that before the copies therof were delivered, they sould yitt be reviewed and sighted by their brethrein, Mr Robert Pont, Mr James Lowsone, and Mr David Lindsay, and being written over conforme to the originall, a copie to be presented by them to his Hienesse, with a supplicatioun penned by them to that effect, with another copie to the counsel,

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[154] Calderwood, III: 402.

the time to be at the discretioun of the brethrein, so that it be done before the generall fast...[155]

Thus the copies of this new polity of the Church were presented to both the King and his Privy Council after reconsideration of its contents by commissioners before receiving their approval.

The second Assembly was summoned extraordinarily at Stirling on 11th June soon after the former Assembly was closed. One of the reasons why the Assembly was summoned again so shortly might be that it had been already decided that the Parliament would be held on 15th of this month, and the Assembly therefore had to arrange the final reconsideration of the new polity as soon as possible in order to submit the document to the Parliament before its opening. And another reason might be that it was necessary to listen to and discuss the reports by the commissioners who had been appointed in the previous Assembly to submit and explain the copies of the *Second Book of Discipline* to King James and the Privy Council. Concerning the report by the commissioners, Calderwood describes the situation at the time when it was submitted to the King:

> They exhibited to the king's Majestie a copie of the heed of the policie, with the supplicatioun to his Grace, who gave a verie confortable and good answere, that not onlie would he concurre with the kirk in all things that might advance true religioun, presentlie professed within this realme, but also would be a procurator for the kirk; and that therafter, his Grace presented to the counsel the said supplicatioun, who nominated persons to conferre in the mater; and by his Majestie's procurement obteanned, that they might choose so manie ministers to conferre as was at length agreed upon.[156]

The King's response might have been much more than expected by the members of the Assembly, and thus it was not strange that they might have thought that the further

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[155] Ibid., 402-3.
[156] Ibid., 412.

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practical reformation of the church could be done smoothly. Subsequently, this

Assembly enacted that:

> concerning electioun of bishops and superintendents ... the General Assemblie all in one voice hath concluded and provided, that the said act sall be extended to all times to come, ay and whill the corruption of the estat of bishops be alluterlie takin away; and that all bishops alreadie elected be required particularlie to submit themselves to the General Assemblie of the kirk, ...[157]

This seems to be one example demonstrating that the previous Assembly's decision

was executed according to the *Second Book of Discipline* soon after they received the

answer from the King.

In the third Assembly held in October, four noblemen, the Lord Chanceller, the

Earl of Montrose, Lord Seton and Lord Lindsay, were invited to attend. The Assembly

persuaded them to approve this new book of polity in the Parliament, because the

previous Parliament on 15th June did not approve the new book of discipline. The

moderator explained to them that:

> in name of the Assemblie, what care and studie the Assemblie had takin, to keepe and intertean the puritie of the sincere Word of God unmixed with anie inventioun of their owne heeds, to reserve it to the posteritie hereafter. ... Praying therefore, the nobilitie present, ...if they would alow, affirme, and mainteane the religioun presentlie established within theis realme, as also, the policie and discipline alreadie spoken of, and labour at the king and counsell's hands for an answere to the heeds after following: - To witt, That his Grace and counsel would establishe suche heeds of the policie as were alreadie resolved and agreed upon by the said commissioners; and caus suche other as were not agreed upon finallie to be reasoned, and putt to an end: And that his Grace and counsel will restore the kirk to the benefite of the act of parliament concerning the thirds; and that none vote in parliament, in name of the kirk, except suche as sall have commisioun of the kirk to that effect: ... .[158]

Thus, the *Second Book of Discipline* was submitted again to the Parliament to be

certified by the civil government.

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[157] Ibid., 411.
[158] Ibid., 427.

After its submission, a special conference was summoned at Stirling Castle from 22nd to 29th of December to examine carefully the contents of the *Second Book of Discipline* in detail, word by word, among the representatives of the Church and of the Crown. This Stirling conference consisted in total of thirteen commissioners including five ministers and two archbishops. Erskine of Dun was elected as the moderator for this conference.[159] It is interesting that they spent the first three days discussing mainly the first chapter of the Book.[160] Therefore, we may infer that the representatives from the Crown heavily criticised the opinion concerning the distinct powers between the Church and State, which is so-called 'the theory of Two-Kingdoms'. Afterward, the discussion progressed smoothly. Finally, this conference agreed that 'an article be formed and givin in to the king's Magjestie and estats, in the nixt parliament'.[161] For the representatives of the Church, this agreement seemed to give the impression that the new book of polity would be approved.

III. A Survey of the Contents of the *Second Book of Discipline*

As may be seen from the above, the *Second Book of Discipline* was drawn up with greatest care and deliberation. Its contents were arrived at through the work of the special committee organized in 1575, and successive General Assemblies' discussions between 1576 and 1578. The process of production of the *Second Book of Discipline* was quiet different from that of the *First Book of Discipline* which was drafted mainly by John Knox and arranged by so-called 'six-Johns' within a few days. In contrast, the

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[159] Ibid., 433-443; Kirk, *SBD,* 245-253.
[160] Calderwood, III: 433-35.
[161] Ibid., 442.

contents of the *Second Book of Discipline* were discussed in successive General Assemblies, before it was approved among churches as the blueprint of their new polity. However, it was not until August 1590, that the General Assembly received it as the constitutional position of the church and enacted an Act for all ministers to accept the Book.[162] Moreover, while handwritten copies seem to have been circulated as a result of an Act enacted by the General Assembly of April 1581, *the Second Book of Discipline* was not printed until 1621 in Holland.[163]

1. The Composition

The *Second Book of Discipline* contains thirteen chapters. The first chapter defines the jurisdiction of the church by making clear how its authority is different from that of the civil government. The second chapter defines the lawful offices in the church, and its functions. These are followed by discussions on ordination for the ministry (the third chapter); the office of ministers (the fourth); the office of doctors and the schools (the fifth); the office of elders (the sixth); the functions of church courts and discipline (the seventh); the deacons (the eighth); the patrimony of the church (the ninth); the role of the Christian magistrate (the tenth); abuses remaining in the church (the eleventh); the issues regarding the church's reform (the twelfth); and lastly, the common wealth and further Reformation (the thirteenth).

We don't have any information concerning how the distribution of chapters of this book was decided. For example, it may be possible that the eighth chapter 'of

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[162] Calderwood, V: 108; Shaw, 'The Inauguration of Ministers in Scotland: 1560-1620', *RSCHS* vol. 16, 50.

[163] Calderwood, V: 108; Shaw, op. cit, 50. The General Assembly had enacted that the copies should be taken to every presbytery, and again the same was enacted in the General Assembly on August 1590.

deacons' was located just after the sixth chapter 'of elders', for each particular church had already adopted both offices of elders and deacons in their church life after the Reformation in 1560. However, editors of the book adopted the continuity between 'of elder' and 'of church court' rather than that between 'of elders' and 'of deacons'. Therefore it seems that the editors intended to distinguish the elders from the deacons in terms of spiritual functions. Furthermore it was possible for the first chapter (a discussion on church and state) to be located just before or after the tenth chapter (dealing with the Christian Magistrate). Yet it seems that the editors of this Book intentionally located it at the beginning of the entire document. Although we can only make inferences concerning the organization of this book, it is natural to think that the final distribution of the chapters reflects the thought of the editors.

According to Kirk's edition, each sentence of the *Second Book of Discipline* was numbered, allowing us to count a total of 209 sentences in the document.[164] The largest chapter is the seventh chapter entitled 'OF ELDARSCHIPIS, AND ASSEMBLEIS AND OF DISCIPLINE', which consists of 41 numbered sentences.[165] Compared to the second largest chapter, the twelfth chapter,[166] it is twice as large. Thus the seventh chapter is the most outstanding among the others. On the other hand, the shortest is the eighth, which considers 'of deacons'. This chapter consists of only 7 sentences.[167] The next shortest chapters are the ninth and the tenth, 'of the patrimony of the church' and 'of the office of a Christian magistrate in the church' respectively. These have a total of 8 sentences each. Thus, the length of the chapters varies widely, and the variation may partly reflect the editors' main concerns for reform.

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[164] Kirk, *SBD*, 159-244.
[165] Ibid., 195- 206.
[166] Ibid., 230-40. This chapter entitled 'CERTANE SPECIALL HEIDIS OF REFORMATIOUN QUHILK WE CRAVE' consists of 22 sentences.
[167] Ibid., 207-8.

2. Chapter I: Church and State

The *Second Book of Discipline* begins by defining the visible Church as; first, a company or fellowship of those professing true faith in Christ outwardly (I.1); secondly, the elect and godly (I.2); thirdly, a spiritual institution professing truth (I.3).[168] The jurisdiction of the Church was defined as a spiritual jurisdiction, and hence autonomous from other powers on the earth. As the book asserts, the authority of the Church 'flows immediately from God and the Mediator Christ Jesus, and is spiritual'[169], 'having the ground in the word of God'[170] (I.4-5, 10). The Royal supremacy over the Church was rejected by emphasizing the different nature of the powers between the Church and the State (I.8-9). The role of the magistrate in relation to the Church was recognized as defending and sustaining of the Church (I.9, 17, 22), not as determining rules concerning doctrine or discipline of the Church. Both the Church and the State commonly derive their authority directly from God (I.8-9). Although neither the Church nor the State may intrude upon the other's jurisdiction (I.14), the minister had a responsibility to teach the magistrate how to perform his duty in the commonwealth according to the Word of God (I.9). While the magistrate was required to ensure that ministers performed their duties according to the Word, the ministers should teach the magistrates to discharge their duties as directed in the Bible (I.22). Also in the Article XXIV, 'OF THE CIVILE MAGISTRATE', in the *Scots*

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[168] Ibid., 57, 163.
[169] Ibid., 166.
[170] Ibid., 164.

Confession of Faith, statesmen of the realm had already been acknowledged as the ones who protect and defend Religion.[171]

While the Church side thought that ecclesiastical authority was understood to derive immediately from God and not intermediately through sovereignty of the king, the Royal side strongly claimed the State's absolute supremacy or ascendancy over the Church. More perplexing problems were the renewed claims for a restoration of the Church's patrimony to support the ministry (Chapter IX and XI.6). Furthermore, the General Assembly of April 1576 had also affirmed that the patrimony of the Church should be used for education, welfare, and poor relief.[172] Thus, it was affirmed in the seventh chapter: '38. That the patrimony of the kirk be not diminished nor abusid'.[173] Such a programme for recovering the patrimony of the Church threatened the Crown and nobility, because it prevented them from exercising their desire for ecclesiastical properties and patronages.

3. Chapter II, III, VI, and VIII: The Offices in the Church

Concerning the ministry of Church, it was affirmed that doctrine, discipline and distribution are three main divisions of the role of the Church (II.2). To fulfil these ministries, four offices were appointed; minister, doctor for doctrine, elder for discipline, and deacon for distribution (II.3, 10). Thus different roles were clearly assigned to each office. The minister of the Word of God and the Sacraments was identified with the office of New Testament bishop or shepherd of the flock (IV.1-2).

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[171] Henderson, *The Scots Confession of 1560*, 45-46.
[172] Calderwood, III: 367.
[173] Kirk, *SBD*, 205.

However, the conventional diocesan episcopacy was condemned as a human invention which was contradictory to the Word of God (II.12).

In connection with such office-bearers as a whole, the following requirements were emphasized: firstly, an individual calling or vocation (III.1-3); secondly, its testimony with conscience before God (III.4-5); thirdly, an examination by the eldership (III.7, 9); and fourthly, a public and lawful election with congregational consent (III.6-7). Here, consequently, the *Second Book of Discipline* clearly asserts that the right for election and examination of the clergy belongs not to the civil power but to the Church by declaring their own spiritual jurisdiction. As to their ordination, it is noted that the ceremony of the ordination should be accompanied by the imposition of the hands of eldership (III.12).[174] It is reconfirmed that each minister has to serve a particular church (III.15, IV.1-2).

Concerning 'pastor', 'bishop' and 'minister', although their title differ, they are to undertake the same ministry. The Book states that they are all subject to the Word of God, and are to serve by watching over particular congregations (IV.1). The importance of vocation to the ministry is strongly emphasized again (IV.2-4). The works of the ministers are, first, preaching of the Word of God (IV.7), secondly, administration of the Sacraments according to the Word (IV.8), thirdly, praying for the people of the church he serves (IV.9), fourthly, watching over the manners of his own congregation (IV.10), and fifthly, pronouncing the sentence of excommunication (IV.11). All these follow the contents of the *First Book of Discipline*.[175] It is prohibited for ministers to leave their congregation at their discretion without consents of the synod and General Assembly (IV.6).

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[174] Kirk, *SBD*, 180-181.
[175] Cameron, *FBD*, 90, 170.

As regards the office of doctors, although it was assigned mainly the task of interpreting the Scripture (V.2-3), they are allowed to have seats in the church courts along with the ministers and elders as a kind of 'elder' (V.5).[176] However, preaching the Word of God and administering the Sacraments, and some rites of the church are not allowed to be exercised by the doctors (V.6). Thus, there is clear distinction between the office of minister and doctor concerning their role and function in the Church.

The office of elder is recognized as a perpetual and spiritual one, relating to the government of the Church (VI.3-5). Lawful vocation is required for elders to exercise their office (VI.6). The lawful calling to the office is required, too (VI.3). The role of elders is not to teach the Word of God (VI.9), but to watch carefully over the Church both publicly and privately (VI.11, 13): 'As the pastouris and doctouris sould be diligent in teaching and sowing the seid of the word, so the eldaris sould be cairfull in seiking the ftuict of the same in the peple.'(VI.12)[177] Furthermore, it is also required for elders to know all there is to know about the acts of the assemblies (whether particular, provincial or general) so that they may execute them (VI.14). The principal office of elder is 'to hauld assemblieis with the pastouris and doctouris for establisching of guid ordour and execution of discipline' (VI.17).[178]

Like that of the elder, the office of deacon is also recognized as a perpetual and spiritual one (VIII.1-3). Their main task is to collect the church's revenues and administer distribution for the poor (VIII.2, 6 and IX.6-9), according to the judgement of the eldership (VIII.7). The deacons are not allowed to have a seat in the eldership as

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[176] Kirk, *SBD,* 189. Here it is noted that: 'The doctor being ane elder ...sould assist the pasture in the government of the kirk...'.
[177] Ibid., 93.
[178] Ibid., 194.

the ruling officer. Regarding this point, Kirk points out that: 'This was logical enough since deacons were purely financial officers possessing no competence in disciplinary matters which properly resided within the jurisdiction of ministers, doctors, and elders'.[179] That is to say, there is jurisdictional distinction not only between the Church and the State, but also among the offices of the Church. We remember that in discussions concerning the deacon in the General Assemblies of 1576, there were frequent disagreements even among the ministers. On the other hand, Kirk indicates that Beza had approved the deacons' participation in the church courts of Scotland in his letter to Lord Glamis in 1576.[180] Actually, it is true that there wasn't uniform opinion during the Reformation period concerning whether the deacon should be involved in the church court or not. The *First Book of Discipline* allowed the deacons to have the seat in the Kirk Session which dealt with some ecclesiastical discipline, too.[181] Indeed, for example, during 1560's in St. Andrews, deacons were often involved in some of the disciplinary cases judged by the Kirk Session.[182] Nevertheless, the *Second Book of Discipline* decided to exclude them from the courts. It is possible that the reason why the chapter dealing with this office became the shortest part in the Book is that most parts of disagreement were deleted from the Book as a result. Further, it was declared that such titles as 'the deanis, archedeanis, chanteris, subchanteris, thesauraris, chancelaris, and utheris' have no place in the reformed kirk.(XI.3)[183]

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[179] Ibid., 101.
[180] Ibid., 208.
[181] Cameron, *FBD*, 168. It is mentioned in 'Of Ecclesiastical Discipline' that: 'If the crime be publick, ..., then ought the offender to be called in presence of the Minister, Elder and <u>Deacons</u>.'[my underlining]
[182] Kirk, *SBD*, 208. Here, he refers to the *Register of St Andrews Kirk Session*, i, passim.
[183] Ibid., 218.

Concerning the vocation of office-bearers, we can recognize a little difference between the *First* and *Second Book of Discipline.* While the *First Book of Discipline* divides vocation to the ministry into three parts; election, examination and admission, the *Second Book of Discipline* divides it into two parts; election and ordination.[184] Furthermore, Kirk suggests that all office-bearers were recognized as having their inward vocation from God, so that all of them ought to serve for life.[185] In addition, because both the elders and deacons were not full-time professional officers like those of the ministers, they did not receive any stipend from the church.

4. Chapter VII: Ecclesiastical Courts

The spiritual courts of the church are composed of three offices, namely ministers, doctors and elders, except deacons (VII.1, 27). These ecclesiastical courts regarded as 'elderships' or assemblies were divided into four types: first, 'Kirk Session' which is the local eldership of one local congregation, or that of several adjacent churches in a district; secondly, the provincial synod composing of ministers and doctors and elders in the region; thirdly, the General Assembly of whole nation of Scotland; fourthly, an international Assembly of all Reformed churches in the world (mainly, the Western European countries at that time) (VII.2). According to this classification, undoubtedly, there is no direct mention of 'presbytery' as the church court in the *Second Book of Discipline*. However, the idea of 'ane common eldership' is affirmed twice (VII.14 and XII.7). The lawful power of the church, including visitation of other churches, excommunicating sinners, protecting true doctrine,

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[184] William Cunningham, *Discussions on Church Principles: Popish, Erastian, and Presbyterian*, 330.

[185] Kirk, 'Second Book of Discipline', *DSCHT*, 766.

deposing from the office, is not attributed to any individual persons but to such conferences (VII.3-4, 7-8, 11-12, 21, 24, and 30-31). Especially, it is assigned to the eldership to take heed whether or not the Word of God is adequately preached, the Sacraments are properly administered, and the ecclesiastical discipline is rightly maintained (VII.18). The moderator should be elected with the consent of the members of the conference (VII.5). The purpose of all church courts is to keep the faith and doctrine in purity without error or corruption, and to keep comeliness and order in the Church (VII.9). The upper eldership has the power to deal with and handle the problems which each congregation couldn't deal with (VII.29, 34). Thus, the *Second Book of Discipline* embodied the system that a Kirk Session is supervised by 'a common eldership', consisting of ministers, with assistance of elders; and that the synod has a supervising and reviewing power over all common elderships within its bounds, and the General Assembly over all the synods and the whole.[186] Here, we may find ideas related closely to the modern version of the four-fold Presbyterian system.

5. Chapter XII: Plea for Further Reformation

Chapter XII gives some supplementary explanations to the whole Book and is filled with some interesting suggestions. First of all, it begins with the claim to order ecclesiastical polity on the basis of the Scripture (XII.1). Such a concern has been a main stay of the Scottish Reformation from the beginning and was not a distinctive feature of this Book.[187] The next claim is the necessity to reorganize and re-divide the dimensions of the whole province and parishes in the realm (XII.2). The reason for

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[186] Clark, op. cit., 114.
[187] Cameron, *FBD*, 86. It is clearly noted that: 'Most humbly requiring your Honours, that as you look for participation with Christ Jesus, that neither ye admit any thing which Gods plain word shal not approve, neither yet that ye shall reject such ordinances as equitie, justice and Gods word do specifie.'

such reorganization is explained: 'becaus it wilbe thocht hard to find out pasturis or ministeris to all the paroche kirkis of the realme, alsweill in landwart as in borrows to[w]nis' (XII.3). Although it is desirable that one minister serves one congregation, it seems that there was a disproportion in the supply of ministers across parishes. Further, some ministers had to undertake more than a single charge, so much so that the editors of the Book suggested: 'every paroche of reasonable congregations there wald be placit ane or ma pasturis to feild the flok and na pasture or minister aucht to be burdenit with the particular charge of ma flokis of kirks thene ane allanerlie'(XII.3).[188] Furthermore, the book offers a series of concrete suggestions to realize such radical reorganization (XII.4):

> parochis in landwart or small villagis may be joinit twa or thrie or ma in sum places togidder and the principall and maist commodious kirkis to stand and to be repairit sufficientlie and qualefeit ministeris placet thairat, and the uther kirkis quhilk ar not fund necessary may be sufferit to decay, thair kirk yairdis always being kepit for burial places, and in sum places quhair neid requires ane parochine quhair the congregatioun is over greit for ane kirk may be devidit in twa or ma.[189]

Afterwards, this suggestion brings the answer from the King to the General Assembly in April 1581 to reorganize the size and territory of each local church.

This chapter mentions the function of elder and eldership concerning the administration of discipline (XII.6):

> As to eldaris, thair wald be sum to be censuris of maneris of the people, ane or ma in everie congregatioun, bot not ane assemblie of eldaris in every particular kirk, bot onlie in the townis and famous places quhair resort of men of jugement and habilitie to that office may be had.[190]

Kirk notes about this sentence:

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[188] Kirk, *SBD*, 104, 230.
[189] Ibid., 230-1.
[190] Ibid., 231.

the intention seems to have been not to create a new court as such but rather to remodel and extend the jurisdiction of kirk sessions by abandoning an attempt to create elderships for individual congregations and by adopting instead a scheme for establishing communal elderships of neighbouring parishes.[191]

As Kirk mentions, the role of elders and eldership focused on each local congregation's strength.

Further, we should take care to note the context in which this sentence is located. It was only after a discussion on reorganisation of the church courts that the book proceeded to mention of a common eldership. This idea seems to have emerged from the context of reorganisation.

We have to remember as well that the connection among adjacent churches in the same areas had already been recommended in the *First Book of Discipline*. It explains 'a common eldership' (XII.7): 'Quhair the eldaris of particular kirkis about may convene togidder and have ane common elderschip and assemblie place amangis thame to treat of all thingis that concerne the congregatioun of quhome thay the oversycht.' [192] The idea that several particular adjacent churches share the same eldership as their common eldership is clearly explained here. Also as in the following sentence, the idea was written in such other phrases as 'the assembles of particular eldershippis' (XII.8).[193]

Kirk conclusively says that: 'The communal eldership or presbytery, in short, was designed to replace individual kirk sessions and was based not on doctrinaire abstractions but on the need to solve practical problems.'[194]

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[191] Ibid.
[192] Ibid., 232.
[193] Ibid.
[194] Ibid.

Furthermore, this chapter deals with the problems concerning the election of the minister: first, the liberty of election in kirks (XII.12, 14); secondly, the necessity of the lawful election (XII.13); thirdly, the veto to the system of the patronages and benefices which had confirmed from the Middle Ages (XII.14). The remaining parts of this chapter deal with such financial matters as a restoration of the patrimony of the church (XII.15, 16, 17, 21, 22) and the office of the deacon to collect such patrimonies and 'teinds' as a kind of tax for the Church (XII.18, 19, 20). The *First Book of Discipline,* in the fifth and sixth head, had already claimed that such patrimony and 'teinds' should be preserved in the Reformed Church to support the works of the church financially.

In sum, the *Second Book of Discipline* was formed very carefully through a series of repeated discussions in the General Assemblies from 1575 to 1578. Furthermore the *Second Book of Discipline* was drafted with the input of the various opinions of the committee's members who were elected from several areas to draft the new polity of the Church. Therefore, Kirk often criticizes sharply the attribution of its authorship to Andrew Melville alone.[195] Noting that 'Andrew Melville was merely one of thirty or so participants in its composition',[196] he insists that the work of production of the *Second Book of Discipline* should be attributed not only to Melville, but the special committee which consisted of over thirty ministers, active in formulating and revising the contents of the works.

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[195] Ibid., 45; Kirk, 'Second Book of Discipline (1578)' *DSCHT*, 765-6; Kirk, 'Scottish Books of Discipline', *OER,* vol.4, 32.
[196] Kirk, 'Second Book of Discipline', *DSCHT*, 765.

CHAPTER THREE

The 'Eldership' in the Scottish Reformation
And the Formation of the 'Presbytery'

I. Examination of the 'Eldership' in the Scottish Reformation

1. Eldership in the *Second Book of Discipline*

The term of 'presbytery' was used only twice in chapters VIII and XI of the *Second Book of Discipline*. Furthermore it did not necessarily refer to a church court located between a particular Kirk Session and a synod.[197] In spite of this, it is clear that the P4resbyterian system was formed according to the design indicated in the *Second Book of Discipline*. To recognize what the idea of 'a common eldership' was, it is important to realize the origin of the Presbyterian system of polity.

Although the term 'eldership' was used twenty times in the *Second Book of Discipline*, the usage of the term is ambiguous.[198] First of all, we find that the term is

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[197] Kirk, *SBD*, 208. Here, the term 'presbytery' is used in these sentences[my underlining]: 'This thay aucht ti di according to the juigment and appointment of the <u>presbytereis</u> or elderschippis (of the quhilk the deaconis ar not) that the patrimony of the kirk and pure be not converted in privat mennis use nor wranguslie distributit.'(VIII. 7.). And see 223, here it was also used: 'Na man aucht to have the office of visitatioun bot he that is lauchfullie chosine be the <u>presbyterie</u> thairto.'(XI. 15). So it is clear that the term 'presbytery' was used without any distinction from the term 'eldership'.

[198] The context in which the term was used became more important than the number of times in which it was used. These are the sentences in which the term 'eldership' is used in the *Second Book of Discipline* [my underlining]: 1. the <u>eldarschip</u> for guid ordour and administration of discipline;... (II.7, *SBD,* 175). 2. Electioun is the chesing out of ane person or personis maist able to the office that vaikis be the judgement of the <u>eldarschip</u> and consent of the congregatioun quhom to the persone or personis beis appointit (III.7*, SBD*, 179). 3. In the ordour of electioun, it is to be eschewit that na persone be intrusit in ony of the offices if the kirk contrarie the will of the congregatioun to quhome thay ar appointit or without the voice of

twice spelled as 'eldarschip' or 'elderschip' in the Book. Probably, such inconsistent spelling may vouch that the Book was not written by a single person. In fact, the authorship of the *Second Book of Discipline* should not be ascribed only to Andrew Melville but to the members who explained the contents of this Book in the General Assembly of April 1577.

What the *Second Book of Discipline* defined as the function of the eldership would be confirmed from the sentences in which the term 'eldership' was used. In the first quoted sentence, it is defined in connection with discipline: 'for guid ordour and administration of discipline' (II.7). The next sentences from chapter III indicate the

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the elderschip (III.9, *SBD*, 180). 4. The ceremonyis of ordinatioun ar fasting and earnest prayer, and impositioun of handis of the elderschippe (III.12, *SBD*, 180). 5. It appertenis to the minister, efter laufull proceding be the elderschip, to pronunce the sentence of binding and lowsing upone ony persone according to the power of the keyis grantit unto the kirk (IV.11, *SBD*, 185). 6. It belangis alswa eftir lauchfull proceding in the mater be the elderschip to solempnizat the contract of marriage betwixt thame that ar joint thairin and to pronounce the blessing of the Lord on thame that entir in the holie band in the fear of the Lord (IV.12, *SBD*, 186). 7. The eldarschip is ane functioun spirituall, as is the ministrie (VI.5, *SBD,* 92). 8. Thingis that thay cane not correct be privie admonisioun thay should bring to the assembly of the elderschip (VI.16, *SBD*, 194). 9. Eldarschippis or assembleis ar constitute commounlie of pasturis, doctouris and sic as commounlie we call eldaris that labour not in the word and doctrine (VII.1, *SBD*, 195). 10. ...it is the part of the eldarschip to send out qualifeit personis to visit pro re nata (VII.8, *SBD*, 197). 11. ...we think thrie or four, ma or fewar, particular kirkis may have ane common eldarschip to thame all to judge thair ecclesiasticall causes (VII.14, *SBD*, 199). 12. The power of thir particular eldarschippis is to gif diligent labour in the boundis committed to thair charge that the kirkis be kepit in guid ordour to inquire diligentlie of nauchtie and unrewlie personis and travel to bring thame in the way agane, ather be admonitioun or threitining of Goddis judgementis or be correctioun (VII.17, *SBD*, 200). 13. It pertenis to the eldarschip to tak heid that the word of God be puirlie preachit, within thair boundis, the samramentis rychtlie ministrant, the discipline mentenid and the ecclesiasticall guidis uncorruptlie distribute (VII.18, *SBD*, 200). 14. Be eldarschip is meint sic as ar constitute of pastouris, doctouris and sic as now ar callit eldaris (VII.23, *SBD*, 202). 15. This thay[deaconis] aucht to do according to the juigment and appointment of the presbyteries or eldreschippis (of the quhilk the deaconis ar not) that the patrimony of the kirk and pure be not converted in privat mennis use nor wranguslie distributit (VIII.7, *SBD*, 208). 16. The elderschippis being weill establishet hes power to send out visitouris ane or ma with commissioun to veseit the boundes within thair elderschippis; and siclyk eftir compt tane of thame ather to continew thame or renew thame frome tyme to tyme to the quhilkis elderschippis thay salbe also subject (XI.16, *SBD*, 223-4) . 17. It aggreit not with the Scripturis that thay should be exemit fra correctioun of thair brethren and discipline of the particular elderschip of the kirk quhairas [recte, quhairat] thay should serve, nather that thay should usurp the office of visitatioun of uther kirkis nor ony uther functioun besyd uther ministeris, bots afar a sbeis committit to thame be the kirk (XI.19, *SBD*, 225). 18. Quhair the eldaris of particular kirkis about may convene togidder and have ane common elderschip and assemblie place amangis thame to treat of all thingis that concerne the congregatioun of quhome thay have the oversycht (XII.7, *SBD*, 232). 19. And as thar aucht to be men appointit to unit and devyd the parochis as necessitie and commoditie requires, sa wald thair be appointit be the generall kirk, with the assent of the prince, sic men as feirith God and knew the estait of the cuntreis that war able to nominat and designe places quhair the assembles of particular elderschippis sould convene to tak consideratioun of the dioces as thay war dividit of auld and of the estait of the cuntres and provincis of the realme (XII.8, *SBD*, 232). 20. Yit becaus this vocatioun appears to mony to be dangerous let them be oblist (as thay war of auld) to ane yeirlie compt to the pasturis and elderschip and gif the kirk and prince think expendient lat cautioneris be obleist for thair fidelitie that the kirk rents onnawayis be delapidat. (XII.19, *SBD*, 238)

importance of 'the jugement of the eldarschip' and 'the voce of the elderschip' in the election of the ministers (III.7 and 9). It was also decided that the ordination of the ministers was to be accompanied with 'impositioun of handis of the elderschippe' (III.12). In the seventh sentence, the fundamental function of eldership was briefly defined in the word 'spiritual': 'The eldarschip is ane functioun spirituall, as is the ministrie' (VI.5). Furthermore, the minister could not arbitrarily pronounce the sentence of excommunication without the judgement of the eldership, for 'the power of the keys' to bind or loose someone also should not be attributed to the minister in person, but to the Church itself (IV.11). In the thirteenth sentence, the eldership was to preserve and defend the marks of true church, 'that the word of God be puirlie preachit, within thair boundis, the samramentis rychtlie ministrant, the discipline mentenid' (VII.18), which had been already affirmed in chapter eighteen of the *Scots Confession of Faith* (1560). Further, 'to send out qualifeit personis to visit' is also ascribed not to a bishop or a superintendent but to the works of eldership (VII.8 and XI.16). Afterward, with the creation of presbyteries in 1581, the General Assembly in August 1582 decided that presbyteries have the power to appoint for visitations 'to suche two or ma as the presbyterie sall direct, for the necessitie of the matter, according to the Booke of Policie'.[199] Thus, such functions as election of the minister, supervising the churches, and administrating the ecclesiastical discipline, have been switched from the individual office of bishop or superintendent to the eldership.

It is also clear that the word 'eldership' means an ecclesiastical session or assembly constituted by elders described as 'teaching elder (minister and doctor)' and 'ruling elder (elder)', according to the ninth sentence: 'Eldarschippis or assembleis ar constitute commounlie of pasturis, doctouris and sic as commounlie we call eldaris

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[199] Kirk, *SBD*, 197; Calderwood, III: 617.

that labour not in the word and doctrene.' (VII.1). Also in the fourteenth sentence: 'Be eldarschip is meint sic as ar constitute of pastouris, doctouris and sic as now ar callit eldaris'(VII.23), the composition of such eldership as the ecclesiastical and spiritual conference is reaffirmed. Kirk indicates that the term 'eldership' was often used as a synonym for the terms 'session', 'consistorie' and 'assemblie' in the contemporary documents. [200] Furthermore, he notes that both the single Kirk Session and the Presbytery were commonly recorded as 'eldership' in various contemporary documents. [201] Although, when the *Second Book of Discipline* mentions the Kirk Session, it was called 'particular eldership'(XI.19, XII.8). However, he does say that the term 'particular eldership' does not necessarily mean the individual Kirk Session.[202] In the *First Book of Discipline*, the term 'concistorie' had been used to describe a Kirk Session or the prototype of a Kirk Session. [203] He cautions: 'The mistake...is to assume the complete identity of eldership and kirk session.'[204] Not only the Kirk Session but also the presbytery, the synod and the General Assembly should be commonly regarded as a kind of 'eldership' as far as these sessions consisted of the elders of the Church in the wider sense. This is because the term 'eldership' means the spiritual and ecclesiastical meetings of the persons consecrated as 'elders' in the Church and it indicates not only that of each single church but also that consisting of representatives from several churches.[205]

2. The 'eldership' in the Reformed Tradition during Sixteenth Century

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[200] Kirk, *SBD*, 109.
[201] Ibid.
[202] Ibid., 225.
[203] Cameron, *FBD*, 169.
[204] Kirk, *SBD*, 102-3.
[205] Ibid., 195.

To know what the eldership was in the context of the Scottish Reformation, it is also important to identify it with the movements of other Reformed traditions on the Continent. The idea and practice of the 'eldership' as the system of church polity by three- or four-fold ministry offices had already appeared elsewhere in countries and cities in Western Europe before the Scottish Reformation.[206] Kirk, for example, refers to the relationship of eldership in Scottish Presbyterianism to the pattern of eldership in the overall Reformed tradition: 'in its advocacy of an eldership, the Book of Discipline exhibited an indebtedness to Oecolampadius, Bucer and Calvin, and not least to Beza's *Annotations* on the New Testament, first published in 1557, and widely acclaimed, where the eldership or presbytery, as the company of elders or presbyters, was seen to be an essential element in church government.'[207] What Kirk indicates is clearly that the idea and practice of the eldership were brought from the Continent into Scotland.

In the whole Reformed tradition, the term 'eldership' was not used as a proper noun but as a kind of generic name. Hence the term as it was used in the *Second Book of Discipline* was often ambiguous as well. However it is very clear that the function of eldership is closely related to ecclesiastical discipline which amounts in practice, first, to the cure of souls; secondly, to the care of the whole spiritual and moral well-being of individual and community; and thirdly, to building up and forming of righteousness and the general establishment of a Christian standard in thought and conduct.[208] However, it should also be recognised that discipline developed in the context of excommunication which was a kind of means to punish sinners. In terms of the relationship of the eldership to ecclesiastical discipline, Henderson summarises the

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[206] Torrance, The Eldership in the Reformed Church, *SJT* 37, 505.
[207] Kirk, *SBD*, 114.
[208] Henderson, *Presbyterianism,* 69.

pedigree of the eldership in the Reformed tradition: 'It appears to have been the Basel Reformer, Johannes Oecolampadius, who first made a definite attempt to institute for purposes of discipline an eldership independent of the civil authorities.... His views were adopted by Martin Bucer of Strasburg from whom they reached John Calvin,...' [209] Thus, as Kirk also mentions, Oecolampadius is a key figure in understanding the origin of the eldership associated with ecclesiastical discipline.

It was Johannes Oecolampadius (1482-1531) who developed a Reformed doctrine of excommunication. [210] While the Reformation order became law for the Basel cantonal church on 1st April 1529, the voice of dissatisfaction was immediately aroused against Oecolampadius's plan to place the final judgement of excommunication in the hands of the Church. [211] Then, in 1530, he wrote the *Oratio de reducenda excommunicatione*, in which he asserted again that the Church needed a court of its own and sought to limit the Council's authority over the Church, emphasising the necessity that each congregation elect lay elders who would form an autonomous eldership with the pastor. [212] His idea of the eldership associated with ecclesiastical discipline was followed and developed by Bucer and Calvin. In Oecolampadius' point of view on the eldership, the ecclesiastical discipline that the Church should judge independently from the civil one according to the authority of the Word of God was of great importance. Such an idea that the judgement of the church was independent from the power of the state was developed by the later Reformers.

While Calvin introduced a four-fold office into Geneva: doctor, pastor, elder, and deacon, he regarded the offices of pastor and elder as the key of the moral and

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[209] Ibid., 56.
[210] Robert C. Walton, 'OECOLAMPADIUS, Johannes', *OER,* vol. 3, 169.
[211] Ibid., 171.
[212] Ibid.

godly life of a congregation. Calvin thought that the New Testament taught that a senate of elders was to govern the Church with the teaching elder whose primary calling is to be preacher and minister of the Sacrament.[213] Torrance summarizes the feature of the eldership in Geneva in the following:

> In Geneva these 'seniors' or 'elders' were representatives of the City Councils who were associated with the ministers in keeping discipline. Together they constituted the 'consistory' which comprised twelve from the City Councils, members elected annually, and six pastors, and it was presided over by one of the syndics or magistrates. Their prime function was to act as judges in matters involving spiritual and moral discipline with authority to pronounce censure in the community, but without prejudice to civil jurisdiction.[214]

According to what Torrance notes, we can grasp the strong partnership or cooperation between the eldership and the City Council concerning the exercise of discipline. In Geneva, all ministers and the dozen elders attended the weekly meeting called the 'consistory' which was substantially 'both a church institution and a governmental body, its presiding officer not a pastor, but the elected head of Geneva's Small Council.'[215] This is a point in which the eldership in Geneva seems to reflect that, while Calvin insisted on the autonomy of the Church being independent of the civil authority, he thought that the Church should have a good cooperative relationship with the State.

In France in 1559, the representatives of the Huguenots churches met in Paris and twenty persons among them wrote their own *Gallic Confession* and the *Discipline ecclesiastique*. In these documents, the Huguenots did not make ecclesiastical discipline a mark of the true Church as the Scots and the Dutch did in their own Confession of Faith. Torrance points out that the eldership in France was more closely

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[213] Calvin, *the Institutes of the Christian Religion*, IV. III. 1-5 (tr. Henry Beveridge, Edinburgh, 1846), 57-62.
[214] Torrance, op. cit., 505; J.K.S. Reid(ed.), *Calvin: Theological Treatises*, 63-65.
[215] W. Fred Graham, 'PRESBYTERIANISM', *OER, vol.3*, 338.

related to worshipping God and the sacramental life of the Church than discipline.[216]

He suggests that a reason might be that the Reformed church in France did not have

such a relationship to the State as was found in Geneva.[217] Also Henderson suggests:

> As French Protestants were a scattered minority in a country whose State
> Church was Romanist and whose civil authorities were suspicious or hostile,
> an elder's duties were confined to his congregation and to strictly
> denominational councils, the situation in this respect being in contrast with that
> in Geneva or Scotland.[218]

It was never true that the Huguenots ignored ecclesiastical discipline as the role of

eldership because they could not receive the support from the civil government.

Henderson indicates that the function of the elder in France was, together with the

pastors, to take care of the members who attended at the worship and the communion,

as well as to oversee the Church, to report misconduct in the church, and to judge the

people who were accused.[219] Also in France, the eldership had the role of watching

over the congregation from the beginnings of the Reformation.

The emergence of the Reformed church in the Netherlands was associated with

the struggle for liberty from Spain whose state church was Romanist like France.[220]

Moreover there were French-speaking towns such as Lille, Tournai, and Valenciennes,

to which Reformed preachers from Geneva and France had ready access.[221] From such

situations, it was not strange that the eldership in the Netherlands followed the French

type. On the other hand, article 29 in the *Belgic Confession,* written by Guy de Bres,

emphasized the importance of ecclesiastical discipline as one of the marks of the true

church. This is the position of the *Scots Confession* as well. The *Belgic Confession*

was published at first in France in 1561, then translated and published in the

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[216] Torrance, op. cit., 505.
[217] Ibid.
[218] Henderson, op. cit., 66.
[219] Ibid.
[220] Ibid., 120.
[221] James D. Tracy, 'NETHERLAND', *OER,* vol.3, 137.

Netherlands in 1562, and it showed parallels with the *Gallic Confession* of 1559.[222] Afterwards, the *Leicester Church Order* of 1586 listed four courts as 'kerkeraden' (consistories), classes, particular synods, and national synods (General Assembly), thereby the 'Presbyteriaal-synodale stelsel' was fixed in Netherland.[223] Henderson also points out the feature of the eldership in the Netherlands that: 'The elder had considerable pastoral responsibility, and was expected to keep in close touch with the people in their district for the encouragement of Christian practice and knowledge.'[224]

Also in England, although the ecclesiology of the Reformed church could not necessarily spread widely, we can confirm that the Reformers recommended introducing the eldership into England. Henderson introduces the case that William Turner recommended the appointment of elders to help with parish discipline in his *The Huntyng of the Romyshe Wolfe* published in 1554.[225] Besides, we can pick out such names as Laurence Humphrey, Thomas Cartwright, and Walter Travers, who were forced into exile from England to cities in the Continent during the reign of Queen Mary Tudor, as persons who recommended the eldership in England.[226] For example, Travers, in Geneva in 1574, published the *Ecclesiasticae Disciplinae* written in Latin and later in the same year Cartwright translated it into English.[227] Again in 1587, he published the *Disciplina Ecclesiae Sacra ex Dei Verbo descripta,* a so-called '*Book of Discipline*', in which he defended the Presbyterian form.[228] Kirk points out that: 'Walter Travers... believed that a 'consistorie' should 'be had in every congregation' and he distinguished three further courts, the conference or classis, the

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[222] Michael A. Hakkenberg, 'BELGIC CONFESSION', *OER, vol.1*, 138.
[223] Henderson, op. cit., 120.
[224] Ibid., 66.
[225] Ibid., 67.
[226] Ibid., 67-8; Hazlett, op. cit., 64.
[227] F.L. Cross, 'Travers, Walter', *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 1637.
[228] David W. Hall & Joseph H. Hall (ed.), 'Book of Discipline, 1587', *Paradigms in Polity: Classical Readings in Reformed and Presbyterian Church Government*, 248. It was introduced as 'one of the first English documents on Church Government'.

provincial synod and national synod, within a kingdom.'[229] What Kirk suggests is interesting when we compare the thought of Travers with the idea of a common eldership in the *Second Book of Discipline*. While Travers acknowledged that each particular congregation should have her own particular eldership dealing with the several matters occurring in the parish, the *Second Book of Discipline* indirectly declined such acknowledgement by introducing the idea of common eldership. This does not mean that the editors of the *Second Book of Discipline* ignored or neglected the importance of the particular eldership. They would also think that each church should be governed by the godly eldership, and therefore, it was natural for them to think that each church organized her eldership. Besides, what we have to bear in mind is that, there was a situation in which every church could not constitute its eldership, and yet organizing the eldership in a particular church was considered to be important so as not to lose the notes of a true Kirk. Therefore the common eldership seems to be instituted as a tentative and temporary means to meet the situation when a church could not organize a particular eldership. Moreover, if the idea of common eldership was to meet the practical needs of the Church, it is possible to say that the situation was very similar to the case of the institution of the office of superintendent. Indeed there was no direct mention as to whether the common eldership was designed as a temporary system or perpetual one in the *Second Book of Discipline*. From this perspective, it may also mean a certain transition of the power and role of ministry from the clergy to the laity.

When we pay attention to the other Reformed traditions, we may acknowledge different features in their ideas of eldership. Concerning the eldership associated with

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[229] Kirk, *SBD*, 113. [Walter Travers, *A full and plaine declaration*, 159, *Puritan Manifestoes*, 97 and 118-9.]

discipline and the four-fold style of offices, Scotland followed the other Reformed churches. On the other hand, concerning the Presbyterian polity consisting in four-fold church courts: Kirk Session, presbytery (classis), provincial synod, and the General Assembly, Scotland preceded the Netherlands and England.

3. Comparison of the 'Eldership' in the *First* and *Second Book of Discipline*

Although the term 'eldership' was not clearly used in the *First Book of Discipline*, John Knox and his colleagues had introduced the offices of elders and deacons into the system of the Church government. The role of elder was written in the eighth head of the *First Book of Discipline*:

> The elders being elected must be admonished of their office, which is to assist the ministers in all publike affares of the kirk, to wit, in determining and judging causes, in giving admonition to the licentious liver, in having respect to the manner and conversation of al men within their charge. For by the gravitie of the Seniors the light and unbridled life of the licentious must be corrected and bridled.
>
> Yea the Seniors ought to take heed to the like manners, diligence and study of their ministers. ... [230]

In this *Book*, the term 'Senior(s)' was often used as a synonym for 'Elder(s)'.[231] What these quotes make clear is that the function of the elders in a congregation was, first, to help and support the ministry, secondly, to oversee the whole congregation, not only the members of the congregation but also the ministers of the parishes.

The function of eldership in the *First Book of Discipline* was also closely associated with ecclesiastical discipline as was the case in other Reformed traditions. The *Book* notes:

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[230] Cameron, *FBD*, 175-6.
[231] Ibid., 36, 174.

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> If the crime be publick, ... then ought the offender to be called in presence of the Minister, Elder and Deacons, where his sinne and trepasse ought to be declared and aggreged, so that his conscience may feele how farre he hath offended God and what slander he hath raised in the Kirk.[232]

Thus, administration of ecclesiastical discipline, involving such roles as oversight of the whole congregation, examination and judging of offenders, making them repent, and removing the evil, was the main function of the eldership. In such disciplinary cases, the *First Book of Discipline* did not exclude the deacons from the eldership. Concerning the administration of discipline to the minister of the congregation, the *First Book of Discipline* notes, if the minister was stubborn and disobedient to the judge of the eldership; 'then may the Seniors of the kirk complain to the ministry of the two adjacent kirks, where men of greater gravitie are.'[233] This sentence clearly points out the close relationship among the adjacent churches in the same area. Such relationship also should not be missed when we think of the common eldership as the origin of a presbytery.

While we think of the eldership, we must clarify the position of eldership in particular churches in the context of the Scottish Reformation, because a congregation has always been the most basic unit of the Reformed Kirk, since it had started out as a grass-roots movement with worship being organized in secret 'privy kirks'.[234] It should be recollected that the Reformers clearly thought of the fundamental importance of the congregation as a visible church possessing the true marks of the universal church in the *First Book of Discipline*.[235] Donaldson notes concerning the position of particular churches in the Reformation in Scotland:

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[232] Ibid., 168.
[233] Ibid., 176.
[234] Kirk, 'Privy Kirk', *DSCHT*, 679. Here Kirk notes that: 'The formation of these clandestine congregations greatly assisted the transition of Protestantism at the Reformation from a mere network of underground cells to a recognized Church intent on claiming the allegiance of the nation.'
[235] Cameron, *FBD*, 68.

In practice, it was congregational organisation which came first in Scotland, because with the 'privy kirks' the new church system had started to develop at its lowest level. The proposals of the Book of Discipline likewise put their emphasis on the parish, to the extent that they are far more explicit about congregational organisation at the bottom than about any supreme organ of government at the top.[236]

As these passages make clear, one of the distinctive features of the beginning of the Scottish Reformation was that it was not accomplished with a top-down style such as in England by the power of King Henry VIII. It was a bottom-up Reformation by individual persons and congregations. The role of such individual Kirks was very weighty, because, whenever several important issues such as excommunication or the settlement of some financial problems occurred in the parish, while the superintendents were expected to help the congregations deal with such matters, the congregation was required finally to assume responsibility. The minister seems to have been compelled to act as the executive of the congregation's requirements.[237] Therefore, each congregation was also expected to be autonomous to decide something by herself according the Word of God. Cameron summarizes: 'A considerable measure of freedom is given to the local congregation through its ministry to exercise a wide range of responsibility.'[238]

Similar expectation of the congregation acting as an autonomous body extended to the relationship between a congregation and a minister. Concerning the nomination or transfer of the minister, for example, the consent of the congregation is required in both the *First Book of Discipline* and the *Second Books of Discipline*.[239] So the decision of the people of each congregation was not less important than that of

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[236] Donaldson, *The Scottish Reformation*, 81-2.
[237] Cameron, *FBD*, 68, 163 and 170.
[238] Ibid., 70.
[239] Ibid., 101. Here it is noted in the Fourth Head: 'The Admission of Ministers to their offices must consist in <u>consent of the people, and Church whereto they shall be appointed</u>,...' [my underlining]. Furthermore, James Kirk, SBD, 179. In the chapter III, it was noted that: '7. Electioun is the chesing out of ane persone or personis maist able to the office that vaikis be the jugement of the eldarschip and <u>consent of the congregatioun quhom to the persone or personis beis appointit</u>' [my underlining].

clergy. Kirk notes: 'Congregational election of ministers was preferred to nomination and presentation by a patron; the intrusion of unworthy candidates for the ministry was deplored; and the supervision of admissions was entrusted to the eldership which had responsibility for all disciplinary matters'.[240] Furthermore, Donaldson characterizes the Kirk Session as 'an element of lay control, an element of anti-clericalism'[241], and because it was so, he argues: 'the kirk session could examine, censure and (with the superintendent's sanction) even depose their minister. Anti-clericalism could hardly go further.'[242] Thus, he indicates that the roles of the Kirk Session as an autonomous body also reflected such a tendency as anti-clericalism in the Scottish Reformed Church. Perhaps, though, Donaldson has confused the Reformed ministers' commitment to a church where the power and influence of the clergy is restricted or held in balance by lay representation with an anti-clericalism which seeks the outright limitation of clerical influence.

Such emphasis on the autonomy of each individual congregation was not necessarily inconsistent with the institution of the office of superintendent or the new system of Presbytery, both of which were expected to supervise each congregation. For taking such responsibility to be autonomous, each congregation needed to be guided by the eldership, consisting of the learned ministers and godly elders who had been selected in and from the congregation. So, both the institution of the office of superintendent, and later, the inauguration of the common eldership and presbytery, are not to remove the autonomous power from each congregation but to increase and promote it in each congregation.

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[240] Kirk, *Patterns of Reform*, 362.
[241] Donaldson, *Scotland: Church and Nation through Sixteen Centuries*, 62.
[242] Ibid., 62.

One of the functions expected of the superintendent or the presbytery was commonly to instruct and train ministers and elders to form the autonomous eldership relying solely on the authority of the Word of God. While the minister of each church became a chairman of the session, some churches couldn't have their own ministers because of a shortage of the number of ministers at that time. Hence vacant churches could not be managed by the Kirk Session with its own minister. In such a case, the office of superintendent had been expected to supervise congregations within their dioceses after 1560 but the office of superintendent could not function well. On the other hand, the relationship among churches in the same area became closer through the institution of the exercise for the study the Bible. Such relationships characterized not only the relations between 'the inferior church' and the 'greater church' of the most notable town of the district, but also the relations among 'inferior' churches in same area.[243]

In the context of the Scottish Reformation, the roles played by a congregation in the church government were significant and weighty. Indeed, there is an opinion that: 'the kirk-session was simply a committee of the presbytery'.[244] But, as Foster recognizes, the Kirk Session was 'the foundation stone of Scottish church government'.[245] He argues for the importance of the role of Kirk Session concerning administration of discipline: 'Most disciplinary cases were heard by kirk sessions, and neither bishops nor presbyteries were very successful in establishing discipline in a parish which had no effective kirk session.'[246] Finally, he concludes: 'Kirk sessions were the oldest, most enduring and efficient institution developed by the reformed

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[243] Cameron, *FBD*, 68 and 98-99.
[244] van Wyk, op cit, 56. He mentions this opinion as 'according to Calderwood'. However, it is not necessarily certain whether Calderwood recognized the kirk session as such.
[245] Walter Roland Foster, *The Church before the Covenants*, 4.
[246] Ibid., 84.

Kirk. Sessions successfully enlisted much of the leadership of the church and nation.'[247] Therefore, it is no wonder that Travers thought, even though it was in the context of England, that every particular church should have their own eldership because it is the fundamental unit where the church takes a stand for the notes of true Kirk.

II. The Idea of 'Ane Common Eldership'

1. Kirk's Analysis of the emergence of the Idea of 'common eldership'

When we pay attention to the *Second Book of Discipline* to understand the origin of Presbyterianism in Scotland, the idea of 'ane communal eldership', that several churches can or may share a same eldership, becomes a clue for understanding it. This is expressed twice in chapters VII and XI. It is important that the following areas should be examined: what a common eldership was in the *Second Book of Discipline*, how this idea of 'common eldership' emerged, and what the context of the emergence of such an idea was.

Kirk analyses the reason why the idea of 'ane common eldership' emerged, and the social context from which it emerged:

> Practical considerations...may have suggested the suitability of introducing common eldership of 'thrie of four, ma or fewar, particular kirkis' in areas where the shortage of ministers was acute and where no session had been established. Not only so, the decision to unite three or four churches into a common eldership also coincided with the practical problem of 'the platt [plot] of the four churches' served by one minister, and it had a relevance, too, for the phasing out of readers, as the assembly was later to recommend. At the same time, the envisaged elimination of bishops as overseers placed a further emphasis on the need to develop closer links among churches to permit conference and discussion among neighbouring ministers. The creation of

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[247] Ibid.

common elderships fulfilled this additional requirement though the second Book of Discipline still seemed to concede that some churches might retain their own 'particular eldership', presumably in areas where flourishing kirk sessions were already established. ... The communal eldership or presbytery, in short, was designed to replace individual kirk sessions and was based not on doctrinaire abstractions but on the need to solve practical problems.[248]

These passages indicate some very useful insights to understand the factors leading to the forming of a common eldership. What this analysis makes clear is that 'a common eldership' was a practical method, first, to redeem situations which arose from 'the shortage of ministers'; secondly, to develop the role of oversight so as to eliminate the office of bishop from the Church; and thirdly, to develop closer relationships among adjacent churches in the same area. When we think of the roles and functions ascribed to the ministers, the problem of the shortage of ministers makes it possible that the existence of vacant churches led to the stagnation of evangelization, and the absence of the sacraments in worship. Furthermore, when Kirk examines the case of the establishment of the Stirling Presbytery, he concludes: 'The creation of a 'common eldership' centred on Stirling certainly offered a practical solution to the problem of supervising so many churches lacking ministers, though attempts to reduce the number of parish churches in the area inevitably met with local resistance'.[249] What he indicates here is that there was a considerable connection between the problems of shortage of ministers and the forming of a common eldership. It is clear that the situation of shortage of ministers caused several secondary problems for the Church. For example, the shortage of ministers would be logically accompanied by corresponding vacancies in churches for ministers. Although the office of readers had been instituted to meet the needs of such vacant congregation to lead the worship since 1561, the General Assembly in 1581 decided to stop promoting the office of reader.

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[248] Kirk, *SBD*, 103.
[249] Ibid., 108.

Also Burleigh maintains: 'The office of reader was abolished in spite of the fact that there were not nearly enough ministers to supply the parishes'.[250] At the same time, he indicates: 'this seems to have been prompted by the idea that ... the readership might be too easy and cheap a method of filling charges with unqualified men'. [251] Furthermore, although they were all expected to supervise carefully such vacant congregations, the superintendents had not been able to properly do so and the 'tulchan bishops' did not exercise the ministry of the Word of God.

We have to remember again that the *First Book of Discipline* officially recognized the shortage of ministers:

> We are not ignorant that the raritie of godly and learned men shall seem to some a just reason why that so strait and sharpe examination should not be taken universally, for so it shall appeare that the most part of the Kirks shal have no minister at all. But let these men understand, that the lack of able men shall not execuse us before God, if by our consent unable men be placed over the flock of Christ Jesus.[252]

These sentences make it clear that the first Reformers emphasized the quality and ability of ministers rather than their number. Although the office of reader was instituted as a temporary measure to cover the shortage of ministers, there is some truth in Burleigh's suggestion that it might have become an easy way to cover the shortage. Increasing the number of the ministers was clearly one of the important objects of the Reformers. At the same time, it was also important not to promote unable persons as office bearers to vacant churches. Such conditions prompted churches to gather and cooperate with each other so that their autonomy might be preserved. Kirk suggests:

> A distaste for congregational autonomy,... together with an awareness of the need to solve the very practical problem of parishes, still without ministers or

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[250] Burleigh, *A Church History of Scotland*, 201.
[251] Ibid.
[252] Cameron, *FBD*, 104.

sessions, several of which were often grouped together under one minister (though each might possess a reader) led to the solution of 'commoun elderships', consisting of ministers, doctors and elders from several parishes.[253]

While the situation of the shortage of ministers seems to be the main factor of forming a common eldership, it was not the only reason for doing so. Other factors also accompanied the shortage of ministers. Kirk indicates several phases of them: first, the condition in which a minister served several churches at the same time; secondly, the General Assembly had decided to phase out the office of readers; thirdly, abolition of the office of superintendent and bishop as a supervisor in a single person. Along with abolition of the office of bishop and superintendent, the role of overseers had to be shifted from such offices to something other as well. Therefore the General Assembly decided to shift it, first of all, to the 'exercise' which had been instituted after 1560 according to the *First Book of Discipline* and had functioned like an authoritative body in each area.

Kirk maintains: 'No aspect of the second Book of Discipline's programme has caused greater confusion, and perhaps needlessly so, than the issue of whether the presbytery can be said to receive support from that document'.[254] Indeed, there are only two instances of the use of the word 'presbytery/ies' in the *Second Book of Discipline*: '....according to the juigment and appointment of the <u>presbyteries</u> or eldershippis'(VIII.7)[255], and 'No man aucht to have the office of visitatioun bot he that is lauchfullie chosine be the <u>presbyterie</u> thairto'(XI.15).[256] As we can see in the former sentence, Kirk indicated that, when the word 'presbytery' was used in this *Book*, there is terminologically no clear distinction between 'presbytery' and 'eldership', so that

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[253] Kirk, *SBD*, 199.
[254] Ibid., 102.
[255] Ibid., 208. [my underlining]
[256] Ibid., 223. [my underlining]

the word 'presbytery' did not necessarily refer to one of the four-fold church courts, located between the Kirk Session and the synod. [257]

This series of analyses by Kirk seems to be exact and fully coherent with the matters often discussed in the General Assemblies during the 1570s. The problem of the shortage of ministers had been dealt with seriously since the Reformation.

2. The Exercise and Synod in Relation to the Common Eldership

From the beginning of the Reformation, the Reformers had made it a point to emphasize the local bond which appeared especially in the practice of the exercises and the synods. The relationship established by regional bonds among adjacent churches was an important factor which contributed to the eventual establishment of the Presbyterian government in Scotland. Moreover, it is held that the regional bond has been traditionally strong in Scotland.[258] Hence it is necessary to examine them in studies of the establishment of Presbyterian government.

(1) The Exercise during the 1570s

Although the 'exercise' is not mentioned in *the Second Book of Discipline*, the exercise should never be disregarded when we think of the origin of Presbyterianism in Scotland. The exercise had come to play an important role in the organisation of the Church by the early 1570s. As the importance of the exercise was recognized by degrees, the role of exercise became more administrative by the middle of the 1570s.

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[257] Ibid., 102.
[258] S. A. Burrell, 'The Covenant Idea as a Revolutionary Symbol: Scotland, 1596-1637', *Church History 27*, 339-40.

The General Assembly held on 24th April in 1576 agreed that, in urgent cases such as 'if the minister commit some notorious crime', the commissioner 'may convene these that are upon the exercise in that province' to examine the offence and suspend him, 'at least with advice of six ministers within his bounds', 'with advice of the ministers of the exercise within that province'.[259] This example shows that the commissioners required the support of the ministers of the exercise in the area when they administered their powers as commissioners. The Assembly regarded the power as being 'not in the visitoer, but in the kirk.'[260] Hence, the power of the church did not depend on the individual person but the agreement of the ministers. Thus the exercise had played a certain important role in the administration of discipline by the late 1570s.

Other cases in which the exercise functioned as a kind of administrative body are frequently indicated by Donaldson and Kirk.[261] For example, Kirk notes:

> Similarly, in 1578, the 'Brethren of the Exercyiss of Edinburgh beand convenit with the Commissionar of Lowthiane' undertook certain administrative duties, and in 1579 the assembly instructed a commissioner 'with the assistance of the brethren of his Exercise' to execute the assembly's injunctions in a case of non-residence.[262]

During the 1570s, when ministers convened at the exercise, various ecclesiastical problems or troubles probably would be talked over frankly or discussed seriously among the attendance after the prophesying. Although the discussion of such problems of ecclesiastical discipline in the exercise was only an additional or extra part at first, the importance and necessity of such opportunities in the exercise for discussing problems concerning the work of ministry increased gradually. What we can confirm from the records of Stirling presbytery after 1581 is that the exercise was absorbed

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[259] Calderwood, III: 364-5.
[260] Ibid., 364.
[261] Donaldson, *The Scottish Reformation*, 205. And Kirk, *SBD*, 105-6.
[262] Kirk, *SBD*, 105-6. [referring to *The Booke of the Universall Kirk: Acts and Proceedings of the General Assemblies of the Kirk of Scotland*, ii,465-468, and Records of St Andrews Kirk Session: Register of the Minister, Elders and Deacons of the Christian Congregation of St Andrews, i, 464.]

into the main part of the presbytery, and the discussion of disciplinary matters began to be dealt with not as an additional but as a major part in the agenda of presbytery. Therefore, the substance of both exercise during the 1570s and presbytery after 1581 was hardly changed at all, except that the latter had become more judicial, always keeping an accurate record. Therefore, it is correct that Kirk affirms: 'Such was the transition from exercise to presbytery, which really entailed a change of name rather than a change in function.'[263]

Kirk concludes regarding the exercise: 'It offered a ready-made solution to the problem of substituting a common eldership for individual kirk sessions thereby forging closer links between neighbouring churches in each district.'[264] This analysis raises a crucial factor relating to the establishment of the presbytery. It is conceivable that such a practice as the exercise made the editors of the *Second Book of Discipline* hit on the idea of a 'common eldership'.

(2) The Synod in Sixteenth Century

It is uncertain how the synod actually functioned for each particular congregation because of the absence of any documentation which proves the works of the synod at that time. However, it is conceivable that the synod also became a factor in appearance of the common eldership or presbytery.

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[263] Ibid., 106.
[264] Ibid.

The synod met twice a year in April and October after 1561.[265] Interestingly, there was, however, no definition concerning the synod in the *First Book of Discipline*. Cameron guesses the reason of such an absence from the Book:

> 'Synods had been by this time successfully introduced into the reformed Churches of Switzerland and were beginning to occupy a place of considerable importance in the reformed Church of France, therefore it is a little surprising that there is no specific mention of this court in the Book of Discipline.'[266]

Thus, despite the absence of any clear definition, it is possible, as Shaw indicates, to say that the 'basic organisation of the medieval synod continued unchanged in the reformed Church in Scotland'[267].

In the *First Book of Discipline*, the church government in each local district was closely connected with the role of superintendents.[268] In terms of the superintendent's area, it was defined, for example, in the case of the superintendent of Glasgow: 'whose Diocesse shall comprehend Clidsdaill, Renfrew, Mentheth, Lennox, Kyle and Cunninghame: his residence to be in Glasgow.'[269] What this means is that the superintendent of Glasgow was expected to oversee six dioceses under the synod for which he had to take a responsibility. Thus, the synods met on the initiative of the superintendent or bishop of the area during the 1560s.[270] The function of the synod directly connected to that of superintendent.

Although the reformers first expected that the superintendent leads the synod as the 'superintendent's court' in each district, they could not fully fulfil such an expectation. As we see above, superintendents had not been able to function well by

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[265] Ibid., 115; Shaw, *the General Assemblies of the Church of Scotland, 1560-1600*, 175. In the Middle Ages, synod was usually held once a year in autumn.
[266] Cameron, *FBD,* 69.
[267] Shaw, op. cit., 174.
[268] Cameron, *FBD*, 116-122.
[269] Ibid., 121.
[270] Shaw, op cit., 175.

the middle of the 1570s.[271] Hence, the synod also would not function as well as it was expected.

Although practice throughout the country was probably not uniform, it was generally required that not only ministers in the district but also elders or deacons from each church attend the synod.[272] However, lay attendance seems to have been sometimes lax. For example, Kirk notes that: 'no elders are recorded as present in the synod of Lothian for this period.'[273]

Kirk mentions one aspect of the work of the synod: 'An elected moderator, as observed in the General Assembly since 1563, superseded the role of superintendent or commissioner as permanent moderator of synods.'[274] From the beginning of the Reformation, the synods were dignified gatherings which probably met twice a year regularly, and it was led by the initiative of the superintendent or the bishop of the district under the authority of the General Assembly. It had been permitted only for the clergy to be present at the synod after the thirteenth century. However, the new synod settled by the Reformation allowed the laity to attend the meetings of synods.

The synod was expected to be a higher court to which the Kirk Session could appeal about ministerial matters or troubles in the parish. Shaw states concerning the synod that: 'This court played a considerable part in the administration of the Church. The synod was the court of appeal from the kirk session ...'.[275] Nevertheless, the function of the synod grew less important within the organisation of the Church after 1572.[276] Shaw concludes: 'By the end of the century the synod was of little

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[271] See above, pp.14-8.
[272] Shaw, op. cit., 174.
[273] Kirk, *SBD*, 116.
[274] Ibid., 115.
[275] Shaw, op. cit., 175.
[276] Ibid.

importance', because the presbytery did 'gradually take over many of the powers and responsibilities of the synod'.[277] Furthermore, Henderson states that: 'Synods had tended to be overburdened as the number of ministers and organised parishes increased, and it was really necessary to have part of the work delegated to more local bodies. The duties of a Presbytery came to be similar to those of a Synod, but on a smaller scale.'[278] Thus, Henderson concludes that presbyteries gradually took over the duties which were delegated to the synods, as presbyteries increased in number during this period.

This may give an impression that every synod could not function well during the late sixteenth century. However, the Lothian synod functioned comparatively well. It often introduced bills and questions to the General Assembly and contributed to the further development of church government.[279] Therefore, we have to also bear in mind that there were different degrees of efficiency in function between each synod during this period.

Consequently in 1581, the whole land of Scotland was divided into twenty-two new provinces according to the dismantlement of old dioceses in favour of a new scheme of dioceses and presbyteries. [280]

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[277] Ibid.
[278] Henderson, *The Church of Scotland – A Short History*, 61.
[279] Calderwood, III: 280, 589-91, 746,. etc.
[280] Kirk, Ecclesiastical organisation: early post-Reformation, *Atlas*, 382. These provinces were Shetland, Orkney, Caithness, Sutherland, Ross, Moray, Banff, Aberdeen, Angus and Mearns, Perth, Dunkeld, Dunblane, Stirling, Fife, West Lothian, Edinburgh, Haddington, Merse and Teviotdale and Tweeddale, Clydesdale and Renfrew and Lennox, Cunninghhame and Kyle and Carrick, Galloway, Dumfries.

III. Process for Inauguration of Presbytery by the General Assemblies (1579-1581)

The *Second Book of Discipline* was a means for the end of establishing a new system of ecclesiastical government. Therefore the Church had to take further steps to reform the system according to this new book of polity after finishing the work of drafting. However, the process was not necessarily easy. The General Assembly spent much time discussing the matter till 1581 when the first presbytery came to be formed. To that we now turn our attention.

1. 1579

In 1579, the General Assembly was held once in July. The King's official letter with his signature was sent to the Assembly and read openly. Reflecting the result of the discussion of the contents of the *Second Book of Discipline* at Stirling Castle, the King indicated that, if the Assembly discussed and came to agree with the points which had not reached agreement in the former conferences at Stirling before the next Parliament, then they may be passed into laws. [281] This reaction to the former conference showed that the King had not yet been fully satisfied with its contents and required further examination of 'the articles not yet agreed upon'. The commissioners reported what the Stirling conference discussed to this Assembly. After the report,

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[281] Calderwood, III: 444. The Letter notes: 'whatsoever in the former conferences tuiching the policie of the kirk was remitted, to be reasoned and decided by our estats in parliament, let it so rest, without prejudging the same by anie your conclusions at this time, seing our parliament so shortlie now approacheth, and that wer are weill pleased and content, that before the samine, suche maters as are not yitt fullie reasoned may be consulted upon, and prepaired to passé in forme of laws; and the meetest for that worke to be expreslie imployed therin, to the end that things conferred and agreed upon may be presented to our estats, to be approved in our said parliament, and due ececutioun to follow theron, for the advancement of God's true religioun, and to the repose of you, and others our good subjects, the members of the kirk of God within our realme.'

they discussed the contents of the new book to confirm the meaning of the words like 'presbytery', 'eldership' and so on, which had wide range. Then the Assembly decided what they should require from the King. Six items were raised. Amongst these was an issue concerning church polity:

> Because, in the last conference holdin at Stirline, at his Grace his command, concerning the Policie of the Kirk, certan articles theranent remaine yitt unresolved, and referred to farther conference; therefore, the Assemblie craveth his Majestie, that persons unspotted with suche corruptions as are desired to be reformed, may be nominated by his Majestie, to proceed in farther conference of the said Policie, and time and place to be appointed for that effect.[282]

Thus, the Assembly decided to adjust further the points which had not yet been agreed upon between the Church and State.

In the discussion concerning the new church polity, the synods of Lothian and St Andrews propounded several questions which involved the matters relating to office in the Church. The Lothian synod, for example, propounded four questions; first, about the office of reader; secondly, about the office of minister; thirdly, about dealing with benefice holders who sinned; and fourthly, about the polity of presbytery. This fourth question read: 'Quest, Forthlie, a generall order to be takin for erecting of presbyteries in places where public exercise is used, until the time the Policie of the Kirk be established by law.' And then, the Assembly answered this question: 'The exercise may be judged a presbyterie'.[283] Thereby, the exercise was decreed as 'presbytery' officially in the General Assembly, even though it was a tentative recognition. After these discussions of 'the Book of the Policie', this Assembly

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[282] Ibid., 447. See also Row, op. cit, 67.
[283] Calderwood, III: 450; Row, ibid., 68; See above p.19.

decided to present the King with a long letter of supplication persuading him with polite words to approve the new Book of Discipline.[284]

2. 1580

In 1580, the General Assembly met twice, on 12th July and 20th October. In the former Assembly, it cannot be confirmed whether there were discussions concerning the contents of the Book of Policy or not, except that, when they confirmed the items which they had presented to the King and his privy council for receiving their final answer, it was minuted: '*Item*, That the Booke of Policie may be established by act of Privie Counsell, till a parliament be had, at the which the samine may be confirmed.'[285] This Assembly kept on requiring a public approval by the civil authorities.

On the other hand, this Assembly seemed to set about actively reforming the structure of church government rather than merely discussing further the contents of the book. The Assembly concluded the total abolition of the office of bishop, and partially that of reader. First, concerning the former office, the Assembly declared that it was unlawful in the Scottish church, noting that: 'the whole Assemblie of the kirk, in one voice, ...findeth and declareth the samine pretended office, used and termed as

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[284] Calderwood, III: 452-5. This letter addressed to the King from the Church notes: ''Which thing wiselie begunne in your Highnesse' name, by your first regent, of godlie memorie, and ordeanned by Act of Parliament to be followed trueth, hath beene diligentlie pressed for from time to time, but speciallie now, since, the acceptatioun of the government in your owne person, when as, not onlie most lovinglie and wilinglie yee did receave the Book of the Policie of the Kirk, offered by them who were directed to your Majestie in name of the general kirk, but also, was verie carefull to find out men meete for conference upon the heeds of the same, lamenting for the raritie of suche kinde of persons as were desired to conferre thereupon; and hath appointed diverse times and places, where suche conferences in your name, and at your commandment, have beene had, not without fruit and agreement, in manie heeds to be passed in laws, but with expectatioun of greater things after to follow, upon further conference, providing suche men be appointed thereto as your Hienesse wished, and we most earnestlie crave. ......Finallie, to make this policie of the kirk to be humblie and earnestlie craved to be established by your Highnesse, by the most part of the true subjects of your realme.''
[285] Ibid., 467.

in above said, anlawfull in the self, as having nather fundament, ground, nor warrant in the Word of God'.[286] Secondly, concerning the latter, the Assembly concluded that: 'their office is no ordinar office within the Kirk of God'. They also 'Inacted, That readers who hes read two yeares, and now cannot exhirt, be deposed by the Commissioners of that province; and that no reader bruik or injoy gleeb or manss where there is ane actuall Minister.'[287] From this final sentence, we can infer that both the minister and the reader had served the same church at the same time. Although the shortage of the ministers had not yet been sufficiently resolved and not every church could call their own full-time minster by this time, it is reasonable to assume that the number of the ministers increased during the two decades since 1560. The increasing of the number of ministers could be one of the reasons why the *Second Book of Discipline* was willing to abolish the office of reader. However, more specifically, the quality and works of the readers was raised by the *Second Book of Discipline* as a consideration for their abolition as well. In fact, we may rightly infer from the first sentence above that not every reader played his role in the congregation in leading worship. The Assembly also set the limitation that: 'A pastor should have no more congregations but one, nor ought to be named the minister of more congregations nor one'.[288] Considering these enactments concerning the office of reader and pastor, both indicate that the situation of the local congregations had changed clearly since 1560. Thus, it is probable that the office of the reader was excluded from the office of the church in the *Second Book of Discipline* because it ceased to be a necessity for the church in the 1570s.

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[286] Ibid., 469.
[287] Row, op. cit., 69.
[288] Ibid; Calderwood, III: 471.

Furthermore, the Assembly dealt with financial matters such as the 'thirds of benefices' which was a scheme that one-third of the revenues of all benefices of the church be collected by the Crown for its own needs and for the reformed churches. It had been introduced after the Reformation to finance the ministry of the Kirk.[289] One of the main reasons why superintendents couldn't fully function was that the church could not adequately sustain them financially, because such revenues were not collected by the agents of the Church but by the one of the landlords. Hence it was difficult for the Church to receive such money which had been conveyed into the hand of the Crown. Furthermore, the patronage that the Reformers tried to abolish was defended by powerful persons with vested interests, and a lot of money had been allowed to the nominal 'tulchan bishops'. To reform the system, the Church had to stop allowing money to such nominal bishops. The Assembly decided to present to the King their eight requirements, three of which concerned the financial matters of benefices. Furthermore, this assembly concluded concerning the financial problems of the ministers and church:

> all persons within the ministrie, als weill these who usurpe the stile of bishops, as others that sall be tryed hereafter, to diminishe the rents of their benefices, ather by diminution of the old rental, by setting of victual for small prices, and within the worth, or otherwise unjustlie dilapidating, and putting away the rent therof, by the judgement of the Generall Assemblie, sall underly the sentence of excommunicatioun without father processe.[290]

In the Assembly in October, there was hardly discussion concerning the *Second Book of Discipline* itself. However, first of all, they enacted as the first act: 'wherin was damned the pluralitie of kirks in the person of one man, be putt in executioun by the commissioners of provinces, according to the tenour therof'.[291] Furthermore, as the fourth act: 'It was considered to be a corruptioun, tending to

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[289] David F. Wright, 'Third of Benefices', *DSCHT*, 818.
[290] Calderwood, III: 470-71.
[291] Ibid., 477.

tyrannie, that the power of visiters sall stand in the person of one man, which sould flow from the presbyteries.'[292] Thereby this Assembly concluded that it was not allowed for one person to supervise each local congregation. This enactment applied not only to the bishops but also to the superintendents. Although the surviving superintendents seem to have continued in their office at that time, the original five superintendents had no successors.[293] The fact that there were no successors, notwithstanding that almost twenty years had passed since the first five superintendents were instituted, shows a clear demise of the office of superintendent. Therefore, it might be possible to say that the office of superintendent virtually came to an end by this enactment.

3. 1581

In 1581, the General Assembly was held once in April. According to Calderwood, the first subject of this Assembly was that of the dismissal of unworthy ministers:

> Forasmuche as, for purgatioun of the ministrie of unworthy persons that had entered into the functioun, to the great slander of God and his kirk,...Therefore, ... the Assemblie requirethe all men, ... that they delate and give up the names of suche persons in ticket, the morne at noone, that order may be takin fir removing of the great slander arising to the whole kirk by suche unworthy persons.[294]

It may be seen that the Assembly took such matters very seriously. While the Church had decided not to provide unworthy ministers to particular churches, the Crown and Patronage holders did not undertake such Reformation. Hence the issue of patronage

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[292] Ibid., 478.

[293] Kirk, 'Superintendent', *DSCHT*, 807.

[294] Calderwood, III: 515. Calderwood noted immediately after writing this citation: 'What was done the morne we understand not, because there wanteth in the Register the third and fourth session, rivven out by sacrilegious hands in the yeere 1584'. This mention seems indicating the possibility that the Register was intentionally falsified and broken by someone later, since the Register was taken out from the Church to the King or the Regent's hands because of the royal supremacy over the church at that time. We can confirm that the Assembly in 1586 decided to go to the King and ask him their return.

was left unresolved and became a kind of symbol of the struggle and conflict of the Church against the State in Scottish church history ever since.[295]

In the fifth session, the official letter from the King to the Assembly was read openly. This letter indicated what the King and his Privy Council had decided about the church polity according to the new Book of Discipline. It chiefly concerned two points: first, 'to make the ministers assured of their livings and stipends' and secondly, as to the new polity of presbytery 'how elderships may be constituted of a certain number of parishes lying together'.[296] Furthermore, interestingly, it offered their concrete proposals:

> there are in Scotland about 924 kirks, compting five score to the hundredth. Of these, sindrei are pendicles and small parishes, and manie kirks are demolished. Some parishes also are of greater bounds than that the parochiners may convenientlie convene to their parish kirks. It hath beene thought meete, therefore, to reduce thir 924 kirks to 600, and at everie kirk to have a minister, their stipends and livings to be modified in foure degrees. ''An hundredth at 500 merk the peece.'' ''Two hundredth at 300merk the peece.'', ''Two hundredth at 100 pund the peece.'' ''An hundredth at 100 merk the peece.''.[297]

These directions from the Crown clearly reflected the third and fourth items in the twelfth chapter of the *Second Book of Discipline*.[298] Moreover, this letter describes a

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[295] K.R. Ross, 'Patron, Patronage, Patronage Acts', *DSCHT*, 649; Kirk, *Patterns of Reform*, 368-425 (the chapter 10 entitled 'The survival of ecclesiastical patronage after the Reformation'). Patronage was originally a role of pious landowners, who built and endowed church buildings in their own areas, in the appointment of ministers. The system of Patronage was developed in Scotland during the Middle Ages. However, the system had been abused by insincere landowners by the period of the Reformation. Hence, the Reformers intended to abolish patronage outright through the First Book of Discipline. Furthermore, the Second Book of Discipline also condemned the system and sought to abolish it, too. However, patronage was defended by powerful vested interests of secular authorities and the landowners retained their positions as patrons for the church without any spiritual sense. Dissatisfaction and struggle with patronage continued for a long time in Scotland; it became a cause of the Disruption of 1843.

[296] Ibid., 516.

[297] Ibid., 519-20

[298] Kirk, *SBD*, 230-1. It was noted in the third item: '3. First, seing the hail cuntrie is devydit in provincis and thir provincis agane ar dividit in parochis alsweil in landwart as in townis, in every paroche of reasonable congregationis thay[*recte*, there] wald be placit ane or ma pasturis to feid the flok and na pasture or minister aucht to be burdenit with the particular charge of ma flokis or kirks thene ane allanerlie.' And in the fourth item: 'And because it wilbe thocht hard to find out pasturis or ministeris to all the paroche kirkis of the realme, alsweill in landwart as in borrows to[w]nis, we think, be the kirk and the prince, parochis in landwart or small villagis may be jo[i]nit twa or thrie or ma in sum places togidder and the principall and maist commodious kirkis to stand and to be repairit sufficientlie and qualefeit ministeris placet thairat, and the uther kirkis quhilk ar not fund necessary may be sufferit to decay, their kirk yairdis always being kept for

new framework of fifty-three presbyteries and eighteen dioceses in which each presbytery would be involved, in total.[299] It is hardly thinkable that such a proposal was designed by the side of the King alone, and the General Assembly agreed with this proposal.

In the eighth session, the Assembly decided that:

> a beginning be had of the presbytereis instantlie, in the place after following, to be examplars to the rest which may be established hereafter, viz., Edinburgh, Sanct Andrewes, Dundie, Perth, Stirline, Glasgow, Air, Irwing, Hadinton, Dumber, Chirnside, Linlithquo, Dumfermline. To some of thir presbyteries were assigned twelve, to some sixteen, to some twentie, to some foure and twentie kirks, as the brethrein deputed to joyne them thought meetest, till better advice be had.[300]

Although fifty-three presbyteries had been designed as a whole, only thirteen presbyteries were decided to be established instantly as model presbyteries 'to be examplars to the rest'.[301] According to this decision, first of all, three presbyteries in Haddington, Edinburgh and Stirling were formed immediately by August in this year. And then, the rest of the presbyteries were organized gradually by April 1582.[302] Besides, this Assembly enacted as the second Act: 'The Assemblie ordeanneth everie eldership, in their first meeting which is to be holdin, to choose out of their number a moderator, to continue till the nixt Synodal Assemblie'.[303] What the term 'eldership' indicates in this context was probably 'presbytery'. Furthermore, this Assembly concluded as the final act that:

> Forasmuche as travells have beene takin in framing the Policie of the Kirk, and diverse sutes have beene made to the magistrate for approbatioun threof, which

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burial places, and in sum places quhair neid requires ane parochine quhair the congregatioun is over greit for ane kirk may be devidit in twa or ma.'

[299] Calderwood, III: 521-22.

[300] Ibid., 523.

[301] Kirk, *SBD*, 107. He describes the thirteen presbyteries established in 1581 as 'model presbyteries'. See also his *Patterns of Reform*, 363.

[302] Kirk, *SBD*, 134. These were the presbyteries of Ayr, Irvine, Linlithgow, Dunfermline, St Andrews, Perth, Dunkeld, Dundee, Berchin, and Montrose.

[303] Calderwood, III: 526.

albeit yitt have not takin the happie effect which good men would wishe; yitt, that the posteritie may judge weill of the present age, and of the meaning of this kirk, the Assemblie hath concluded, that the Booke of Policie, agreed to in dicerse Assembleis before, sall be registred in the Acts of Assemblie, and remain theirn *ad perpetuam rei memoriam*, and the copeis therof to be takin by everie presbyterie.[304]

Thus, with the authorizing of the Second Book of discipline in the General Assembly in this year, what most would regard as the Scottish Presbyterian system began; though it could be argued that the Reformed Church of Scotland was governed in one way or another by a college or colleges of presbyters (including the General Assembly) from the very beginning.

In addition, the General Assembly held in April 1582 agreed to the following in their final agenda[305]: that a moderator of presbytery should be elected by the decision of each presbytery; that the number of members of a presbytery was not necessarily equal with that of other presbyteries; that elders who did not subject themselves to the presbytery should be exhorted to subject; that ministers who did not appear at neither the exercise nor the presbytery should have some penalty imposed with full consensus and subscription of every minister of the presbytery; that the date of the presbytery should be the same day of the exercise; that the clerk of the presbytery had to record the proceedings, and both the moderator and clerk might subscribe, etc.[306] These seems to reflect the problems which occurred after the inauguration of thirteen 'model presbyteries' in 1581.[307]

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[304] Ibid.
[305] It was entitled: 'ANSWERES TO DOUBTS PROPONED CONCERNING THE PRESBYTERIES'
[306] Calderwood, III: 616-8.
[307] Kirk, *Patterns of Reform*, 363.

IV. Inauguration of Stirling Presbytery in August 1581

It seems important to investigate the actual conditions of the inauguration of a presbytery, and the case of the Stirling presbytery is perhaps the most useful example. When it was decided that the thirteen model presbyteries should be established in the chief cities or towns mainly in the lowland, Stirling presbytery was established as one of them soon after the General Assembly. Kirk indicates the significance of the Stirling presbytery for today: it kept the earliest and only surviving presbytery records commencing with its formal inauguration in 1581.[308]

The records show that it was 8th August 1581 when the Stirling presbytery had the first meeting, and, since then, it was held with the frequency of almost once a week until 1587.[309] The first meeting of the presbytery consisted of eight ministers and nine elders, who were from Stirling, St Ninians, Falkirk, Dunblane, Logie, Alva, Fossoway and Glendevon, though the General Arssembly on April 1581 had proposed that Stirling presbytery should contain a total of twenty-four churches.[310] Therefore, two-thirds of the churches in the diocese could not or did not gather at the inauguration of Stirling presbytery. It is possible that the reason for their absence was that the huge size of its area prevented some members from convening once a week regularly. Yet, the main factor in absence was also connected with the problem of shortage of ministers. Kirk points out that there were still several vacant churches of ministers in the diocese in 1586: for example, Kippen, Tullibudy, Glendevon and Muckhart in the area of Stirling presbytery could possess only a resident reader and only occasionally

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[308] Kirk, *Stirling Presbytery Records 1581-1587*, ix.
[309] Ibid., 1.
[310] Ibid., xiii-xiv and 1; see also Kirk, *SBD*, 107.

be visited and served by a minister. Other churches in the area such as the Port of Menteithe could not receive even such support by ministers, hence the area was described as having 'na eldaris, deacones nor forme off disciplein'.[311] Moreover, although there were such vacant churches, the decision to reduce the number of churches in the area by means of union or division, according to the *Second Book of Discipline* and the authoritative decision of the general assembly on April 1581 was resisted by the people living in local areas. For example, the small congregation in Bothkennar, a vacant ministerial church, protested at the plan to be united with either Airth or Falkirk.[312] Then the congregation of Bothkennar promised that, if the presbytery would only find them a resident minister, they would repair the church, provide a stipend of a hundred marks and even make a horse available for the minister.[313] Kirk indicates that all these conditions had given an effect to the claims of the *Second Book of Discipline* for establishing 'common elderships'.[314] Thus Kirk affirms that: 'The creation of a 'common eldership' centred on Stirling certainly offered a practical solution to the problem of supervising so many churches lacking ministers'.[315]

Another case which Kirk mentions in this respect, is that of Andrew Graham. Graham, a minister of Dunblane who should have been one of the members of the presbytery, was disinclined to attend the Stirling presbytery, because of 'his desire to inaugurate a separate Presbytery of Dunblane.'[316] The reason for his desire is contained in his following assertion recorded by the Stirling presbytery:

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[311] Kirk, *SBD*, 107.
[312] Ibid., 108.
[313] Ibid.
[314] Ibid., 107.
[315] Ibid., 108.
[316] Kirk, *Stirling Presbytery Records.*, xv.

> because we haif a presbytery of our awin erectit of a lang tyme past in Dunblane be the prdur approvit be the generall kirk affoir our visitour standand undischaigit, our assemblies and conventionis mentenid, our ecerceis haldin and keipit and the materis of our kirk intreattid.[317]

These are clear cases of dissatisfaction with the constitution of the presbytery among the members of the presbytery at its beginnings.

It is also an interesting point that the clerk of the presbytery recorded the proceedings of its first inaugural meeting. At the first day of the inauguration, after calling the role of attendance, first of all, James Duncansone, a reader of the kirk in Stirling, was elected as the clerk, then Patrick Gillespie, the minister of St. Ninians, was elected as the moderator.[318] After the election of the office-bearers of the presbytery, it was decided that the 'exercise' should be held every Tuesday at nine.[319] Then, the first meeting of the presbytery on this day was over. From this record, it is clear that the exercise had been continued in the presbytery as a major, not a minor part of the proceedings. Furthermore, it is also interesting that a reader was elected as the clerk of presbytery.

The presbytery was expected to play the role as the administrative and judicial body of the Church in each district. The records show that Stirling presbytery started to discuss, immediately after its inauguration, the case of Robert Montgomery nominated to the vacant archbishopric of Glasgow by the nomination of the King. According to the presbytery records on 5th September 1581, it was noted:

> The brethir, considering the grit absence of Mr Robert Montgumrie, minister at Stirling, fra his charge and necligence in his offeice bayth in doctrein and

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[317] Ibid., 1-6, 12-18, 59.

[318] Ibid., 2.

[319] Ibid. It is not uncertain from the text of the records whether the date of 'Tuesday' is the same day of the presbytery being summoned or not. But other later records sometimes mentioned that the exercise was held son the same day of the presbytery. Therefore, it is possible that Stirling presbytery was summoned on Tuesday from morning to evening, in which the exercise was practiced from nine to noon, then, afternoon, the members of the presbytery started discussion concerning the ecclesiastical matters.

disceplein, ordains the moderator to admoneis him thairof and to desyr him to compeir the neix sessioun to schw the causis of his absence.[320]

This is the first mention of the case of Montgomery's censure by this presbytery. Since then, his case was discussed continuously in the meetings of presbytery, until Stirling presbytery, on 13th March 1582, rigidly censured Montgomery's practice:

> ... concerning the frequent absuence of Mr Robert Montgumrie from his charge without ony lycence askit or geven, and his intollarablle negligence in preaching of the Word, ministratioun of the sacramentis and usein of disciplein, quhairof being oftin tymis admonesit hes nevir pressit ti amend noe keipit ony promeis made thairanent, bot be the contrar dois occupy him self contenwallie in warldlie effairis and ungodly suittis of unlauchfull honouris, pre-eminence and riches expres agaimis the Word of God, the actis of the generall assemblie and dewatie of ane trew pastour, ...[321]

The series of actions of Stirling presbytery against Montgomery shows that the presbytery functioned, from the beginning, as a judicial church court not only for the people but also the ministers in the diocese. Besides the case of Montgomery, the Record shows also that the presbytery often discussed and judged many cases of excommunication for adultery or other scandals, and sometimes of marriage, of admission and deposition of a minister,[322] of the stipend a minister should receive,[323] of matters concerning the exercise,[324] and of administration of the baptism.[325] On 9th April 1583, Stirling presbytery also managed to send three ministers as commissioners to a parish in the presbytery to 'tak inquisitioun and tryell of sic thingis in that parrochun as concernis the glorie of God and weill of his kirk, and farther to travel with the congregatioun thairof and desyr thame to provyd a sufficient dwelling for Mr

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[320] Ibid., 6
[321] Ibid., 37.
[322] Ibid., 50-51. Here, for example, Deposition of a minister was approved at the meeting on 31th July in 1582. See also 65-66 concerning the case of election of minister. Here, for example, James Anderson, a candidate for a kirk in Stirling, was discussed in the presbytery met on 4th December in 1582.
[323] Ibid., 9. The meeting held on 10th October in 1581 dealt with this matter.
[324] Ibid., 20, 33, 63. Concerning the penalty for the absences, it was discussed on 9th January in 1582, and on 11th December in 1582. Concerning the text of the exercise, it was discussed on 27th February in 1582 and on 27th November in 1582.
[325] Ibid., 222.

Alexaner Chisholme, thair minister'.[326] This shows that the presbytery supervised the life of a congregation in both spiritual matters (concerning the glory of God) and practical matters (concerning the stipends of the ministers). Kirk, as the editor of the *Stirling Presbytery Records*, summarizes the functions of the presbytery:

> The examination, ordination, admission (and, indeed, deposition) of ministers, the supervision and visitation of the parishes, the formulation of enactments and the execution of ordinances made in the higher courts, the licensing of marriage contracts, the correction of manners, and the ultimate sanction of excommunication were all understood to be functions appropriate to be discharged by presbyteries.[327]

Indeed, these functions which Kirk mentions largely accord with matters dealt with by the Stirling presbytery at that time. When these functions are compared to those expected of the superintendent, we may detect a certain similarity between those of the superintendent and the presbytery. Although the process of establishing presbyteries throughout the realm according to the decision of the general assembly in 1581 was relatively slow, Stirling presbytery started to act as an example for the rest.[328]

Furthermore, Kirk points out another aspect concerning the inauguration of the presbytery as a common eldership:

> The failure to reduce the number of parishes on the scale proposed and the relatively slow process of establishing common elderships throughout the country were all conductive to the continued existence of kirk sessions as 'particular eldership'. The result was that a two-tier system of kirk session and presbytery, both confusingly called elderships, came into being, though such a development had not been fully foreseen in the second Book of Discipline, and Scottish Presbyterianism ended up with four courts instead of the three proposed by the second Book of Discipline.[329]

What Kirk indicates is that, while there was a failure to reduce the number of parishes and establish a common eldership smoothly, according to the decision of the General

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[326] Ibid., 108.
[327] Ibid., xviii.
[328] See above p.88.
[329] Kirk, *SBD*, 108.

Assembly in 1581, nevertheless each Kirk Session functioned continuously in fulfilling its intended role in the structure of church government. On the other hand, it is impossible, using only the Stirling Records at that time to ascertain how a presbytery could effectually administer ecclesiastical discipline. Foster expresses the opinion concerning the power of presbytery in general: 'Even where presbyteries were formally established, their existence in 1600 was sometimes insecure and their ability to maintain effective discipline limited.'[330] Furthermore, he asserts: 'At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the presbytery was the newest and probably the weakest unit of church government.'[331] Through these indications Foster suggests that the power of presbytery was not necessarily enough to administer discipline.

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[330] Foster, op cit., 85.
[331] Ibid., 86

CHAPTER FOUR

The Development of Presbyteries (1581 - 1638)
-The Growth of the Presbyterian Powerbase in the Age of Conflict-

I. Historical Survey of the Period between 1581 and 1638

When we think of the period during 1581 and 1638 in Scotland, the conflict between 'Church and State' cannot be disregarded. This conflict is often illustrated by two famous phrases. The first is the declaration by King James VI: 'No bishop, no king'. The second is Andrew Melville's words to the King in which he asserted that James was neither lord nor head in the Church, but a member of it and in the well-known words 'God's silly vassal'.[332] King James thought that the King was the ruler of all estates, and therefore, emphasized the crown's supremacy over the Church, using bishops as tools to control her. Melville, on the other hand, held that Christ is the only head and ruler of the Church, and hence emphasized that the Kings who have faith in Jesus Christ must be subject to the authority of Christ concerning the spiritual matters. 'Ultimately', indicates Hazlett, 'both Andrew Melville and James VI & I became symbols of Protestant disunity due to conflicting visions of the institutional Church.'[333] The series of conflicts between the Church and State resulted in pendulum swings in church government so much so that Donaldson describes it thus; 'episcopacy in 1584, presbytery in 1592, episcopacy in 1610, presbytery in 1638'.[334]

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[332] Hazlett, *The Reformation in Britain and Ireland*, 160; Thomas M'Crie, *Life of Andrew Melville* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood, 1855), 181.
[333] Ibid., 161.
[334] Donaldson, *Scotland: Church and Nation through the Sixteen Centuries*, 75.

On May 1584, the government defined the Crown's standpoint in relation to the Church in the 'Black Acts', which declared in their second Act: 'this present Parliament...confirmis the royall power and auctoritie over all statis alsweill spirituall as temporall within this realme in the persoun of the kingis majestie our soverane lord his airis and succesouris.'[335] Moreover, the twentieth Act declared that the Archbishop and bishops should be commissioners of the King's in any ecclesiastical causes.[336] Thereby, the Black Acts affirmed the supremacy of the King and the civil powers over the Church and reinstituted the office of bishops in the Church. These Acts were clearly inconsistent with the new framework exhibited in the *Second Book of Discipline*.

In spite of such difficult situations in promoting the Presbyterian system, presbyteries still multiplied in number and became increasingly effective from 1586. The main cause of such growth of presbyteries was a compromise in ecclesiastical administration, which the government first worked out in February 1586, and the General Assembly subsequently accepted in May.[337] Donaldson summarizes the main points of this compromise:

> 'the erection of presbyteries was permitted and, although bishops were to be permanent moderators of presbyteries and synods, the bishops were to act in administration only with the advice of committees of ministers, they were to be subject to the general assembly and each bishop was to have his own congregation'.[338]

Donaldson views favourably this compromise because it brought growth to the Churches' presbyteries. Nevertheless, we should also note that the compromise was virtually a guarantee for the reinstitution of episcopacy as it ensured that the bishops

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[335] Donaldson, '1584 BLACK ACTS', *Scottish Historical Documents*, 154.
[336] Ibid., 155.
[337] Calderwood, IV: 557-559.
[338] Donaldson, *Scotland: James V to James VII*, 199.

were permanent moderators of presbyteries and synods. Hence, the tension between 'Church and State' mounted steadily.

The turning point for the Church appeared in the 'Golden Act' promulgated by the Scottish Parliament in 1592. This approved the fourfold system of church government by General Assembly, synod, presbytery and Kirk Session, though the power to convene the General Assembly was left in the hand of the Crown.[339] The main significance of the Act was that it ratified the *Second Book of Discipline*. This Act clearly defined the power of the presbyteries:

> The power of the Presbytereis is, to give diligent labours in the bounds committed to their charge, that the kirks be keeped in good order; to enquire diligentlie of naughtie and ungodly persons, and to travel to bring them in the way again, by admonitioun or threatening of God's judgements, or by correction. It apperteaneth to the eldership to take heed that the Word of God be purelie preached within their bounds, the sacraments rightlie ministered, the discipline interteaned, and ecclesiasticall goods uncorruptlie distributed.[340]

The final sentence of this quotation shows that it belongs to the work of the eldership to ensure that the three notes of the true church are maintained. Furthermore, this Act clearly qualified the second Act of the 'Black Acts' in terms of the supremacy of the King over all estates involving spiritual matters, noting that:

> Item the kingis majestie and estaittis foirsaidis declairis that the secund act of the parliament haldin at Edinburgh the xxii day of May, the year of God [1584] sall na wayes be prejudiciall nor dirogat any thing to the privilege that God hes gevin to the spirituall office beraris in the kirk concerning headis of religioun, materis of heresie, excommunicatioun, collatioun or deprivatioun of ministeris or ony sic essentiall censouris speciall groundit and havand warrand of the Word of God.[341]

Again, the 'Golden Act' ratified the Presbyterian four-fold system of government noting that:

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[339] Wright, 'Golden Act (1592)', *DSCHT*, 368.
[340] Calderwood, V: 164. The term 'eldership' indicates 'presbytery' in this sentences.
[341] '1592 ACT AUTHORISING PRESBYTERIAN GOVERNMENT', *Scottish Historical Documents*, edited by Donaldson, 161.

And als, ratifeis and approves the Synodall or Provinciall Assembleis to be holdin by the said kirk and ministers twise in the yeere, as they have beene, and are presentlie in use to doe, within everie province of this realme.

And als, ratifieis and appreves the Presbytereis and Particular Sessiouns appointed by the said kirk, with the whole jurisdictioun and discipline of the kirk, as agreed upon by his Majestie,...[342]

Although it is sometimes said that the 'Golden Act' shows a victory of Presbyterianism in Scotland at that time,[343] it could be too highly rated as 'the Magna Carta of presbytery'.[344] What the Act achieved was no more than the conferring of legal status on presbyteries which had already been functioning in the realm at that time.[345] It did not necessarily produce the Presbyterian system. It only approved the system which had already been established since 1581. It's importance lies mainly in formalizing the system throughout the country.

Further, the Act contained some weaknesses. First, it maintained the existence of individual commissioners as overseers and the scheme of the old episcopal dioceses. Hence it made the revival of an episcopal system possible. Secondly, it gave the King power to order the time and place of the meetings of the General Assembly[346] and rights to nominate bishops to vacant bishoprics, so that they could also sit and vote in parliament as nominal representatives of the Church. 'Thus', says Donaldson:

the act of parliament of 1592 which for the first time recognised Presbyterian government was a logical step in view of developments since 1586, perhaps a mere recognition of a *fait accompli*. ... It is an error to imagine that in 1592 there was a complete and pure presbyterian system and that only the king's preference for episcopacy prevented its peaceful continuance.[347]

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[342] Ibid., 160; Calderwood, V: 163.
[343] Henderson, *Presbyterianism,* 50. Here he states that: 'In 1592 the Scots Parliament ratified the changes introduced by Melville, and established the fully developed Presbyterian system.'
[344] Donaldson, Scotland: *James V to James VII*, 200.
[345] Kirk, *SBD*, 153.
[346] Donaldson, *Scotland: Church & Nation through Sixteen Centuries*, 77.
[347] Donaldson, "The Polity of the Scottish Church 1560-1600", *RSCHS* 11, 225.

As a result, bishops had been almost eliminated from ecclesiastical administrations, although the office of bishop was not abolished and lay patronage likewise survived.[348]

However, the respite for Presbyterianism occasioned by the Golden Act did not last long. The legal status of presbyteries granted by the Golden Act was radically changed by the King in 1610. He forced the General Assembly at Glasgow to restore to the episcopate some functions which had previously been performed by presbyteries for more than two decades.[349] Thereby, he plotted to reduce the consultative importance from presbyteries, shifting the weight over to the bishops who were his tools to control the Church. Furthermore, two courts of High Commission were established to penalise Presbyterian nonconformities.[350] Subsequently, parliament ratified the Episcopal government in 1612.

From 1612 to 1637, the royal policy engaged the church in the task of moulding Scottish worship into closer semblance with Anglican forms. By 1618 James sought to enforce, through the Five Articles of Perth, such Anglican practices as kneeling at communion, Episcopal confirmation, the observance of certain festivals, and private baptism and communion.[351] These challenged the reformed pattern of worship established by Knox and the early reformers. Nonconformity to the new regulations soon arose heightened by feelings of Scottish nationalism. However, the nonconformity did not arise from nationalistic motivations alone. Hazlett analyses the theological reasons for the rejection of the Five Articles of Perth:

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[348] Donaldson, *Scotland: James V to James VII*, 199.
[349] Ibid., 206.
[350] Kirk, 'Presbyterianism', *DSCHT*, 674; Calderwood, VII: 108-9.
[351] S. Isbell, 'Perth, Five Articles of'', *DSCHT*, 654; Hazlett, op cit., 161; Burleigh, *A Church History in Scotland,* 215.

> Their rejection was related to issues such as authority of Scripture, the nature of Christ's Eucharistic presence in relation to the elements, the indissoluble bond between Word and sacrament, the relationship if any between the sacraments and salvation, and equally, between the Gospel and Old Testament ceremonial law in regard to religious festivals, and so the exclusive supremacy of the Sabbath. In addition, there was the question of the authority of the monarch in the Church.[352]

As Hazlett indicates, the contents of the Five Article of Perth contradicted the theology and practice of the Scottish Church which stood on the *Scots Confession of Faith*.

Charles I ascended to the throne of his father, James I, in 1625. Charles followed his father's belief in the divine right of kings.[353] His attempts at imposing a new *Book of Canons* in 1536, followed by imposition of a new liturgy on the Scottish church in 1537, resulted in strong Scottish resistance. In 1636, the *Book of Common order*, or 'Knox's liturgy', was abolished and the use of 'Laud's Liturgy' or the *Book of Common Prayer*, and the *Canons and Constitutions Ecclesiastical* were enforced; extemporaneous prayer was abolished, and excommunication was enacted for any denial of royal supremacy over the Scottish church.[354] At St. Giles in Edinburgh, the day (23rd July 1637) set aside for the introduction of the new service book resulted in a riot. The resistance soon became organised. Nobility, lairds, burgesses and churchmen formed a powerful committee, called the Tables, to deal with the issues at hand. Charles's abortive attempt at dealing with the resistance resulted in a withdrawal of the Canons and the Liturgy, the summons of a free General Assembly, and the holding of a free Parliament.[355]

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[352] Hazlett, op. cit., 161.
[353] Burleigh, op. cit., 210.
[354] Ibid., 213-4.
[355] Donaldson, *Scotland: James V to James VII*, 311-312.

The next stage began with the National Covenant drawn up by Alexander Henderson (1583-1646) and Archibald Johnston of Wariston (1611-1663). J. D. Douglas notes that it had a political as well as religious aim: 'the National Covenant was an appeal to the people for support'.[356] The Covenant began by repeating the Negative Confession of 1581 and followed by a detailed list of various Acts of Parliament which had approved the Reformed faith and Presbyterian church polity.[357] This was followed by the oath of the subscribers 'to maintain the freedom of the Church from civil control, to defend the true Reformed religion, and to decline the recent innovations in worship decreed by the King until the General Assembly had ruled on them.'[358] This movement of the Covenant in 1638 forced Charles I to allow the banned General Assembly to convene at Glasgow. Thus, the General Assembly met in Glasgow in November 1638. It annulled the Acts of the Assemblies of 1606, 1608, 1610, 1616, 1617 and 1618 as 'unfree and unlawful', and gave specific reasons for each annulment.[359] It also excommunicated the bishops and abolished prelacy and alien Anglican practice in worship as 'popish'. This was the beginning of the new period which is known as the 'Second Reformation' in Scotland.

II. Presbyterian Polity during 1581 and 1638

1. Development of Presbyteries

After the inauguration of presbyteries in 1581, the General Assembly in April 1584 defined the works of presbyteries as the following: 'presbyteries sould have care

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[356] J.D. Douglas, 'National Covenant', *DSCHT*, 620. The National Covenant was first signed on 28 February in 1638 at Greyfraiars' Church by leading nobility and barons, then, on 1st March, by ministers and burgesses.
[357] Ibid.
[358] Ibid.
[359] Dunlop, op. cit., 165.

of the doctrine and maners within their bounds, and of the electioun of pastors, when anie of them sall happin to enlaike; and power of excommunicatioun, and dispositioun of benefices.'[360] Furthermore, 'There is appellatioun from the particular Kirk to the Presbyterie; from the Presbyterie to the Synodall, and from the Synodall to the Generall, if anie man be hurt or greeved.'[361] These show that the General Assembly further developed the duties or functions of presbyteries since the *Second Book of Discipline* had been approved. Subsequently presbyteries gradually developed both in number and in roles during this period.

(1) Development in Number

After the inauguration of Stirling presbytery, other presbyteries followed. Since 1581 when thirteen model presbyteries were instituted, the number of presbyteries reached to forty-seven by 1593.[362] Subsequently, only two new presbyteries were instituted between 1593 and 1607.[363] However fifteen presbyteries

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[360] Calderwood, IV: 51.

[361] Ibid.

[362] Foster, op. cit., 85. Here, while he introduces such number of presbyteries according to Calderwood's list, he indicates also that Calderwood's list is not accurate because of including the Shetland presbytery which existed in name only and omitting Stirling presbytery. Even if Shetland presbytery was excluded from the list and Stirling was included, then, as a result, the number doesn't change.

[363] Kirk, 'Ecclesiastical Organisation: the early seventeenth century', *Atlas*, 390. Here Kirk states: 'At least one more presbytery is known to have existed in the Western Isles, but no detailed records are available to show what was happening in either Argyll or the Isles in general. Another presbytery appears to have existed in the south between Dumfries and Jedburgh presbyteries, where a block of parishes is not mentioned in the record'. Thus, if two cases were reflected in the calculation, then the number of presbyteries would be fifty-three.

appeared during 1608 and 1637.[364] Kirk counts a total of sixty-four presbyteries by the early 1640s.[365]

In the church's intention in 1581, a total of fifty-three presbyteries were designed to be established.[366] Hence numerically, almost 90% of the design was accomplished by the end of sixteenth century. The number of sixty-four by the early 1640s amounts to 120% of the original design. Therefore, it is possible to say that the Presbyterian system expanded smoothly within the first twelve years between 1581 and 1593 as more presbyteries were established than what was designed when the *Second Book of Discipline* was first approved.

The statistics also suggest that Presbyterianism in Scotland progressed without any support from the civil powers. This may be seen from the fact that only two presbyteries were established between the years 1594 and 1607, evidencing that the prevalence of the Presbyterian system was independent from the 'Golden Act' of 1592.

The typical pattern of creating a new presbytery was through division or separation from an existing one. Although it might be difficult for churches to organize new presbyteries during this unstable period, presbyteries were still slowly and steadily being formed in this manner. For example, in the case of Aberdeen presbytery, eight northern parishes presented a supplication to the synod to establish them as a separate presbytery (Ellon presbytery) on 14th October 1597, because the huge size of Aberdeen presbytery prevented them from regular attendance.[367] The

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[364] Foster, op. cit., 87. The accuracy of the number of new presbyteries during this term is unclear. Although Foster shows it as sixteen, or possibly eighteen, then it would be contradict the total number of presbyteries by 1638, sixty-four, because forty-seven presbyteries had been already instituted by 1593. Kirk indicates that forty-nine presbyteries had existed by 1607 in *Atlas*, 390. On the other hand, there were no records showing suppression or disappearance of any presbytery by 1638, so I put the number 'seventeen' provisionally.

[365] Kirk, op. cit., 389.

[366] Calderwood, III: 521-22.

[367] Foster, op. cit., 87.

synod agreed to this supplication and asked the General Assembly for permission to establish it. The Dunblane presbytery and Aberlour and Abernethie presbytery were also established in this way. Dunblane was separated from Auchterarder presbytery before 1616,[368] and Aberlour and Abernethie were divided into two new presbyteries from Inveraven.[369] Through this process, the church succeeded in increasing the number of presbyteries during the period between 1581 and 1638.

(2) Its Geographical Area

Heron refers to a feature of the presbytery: 'As a Kirk Session has a parish, so a presbytery has a geographical area – its 'bounds'. These areas vary considerably in size, normally in inverse ratio to the number of its charges'.[370] Whenever we think of the Presbyterian system, we should not overlook its geographical area in which congregations build strong partnerships with each other to co-operate in the works of ministry.

Concerning the areas of presbyteries which had been established by the early seventeenth century, Foster makes an interesting point: 'The jurisdiction of presbyteries ignored diocesan limits where necessary and often included parishes from several dioceses.'[371] The Episcopal system and the old diocesan structure were still alive even after the Reformation of 1560, but the area of a presbytery was not necessarily consistent with the old diocesan scheme. Hence, in all probability, the boundaries of presbyteries often could not be accommodated to suit diocesan requirements. The coexistence of presbyteries with the old Episcopal diocesan

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[368] Ibid., 86.
[369] Ibid.
[370] A. Herron, 'Presbytery', *DSCHT*, 676.
[371] Foster, op. cit., 87.

structure inherited by the superintendents in the 1560s led to some anomalies.[372] As Foster indicates, there were several presbyteries established which ignored the old diocesan limit. For example, although most parishes in Perth presbytery lay within the diocese of St. Andrews, half a dozen parishes lay within Dunkeld, and four parishes within Dunblane.[373] This shows that a presbytery might contain parishes from three separate dioceses. However, not every presbytery ignored the diocesan limit. Most were instituted within a diocesan area with a relationship of cooperation with neighbouring churches called a 'local bond'.[374] It is also possible to say that the weakness of the power of bishops enabled many congregations to ignore their diocesan jurisdiction. Even after the reinstitution of bishops as permanent moderators of presbyteries in 1610, presbyteries still functioned as before.

Compared to the superintendents' charge in the 1560s, the geographical size of a presbytery was considerably smaller. It was hence more appropriate for effective oversight. Even though presbyteries differed in sizes across urban and rural areas, the larger presbytery gradually became smaller by way of division or separation.

(3) Frequency and Membership of the meetings of presbytery

Presbyteries usually met once a week and fortnightly during the winter season.[375] In Forfar presbytery, it was decided that the members should gather at the

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[372] Kirk, op. cit., 389.
[373] Foster, op. cit., 87. Foster introduces the case of institution of Perth presbytery: 'The presbytery of Perth...contained eleven parishes from the diocese of St. Andrews, three from Dunblane, and five from detached sections of the diocese of Dunkeld'. As Foster indicates, Perth presbytery consisted of several churches which were in different dioceses. Also Forfar presbytery 'included nine parishes from the archbishop's diocese and four from the diocese of Brechin.' Thus, there were cases that shows what Foster indicates is appropriate.
[374] Ibid.
[375] ibid., 88.

meeting place regularly every Wednesday at ten.[376] The place of meeting was not necessarily fixed at the main church. Dunlop mentions that the presbytery often 'met at a church where some trouble had arisen to deal with the matter on the spot.'[377] This shows that pastoral factors were considered even in logistical decisions.

The meetings of presbyteries were attended mainly by ministers and elders, candidates for the ministry and other expectants.[378] When Stirling presbytery was inaugurated in 1581, elders often attended presbytery meetings and the *Second Book of Discipline* defined elders as regular members of 'eldership'.[379]

Despite such conditions, Foster notes that: 'One of the more distinctive features of presbyteries prior to 1638 was the absence of elders as regular members of this court.'[380] This is clearly contradictory to the case of Stirling presbytery and the principle on the *Second Book of Discipline* concerning the eldership. Foster refers to the division of opinions in the Church regarding the right of elders to attend presbytery in 1597 as a cause of this anomaly.[381] 'Whatever the theory,' says Foster, 'there is remarkably little evidence that in fact elders were ever regular members of presbyteries for any length of time or over any wide area between 1600 and 1638.'[382] Again, he indicates that 'acts requiring elders to attend presbyteries were apparently nonexistent.'[383] Although not every elder was absent from the presbytery meetings,

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[376] Ibid.

[377] Dunlop, op. cit., 174. Although he does mention to the historical documentation which prove his indication, if he is correct, the presbytery seems to be equal to the occasion case by case in the most appropriate and practical way at that time.

[378] Foster, op. cit., 88.

[379] Kirk, *SBD*, 191-206.

[380] Foster, op. cit., 88.

[381] Ibid., 88-89. Here he summarises the discussion on the matter of membership of elders in the presbytery: 'In response to some questions by James VI, the synod of Fife affirmed that presbyteries should be composed of pastors, elders and deacons; while Patrick Galloway, the respected minister of Stirling who was later to decline an appointment to the episcopate, roundly affirmed that presbyteries should be composed of 'Pastors onlie,' and a third set of anonumous answers agreed with him.' See also Calderwood, op cit, vol.V, 589, 598-602.

[382] Ibid., 89.

[383] Ibid.

elders' attendance was probably rare, because the meetings of presbyteries were held as frequently as once a week during summer seasons. The meetings were held from morning to evening on a weekday. Hence most lay elders having their own business couldn't spare time to attend the meetings. Thus, while the ministers were required to attend regularly, it was difficult to require elders to attend the meetings as regularly as ministers. Foster indicates: 'Even after 1638, when elders were inducted as members of presbyteries, it was apparently not common for them to attend regularly.'[384] Alexander Henderson also stated that: '...the Elders are not so strictlie tied to ordinarie attendance; but if there be any matter of great weight to be handled, they are all warned to be present.'[385] Thus the elders were not rigidly required to attend the presbytery as the ministers were. More important than regular attendance was the issue of whether elders supported and sustained the decisions of presbyteries. Regarding this, Foster notes:

> Presbyteries often had difficulty establishing their authority in the early decades of the seventeenth century, and they could only succeed in doing so if they had the 'assistance and concurrence' of the leading laymen of the presbytery. That support, rather than weekly attendance, was the real need.[386]

This was a very important concern considering the instability of this period.

(4) Election of the Moderator of a presbytery

The General Assembly in April 1582 decided that the moderator of a presbytery should be elected by the decision of each presbytery.[387] However, the Assembly's decision was not necessarily followed. We have a record of a moderator

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[384] Ibid., 90.
[385] Alexander Henderson, *Government and Order of the Church of Scotland*, 47.
[386] Foster, op. cit., 90.
[387] Calderwood, III: 617.

of a presbytery chosen in the provincial synod.[388] Moreover, because the case in point concerned a provincial capital presbytery, it is possible to suggest, as Foster does, that moderators of other presbyteries in the same province may well have been chosen in the same pattern, too.[389] Foster concludes: 'The right of presbyteries to elect their own moderators was not universal in Scotland at the beginning of the century.'[390]

Moreover, presbyteries' right to elect their moderator was subsequently revoked by the decision of Linlithgow convention in December 1606 which reintroduced Episcopacy. It was decided that the bishop should be the constant moderator of the presbytery and synod he presided over. By 1608, without election, bishops were almost automatically inducted as constant moderators of the presbyteries they presided over.[391]

However, the election of moderator was gradually revived in a few presbyteries after 1620, especially in the rural areas.[392] This tendency would show that the Episcopal system did not function consistently well during this period.

2. Work of Presbyteries

Foster points out that: 'At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the presbytery was the newest and probably the weakest unit of church government.'[393] This seems to be especially so in rural areas. Although presbyteries developed in number in the late sixteenth century, it was in the early seventeenth century that they

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[388] Foster, op. cit., 91. The Aberdeen presbytery records on 20th April 1599 shows the decision that: 'Mr David Coningaime being moderator chosin be the last provincial assemblie haldin at Aberdeen'. David Coningaime was bishop of Aberdeen at that time.
[389] Ibid.
[390] Ibid.
[391] Ibid., 92-3.
[392] Ibid., 93. Here Foster indicates the case of Ellon presbytery in 1623 showing that not a bishop but a minister of the presbytery 'wes chosin moderator be voit of the brethren of the presbyterie'.
[393] Ibid., 86.

really grew in power and function. How did this happen between 1581 and 1638, even though it was the period of struggle against the constant attempt to revive Episcopal authority? During that time, the Presbyterian system advanced as presbyteries worked together to overcome various practical problems.

(1) The Exercise

When the General Assembly in April of 1582 defined the roles of presbyteries, they stated part of their functions as the following:

> 7. The assemblie ordeaned the particular presbytereis to trie and examine suche as were desirous to enter in the functioun of the ministrie, and to provide suche as they find qualified to kirks. [394]

The General Assembly made the function of presbytery to be trial and examination for the clergy and candidates, and their appointment to parish churches.

After its institution in 1581, the presbytery clearly took over the work of exercise and advanced the roles of the exercise. It was at the exercise that the ministers and candidates were examined and tried in terms of their aptitude for the ministry.

As the case of Stirling presbytery shows, the exercise was not an additional practice but a crucial part of meetings from the beginnings of the Presbyterian system. It was an unchanged practice since the Reformation in 1560. Unfortunately, there are hardly any revealing vivid records showing how the exercises were organized between 1581 and 1638. The process of how an exercise on 23rd May 1587 proceeded was briefly recorded in the *Stirling Presbytery Records*, entitled '*Tryell of Patrik Layng*':

> Mr Richard Wrycht propheceithe on the x chaptur to the Hebrewis beginnand at the 19 vers thairof inclusive to the 24 vers of the samin exclusive, and Patrik Layng addithe thairto in the second plaice, according as he was ordeinit for ane

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[394] Calderwood, III: 615.

part of the tryell of his doctrein. The brethrein continewis thair jugementois on the said Patrikis doctrein quhill thay heir him theiche the vj day of Junij in he first plaice on the ordinar text of the exerceis and thane to juge on baithe.[395]

It is rare that the process of exercise was recorded vividly in the Records of presbyteries at that time. In many other cases, the exercises were briefly reported in such form as: 'The quhilk day Mr Arthur Fethie propheceithe and Mr Henrie Layng adithe thairto in the second plaice as thay war ordeinit.'[396] Thus, although we have little details about the practice, we nevertheless know that the exercise was actually practised.

While the exercise was a kind of Bible study meeting from the beginning, it was also a kind of consultative court for ministers' theological understanding and was referred to as a 'Tryell (trial)'. It was also a place where the participants' Biblical interpretation was examined and tried by the other participants, as in the case of the Stirling presbytery on 23rd May 1587 quoted above. Thus, one of the important functions of the exercise was to train the ministers regularly.

Alexander Henderson summarized its process in the early seventeenth century:

> The exercise...ended in publick, the people depart, and the Ministers and Elders, with others who are permitted to bee present, goe to the private place of their meeting, where, ...the Moderator having begun with prayer, the doctrine delivered in publick is examined.[397]

We have little information concerning what was addressed at an exercise. Nevertheless, we know from Henderson that at least a 'sermon' was addressed.[398] The sermons were generally approved by the participants and some injunctions might be

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[395] Kirk, *Stirling Presbytery Records 1581-1587*, 257.
[396] Ibid., 259. As far as the *Stirling Presbytery Records* are concerned, this was a general style for recording practices of the exercise in presbyteries.
[397] Alexander Henderson, op. cit, 50-1; Foster, op. cit., 94.
[398] Alexander Henderson, *Sermons, Prayers, and Pulpit Addresses by Alexander Henderson, 1638*, 31-52. This source entitled 'At Saint Andrews - Exercise' indicates that he addressed a sermon on to Gal. 5: verses 7-9.

commonly given by veteran ministers to the presenter. However, when serious error was found, the erroneous presenter would be rebuked after the exercise in a presbytery acting as a judicial court.[399]

The character of the exercise changed over the years. At the beginning of the Reformation, the exercise was more of a collaborative training for the gospel preaching ministry. However, it gradually became administrative during the 1570s, and by the early seventeenth century, it functioned more as a trial for ministers who presented at them. Although the 'trial' aspect of the exercise was present from the beginning, it was however, not its central concern. The practice gradually became more judicial only as it was increasingly tied to the presbyteries which functioned as the judicial courts of the church.

After 1610 when King James wished to reinstitute the episcopacy and do away with the presbytery, 'there was some attempt to avoid the word presbytery which had a presbyterian sound. The word Exercise was occasionally substituted.'[400] This indicates that the presbytery was almost identified with the exercise. In the very least, it suggests that they were regarded as synonymous during the early seventeenth century.

(2) The Court of Ecclesiastical Discipline

The presbytery soon had the task of dealing with cases of more serious offences, such as those involving excommunication or a contumacious offender.[401]

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[399] Foster, op. cit., 94. He introduces a record of the presbytery of Paisley in which the minister of Paisly was severely rebuked for his preaching 'that a man once justified, might possiblie fall away from justifiing faith'. Thus, this was the case that the presbytery examined the doctrinal understanding of the presenter.
[400] Henderson, "the Exercise", 25.
[401] Foster, op. cit., 96.

Foster points out that the introduction of constant moderators should never be overlooked behind such development of the Presbyterian system.[402] Concerning this point, Foster's opinion seems to be consistent with Donaldson's regarding the Episcopal regime. In two places, Donaldson notes that:

> so far from episcopacy being detrimental to the rest of the Presbyterian system, all the indications are that the association of bishops with presbyteries and synods worked smoothly and that under their joint direction the parish ministry and the discipline of the kirk session operated better than before. ...... many of the schemes of John Knox received their fulfilment under this episcopal regime. ......The moderate episcopalian regime of the early seventeenth century proved generally acceptable to the Scots.[403]

> So far from the existence of bishops being detrimental to the rest of the Presbyterian system, the evidence all suggests that the combination of bishops with presbyteries worked well and that under their joint direction kirk sessions operated more widely and more effectively than ever before. The episcopate had been revived and developed without needlessly offending Presbyterian susceptibilities.[404]

Donaldson clearly estimates positively the roles played by bishops in the Presbyterian government during early seventeenth century as well as in the beginning of the Reformation. Foster's conclusion clearly follows the one of Donaldson in estimating the role of bishops:

> Kirk sessions, presbyteries and synods were well-established by 1610. Bishops worked with those courts and often supported them in difficult disciplinary cases. ... Clearly Scottish episcopacy was not exactly 'what Episcopacy is in other places'. Episcopacy in early seventeenth century Scotland was an interesting and in some ways a unique development of the ancient office of bishop.[405]

The Linlithgow Act of 1606 placed the immediate appointments of moderators in the hand of bishops and, ultimately, the King. This was reinforced again by the Glasgow Act of 1610. This means that the jurisdiction of ecclesiastical discipline was forcibly

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[402] Ibid., 109.
[403] Donaldson, *Scotland: Church and Nation through the sixteen centuries*, 78-9.
[404] Donaldson, *Scotland: James V to James VII*, 207.
[405] Foster, op. cit., 65.

transferred from presbyteries to diocesan bishops in 1610. It is, however, less obvious that the 1610 Act meant any real change in the right of presbyteries to conduct visitations.

Concerning the administration of discipline, each presbytery commonly dealt with such cases as profaning of the church, superstition, slander, adultery, murder, papistical practices, non-attendance at Holy Communion, non-observance of the Sabbath, and all the human misdemeanours which were remitted from each Kirk Session as serious problems.[406]

Besides the task of administering discipline over clergy and laity, presbyteries had other matters to deal with. The visitation of churches in the parish had been a part of the work of presbytery since the abolition of the office of superintendent and the institution of the Presbyterian form of government according to the *Second Book of Discipline*. The kind of visitation was various. It was not limited to the work of a person who was committed to visit by the superior court. After the power to oversee churches in a district had been moved from presbytery to bishop in 1610, the moderating bishops, however, did not visit churches though the General Assembly stipulated that they should.[407]

Dunlop indicates the possibility that, when a presbytery was too small to deal with an important matter, the synod ordered a nearby larger presbytery to support a smaller one during the early seventeenth century.[408] When Ellon presbytery was divided from Aberdeen presbytery in 1601, it was small. So Ellon presbytery worked with Aberdeen presbytery.[409] Such similar cases were found as well in the case of Paisley presbytery which was supported by Glasgow presbytery. Such a connection

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[406] Dunlop, op. cit., 171-2.
[407] Ibid., 171-2.
[408] Ibid., 171.
[409] Ibid.

between presbyteries seems to be very important in the development and growth of presbyteries in number as well as in quality of works.

Presbyteries increased not only in number but also in strength and stability of their roles during the early seventeenth century. Foster summarizes the general features of presbyteries during early seventeenth century:

> Presbyteries between 1600 and 1638 continued to be important and effective agents of the church. They helped to maintain the authority of reformed theology on a practical and parochial level; they brought clergy into close and frequent contact with one another at a time when travel was not easy, and they protected ministers from the ire of angry parishioners. They were disciplinary courts for more serious offences, as well as courts of appeal and sources of advice for kirk sessions. They supervised the process of excommunication, examined candidates for ordination, conducted institutions, and held most visitations of local parishes. They were responsible for a wide variety of administrative activities and exercised effective control over most of the officers of the kirk: elders and deacons, kirk officers, schoolmasters, and readers. Their work was of immense importance in establishing law and order within the bounds of their jurisdiction.[410]

As Foster's overall assessment is concerned, even though the presbyteries might be 'the weakest unit[s] of church government' during the early seventeenth century, he evaluates that the developing presbyteries functioned effectively during that time.[411] Indeed, presbyteries developed remarkably not only in number but also in their effective function. At the same time, however, it should be also remembered that their existence was insecure and their ability to maintain effective discipline was limited in some degree during this period. Most newly established presbyteries were weak organisations, some of which needed to be supported by an adjacent strong presbytery.

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[410] Foster, op. cit., 109.
[411] Ibid., 86. See also above p. 109 of this dissertation.

III. Admission into the ministry during 1581 and 1638

Behind the development of presbyteries during the period between 1581 and 1638, increasing the number of competent ministers to lead congregations and organize presbyteries was the other important problem that had to be overcome at all costs. The Church had to face the issue of shortage of ministers, which had been a continuous challenge from the beginning of the Reformation. The introduction of the common eldership was also, as Kirk indicates, one means to cover the shortage of ministers at that time. Afterward, the number of ministers increased enough to be able to offer a minister to each congregation throughout the realm by 1638.[412] The question is how the church could manage to increase the number of ministers during the early seventeenth century? Let us examine the process by which the Church overcame the problem of shortage of ministers after the institution of the Presbyterian system in 1581.

1. Preparation for a Standard for the Admission into the Ministry

At almost the same time as the first settlement of a presbytery in Stirling, the Lothian synod in August 1581 decided to submit petitions to the next General Assembly in October. The first topic of petitions was to require the making of a common standard for examination, trial, admission and ordination to the ministry.[413] This requirement seems to be also an action against a problem of shortage of ministers, because, if each presbytery could adopt freely their own standard of the examination

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[412] Ibid, 134.
[413] Calderwood, III: 589; Kirk, *SBD*, 68.

for candidates, then each might be able to make the standard lower than others. It is clear that to lower the standard would be a thoughtless way to increase the number of ministers. Although the petition of the synod of Lothian was accepted and a special committee was immediately organized to discuss this petition, the next Assembly on April 1582 could only enact that: 'The Assemblie ordeaned the particular presbyteries to trie and examine suche as were desirous to enter in the functioun of the ministrie, and to provide suche as they find qualified to kirks.'[414] Although the synod of Lothian had requested the making of a common standard, not depending on the judgement of each presbytery, this enactment mentioned nothing about the standard at all, but it merely repeated that the judgement should be committed to each presbytery. Afterward, the synod of Lothian formulated its own rules for admission into the ministry by April 1589.[415] The main points of the standard that the synod of Lothian formed were these: first, a candidate had normally to be aged twenty-five; secondly, he had to participate for a year in the exercise; and thirdly, he had to attend the Kirk Session of the principal town of the presbytery to acquire practical knowledge how to govern the church as well as how to apply the doctrines to church life.[416] Furthermore, at his admission, a representative from each presbytery was to be present to examine his qualification for the ministry, and after offering prayers with laying hands on him, he was appointed to be a minister.[417] Again, on 19th March 1611, the synod of Lothian discussed a standard of examination for candidates, and concluded that:

> It is concludit, that whatsomever persone who has not exercised publictlie of before, and desire to be admitted to the ministerie, that before his admission, he be tryed efter this forme: First, that he teache in Latine privatlie, Nixt, that he teache in Englishe privatlie. Thirdlie, that he adde to the exercise, and exercise publictlie, theache in pulpit popularlie. Last of all, that he be tryed by

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[414] Calderwood, III: 591, 615; Kirk, *SBD*, 68.
[415] Kirk, *SBD*, 68-69.
[416] Ibid., 69.
[417] Calderwood, VII: 155; Kirk, *SBD*, 69.

positionea, and questions upon the controverted heads and places of theologie; and these tryalls to preceide his admission.[418]

Although there might be no common standard among synods and presbyteries by which the candidates must be examined, these examples of the synod of Lothian show that a synod managed to make an original standard for admission into the ministry among presbyteries in the synod. This shows also that the synod instituted the standard by which presbyteries in the synod should examine the candidates.

On the one hand, as the *First Book of Discipline* declared that only godly and learned men should be ordained as the ministry, the church demanded ministers to be learned fully enough to proclaim the Word of God with solid understanding of Reformed theology. On the other hand, the shortage of ministers remained as a serious issue. The situations concerning admission into the ministry gradually changed during the early seventeenth century, and the shortage of ministers was resolved by 1638. It took almost eighty years to overcome this problem which had been bothering the Church. According to the report by Foster concerning the number of ministers of each presbytery in 1600, the presbytery of Kincardine O'Neill had fifteen ministers with the degree of Divinity and two ministers without degree, Paisley had twelve ministers with degree and one without degree, Melrose had eleven ministers with degree and four without degree, Auchterarder had ten ministers with degree and two without degree, and Orkney had six ministers with degree and eight without degree.[419] Although there were some ministers without degree, it might be said that most congregations could have their own resident minister.

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[418] Calderwood, VII: 155.
[419] Foster, op. cit., 133. He compiled this data from the *Register of Assignation and Modification of Stipends* in 1601.

Foster notes that the examinations for the candidates in presbyteries were sometimes dealt with extensively, but most were considerably less strenuous.[420] According to his analysis, the main reason of such tendency of examination in presbyteries was that a candidate for the ministry had often been an expectant in a presbytery for some years, thereby, his abilities, gifts and even weakness as a person would be familiar to the brethren of the exercise long before he received a presentation from a presbytery.[421] And this shows that the exercise in a presbytery functioned as an important theological institution not only to train the candidates but also to examine their gifts and endowments for the ministry, rather than that the candidates were not examined rigidly by a presbytery. Alexander Henderson refers to several points that presbyteries should examine of the candidates for the ministry at that time in the early seventeenth century: '(in) Latine, Greek, and Hebrew, in his interpreting of Scripture, in the controversies of Religion, in his gift of exhortation, in the holy and Ecclesiastical History and Chronologie'.[422] After passing these examinations, a candidate was expected to have an edict served at a parish where he was presented, following an old reformation tradition in Scotland.[423] And then, each candidate was approved to be 'ordained' for the ministry by presbyteries.[424]

2. Establishment of Financial Support System for Bursars

As the *First Book of Discipline* requires the ministers to be 'godly and learned men', candidates for the ministry were required to spend some years studying theology

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[420] Ibid., 139.
[421] Ibid.
[422] Alexander Henderson, *Government and Order if the Church of Scotland*, 7; see also Foster, op. cit, 139.
[423] Foster, op. cit., 140.
[424] Ibid. The terminology of institution of the ministry seems not to be fixed during 16th and 17th centuries. The most common terms were not 'ordination' but either 'inauguration' or 'admission'.

at a seminary or college of Divinity to meet such requirement and to become a learned minister. However, the chance to study at any higher institution was not necessarily open to every person, but limited to the rich or at least the middle classes who could pay the fees for education at that time. This seems to indicate that the structure at that time meant that only the rich people who could go to such higher institutions could be the clergy at that time. On the one hand, to increase the number of ministers was an urgent problem to overcome; on the other hand, the candidates who could financially support themselves were limited. Thus, the Church had to change this structure in which the candidates struggled.

The General Assembly in March 1596 decided that the Church should support candidates as bursars:

> Becaus the kirks in diverse places of the countrie susteane great hurt, through the laike of qualified persons in the ministerie instructed and trained up in the schools of theologie; therefore, it is craved, that an act be made in this Assemblie, ordeaning everie Provinciall Assemblie to furnish a sufficient interteanement for a bursar in the New Colledge of St Andrewes, this 1596 yeere, and so furth, yeerlie, in all tyme coming; and that everie Provinciall Assemblies all have the priviledge to present the said bursar, so oft as the place sall vaike. And in cace there be anie of the ministers' sonnes within the province if meete graces for the said place, that he bepreferred to all others by the ministerie; and after the expiring of his course in the studie of theologie, that he be bound to imploy his travels within the province to the which his graces may be answerable; and that it be not leasome to the said bursar to imploy his travels in anie other place, except by the speciall advice and consent of the said province.[425]

This decision shows that the Assembly recommended synods and presbyteries to support bursars at Divinity school as one of the ways to resolve the problem of shortage of qualified ministers. Although there was no historical documentation which proves how fully this decision was implemented, this decision shows that the General Assembly in March 1596 clearly tried to overcome somehow this aspect of the

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[425] Calderwood, V: 414.

problem of shortage of ministers and made a direction to support bursars financially,

though the Church didn't have enough money.

3. Increase of the number of ministers

The Glasgow Assembly in 1638 annulled the Acts of the previous Assemblies

in 1606, 1608, 1610, 1616, 1617 and 1618 because these were regarded as totally

'unfree and unlawful'.[426] However, Foster points out that the Aberdeen Assembly in

August 1616 played an important role in increasing the number of candidates for the

ministry, although it was involved in the annulment. Foster makes much of this

Assembly because it enacted that:

> *Item*, It is appointed, that there be bursars sent out of everie diocie to the Colledge of Divinitie in St Androes, there to studie their theologie, making twentie-sixe in number, wherof the halfe sall be poore ministers' sonnes; and the meaner diocies to be helped by the greater.[427]

> 'for the provision of some students in Divinitie, every Diocie shall intertain two; or according to the quantitie of the Diocie, so many as the number may arise to twenty-six in the whole, ...'.[428]

This was important as it was only after this that the synods started financially

supporting the candidates studying at the New College of St. Andrews. The synod of

Fife, for example, set up a plan to support five bursars who would receive a fixed sum

of money for a certain term. Subsequently, six men were being supported by this

synod by 1623.[429] The synod of Aberdeen also started to support three bursars in

1617.[430] It was not only synods but also presbyteries that started to support bursars.

For instance, the presbytery of Dunblane ordered each Kirk Session to take up their

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[426] Dunlop, op. cit, 165; see above p.105.
[427] Calderwood, VII: 231-2.
[428] Calderwood, VIII: 107.
[429] Foster, op. cit., 134.
[430] Ibid. [citing Ellon Presbytery Records, 19 October 1620]

first collection for a 'Burser of St Androis' in 1619. [431] George Gillespie, a commissioner to the Westminster Assembly from Scotland, was also a bursar supported by Kirkcaldy presbytery from 1631, and then Patrick Gillespie received support as a bursar from 1635. [432]

Furthermore, the movement of such support for bursars expanded to the level of individual congregations. Foster mentions the case of Trinity College Kirk Session in Edinburgh which appropriated fifty pounds yearly for a bursar as his fees of school and accommodation. [433] Therefore, Foster commends this Act of the General Assembly by saying:

> The act was remarkably effective; the church had both the resources and the desire to support a bursary system, and thereafter references to bursars in divinity are found in many church records. Synods usually supervised the system; the actual funds for bursars were raised by kirk sessions. [434]

Furthermore, he indicates that: 'The support of a substantial number of bursars in Divinity was one more sign of the growing stability, prosperity and good order of the Church after 1600.' [435]

In addition, it was not only financial support but also theological and practical trainings that a presbytery offered to the candidates for the ministry. The candidates who had received financial support from a presbytery or a synod were required to study privately the Scripture sentences which the presbytery obliged them to exercise. [436] Furthermore, Foster mentions that: 'Expectants were frequently assigned to make an exercise or an addition at presbytery meetings, but their most useful

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[431] Ibid. [citing Dunblane Presbytery Records, 21 January 1619.]
[432] Dunlop, op. cit, 173.
[433] Foster , op. cit., 134. [citing *Trinity College Kirk Session Records*, 10 January 1633.]
[434] Ibid.
[435] Ibid., 135.
[436] Ibid., 136.

function was as preachers in vacant parishes.'[437] Concerning such a series of support to candidates for the ministry by synods, presbyteries and Kirk Sessions, Foster says: 'Between 1600 and 1638 the number of expectants was increasing. No general statistics for expectants exist, but there are many signs that the number was rising.'[438] The study of presbytery records by Foster shows that the number of expectants for the ministry in each of the presbyteries of Jedburgh, Ellon, Dunblane and Lanark, increased after 1600.[439] But it is asserted by Calderwood in his *History* that, at an Assembly held on July 1608, the members complained about the shortage of ministers: 'the want of preachers in manie congregatiouns in this land; so that in one province, threttie-one kirks are to be found vacant, and in others, some seventeene, as in Nithisdaill, and others twentie-eight, an in Annerdaill, and siclyke in manie parts of the land.'[440] This shows clearly that, at the year of 1608, many provinces still shared the common problem of shortage of ministers and an effective solution to this problem had not yet been clearly achieved. However, relying on the words of Archbishop Spottiswood, Foster says that there were almost nine hundred ministers in Scotland in 1621.[441] In other words, there was some radical change in the number of ministers between 1608 and 1621. Therefore Foster praises the role of the Aberdeen Assembly 1616 in dramatically increasing the number of ministers by 1621.

The records of the synods support the fact of such an increase of the number of ministers. For example, the synod of Fife in 1611 had twenty-eight expectants, and furthermore, nine were newly admitted in 1612. Foster estimates that the total number of the expectants waiting for benefices in Scotland in 1638 was probably not less than

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[437] Ibid.
[438] Ibid., 137.
[439] Ibid.
[440] Calderwood, VI: 765.
[441] Foster, op. cit, 154.

one hundred and fifty.[442] Furthermore, he indicates that the ministers without degree disappeared by 1638.[443] Hence he concludes: 'The Church of Scotland could now enjoy the luxury of having a number of qualified candidates for every vacant post in the ministry.'[444] Many ministers were probably well trained in Arts and Divinity schools and presbyteries during the early seventeenth century. Therefore, as Foster indicates, it is probable that the General Assembly at Aberdeen in 1616 caused the number of ministers to increase.

Concerning the problem of the shortage of ministers, the *First Book of Discipline* noted that:

> We are not ignorant that the raritie of godly and learned men shall seem to some a just reason why that so strait and sharpe examination should not be taken universally, for so it shall appear that the most part of the Kirks shal have no minister at all. But let these men understand, that the lack of able men shall not excuse us before God, if by our consent unable men be placed over the flock of Christ Jesus. ... The chiefest remedie left to your Honours, and to us, in all this rarietie of true ministers of fervent praier unto God, that it will please his mercie to thurst out faithfull workmen in this his harvest.[445]

The problem of shortage of able ministers was clearly a continuous issue from the beginning of the Reformation and an object which needed to be prayed over fervently. The idea of the institution of 'a common eldership' also emerged from the concern over this issue. In 1638 when this problem was resolved, the Presbyterian structure did not become unnecessary for the church. Rather, the church began to construct its ecclesiology on the foundation of the Word of God. Subsequently, the representatives of the Church in Scotland (Alexander Henderson, Samuel Rutherford, George

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[442] Ibid. He estimates that the average of the candidates was roughly three in each fifty presbyteries, so the total number of expectants might be 150.
[443] Ibid., 133.
[444] Ibid., 138.
[445] Cameron, *FBD*, 104.

Gillespie, James Durham, and John Bailie) led the 'Second Reformation' by their

writings which contributed to a theoretical development of the Presbyterian system.

In this dissertation, every effort has been made to describe the process of the emergence of the Presbyterian government and its development during the period of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Having arrived at the close of this dissertation, it is appropriate to summarize the key points of this study to follow the origin of Presbyterianism in Scotland. Along the way, brief reflections about the implications for the present context will be included.

In the first chapter, we focused on the role of the office of superintendents and the practice of the exercise as means which the Reformers employed to fulfil their ends. What the Reformers aimed at as their ends were the spiritual concerns of evangelizing Scotland and establishing the true church as defined by the three marks of the 'True Kirk'. Clearly, the 'preaching ministry' was located in the central position of the Reformers' concern at the point of the Reformation.[446] Both the office of superintendents and the exercise were designed to fulfil this aim. The main role of superintendents was, undoubtedly, to serve as 'travelling preachers' to spread Reformation doctrine throughout their district. Also the practice of the exercise was originally started to promote the correct knowledge and interpretation of the Bible among the participants.

The Reformers also expected the superintendents to undertake administrative as well as preaching duties. However, their expectation for superintendents was too

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[446] Robert M. Healey, "The Preaching Ministry in Scotland's First Book of Discipline", *Church History* 58, 351.

unrealistic for any single person to carry out and fulfil. Almost half of the proposed positions were vacant from the beginning and no successors followed in their wake. Therefore, the needs which the works of the superintendents were supposed to meet had been imperfectly met by the time of the office's abolition. On the other hand, the exercise successfully functioned to meet the administrative gaps left by the superintendents, even though they were originally designed as bible studies. Hence, the importance of the exercise increased and it gradually transformed into an administrative occasion. Consequently the exercise had two functions. First, it functioned as a bible study to equip preachers. Secondly, it also became an administrative occasion which examined and judged ecclesiastical matters in local areas. Hence, the meetings of the exercise came to be regarded as 'Proto-presbyterial gatherings'.[447]

The *Second Book of Discipline* reflected these situations during the early 1570s. The second chapter described the process of how Presbyterian polity emerged during this period. Through General Assembly's discussions on the contents of the *Second Book of Discipline*, it eventually ratified the special committee's conclusion for the common eldership which was adopted into the new polity. The idea of 'a common eldership', thereby replacing some individual Kirk Sessions and covering the shortage of ministers, and further, establishing close relationship between adjacent churches in each local area, was clearly an extension of the exercise.[448] Furthermore, the 'eldership' was originally an ecclesiastical court through which the church administered discipline or censured offenders. All classes of society were equally required to be subject to the judgement of the elderships on all spiritual matters. Thus,

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[447] Hazlett, *The Reformation in Britain and Ireland*, 65.
[448] Kirk, *SBD*, 105-6. Here Kirk indicates that it was 'the transition from exercise to presbytery, which really entailed a change of name rather than a change in function'.

the common eldership was designed to be a church court in each local area. Although the *Second Book of Discipline* did not clearly ordain the presbytery as an intermediate ecclesiastical court between Kirk Session and synod, the common elderships virtually functioned as an intermediate one. As a result, the practice of the exercise and the idea of a common eldership were fused and became the 'presbytery'. Consequently, the office of superintendent disappeared from the *Second Book of Discipline*.

The *Second Book of Discipline* was carefully edited through the discussions in the General Assembly between 1575 and 1578. After the discussion at Stirling Castle by the representatives from both the Church and State, the Church started to organize common elderships or presbyteries along the lines laid down in the *Second Book of Discipline*. When the first common eldership or 'presbytery' was instituted in Stirling in August 1581, the practice of the exercise remained as the main bulk of its proceedings.

Although the original meetings of the exercise had gradually taken on administrative functions, these functions were now separated from the exercise meetings of the presbytery. The examination of ministers and candidates for the ministry continued to take place in exercise meetings. However the administration and supervision of churches was carried out in presbytery meetings apart from the exercises. Subsequently, the offices of bishops and superintendents which were now redundant were removed from the new ecclesiastical polity. From then, parity among ministers became a principle of Presbyterianism.[449]

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[449] Hazlett, op. cit., 157.

As Kirk indicates, a reason for instituting common eldership was to deal with the problem of the shortage of ministers in each local area.[450] This problem was directly connected with the inability of Kirk Sessions to function well in each parish. Kirk Sessions were important units in the administrative life of the church from the beginning of the Reformation. Each congregation has the responsibility to establish, nourish and preserve the church as the true body of Christ defined by the three marks of the 'True Kirk'. Therefore, each Kirk Session must be led by able ministers and faithful elders, and church members are required to trust and submit to the decisions of their Kirk Sessions in all spiritual matters. The shortage of ministers was a serious problem then and it still remains as a matter which Presbyterian churches face today.

Although the General Assembly also agreed at first to reduce the number of parish churches significantly, such attempts could not proceed smoothly because of resistance from local congregations. Furthermore, while the number of presbyteries successfully increased, it was not matched with a comparable increase in the number of ministers. Significant increase in the number of ministers began only in the early part of seventeenth century and the numbers became enough to supply every local congregation only by 1638.

It is interesting to note at this point, that the solution raised by the Reformers concerning the lack of ministers was, first of all, to pray, and also to establish schools for candidates of the ministry. The prayers of the church were certainly answered by this point and the early seventeenth century church did arrange for institutional bursars to support candidates for the ministry. Such endeavours by the church must not be overlooked. Subsequently, being ripe for further development of the system, the

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[450] Kirk, *SBD*, 108.

church progressed into the next stage called the 'Second Reformation', where the theoretical foundation of Presbyterian polity was advanced.

The appearance and development of Presbyterianism in Scotland during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries was more dynamic and pragmatic than theoretical. Presbyterianism in Scotland originated from attempts to clarify the authority which the church should obey, be subject to and be dependent upon. As the authority in the church became increasingly formalized, there may be tendencies and temptations to equate the formal structures of organisational authority with the essence of Presbyterianism. However, Presbyterianism in Scotland was not formal but vital. Its progress was occasioned by the spiritual concerns of the Reformation and the attempts to overcome the various practical problems in pursuit of them.

The Reformers clearly expressed their spiritual concerns in the *Scots Confession of Faith*, and the *First* and *Second Books of Discipline*. In these foundational documents of the Scottish Reformation, we may detect that the recovery of the authority of Christ in his church was the main concern of the Reformers. Presbyterianism is hence intimately concerned with and related to the authority of Christ in his church. As Kennedy aptly puts it:

> The whole purpose of the Reformers for the church was to bring it back to the authority and discipline of Christ. That is why we are Presbyterians. There is no other reason but that Christ and Christ alone, in His living power in all its members, be king and Head of the Church.[451]

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[451] John Kennedy, *Presbyterian Authority and Discipline*, 113.

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