

ANGLICAN SPIRITUALITY

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The English are a strange people. Much in their culture seems, simply designed to trick foreigners, as in the odd and arbitrary ways in which street houses are numbered, or in the pronunciation of place names which look nothing like their spelling, like Cholmondeley and Beaulieu. There is also a national habit of ironical understatement, or of saying the opposite of what you mean. I learned in the University of Cambridge that the phrase «with respect» means I disagree; «with great respect», I profoundly disagree; «with the greatest respect», you are talking nonsense. The same deceptiveness is true of the national religion. Here an outsider may be taken in by outward appearances, where real change occurs though nothing seems to change: there is a profound national attachment to external forms over substance, as in what I call «facadism», the habit of rebuilding English towns behind old fronts or facades, with new structures inside an older shell. There were many good examples of facadism at the Reformation, as in the diocese of Lincoln, where it was the habit to ring the church bells on the feast of its patron St Hugh. This should have been discontinued when the Protestant Elizabeth I came to the throne, but by a happy accident, this was her birthday, so the bells continued to be rung for her. Other seeming continuities include the royal coronation. Although the Church of England gave up the chrism for centuries, the monarch wears a Catholic cope, and is crowned and anointed with holy oil as of right divine, in a medieval ceremony adapted but not abolished at the Reformation. Until the reign of Anne, who died in 1714, the sovereigns of England «touched» sufferers from the «King's evil» or scrofula, to cure them, like their royal cousins, the Catholic kings of France, and the Queen still distributes «Maundy money» on Holy Thursday. In short, the outer tradition is preserved, though its inner meaning may be gone.

English religion, therefore, shows an apparent continuity which disguises change. The principal note of continuity is the power of

the King over the Church, symbolically expressed at the Reformation by placing the royal coat of arms over the sanctuary where the «rood» or cross had been, as if to worship the supporting lions and unicorns. Henry VIII broke with Rome, dissolved the monasteries and convents, abolished the saints' shrines and pilgrimages, and introduced, hesitantly, a vernacular Bible, but he retained the old Latin liturgy, and left money for two thousand Requiem Masses in his will. His son, Edward, abolished the chantries which prayed for the dead and introduced a vernacular liturgy in his Prayer Books of 1549 and 1552; his daughter, Mary, by her royal authority, briefly restored England to the Roman obedience.

Despite some rebellions, the majority of the people conformed to the changes under Henry and Edward and Mary, and accepted the enduring condition of English official religion, submission to the monarchy. Henry's second daughter, Elizabeth I, was a Protestant like Edward, but she had conservative tastes, with stained glass in her chapel window and a crucifix on her altar, and a profound detestation for the (now legal) marriage of the clergy. Like the Queen, the general population wanted a compromise with the Calvinists now ruling the Church, which retained the three-fold order of bishop, priest and deacon, and a new version of the prayer book, *The Book of Common Prayer* (1559), which was substantially the second Prayer Book of Edward, with a few conservative touches. It kept various Catholic elements, including the order of the Christian Year, with the major feasts and fast days, Christmas, Epiphany, Ash Wednesday, Lent, Good Friday, Easter, and commemorations of the «red letter» saints and apostles from the New Testament, with their own collect, epistle and gospel. Thus many ordinary Catholic festivals —the Annunciation, St Michael and All Angels— survived. There was supplementary list of more minor «black letter day» saints whose festivals could also be observed. The Prayer Book was capable of a more Catholic interpretation, with a rousing statement of the doctrine of regeneration at baptism, the use of the sign of the cross, a form of private confession and absolution in the visitation of the sick, the giving of the ring in marriage; with proper collects, Epistle and Gospel, the Creed, Sanctus, proper Prefaces, a canon and consecration prayer at the Eucharist, with the bald assertion that this was the Body and Blood of Christ (though this was subject to various interpretations), (but no Benedictus or Agnus Dei), and the Gloria as a thanksgiving at the end. If the prayers of the Prayer Book enjoined submission to the crown and the subject's place in the social order, they also inculcated a strong sense of duty to God and neighbour. If they implied a strong Augustinian sense of sin, attributable to the

principal compiler, Thomas Cranmer, they included a formidable body, of translated Catholic prayers. The Prayer Book quickly developed a formal liturgical character with splendid music for the psalms, canticles and anthems, «in choirs and places where they sing», and with a Latin version for cathedrals and college chapels.

By the late sixteenth century many perceive the emergence of a distinctly English form of Protestantism, with claims to be Catholic, which was more like Lutheranism than Calvinism in outer form, emphasising the role of tradition and the study of the Church Fathers beside Scripture, and occupying a sort of middle way or *Via Media*, between Roman Catholicism or Popery on the one hand, and continental Calvinism on the other. The classic formulation of «Anglican» theory is Richard Hooker's *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* (1594-1597), a defence of the doctrine of episcopal order against Calvinist Presbyterianism within the framework of a Catholic conception of natural law. The transition was completed by the attack on certain Calvinist doctrines like double predestination by the «Arminian» divines of the seventeenth century, in a reaction against the High Calvinist Synod of Dort (1619), and by Archbishop Laud's attempts, under King Charles I, to «fence» the altar with communion rails, to give the elements of the Eucharist a decent reverence and a setting of Catholic splendour. There was a developed doctrine of holiness, and even, in some quarters, a rejection of the central Protestant doctrine of justification by faith alone for a belief in justification by faith and works. The «Caroline divines» is a term sometimes loosely, used to describe the whole body of Anglican theologians between Richard Hooker in the 1590s and William Law, in the 1720s, so-called from the reigns of King Charles I (1625-1649) and Charles II (1660-1685). These «divines» produced many books of prayer, like Lancelot Andrewes' *Preces Privatae* (published 1648), John Cosin's *Private Devotions* (1627), and Jeremy Taylor's *Holy Living* (1650 *Private Prayers*) and *Holy Dynig* (1651), founded upon patristic scholarship, and a reading of the medieval theologians, to supplement the public worship of the Church. Still more attractive was the development of a large body of seventeenth-century devotional poetry, much of it sacramental in its teaching, by John Donne, George Herbert and Henry Vaughan, in a Christian humanist tradition which bore further fruit into the eighteenth and nineteenth century.

Yet the «Arminian» Anglicans were also thoroughly Protestant. The heart of the new religion was the reading of Scripture, available in several translations from Henry VIII's «Great Bible» (1535), but given its enduring form in the publication of the Authorised or King

James Version in 1611, the most powerful influence upon the development of a literary English. England was the only major power to embrace the Reformation, even if she did so with a difference. Most Anglican theologians saw the Pope as Antichrist. The Thirty-nine Articles, which received their final form in 1571, were a moderate statement of Calvinist ideas, albeit one which repudiated ultra-Calvinist doctrine like the antinomian belief that Christians were not subject to the moral law. The Articles were binding on the clergy and on Oxford University undergraduates at matriculation, and Cambridge University graduates on graduation. It was later to be said that the Church of England had Protestant Articles and a Catholic liturgy in the Prayer Book; and the liturgy of the Prayer Book was denounced by the radical Protestants or Puritans, even under Elizabeth I, «as an unperfect book, culled and picked out of that popish dunghill, the Mass book full of all abominations». In the seventeenth century there was a massive Protestant reaction against what was popularly perceived to be Archbishop Laud's movement to make the Church of England popish, climaxing in 1640 in the Civil War. There was an attempt, under Scottish influence, to reCalvinise and Presbyterianise the Church of England by throwing out the Prayer Book and the Bishops, and by cutting off the head of the King and his Archbishop of Canterbury. This Puritan reaction came to nought. A new King, Charles II, was restored in 1660; he brought back the Bishops and the Prayer Book, which was lightly revised in 1662, now sanctified by the blood of his father, who was commemorated with a service on the anniversary of his martyrdom on 30 January. The more Puritan elements left the National Church in protest against the new Prayer Book, if they had not already done so, and as the Presbyterian, Congregational and Baptist Churches, offered an alternative severer Protestantism.

This division within the English Protestant tradition between the National Church or Church of England, the Church as by law established, and the Dissenting or Nonconformist Churches outside it, Presbyterian, Congregational and Baptist, was described by, John Dryden, the poet laureate and a convert to Roman Catholicism, in his poem, *The Hind and the Panther* (1687), as a conflict with the Independent or Congregationalist «bloody *Bear*» the Presbyterian wolf and the «bristl'd Baptist Boar». Dryden hoped that the pure milk-white Roman hind (or deer) might convert the Anglican (spotted and therefore mixed Catholic and Protestant) panther. Dryden wrote:

Oh happy Regions, *Italy* and *Spain*,
Which never did those monsters entertain!

In the eighteenth century, Voltaire marvelled at the English, who now had a hundred religions and only one sauce; unlike France, with a hundred sauces and only one religion. The English genius in religion was expressed in diversity, not unity. The challenge of the Dissenting Churches to the National Church strengthened the Catholic tradition in Anglicanism, which advanced the argument that lacking the divinely given ministries of bishop, priest and deacon, the non-episcopal Churches were not Churches. Churches without bishops were not churches. The outcome was an explicitly «High Church» tradition, redefined in the 1690s, with a «high» doctrine of priesthood and sacrament, strongly defensive of the privileges of the State-supported Church against the Protestant Dissenters.

On the other hand, the Evangelical Revival in the eighteenth century, led in England from the 1730s by the High Church Anglican clergyman John Wesley, set out to reinforce the Protestant character of the Church of England, though Wesley also inspired the creation of the Methodist societies which left the Church of England after his death. It is an oddity, that the term «Methodist» originally, referred to a regular or «methodical» reception of the Anglican sacrament. The Evangelical movement which remained within the Church of England after Wesley reached its first peak of strength in the first half of the nineteenth century. Its main theological emphases have been the supremacy of the Bible and the doctrine of justification by faith alone, acquired through a conversion experience of the saving efficacy of Christ's death upon the cross, but it also has a doctrine of sanctification or holiness. Evangelicalism has had a major recovery since the Second World War, and now can claim to be considered the most vigorous and growing party within the Church of England.

The High Church tradition also had a major revival from the 1830s, under the leadership of a number of academics in the then Anglican University of Oxford, the greatest of these being John Henry Newman. Newman and his friends however, redefined the Anglican *Via Media* or middle way as a half way house between Roman Catholicism and popular Protestantism, rejecting the Protestant dimension of the High Church tradition altogether. These «Anglo-Catholics» reintroduced into Anglicanism prayer to the Virgin and saints, celibacy, fasting and religious orders of monks and nuns, which had almost all disappeared at the Reformation. This aroused Protestant fears that Newman was a Roman Catholic Trojan horse inside the Church of England, a traitor attacking its native Protestantism from within, and the impression was reinforced when he and a number of his friends became Roman Catholics in 1845. His Oxford Movement, however,

continued to flourish within the National Church, and through the ritualist clergy, became notorious in the second half of the nineteenth century by reintroducing medieval or modern Roman Catholic ritual into the Church of England, with crucifixes, vestments, stone altars, incense, lighted candles on altars (sometimes indicating a belief in Transubstantiation) and the eastward-facing position at the Eucharist (sometimes indicating a belief in the Sacrifice of the Mass). A number of Anglican clergymen were sent to prison for these ritual offences after 1874, and the Anglo-Catholic revival peaked in the centenary year of the Oxford Movement in 1933, when fifty thousand Anglo-Catholics attended a Pontifical High Mass in the White City Stadium, in a service which looked more Roman than Rome. The distinctive theological emphasis of Anglo-Catholicism was on the doctrine of the Church, though given its continuing lack of a doctrine of church authority, and its defiance of Protestant bishops, the movement was sometimes said to have revived every doctrine of the Church except the doctrine of the Church. The Anglo-Catholic body has declined since 1945, and more recently has suffered the submission of many of its members to Rome, but it still remains a substantial party in the English Church.

Third, there is beside the Protestant and Catholic traditions in the Church of England, the liberal tradition, which goes back to the Latitudinarians of the seventeenth century. «Latitude» means breadth, being «broad of mind», that is tolerant of difference. Latitudinarianism began as a reaction against the confessional wars of religion between Catholics and Protestants, and sometimes went with an insistence that all were Christians, regardless of church allegiance, who could subscribe to the fundamentals or essentials of Christianity summed up in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds. This liberalism, however, came to doubt the Creeds, and found expression in the 1690s in John Locke's conception of a simplified «reasonable» Christianity, reduced to a belief in God and the Messiahship of Jesus, proven by his performance of miracles and fulfilment of prophecy. In the early eighteenth century, Bishop Benjamin Hoadly insisted against his High Church opponents that it is sufficient in religion to be sincere, and that the Church is merely a voluntary association of Christians who assemble to worship, without any special God-given authority of its own. The English Enlightenment inspired the creation of further radical bodies like the Unitarians, who expounded a simplified rational religion which rejected the doctrine of the Trinity. In the nineteenth century, the doubts of modern Biblical scholars about the historical reliability and theological teaching of Holy Scripture reinvigorated the liberal strand in Anglicanism.

So it was that by the 1850s, one observer identified three main parties in the Church of England: a High Church or Catholic Party; a Low Church or Protestant party; and a Broad Church or Liberal party. Evangelicals rejected the High Church emphasis on church authority, and because the Anglican bishops were often Protestant themselves, Anglo-Catholics were in practice presbyterian, defying their bishops, with an infallible priest-pope in every parish. The Liberal party opposed both the Evangelical doctrine of an infallible Bible, and the Anglo-Catholic doctrine of an authoritative Church, though it was never quite clear where this authority was to be found. Indeed the Liberals sometimes went much further, and like Bishop Hensley Henson and Bishop Barnes in the twentieth century, rejected miracles, including the Virgin Birth and the bodily Resurrection. High and Low Churchmen developed their own newspapers and theological colleges, so that in my own city of Durham, there were, before the 1960s, two theological Colleges next door to each other, teaching diametrically opposing Protestant and Catholic theologies. The matter has been further complicated more recently by the development of liberal and conservative Catholic and Protestant strands in Anglicanism, over sexual ethics and the ordination of women, so that now there are liberal Evangelicals and liberal Catholics as well as conservative ones.

My conclusion from this, therefore, is that there is a problem about talking about an Anglican theology, or Anglican theological method, when there are only Anglican theologies, and the unity of the Church of England is not susceptible of theological definition. The Church of England has been unable to make up her mind whether she is Catholic or Protestant or liberal whether she belongs to the Reformation, or to the Counter-Reformation, or to the Enlightenment, or is a selective muddle of all three. This is why so much Anglican theology has been concerned with controversy not with other Churches but with other Anglicans. The Church of England likes to see herself as a bridge church between the Catholic and Protestant churches when she cannot reconcile them in herself. I would argue that the Church's constitution is in essence a liberal one, for its very existence depends on each particular party tolerating the other two. What holds the Church of England together in England is the fact of its establishment —is still the official church of the State and the monarchy—, and its sense of its past as the national Church, as the majority Church, despite the existence of Catholics and Nonconformists and other religions outside it, as a Church which has played its part in every era of the nation's history.

It is also for this reason that the Church of England shows such a preoccupation about defining the «essence» or «identity» of Angli-

canism, unlike, say, Roman Catholics or Lutherans, who have no doubt about what they are. My own view is that Anglicanism is a later construction, an «invention», to use a modish historical term; the word «Anglicanism» itself seems to be a coinage of the later 1830s, possibly one «invented» by Newman in 1837, in his *Lectures on the Prophetical Office of the Church*. One way out of this difficulty, which is very much implied by the tradition itself, was developed by Newman in these Lectures, in which he declared that Anglicans have at least in common the worship of the *Book of Common Prayer*, and that they learn their doctrine or belief through their worship; or, to recast the idea, the kind of God in whom we believe is the God to whom we say our prayers. The *lex credendi* is the *lex orandi*; and the *Book of Common Prayer* gives us both, in the integral connection which it creates between doctrine and devotion, the reason and the affections, head and heart. Newman wrote that Church

transmits the ancient Catholic Faith simply and intelligibly. Not the most unlettered of her members can miss her meaning. She speaks in her formularies and services. The Daily Prayer, the Occasional Offices, the Order of the Sacraments, the Ordination Services, presents one and the same strong edifying language to rich and poor, learned and unlearned, and that not as the invention of this Reformer or that, but as the witnesses of all Saints from the beginning. The very titles of the Prayers and Creeds show this: such as, «the Apostles'» and «the Nicene Creeds», the Creed of St. Athanasius, «the Catholic Faith», «the Catholic Religion», «a Prayer of St. Chrysostom», and the like. It is undeniable, that a stranger taking up the Prayer-Book would feel it was no modern production; the very Latin titles to the Psalms and Hymns would prove it. It claims to be Catholic; nor is there any one of any party to deny, that on the whole it is. To follow the Church, then, in this day, is to follow the Prayer-Book, instead of following preachers, who are but individuals. Its words are not the accidental outpouring of this or that age or country, but the joint and accordant testimony of that innumerable body of Saints, whom we are bound to follow. They are the accents of the Church Catholic and Apostolic as it manifests itself in England.

The strength of this doctrine lay in the stability of the Prayer Book, unchanged from 1662, as attempts to revise it in 1927 and 1928 were defeated in Parliament by Protestant laymen suspicious of the introduction of a greater degree of Catholicism. This argument, at least in Newman's form, has however, been weakened by the appearance since 1980 of two further, more modern, service books, the *Alternative Service Book*, now obsolescent and illegal, and *Common Worship*, which has replaced it, so that the use of the *Book of Com-*

mon Prayer, which also retains a full legality, has become not so much a point of Anglican unity, the «common prayer» or worship of the Church of England, as the defining mark of conservative services and congregations, as distinct from more «modern» or radical ones. There is a further paradox that liturgically Prayer Book congregations are sometimes, through an attachment to old forms, more liberal doctrinally than liturgically radical congregations, which being orthodox feel free to experiment with more modern rites and language.

Yet the Prayer Book is central to Anglican understanding of the spiritual, second only to the Authorised Version of the Bible itself. Its measured cadences, very largely the work of a master of musical prose, Thomas Cranmer, have sunk into the language. Its subtle repetitions have had a particular influence. Take the General Confession:

Almighty and most merciful Father; We have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep. We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts. We have offended against thy holy laws. We have left undone those things which we ought to have done; And we have done those things which we ought not to have done; And there is no health in us. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable offenders. Spare thou them, o God, which confess their faults. Restore thou them that are penitent; According to thy promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesu our Lord. And grant, o most merciful Father, for his sake; That we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life, To the glory of thy holy Name. Amen.

The phrases «erred and strayed», «devices and desires», «a godly, righteous, and sober life», are the common property of educated Englishmen. The clergy were supposed to read the Prayer Book daily, and the ordinary Sunday services for congregations for centuries were Morning Prayer (Mattins) followed by the beautiful litany and the ante-Communion Prayers, and then Evening Prayer (Evensong) in the later afternoon. The Communion Service was held less frequently, a dozen to four times a year in most churches, partly because there could be no celebration without a body of lay communicants, partly because the development of a discipline of prayer and preparation before reception made it a formidable undertaking to both the scrupulous and the careless. The centrality of the Prayer Book chimes in with the Anglican emphasis upon the traditional creeds, which are constantly repeated in its worship; indeed there can be liturgical book in Christendom so given to the repetition of the Athanasian Creed, as the *Book of Common Prayer*. The Creeds, however, are themselves a battleground between liberals and conservatives —the Athanasian

Creed was attacked for its anathemas, and liberals have also found the Virgin Birth and Bodily Resurrection of Our Lord a particular problem –but the stress on the Prayer Books fits in with the Anglican tendency to avoid the inherent self-contradictions of the Church of England by shifting the emphasis from doctrine to devotion. Generally speaking, the words of the Prayer Book were the same, whether, as in Evangelical churches, the service looked like a Calvinist communion, or like a Pontifical High Mass in an Anglo-Catholic one, with vestments, holy water and incense. The argument was that if Anglicans cannot agree about anything else, they can at least pray with the same formulae.

This is supplemented by the claim that the Prayer Book, with its Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer, condensed and adapted from the seven Roman religious offices, have offered a «pattern» for the devotional life: on the sound Catholic, indeed Benedictine, principle that prayer should be related to the public liturgy. There is, however, a difference between the Protestant and Catholic divisions within Anglicanism. Protestantism emphasised the word of God in the Bible, both read in private and preached in public. Faith came through hearing, rather than sight. The Evangelical revival stressed the doctrinal and devotional exposition of Scripture, as can be seen in the celebrated *Sermon Skeletons* of the eighteenth-century Vicar of Trinity Church, Cambridge, the Rev Charles Simeon, who influenced generations of Cambridge undergraduates. Evangelical preaching was emotional, an exhortation to repentance from sin and conversion through the sinner's belief that Christ had died for him; so that Evangelical preaching of Christ's passion lay at the heart of the Evangelical faith. Evangelicals also popularised daily household prayer, in which the male head of the family, or «paterfamilias» read morning and evening prayers to his relations and servants, who knelt to chairs facing the wall.

But the most effective carrier of the Evangelical Gospel was a new body of popular hymnody. *The Book of Common Prayer* contained only one hymn, the two translations of the *Veni Creator Spiritus*, sung only at ordinations (the Ordinal being bound up with the Prayer Book itself). The first of these translations was by the Prayer Book's, principal compiler, Thomas Cranmer, a prose master who had no ear for verse; the second by John Cosin, who completed the last official revision of the Prayer Book in 1662. Otherwise Anglican congregations sang metrical versions of the psalms, first the collection by Sternhold and Hopkins, then by Tate and Brady. But beginning with the Congregationalist Isaac Watts and John Wesley's brother Charles, who wrote five thousand hymns, hymn-singing passed from Methodism into the Church of England to become the most vital and living

force in English religion, even more than Bible-reading, the real religion of the English, even to the present day.

Yet Evangelicalism could seem un-English in its informality. Eighteenth-century High Churchmen repudiated the «enthusiasm» of the Methodists whose conversions were manifest in weeping and paroxysms and fits; an Anglican Bishop of Calcutta, sent to convert the non-Christian millions of India, was exhorted above all to «avoid enthusiasm». The Oxford Movement, in its reaction against the emotionalism of Evangelicalism, especially in its teaching of Christ's Passion, thought it a virtue of Prayer Book devotion that it offered the worshipper an emotional self-restraint or reserve by its containment in formal language, which was justified by the *disciplina arcani* or discipline of the secret allegedly practised by the Early Church in withholding the fullness of its teaching from its catechumens until they were ready to receive it in the maturity of faith. The Oxford Movement considered that by imposing a discipline upon the emotions, the Prayer Book was also a corrective to the wildness of the feelings aroused by Romanticism, in both radical democratic politics and aesthetic and literary practice, as these feelings were a danger to the reasoned intellectual life and to the stability of Church and State. Thus John Keble wrote *The Christian Year* (1827) containing a poem for each of the feast and fast days and services of the Prayer Book, to invest it with the attractions of Romantic literature, but he described the principal value of the book as lying in the «soothing qualities» by means of which the emotions were channelled and refined and subdued. To High Churchmen like Keble, reserve meant that the deepest truths of Christianity were mysteries only penetrable by men of awakened spiritual insight and power; and that principle condemned mere radical critics of the Church without more than rational or critical insight, as well as the emotional enthusiasm of the Evangelicals. Newman said of Evangelical preaching of the Atonement that the most sacred doctrine of Christ's suffering for sin was bandied about like a talisman or charm to convert men. His own preaching of the Passion was the very reverse. As a hearer recalled it, Newman paused in his recital:

For a few moments there was a breathless silence. Then, in a low, clear voice, of which the faintest vibration was audible in the farthest corner of St. Mary's, he said, «Now, I bid you recollect that He to whom these things were done was Almighty God». It was as if an electric stroke had gone through the church, as if every person present understood for the first time the meaning of what he had all his life been saying.

Treat the doctrine in tones of quiet, though it is tremendous; even hide it; then when you unveil it strike, and strike to the heart.

Though this is properly religious, it also harmonised with the polite reserve proper to an English gentleman —faith was too sacred for open discussion—, and the development by the late Victorian era of the English «stiff upper lip», the refusal of the English middle and upper classes to show their emotions in public or at all. Such attitudes were independent of religion. Yet when Lord Melbourne thanked God for the Church of England, for standing between him and real religion, he was doubtless expressing his gratitude for the Prayer Book formalism which inhibited an indecent display of devotional feeling. The careful attention of High Anglicanism until quite recently to the external beauty of worship, an attention to be seen in other forms of public ritual, like that of the monarchy on grand occasions, which is another aspect of the «facadism» I have already mentioned, as also sometimes given the impression that Anglicans are more interested in the holiness of beauty than in the beauty of holiness, in the aesthetics of religion than in religion itself.

Yet what is striking about Anglo-Catholicism is its sense of the inadequacy of its Prayer Book inheritance and of the post-Reformation English tradition in its quest for other sources of spiritual illumination, not least from continental Catholicism. The book was simply insufficient for the development of a fuller spiritual life. One gifted Victorian High Churchman, John Mason Neale, translated scores of hymns into English from the Roman Breviary and the Eastern Orthodox service books, bringing them into ordinary congregational use. He also introduced, in the 1850s, the service of the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, the beginnings of the Anglican extra-liturgical cultus of the Host, now rather discouraged after Vatican II. The High Church movement embarked after 1850 on a new enterprise to draw upon the spiritual riches of Roman Catholicism, in a species of wholesale plunder. I have already indicated that the ritualist movement after 1850 made the Prayer Book Holy Communion look as much like the Roman Mass as possible. There were supplementary works like George Frederick Lee's *Directorium Anglicanum*, which put large parts of the Roman service books into English, while in the twentieth century, a small number of Anglican priests used the Roman rite, and a larger number interpolated the Roman canon of the Mass into the Prayer Book Eucharist. The spread of Roman conceptions of priesthood popularised Roman styles of devotion among the Anglican clergy. Dr Pusey made himself notorious by translating the confessional manual of the Abbé Gaume, and drew on Roman sources in his guidance to the new, Anglican religious communities in their spiritual formation and direction, and the construction of their rules.

This Romanising movement was most influential before 1960. After 1965, the introduction of a vernacular Roman liturgy left Anglo-Catholics without an external model. Yet the Roman influence survives in other ways. There is a small Anglican Benedictine movement but the Benedictines have always had their admirers among Anglicans, enchanted by their great surviving medieval churches and cathedrals, and so there is a mass of Anglican writing about the Benedictine rule. «If we add a little Carmelite mysticism, Oratorian priesthood, Franciscan popular devotion, mediations from the German Dominicans, and moral theology from the Council of Trent», wrote Martin Thornton in 1963, «we have no great exaggeration of Anglican ascetical studies, and indeed, pastoral practice». Thornton is critical of this Irish stew of competing influences, but his own book on Anglican spirituality discusses Augustine, Benedict, Bernard, William of St Thierry, the school of St Victor, the Franciscans and Aquinas. He also makes much of the twentieth century discovery, pioneered by scholars like Evelyn Underhill, of the English medieval mystical tradition, of the *Cloud of Unknowing* and of the writings of Richard Rolle (c. 1295-1349), Walter Hilton (d. 1396) and Julian of Norwich (c. 1342-1413), proclaimed, despite their medieval Catholicism, as Anglicans *avant la lettre*.

I have known Roman Catholics who are mildly irritated by this casual Anglican appropriation of the property of others, but the outsider must recognise that what is operating here is the Anglican claim to a continuity with the medieval English Church, and behind it, to the Church of the Fathers. Even the Venerable Bede, the great church historian of the eighth century who wrote in defence of the Roman obedience, and defined if he did not invent the nationality of the English church and people, is treated as an honorary Anglican. This Anglican program has also tended to be selective, and is often hostile to Ignatian or Carmelite spirituality, or to anything smacking of the era of the Baroque, which is said to be against some English «racial instinct». Yet while the Anglican religious orders have gone into decline —the orders of women especially so—, there is an enormous appetite for books of prayers and meditations, and for retreats, drawing on ordinary Catholic practice, in the contemporary vogue for «spirituality». Much of that vogue lies outside Christianity altogether, in «New Age» religion, but there are opportunities here for both the Anglican and Catholic traditions, if they will only rise to them.