

FORUM ARTICLE

The Future of Anglican Studies

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(Received 28 October 2020; accepted 21 April 2021; first published online 17 September 2021)

Abstract

The papers in this forum offer an interdisciplinary assessment of the state of the field of Anglican Studies and perspectives on future trajectories. The first three papers, on liturgy, history, and world Anglicanism, offer an assessment of the respective state of these areas of Anglican Studies. The second set, on theology, sociology of religion, and biblical studies, stake out positions on how these disciplines inform the work of Anglican Studies. A concluding essay offers a synthesis of these papers, focusing on the themes of local contexts for Anglicanism, a further complexification of decolonizing processes in Anglicanism, and the critical role of conversation in Anglican Studies regarding disciplines, languages, and power dynamics.

Keywords: biblical studies, decolonization, history, liturgy, postcolonial, sociology of religion, theology, world Christianity

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Introduction: Opening a Conversation

The papers in this forum are drawn from a panel on ‘The Future of Anglican Studies’ at the 2019 annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion in San Diego, California. Anglican Studies has emerged as a distinct field over the past twenty years as Anglican identity has become increasingly contested. Anglican Studies does not propose to offer a prescriptive definition of Anglicanism, but rather to study Anglicanism’s multiple modalities as a global religious tradition. This interdisciplinary project contributes to the broader study of how religious affiliation and identity formation operate in networked contexts inside and outside of the Anglican Communion.

Despite the fact that Anglican Studies has emerged as a field of scholarly study, the dialogue between ecclesial identity and academic analysis is significant. Often Anglican Studies scholars self-identify as belonging to Anglicanism itself. Questions about Anglican origins, diversity, and identity are never far removed from more subtle and subjective desires by scholars to see the Anglican tradition flourish and continue. Indeed, the dynamism of Anglican Studies may draw in part from the fact that scholar-practitioners produce the bulk of its scholarship. Whether this remains so in the future will reveal much about the nature of this field and the Christian tradition it studies.

The papers gathered here offer a kaleidoscopic view of this dynamic field – where Anglican Studies has been and where it might be headed. The first three contributions survey the fields of Anglican liturgical studies, history and world Christianity, respectively. Liturgical theologian Lizette Larson-Miller introduces two key issues that the Anglican International Liturgical Consultation has focused on over the last five years: what are the essential dimensions of liturgical formation for those pursuing ordination and what constitutes the essentials of Anglican liturgy? Although Anglicans often celebrate common prayer as the core of their identity, in fact approaches to the liturgy are wildly diverse across the Anglican communion – from an exclusive use of the 1662 Prayer Book in some provinces to an increasing use of online resources by individual congregations in their weekly liturgy. Given such actual diversity, the pressing question becomes: what, if any, are the ‘essential universal Anglican norms of worship’ and what new forms might Anglican liturgy ‘take in the twenty-first century vis-à-vis cultures and personal theologies’?

Anglican historian Sheryl A. Kujawa-Holbrook takes a different approach to introducing her field. She circles the globe, surveying a swath of recent works in Anglican history. While the bulk of Anglican historiography still lies in the northern hemisphere, Kujawa-Holbrook spotlights new works that interpret particular churches in terms of their social and political context rather than treating them as outgrowths of English Christianity. Kujawa-Holbrook argues that Anglican Studies need more such local studies of Anglicanism in the majority world, and especially ones devoted to current concerns such as ‘migration, generational differences, patterns of violence’ and ‘relationship with other faith communities’.

Postcolonial theologian and World Christianity scholar Kwok Pui-lan strengthens this call. Her paper highlights the global expanse of the Anglican communion which consists of forty differently related provinces and members found in more than 165 countries. To analyze this multicultural and postcolonial institution, explains Kwok, world Christianity scholars have left behind 'the center and periphery' model of the Anglican communion in favor of a 'polycentric' model that emphasizes regional and local diversity. She urges Anglican Studies to continue along this path, conducting more local studies of how the Anglican church interacts with particular cultural contexts, and especially of under-represented groups in the Anglican communion, such as the laity and women leaders from the Global South.

The second trio of papers are less surveys of their fields than position papers. Sociologist of religion Martyn Percy contrasts two rival concepts of membership in Anglican polity today: an activist-organizational model that sets a 'high threshold high reward' for discipleship and participation, and a 'low threshold' institutional model that aims to serve the society as a whole. He notes the 'increased density' of the High and Low wings of the postwar English church, both of whom have adopted the activist-organization model over and against the broad church's institutional model. Percy cautions against uncritically embracing this high threshold model, which in his view, leads the Church of England away from a 'more inclusive public ministry' toward sectarianism.

Anglican theologian Scott MacDougall places a different issue at the top of his Anglican Studies agenda: 'what is Anglicanism doing today to carry through its decolonial project?' In the author's view, the crisis of authority that has rippled across worldwide Anglicanism is a clear sign that this de-colonization process is well underway. With its interdisciplinary approach, Anglican Studies is well-poised 'to focus on how and with what effects these processes are unfolding in Anglican contexts'. As he suggests in the second half of this paper, the struggles and conflicts of the Anglican Communion in the twenty-first century ought to be read within this decolonizing framework.

The final paper comes from a different scholarly corner – that of biblical studies. New Testament scholar Stephen Fowl dispels the whole notion of a distinct Anglican style of biblical studies. Instead he argues that the first language for all biblical scholars – Anglicans included – is critical biblical scholarship. He encourages Anglican biblical scholars to study this 'common formation' because it has had the most widespread impact on congregational engagement with Scripture. Further, Fowl urges Anglican biblical studies to attend especially to the voices of biblical scholars from Anglicans in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Here this common formation in critical biblical scholarship can be turned to scholarly advantage: 'it allows for interested parties to get conversations off the ground where other disciplines might struggle'.

This forum concludes with a response from Anglican historian, Mark Chapman. He identifies three major themes from the papers that point to the future for Anglican Studies: first, to study up-close the diverse local contexts in which Anglicanism has emerged; second, to complexify its version of Anglicanism's

postcolonial legacy and its decolonizing processes; and finally, to support the critical role of conversation in Anglican Studies – a conversation across different disciplines, among different languages, and across disparities of power and resources across the global Anglican communion. With the publication of these papers in the *Journal of Anglican Studies*, we seek to open just such a conversation.

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Issues and Concerns in Contemporary Anglican Liturgical Studies

The academic field of liturgical studies, like many areas of focused research, has expanded in the past 25 years to encompass an increasing interdisciplinarity with regard to topics and relationships, as well as the ongoing pastoral application and reception of these research interests in more diverse contexts. All of this is as true for the concerns of Anglican liturgical studies as it is for the larger ecumenical engagement in liturgical expansions and challenges.

For roughly the past 50 years, liturgical studies has generally encompassed the subfields of liturgical history, liturgical theology (including sacramental theology), and ritual studies, the latter often including pastoral liturgy – the application of said history, theology and ritual to lived liturgical events at various levels of church practice.¹ This internal expansion growing from an earlier focus on philology and a desire for a single progressive history of liturgical development² has of necessity meant historically growing in attentiveness to the differentiation between history, historiography, and tradition in a broad array of diverse cultures and languages. Liturgical theology, once limited in Anglicanism to liturgics (the relationship between the texts and practices of the Prayer Book as they are found in liturgical history) has increasingly become a conversation partner with all the sub-branches of systematic theology, especially in sacramentality and sacramental theology in far broader scope than a study of the ecclesial sacraments. And the newer field of ritual studies brings the social sciences into conversation – particularly sociology, anthropology, psychology, as well as the arts, to help articulate how liturgy is performed and received in its participants. The related field of pastoral theology has developed as an essential way of doing theology in ritualizing communities that have no set liturgy or official books. Rather than texts, the focus of study is the actual doing

¹See Mark Searle, 'New Tasks, New Methods: The Emergence of Pastoral Liturgical Studies', *Worship* 57 (1983), pp. 291-308.

²See Paul F. Bradshaw, *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship* (2nd edn; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 1-20.

of rites and rituals in real time, and the development of the techniques of participant-observers and new tools to interpret meaning.

At the same time liturgy has ceased to be an either/or topic in which it was understood as *either* a catholic systematic theological issue *or* a protestant pastoral ministry issue, bringing the essential both/and of the field together in teaching situations. The recognition of liturgical studies as both an academic and an applied field has been particularly helpful in Anglican conversations. The lived liturgical experience, however, may not be quite as integrated, leading to two contemporary concerns within Anglicanism.

First – The Foundational Issue of Liturgical Formation

With gratitude for the opportunity to serve as chair of IALC (the International Anglican Liturgical Consultation) for the past 4 years, the benefits of international Anglican conversations come into focus. In August 2017, the steering committee met in Leuven, Belgium and shared some concerns from our own contexts, which at that time included England, the United States, Canada, Korea, Hong Kong, Southern Africa, and Australia. The primary concern voiced by everyone at the table was liturgical formation and education for those who would be leading liturgy – specifically for those preparing for ordination. The varieties of ways that priests (and deacons and lay catechists) were being trained was a broad array of some formal residential seminary training, local training schemes, very local reading courses (parish based), online resources, occasional local gatherings, and recommended readings done on a solo basis. Those responsible for the education (both the teaching of liturgical history, liturgical theology, and ritual studies, as well as the formation into a life of communal prayer and worship) ranged from extremely well-qualified to not qualified at all.

As the conversation expanded to other members of IALC and especially to those who were teaching in various international Anglican settings, the concern became more urgently expressed and a consensus on the focus of the next IALC gathering was set. Meeting in Hong Kong in January 2019, we listened to each other, to both the common and the unique concerns, and divided into working groups to draft what we thought were the essential dimensions of liturgical formation for the laity (particularly for lay liturgical ministers), for the diaconate (here the vocational or permanent diaconate), and for the presbyterate. The result was an IALC document covering theology, key elements (or competencies), and suggestions for attaining those competencies.³ The introduction of the IALC document articulates liturgical formation in this way:

Formation is the Spirit-driven growth into the full stature of Christ. This is spiritual growth that is manifest in practices of discipleship. The Episcopal Church in the US describes this as ‘lifelong growth in the knowledge, service and love of God as followers of Christ and is informed by Scripture, Tradition,

³While TEAC (Theological Education for the Anglican Communion) covers some aspects of liturgical formation, IALC felt the need to expand regarding the theological rationale and some of the competencies for different orders.

and Reason.⁴ Another group described liturgical formation as a fundamental part of Christian formation, which, in the Anglican Communion is ‘formed by Scripture, shaped through worship, ordered for communion and directed by God’s mission.’ It is acknowledged that formation as growth is not a steady process – it may be imaged more as a spiral of iterative growth. It is often marked by discovery, practice, and reflection, rather than formal learning. Another way to describe this is the lifelong process of catechesis which includes integration of faith, knowledge and competencies within the context of a worshipping and learning community . . . It is a process in which people are transformed by the Holy Spirit for life in all its fullness. Ultimately, liturgical formation is both that growing into the full stature of Christ that comes from our participation in the liturgies of the Church, and those practices of formation that enable and encourage us to more fully enter into those liturgies. That is, the forming of the people of God through liturgy and for enabling their full and active participation in liturgy. The key to both of these trajectories is the habitual participation in the celebration of the official liturgies of the Church, not just the communication of content.⁵

The results were presented at the Anglican Consultative Council meeting in May 2019 (also in Hong Kong) where the document was received with two primary questions and a statement. The questions were: several Anglican representatives asked how this schema of formation might work with those Anglican communities still worshipping with the 1662 Prayer Book exclusively, and second, what of liturgical formation for bishops.⁶ The statement of reality from many parts of the Anglican Communion was the urgent concern about the lack of teachers for the teachers – how do we raise up educated teachers, from where will they come, and how will we afford this? I would add another dimension from a North American and UK perspective – even when there are qualified teachers of liturgical studies, how are they (and their field as an academic reality) recognized as central to Anglican formation?

Second – The Commonality of Common Prayer

Although not a uniquely Anglican issue, the tension between universal and local, common and particular, or catholic and tribal (in the words of Catherine Bell)⁷ seems particularly important to Anglicanism. Both in popular and official discourse, the language of common prayer often stands in place of an Augsburg Confession or a magisterium as the heart of Anglican identity, joining the authority of the instruments of unity: the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lambeth Conference, the Primates’ Meeting, and the Anglican Consultative Council, and the essential

⁴The Charter for Lifelong Christian Formation, www.episcopalchurch.org/documents/charter_for_lifelong_formation_english1.pdf (accessed November 15, 2019).

⁵The IALC draft is available on its new site as a network of the Anglican Communion, <https://www.anglicancommunion.org/theology/liturgy.aspx> (accessed November 15, 2019).

⁶The drafting of some episcopal guidelines has been the focus of additional work by the current IALC standing committee (2020–2021).

⁷Catherine Bell, ‘Ritual Tensions: Tribal and Catholic,’ *Studia Liturgica* 32 (2002), pp. 15–28.

statements or practices of Anglican Christianity: 'listening to scripture . . . the ecumenical creeds of the early Church, the Book of Common Prayer, and Anglican formularies such as the Articles of Religion, catechisms and the Lambeth Quadrilateral.'⁸ The result is that Anglicanism in particular celebrates liturgy within the constant tension of *lex orandi, lex credendi*.

Most Anglican provinces live with a both/and reality: both the peculiarity of Anglican liturgy from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as well as the liturgical patterns of the ecumenical liturgical movement of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In many parishes, this may look like a 1662 Holy Communion service in the early morning, and a late twentieth or early twenty-first century liturgy loosely based on the fourth and fifth centuries at the later morning Holy Eucharist. But beyond those pastoral practices are the central theological and ritual questions that arise with liturgical inculturation. How is Christ known in this culture, and therefore how is faith expressed and created in the liturgy celebrated in this culture? If true inculturation is not adaptation or acculturation, but rather a process by which both the liturgy and the culture are changed, who has the authority to set the center or the boundaries of such inculturated practices? The first document promulgated from the Second Vatican Council in 1963 (*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*) zeroed in on this issue in the first section. 'For the liturgy is made up of immutable elements divinely instituted, and of elements subject to change. These not only may but ought to be changed with the passage of time if they have suffered from the intrusion of anything out of harmony with the inner nature of the liturgy or have become unsuited to it' (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 21). This approach was helpful in later Anglican reflections, contributing to Resolution 47 of the 1988 Lambeth Conference: 'This Conference resolves that each Province should be free, subject to essential universal Anglican norms of worship, and to a valuing of traditional liturgical materials, to seek that expression of worship which is appropriate to the Christian people in their cultural context',⁹ an articulation picked up and developed in the 1989 Document *Down to Earth Worship*: 'Provinces should be ready both to treasure their received ways and also to reflect critically on them in the light of their own cultures. They should be wary lest sheer conservatism in liturgy, or an over-dependence upon uses from elsewhere, in fact become a vehicle of cultural alienation, making Anglican worship a specialist cult, rather than a people's liturgy. Let us hold fast to the essentials and follow the cultural adaptability of the incarnation of our Lord Jesus in everything else.'¹⁰

This is still an issue in many provinces of the Anglican Communion. In other provinces the issue, however, is not a thoughtful and learned reflection on the inheritance of Anglican worship but rather a congregationalist approach at the hands of an individual priest or worship committee to mine the riches of new online ritual patterns on a weekly basis. In these cases, what are the essentials

⁸<https://www.anglicancommunion.org/theology/theological-education/the-anglican-way.aspx> (accessed November 15, 2019).

⁹<https://anglicanliturgy.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Inculturation-1989.pdf> (accessed November 15, 2019).

¹⁰<https://anglicanliturgy.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Inculturation-1989.pdf> (accessed November 15, 2019).

of Anglican liturgy, 'the essential universal Anglican norms of worship'? Who decides? Where are the diocesan liturgical officers, the diocesan committees, the careful study on the part of bishops? Is the essence textual or structural, as in an *ordo*? Is it in the ceremony itself? What is Anglican liturgy in the twenty-first century vis-à-vis cultures and personal theologies?

These two sweeping issues are chosen from many because they speak to a global series of questions in Anglicanism. There are many other issues, chief among them is a better catechesis on sacramentality, symbol, and sign rooted in the centrality of incarnational theology, the importance of dynamism in rites of passage in a post-Christian world (versus the static sense of sacraments often found in parish teaching and practice); and the concern that North American Anglicanism ignores popular religiosity at its peril in a world where growing numbers consider themselves 'spiritual AND ritual, but not religious' and bridges between life and liturgy are needed. This represent another step needed in the global conversation about liturgy in the Anglican tradition.

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An Overview of the Strengths and Challenges of the Field of Anglican History

It is a complex task to summarize the field of Anglican history in such a consolidated manner. For the sake of brevity, I will confine my survey to works published within the last five years. I apologize in advance for important scholarship overlooked. As part of my methodology I consulted with Anglican scholars in regions outside North America.

Significant in its scope is the recent publication of *The Oxford History of Anglicanism* (2017–18), a five-volume project covering five centuries of history. Widely reviewed, this series is the most comprehensive history of Anglicanism to date. Its publication underscores the importance of the study of Anglicanism as the third largest communion in the world, and as a unique form of Christianity with a distinctive history. As series editor Rowan Strong notes, 'Anglicanism has, therefore, been an expression of the community of diverse social groups situated in the differing contexts of the past five centuries – monarchs, political elites, and lower orders; landowners and landless; slave-owners and slaves; missionaries, settlers, and indigenous peoples; colonizers and colonized – and by their enemies and opponents, both within and without their Church.'¹

¹Rowan Strong, 'Series Introduction', in Anthony Milton (ed.), *The Oxford History of Anglicanism*, Vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), p. xxvi.

The impressive list of international contributors found in *The Oxford Handbook of Anglican Studies*² further establishes the distinctiveness and the diversity within Anglican Studies, including historical perspectives. The issue of Anglicanism as a distinctive tradition is particularly noticeable within the narrative of global/world Christianities where we are commonly subsumed under the category of 'Protestantism'. One series where the history, demographics, themes, movements, and trends of Anglicanism are included as distinctive is the 'Edinburgh Companions to Global Christianity' series. The regions studied presently include *Christianity in Sub-Saharan Africa*, *Christianity in North Africa and West Asia*, *Christianity in South and Central Asia*, and, *Christianity in East and Southeast Asia*.³ Essays include history, worship, spirituality, theology, mission, evangelism, gender relations, interfaith relations, monastic movements, and ecclesiology. Not all the essays on Anglicanism are written by adherents, but authors are from the region.

Other current sources of Anglican history include historical commemorations over the last five years, including the King James Bible, Anglican chaplains in the Great War, the Reformation(s), and John Henry Newman. In the 'Reformation(s)' category, there is a stream of revisionist works on the English Reformation and its relationship to the formation of Anglican identity, including monographs written by Diarmaid MacCulloch, Eamon Duffy, Margaret Ashton, Alec Ryrie, and Peter Marshall.⁴ In 2013, Arthur Stephen McGrade published a new critical edition with modern spelling of Richard Hooker's *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*.⁵ In a similar vein, the Davenant Institute publishes 'modernized' translations of his work.⁶

Several scholarly presses sponsor series related to Anglican history. 'Anglican-Episcopal Theology and History'⁷ is published by Brill and edited by Paul Avis and focuses on history and theology from the Reformation to the present. An older series with a wider scope is published by Peter Lang and edited by C.K. Robertson, 'Studies in Episcopal and Anglican Theology'. This series publishes history,

²Mark Chapman, Sathianathan Clarke, and Martyn Percy (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Anglican Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

³Kenneth R. Ross, J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, and Todd M. Johnson (eds.), *Christianity in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017); Kenneth R. Ross, Mariz Tadros, and Todd M. Johnson (eds.), *Christianity in North Africa and West Asia* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018); Kenneth R. Ross, Daniel Jeyaraj, and Todd M. Johnson (eds.), *Christianity in South and Central Asia* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019); and Kenneth R. Ross, Francis Alvarez, and Todd M. Johnson (eds.), *Christianity in East and Southeast Asia* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020).

⁴Among earlier titles from these same authors, see Diarmaid MacCulloch, *All Things Made New: The Reformation and its Legacy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016); Eamon Duffy, *Reformation Divided: Catholics, Protestants and the Conversion of England* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017); Margaret Aston, *Broken Idols of the English Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Alec Ryrie, *Being Protestant in Reformation Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), and *The English Reformation: A Very Brief History* (London: SPCK, 2020); Peter Marshall, *Heretics and Believers: A History of the English Reformation* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2018).

⁵See Richard Hooker, *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity: A Critical Edition with Modern Spelling* (ed. Arthur Stephen McGrade; 3 vols.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

⁶<https://davenantinstitute.org> (accessed November 15, 2019).

⁷See https://brill.com/view/serial/AETH?qt-qt_serial_details=1 (accessed November 15, 2019).

ecclesiology, historical theology, and other works.⁸ Biographical histories of the Archbishops of Canterbury are the focus of a series from Routledge, co-sponsored by the Lambeth Palace Library Archives with extensive original source material.⁹

Presently, the strength of Anglican historiography is in the northern hemisphere, with notable exceptions. Jesse Zink's book on the South Sudan is a critical study of Anglican transnational religious identity at the grassroots level: As Zink writes, 'Rather than offer a history of global Anglicanism that is, at root, a chronological expansion of particular forms of English Christianity, Anglicanism needs more studies of particular churches in their context.'¹⁰

Several other scholars are engaged in the transnational study of African Anglicanism. Robert S. Heaney is published in the 'African Christian Studies Series' by Wipf and Stock to situate African Christian mission within wider African history and world Christianity.¹¹ Heaney's more recent book, *Post-Colonial Theology*¹² focuses more broadly on the ongoing impact of colonialism amid deep human conflicts told through the lens of his own formation in Northern Ireland.

Zambian priest, scholar, and human rights activist Kapya John Kaoma is the first scholar to connect 'renewal movement' Christians in the United States (in the Episcopal Church, United Methodist Church, and Presbyterian Church USA) to the rise of anti-gay legislation in Africa, specifically in Nigeria, Uganda, and Kenya. In his book, *Christianity, Globalization, and Protective Homophobia*,¹³ Kaoma explores the intersection of neo-colonialism, Christian history, globalization, and African sexual politics. Kaoma's work and that of other African scholars is found in the journals *Diaspora*, *Mission Studies*, and the *Journal of Religion in Africa*. Anglican history in the Middle East, specifically in Palestine and in Jordan is researched by Duane Alexander Miller, an Anglican priest, and member of the Protestant Theological Faculty in Madrid. While the historiography is richer than even five years ago, the percentage of Anglicans in Africa supports a need for further critical study of this diverse region.

The history of Anglicanism in Asia is also an emergent field. Philip L. Wickeri, advisor to the Archbishop of Hong Kong for theological and historical studies and Professor of Church History at Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Ming Hua Theological College, publishes 'Historical Studies on Anglican Christianity in China' through Hong Kong University Press.¹⁴ One notable title in the series, *Christian Women*

⁸See <https://www.peterlang.com/view/serial/SELT> (accessed November 15, 2019).

⁹See <https://www.routledge.com/The-Archbishops-of-Canterbury-Series/book-series/AARCHBISH> (accessed November 15, 2019).

¹⁰Jesse A. Zink, *Christianity and Catastrophe in South Sudan: Civil War, Migration, and the Rose of Dinka Anglicanism* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2018), p. 221.

¹¹Robert S. Heaney, *From Historical to Critical Post-Colonial Theology: The Contribution of John S. Mbiti and Jesse N. K. Mugambi* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2016).

¹²Robert S. Heaney, *Post-Colonial Theology: Finding God and Each Other Amidst Hate* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2019).

¹³Kapya John Kaoma, *Christianity, Globalization, and Protective Homophobia: Democratic Contestation of Sexuality in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave, 2018).

¹⁴Books in the series include Philip L. Wickeri, *Christian Encounters with Chinese Culture* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2015); Moria M.W. Chan-Yeung, *The Practical Prophet: Bishop Ronald O. Hall of Hong Kong and his Legacies* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2015), and Philip Wickeri and Ruiwen Chen, *Thy Kingdom Come: A Photographic History of Anglicanism in Hong Kong, Macau, and Mainland China* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2019).

in *Chinese Society*, by Wai Ching Angela Wong and Patricia P.K. Chiu¹⁵ examines the inter-relationships between white women missionaries and Chinese women which resulted in the ordination of Florence Li Tim Oi to the priesthood in 1944, subsequently changing Anglican history.

Theologian Kwok Pui Lan continues to write widely on postcolonial Anglicanism. Other scholars of Anglican history in Asia less well known in the West, include Lin Mei-mei, researching the history of the Episcopal Church in Taiwan; Japanese scholar Renita Nishihara, Rikkyo University, Tokyo; and Tomas Maddela of St Andrew's Seminary in Manila. There is also an active group of Anglican scholars at Sunggonghoe University in Korea, including Jeremiah Yang and Nak-Hyon Joseph Joo. Borderless Press, a project of Postcolonial Networks, is focused on publishing the work of new voices in the majority world, including Anglican history, through decolonizing the publications process – for example, the work of Church of South India scholar C.I. David Joy, who uses postcolonial historiography to interpret colonial communities and resistance movements.¹⁶

The history of Anglicanism in the diverse regions of Oceania deserves further study. The 'Australian College of Theology Monograph Series' through Wipf and Stock, covers a range of sub-fields, including history.¹⁷ Hilary M. Carey, a native of Perth now at the University of Bristol, recently published the notable, *Empire of Hell*,¹⁸ a revisionist history of the role of religion in convict colonialism from Britain and Ireland.

It should be noted here that the *Journal of Anglican Studies* regularly publishes scholarship related to Anglicanism in the majority world.¹⁹ *Anglican and Episcopal History* has expanded its coverage of Anglican majority voices in recent years – for example, scholarship on the history of Latin American Anglicanism by John L. Kater. Anglican Brazilian scholar Carlos Eduardo Calvani publishes in Portuguese. Further critical studies on the history of Latin American Anglicanism recognizing the cultural, linguistic, political, and social differences of the region is needed.

The study of Anglican women in all regions, but more specifically in the majority world is under-represented. A related issue is the presence of women scholars across the field of Anglican history. Although the situation is improving, women scholars continue to be under-represented across Anglican scholarship. Two recent titles are of note: Jane Shaw, *Pioneers of Modern Spirituality*, situates both Evelyn Underhill and Rose Macaulay (among others) within their historical contexts.²⁰ In *Anglican*

¹⁵Wai Ching Angela Wong and Patricia P.K. Chiu, *Christian Women in Chinese Society: The Anglican Story* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2018).

¹⁶C.I. David Joy, *Overlooked Voices: A Postcolonial Indian Quest* (Phoenixville, PA: Borderless Press, 2015).

¹⁷Notable works include John A. McIntosh, *Anglican Evangelicalism in Sydney 1897–1953* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2018) and Wei-Han Kuan, *Foundations of Anglican Evangelicalism in Victoria* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2019).

¹⁸Hilary M. Carey, *Empire of Hell: Religion and the Campaign to End Convict Transportation in the British Empire, 1788–1875* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019).

¹⁹For example, the November 2016 issue on Africa.

²⁰Jane Shaw, *Pioneers of Modern Spirituality: The Neglected Anglican Innovators of a 'Spiritual but Not Religious' Age* (London: Darton, Longman, Todd, 2018).

Women Novelists, Judith Maltby and Alison Shell²¹ explore the relationship between the changing roles of Anglican women from the nineteenth through the twenty-first centuries.

A transnational field of historical study is Anglicanism among indigenous peoples. The Anglican Church of Canada recently released a documentary on the Doctrine of Discovery, 'Stolen Lands, Strong Hearts'.²² Eric Taylor Woods recently published *A Cultural Sociology of Anglican Mission and the Indian Residential Schools*; more work needs to be done on indigenous Anglicanism in local regions, as well as transnational networks.²³

This limited survey of recent Anglican historiography surfaces important areas for future scholarship. On a basic level, the distinctiveness of Anglicanism within the field of global/world Christianities needs further consideration. Much more research needs to be done pertaining to Anglican history in the majority world. Research which considers the local context, including migration, generational differences, patterns of violence, and theological and religious differences will complexify our picture of Anglicanism in the Global South. The history of Anglican relationships with other faith communities is an important growth area. Research in Anglican-Roman Catholic and Anglican-Muslim relationships has already begun. The raising up of under-represented voices in Anglican history, both as authors and as subjects, is an ongoing need. The history of marginalized groups such as women, indigenous peoples, communities of color, etc. is crucial. Such research will deepen knowledge of lived Anglicanism across periods and regions.

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World Anglicanism and the Future of Anglican Studies

The Anglican Communion consists of 41 autonomous and interdependent provinces and several extra-provincial areas, with members found in more than 165 countries around the globe. From a church of the British Isles, the Anglican Communion has grown to become a global, postcolonial, and multicultural church. In recent years, the controversies over women priests and bishops and homosexuality have generated poignant conversations on the identity, authority, and future of Anglicanism. Although we have several important works on the Anglican

²¹Judith D. Maltby and Alison Shell, *Anglican Women Novelists: from Charlotte Bronte to P.D. James* (London: T & T Clarke, 2019).

²²<https://cep.anglican.ca/doctrine-of-discovery-stolen-land-strong-hearts/> (accessed November 15, 2019).

²³Eric Taylor Woods, *A Cultural Sociology of Anglican Mission and the Indian Residential Schools: The Long Road to Apology* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).

Communion, notably Kevin Ward's *A History of Global Anglicanism*,¹ more studies need to be done to better understand the histories and complexity of the Communion.

The debates about the term and methodology of 'world Christianity' have relevance and implications for the study of 'world Anglicanism'. The late Lamin Sanneh has argued that 'global Christianity' carries vestiges of the imperial past and considers churches in other parts of the world as outgrowths of the West. In contrast, he said, 'world Christianity' focuses on local agency and local expressions of Christian faith.² Within Anglican Studies, there does not seem to be such a sharp distinction between 'global Anglicanism' and 'world Anglicanism' in a similar way. For even though Kevin Ward's book has 'global Anglicanism' in the title, he pays attention to the local expressions of Anglican churches in different regions and countries. In *An Introduction to World Anglicanism*, Bruce Kaye cites the work of Sanneh and encourages us to move beyond conceptualizing world Anglicanism as an aspect of British imperial history or simply the result of the English missionary movement. Kaye argues that we should bring 'the non-metropolitan perspectives to the center of concern'.³ Whatever terminologies we choose to use, there is a growing consensus that we need to attend to the diversity and complexity of the Communion, and the relation between the global and the local in future studies of Anglicanism.

Instead of a center and periphery model, world Christianity scholars have increasingly emphasized the polycentric nature of Christianity. Klaus Koschorke writes, 'In order to understand the polycentric history of world Christianity, one has to take into account the variety of regional centers of expansion, plurality of actors, multiplicity of indigenous initiatives, and local appropriations of Christianity.'⁴ Within Anglicanism, this means that we cannot simply focus on the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Instruments of Unity, or the work of the Anglican Communion Office. Important as these are, our present focus must incorporate regional and local diversity, local actors and expressions, and the interaction of the Anglican church with diverse cultures and societies. As the debates on human sexuality have shown, there are vast regional differences in interpreting the Bible, marriage, and same-sex relationships. There are competing discourses on homosexuality in the Church of England, the Episcopal Church, and the African provinces. As Christian demographic has shifted to the Global South, church leaders in the Global South have demanded greater say in shaping the discourses and decisions of the Communion.

In the future, we will need more local studies of the interaction of the Anglican church with culture, religion, and society, especially in the Global South. It has often been said that Anglicans are not united by theology, but by liturgy. But in fact, as *The Oxford Guide to the Book of Common Prayer: A Worldwide Survey* has shown,

¹Kevin Ward, *A History of Global Anglicanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

²Lamin Sanneh, *Whose Religion Is Christianity? The Gospel beyond the West* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003).

³Bruce Kaye, *An Introduction to World Anglicanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 43.

⁴Klaus Koschorke, 'Transcontinental Links, Enlarged Maps, and Polycentric Structures in the History of World Christianity', *Journal of World Christianity* 6.1 (2016), pp. 28-56 (34).

there is much diversity in the translation and adaptation of the *Book of Common Prayer*.⁵ The revised common prayer books produced by provinces in New Zealand/Aotearoa, Kenya, and Brazil show how adaptations have been made in each of these places according to their indigenous cultures and concerns. Scholars such as Stephen Burns and Jenny Te Paa have discussed the common prayer book from postcolonial perspectives, challenging the uses of the colonial language and symbolisms in the liturgy.⁶

Often, when we study local churches and local agency, there is a tendency to focus on the bishops and theologians, to the exclusion of the work of laity and especially female leaders. The volume *Anglican Women on Church and Mission* is important because it showcases the perspectives of female scholars, especially those from the Global South.⁷ Although there are several books on women in the Church of England and the Episcopal Church, there were very few resources about Anglican women in the Global South. Book-length studies that offer such information include Gulnar E. Francis-Dehqani's *Religious Feminism in the Age of Empire: CMS Missionaries in Iran, 1869–1934* and Cordelia Moyse's *The History of the Mothers' Union: Women, Anglicanism and Globalization, 1876–2008*.⁸ Another informative volume is *Christian Women in Chinese Society: The Anglican Story* published in 2018.⁹ The book provides detailed information of the ordination of Revd Florence Li Tim-Oi, the first female priest in the Anglican Communion. It also discusses the work of Bible women, Women's Missionary Service League, and contributions of important Chinese Anglican female leaders. When we have more studies on Anglican women's leadership roles and ministries in different societies, cross-cultural comparative studies will be possible.

The study of local histories enables us to see transnational linkages in world Anglicanism in multitudinal ways. There are many international networks and institutional relationships connecting Anglicans of one part of the world to another, and the work of the Anglican Communion Office represents only a small fraction of these relationships. Companion dioceses, mission partnerships, Mothers' Unions, non-governmental organizations, and other networks have been formed to promote deeper understanding and carry out mutual ministries. These connections are not just from the Global North to the Global South, for they are multidirectional. African missionaries have spread the Gospel and carried out mission work in other African countries. In 1998 the initiative of South to South encounters sponsored by the mission commissions of the Anglican Communion encouraged mission

⁵Charles Hefling and Cynthia Shattuck (eds.), *The Oxford Guide to the Book of Common Prayer: A Worldwide Survey* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

⁶Michael M. Jagessar and Stephen Burns, *Christian Worship: Postcolonial Perspectives* (London: Equinox, 2011); Jenny Te Paa, 'From *Te Rawiri* to the New Zealand Prayer Book', in Charles Hefling and Cynthia Shattuck (eds.), *The Oxford Guide to the Book of Common Prayer* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 343–47.

⁷Kwok Pui-lan, Judith A. Berling, and Jenny Plane Te Paa (eds.), *Anglican Women on Church and Mission* (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 2012).

⁸Gulnar Francis-Dehqani, *Religious Feminism in the Age of Empire: CMS Missionaries in Iran, 1869–1934* (Bristol: University of Bristol, 2000); Cordelia Moyse, *A History of Mother's Union: Anglicanism and Globalization, 1876–2008* (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2009).

⁹Wai Ching Angela Wong and Patricia P.K. Chiu (eds.), *Christian Women in Chinese Society: The Anglican Story* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2018).

collaborations and partnerships. During the heated debates on homosexuality, African clergy persons have been sent to work in North America and American persons have been ordained by African bishops. The formation of the GAFCON movement and the Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans have created new transnational networks to advocate a more conservative view about theology and sexuality. In addition, Anglican immigrants from different parts of the world have brought their cultures and social practices to the life of Western churches. The study of migration, refugees, and their faith expressions should occupy more attention in the study of world Anglicanism.

In the past, the study of Anglicanism has mainly been done by those interested in the history and theology of the church. However, the future study of Anglicanism's local and transnational linkages will benefit from interdisciplinary and inter-religious approaches. The use of anthropology, sociology, ethnography, and other social-scientific methods, and cooperation with scholars in globalization and other area studies will not only enhance our understanding but aid us in generating new research agendas. For example, anthropologist Miranda Hassett's *Anglican Communion in Crisis* provides detailed studies of the debates on homosexuality in Uganda and the globalization of conservative Anglicans.¹⁰ And sociologist Paula Nesbitt's *Feminization of the Clergy in America* uses empirical methods to study the career paths of female clergy, job prospects and mobility, career and family, and structural changes of ministry.¹¹

These studies and others like them indicate that many Anglicans live and carry out their mission among people of different faith traditions. They have to work with their religious neighbors to address issues such as poverty, war, violence, climate change, and racial and religious strife. Archbishop Josiah Idowu-Fearon has done important work on the relationship between Anglicans and Islam in Nigeria, while Judy Berinai has written on how Anglican women in Malaysia have carried out mission in a Muslim-majority society.¹² Although the work of Christian mission in inter-religious contexts is challenging, Anglicans continue to bear witness to the Gospel and work for peace and justice in their societies. As Europe and North America have become increasingly multicultural and multi-religious, it is important to help Christians to face the challenges of religious pluralism and diversity. Anglican scholars such as Judith A. Berling and Sheryl A. Kujawa-Holbrook have written on the principles and practice of inter-religious learning. They have criticized the assumptions of Christian superiority and urged Christians to respect and learn from people of other faith traditions.¹³

¹⁰Miranda K. Hassett, *Anglican Communion in Crisis: How Episcopal Dissidents and their African Allies Are Reshaping Anglicanism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007).

¹¹Paula D. Nesbitt, *Feminization of the Clergy in America: Occupational and Organizational Perspectives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

¹²J. Idowu-Fearon, 'Anglicans and Islam in Nigeria: Anglicans Encountering Difference', *Journal of Anglican Studies* 2.1 (2004), pp. 40-51; Judy Berinai, 'Anglican Women Witnessing in a Muslim Context: Experience in Malaysia', in Kwok Pui-lan, Judith A. Berling, and Jenny Plane Te Paa (eds.), *Anglican Women on Church and Mission* (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 2012), pp. 183-97.

¹³Judith A. Berling, *Understanding Other Religious Worlds: A Guide for Interreligious Education* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2004); Sheryl A. Kujawa-Holbrook, 'Postcolonial Interreligious Learning: A Reflection from a North American Christian Perspective', in Kwok Pui-lan and Stephen Burns (eds.), *Postcolonial Practice of Ministry: Leadership, Liturgy, and Interfaith Engagement* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Press, 2016), pp. 153-65.

The study of world Anglicanism not only contributes to our understanding of Anglican identity and history, but to other academic fields and disciplines as well. Postcolonial studies, for instance, benefits from the study of the encounter of the Anglican church in different parts of the world. For example, R.S. Sugirtharajah, a postcolonial biblical scholar, has discussed how the translation, printing, and dissemination of the English Bible has been used to further imperial expansion.¹⁴ Others have examined how Christian mission has been an integral part of the ‘civilizing mission’ of the West. But Christian values introduced by missionaries also challenged local practices such as footbinding, polygamy, and concubinage. Christian mission schools trained educated elites who played important roles during and after the struggles of national independence in many societies.

The study of world Anglicanism will also contribute to globalization studies and comparative studies about health care, education, development, and politics. As a global network, world Anglicanism provides rich data, archival material, and case studies which demonstrate how ideas and practices travel across nations and regions. The mission archives of Anglican churches contain important reports and first-hand observations of local customs and practices. Though these reports may reflect missionaries’ biases, they contain important information that may not be otherwise available. When carefully used, they present how Christian missionaries and indigenous Christians adapted Western health medicine, education, and other social practices in different cultures. The digitization of some of the mission archives and the collections of books and materials from major universities will contribute to historical and social scientific studies of the Global South and continue to aid us in giving more adequate account of the diversity of world Anglicanism.

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Sociological Reflections on Contemporary Anglican Polity

One question that Anglicanism faces today is, ‘Who is Anglican?’ Any investment in an overly narrow specification of membership will have profound consequences for the identity and organizational shape of Anglican ecclesiology, including performative-liturgical arenas such as baptism. The socio-cultural expectations that are invested by those outside the worshipping congregation in baptism require constant local, pastoral negotiation between churches, clergy and the communities they serve. The socio-theological vision of Anglican polity therefore needs to understand its purpose and roots more deeply. Theology and the supernatural authority of the

¹⁴R.S. Sugirtharajah, *Postcolonial Criticism and Biblical Interpretation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 127–54.

church, which she is called to embody and proclaim, cannot simply allow its ethos, identity and practice to be replaced with what I have consistently termed ‘consecrated pragmatism’.¹ This is particularly the case in relation to the question of how people become part of a social and spiritual body, like the church, that is fundamentally inclusive in nature and character.

The current turn toward ecclesial organization and management, focuses particular attention on how people become part of the church.² Specifically, it presses the question as to whether the global expressions of Anglican polity are distinctive, bounded and overtly member-based organizations in character, seeking clarity of identity, or whether they are broader social and sacramental institutions to which a much wider public relates in a variety of ways. I am mindful that most ecclesial ecologies will contain both of these elements and will be a blend of those who feel a sense of strong attachment (often expressed as ‘membership’), and those whose basically affirmative relationship to the church involves a more variegated form of commitment. My concern is with the concept of membership in Anglican polity as a whole.³ If the church is consumed with its own managerial and organizational goals, including increasing its own numerical growth and discipling its members, it will have lost its soul. I hold, in contrast, that global Anglican polity posits an incorporative model of church; a non-member-based institution that seeks to serve society as a whole, rather than a member-based organization that primarily exists for its committed subscribers.

In her prescient book, *The Precarious Organisation*,⁴ the Dutch sociologist and ecclesologist Mady Thung suggests that national churches in Northern Europe have come under increasing pressure in the postwar years to become self-consciously ‘organisations’, marked by ‘nervous activity and hectic programmes . . . constantly try[ing] to engage’ their members in an attempt to reach ‘non-members’. She contrasts the ‘organisational’ model and its frenetic activism with the ‘institutional’ model of the church – the latter offering, instead, contemplative, aesthetic and liturgical models that take longer to grow and are often latent for significant periods of time, but which may be more culturally resilient and conducive than those of the activist-organizational model. Thung concludes her book by suggesting that the model being adopted by many national churches – a kind of missional ‘organisation-activist’ approach – is what drives the population away. It leads, logically, to sectarianism.

¹Martyn Percy, ‘Consecrated Pragmatism’, *Anvil* 14.1 (1997), pp. 18–28.

²The background to the distinction between organization and institution lies in the writings of Philip Selznick. For a discussion of his work in this field, see Martin Krygier, *Philip Selznick: Ideals in the World* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Law Books, 2012).

³On this, see Paul Avis (ed.), *The Journey of Christian Initiation: Theological and Pastoral Perspectives* (London: Church House Publishing, 2011). See also Martyn Percy, *Shaping the Church: The Promise of Implicit Theology* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010) for a detailed discussion of baptism as a broader cultural practice, which enables the child (i.e., having been ‘blessed’ and ‘christened’) to be received back into a local community as a recognized and publicly affirmed member of that society. For a closer ethnographic study of this phenomenon, rooted in the fishing village of Staithes on the northeast coast of England, see David Clark, *Between Pulpit and Pew* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

⁴Mady Thung, *The Precarious Organisation: Sociological Explorations of the Church’s Mission and Structure* (The Hague: Mouton & Co., 1976).

Church-going in Anglican polity has generally been a matter of relating to and inhabiting a complex institution, where the idea of ‘membership’ of a subscriber-based organization is seen as a more ‘Congregationalist’ kind of ecclesiology. I mean no disrespect to Non-Conformist chapels and congregations here. I simply draw attention to the fact that a parish church exists for the spiritual well-being of the whole community, and it serves that community independently of any subscription or support that the people in the community might provide. This is by no means a unique characteristic of Anglicanism. It is the form of ministry exercised by ecumenical chaplains in prisons, hospitals, schools and colleges, the armed services and other arenas, where the ministers elect to serve the whole body, not merely the committed minority. And amid the general anxiety about apparently declining numbers of attendees at regular Sunday worship in the Church of England, at least one group of churches has bucked the trend: the cathedrals. Consistently, the numbers worshipping in English Anglican cathedrals have been resilient, immune to the decline seen elsewhere. Indeed, many cathedrals report an increase in the number of worshippers. But what do these numbers actually show?

As with much statistical analysis, it is the story behind the numbers that tells us how to interpret the bare arithmetic. To understand the growth of worshippers in cathedrals, one needs to have some grasp of the nuanced ecology of English church-going. Social exchange theory can help with such interpretation. Classic cathedral worship is typically a ‘low threshold’ pursuit – that is to say, anyone can come, without any need or pressure to join a rota, group, class or any other supplementary activity. However, ‘low threshold’ is most likely combined with ‘high reward’: the music will invariably be superb, the preaching of a consistently high calibre and the liturgy predictable and elegant. In contrast, the dominant preferred ecclesial model in the Church of England today is ‘high threshold and high reward’. The justification for this formula is usually the priority of ‘discipleship’, which is preferred to anything that smacks of vicarious religion, or a lack of clarity in matters of belief. ‘High-threshold/high-reward’ churches will offer attendees a rich menu and a variety of groups and activities that will be expected to join. The committed can be identified easily enough – by the range and scale of their involvement in groups and activities. Those who are less involved will be deemed to be, by the same token, less committed. Thresholds for joining and participating are therefore set deliberately high, and this often manifests itself in areas such as restrictive practices in respect of baptisms and marriages, and can even extend, occasionally, to restricting funerals to ‘members’.⁵

The problem with the ‘high-threshold-high-reward’ churches is that, while there is a stress on discipleship and commitment, the model of church being offered is unavoidably narrow. Moreover, the concentration of resources and monies in these ecclesial paradigms means that other churches – I do not include cathedrals here – can quickly develop into ‘High-Threshold-Low-Reward’ churches. By that, I mean that the instinct of affirming the church as being for everyone in the community,

⁵This is a subtler cultural-theological issue than space permits to explore here, but for further discussion, see John Shelton Reed, *Glorious Battle: The Cultural Politics of Victorian Anglo-Catholicism* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1996) and W.S.F. Pickering, *Anglo-Catholicism: A Study in Religious Ambiguity* (London: SPCK, 1989).

while laudable, comes as a cost that falls only on a few. The quality and quantity of worship, pastoral ministry and more besides, can only operate if a few will fund this for the many. This is by no means certain.

There is a further complication to be mindful of here. The emerging millennial generation increasingly characterize themselves as 'spiritual but not religious', and when asked to describe their nascent religious or denominational roots or 'home', choose to say 'none'. The rise of the 'Nones' is a significant challenge to all forms of ecclesial polity and expressions of theology. Despite being, as a generation, more sensitive to faiths than previous eras, 'Nones' are often characterized as insouciant and indifferent towards the church, which then plays into the hands of those who want to turn all church attendees into explicit 'disciples' – preferring the 'high-threshold-high-reward' pattern of polity. This takes the church further way from public life, and tends toward sectarianism. Slow, 'low-threshold' churches that might appeal to the young as epiphanies of spirituality and transcendent encounter are at risk here, as their engagement with 'Nones' does not quickly seek to convert them – but does offer a viable base and resource from which to continue to be 'spiritual-but-not-religious'.⁶ Emerging concepts of membership and belonging in relation to churches are now patently more complex.

That said, the neo-conservative revolution of the last fifty years has seen both the High and Low wings of Anglicanism entirely out-narrate the middle ground (i.e. Broad Church), and then move on to rebrand the moderate-middle as 'liberal'. In turn, the very term 'liberal' was swiftly allotted a consistently negative value in ecclesial climes. For Catholic conservatives, and a handful of conservative Evangelicals, this arguably began with 'Gender Wars' (i.e. the debate on the ordination of women). The vast majority of clergy and laity who desired (and eventually voted for) women priests found themselves repositioned as 'liberals'. On sexuality, a gradual acceptance of lesbian, gay and bisexual Christians, and an eventual (still growing) acceptance of same-sex marriages has also led to the Broad Church and middle ground being labelled, once again, negatively, as 'liberal'.

What is intriguing in all of this is that the Broad Church element within Anglicanism normally holds sensible, moderate and accommodating views on gender, and progressive (note, not radical or liberal) views on sexuality.⁷ The Broad Church, such as it is, tends to be entirely orthodox on creeds, doctrines (e.g. the physical resurrection of Jesus), articles of faith, liturgical proclivities, church polity, Christian practice and canon law. It practises what many term 'generous orthodoxy'. The Broad Church elements within Anglicanism tend to be, if anything, theologically conservative. And they view the High and Low elements of the church as rather more sectarian – and inclined towards 'membership-speak' – than the more inclusive, 'public' ministry that they would seek to embody and practice.

⁶On this, see Kenda Creasy Dean, *Almost Christian: What the Faith of our Teenagers Is Telling Us about the American Church* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

⁷For some further discussion of this, see Martyn Percy, *The Future Shapes of Anglicanism: Currents, Contours, Charts* (London: Routledge, 2017). For more historical perspectives, see W.J. Conybeare, 'Church Parties', in *Essays Ecclesiastical and Social* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, 1855) and C.R. Sanders, *Coleridge and the Broad Church Movement* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1942).

In terms of membership of the church, therefore, the postwar story of English Anglicanism has witnessed the slow accretion of greater density towards the wings: a density, moreover, consisting not merely of numbers, but also of theological and ecclesiological intensity. Both wings – depending on whether one refers to them as high and low, evangelical and catholic – have tended to be more prescriptive about what constitutes ‘membership’ (not only of their own respective groups and societies, but also wider membership of the church), have been zealous on areas such as liturgy, reform and divisive debates, such as those on sexuality and gender. In this, ‘baptism’ as a means of incorporation within the church, and symbolically too in being named to wider society, has become a rite that has attracted wider ecclesial collateral. Specifically, is ‘Christening’ a shared social-sacramental covenant between church and world, and God and people? Or, rather, as the high and low, or evangelical and catholic wings tend to claim, a private rite, performed in public, that inducts individuals into something more obviously bounded, organizational and contained? In addressing this issue, we remain mindful of studies that speak of baptism differently, namely as the rite performed by and in the church that confers a name and social status on the child in question. So, through baptism and naming, the child becomes not only a member of the church, but also a member of the broader social community.⁸

Thung concludes her work with something of a prophetic warning to churches, and here I include global Anglicanism. She notes the inevitability of churches needing to become more organized, and more like organizations, replete with plans for numerical growth and measurable impact. But Mady Thung also sounds a note of caution, namely that every step churches take *towards* the tighter and clearer forms of organization, coupled to overt mission and evangelism, is one further step *away* from the public at large, who, she claims, are looking for more open forms of institutional life, which offer more by way of obliquity than clarity. Ultimately, Anglicanism’s pastoral practice, mission and ministry does not have its identity rooted in being an eclectic and selective member-based organization, requiring detailed confessional subscription from believers. Anglicanism is, rather, far broader: an institutional body that has many kinds of support and supporters, though with room still for those who want to regard themselves as insider-subscribers. Anglicanism offers itself to the world on these terms, and in so doing, is an oblique foretaste of the inclusive Kingdom of God, embodied in Jesus Christ.

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⁸For a closer ethnographic study of this phenomenon, see Clark, *Between Pulpit and Pew*.

Pursuing the Decolonial Agenda: A Future for Anglican Studies

Anglican Studies, as an academic endeavor, is a multidisciplinary examination of a worldwide network of Christian churches that was produced by the confluence of a very specific set of geopolitical and economic histories with an equally particular set of theological commitments and practices. Because the Anglican expression of Christianity was spread throughout the world largely, though not entirely, by the British Empire, because British colonialism has largely, though not entirely, now come to an end, and because the relationship of Anglican churches outside of England with the Church of England and to one another is largely, though not entirely, conditioned by the colonial legacy, to do Anglican Studies is also to do post-colonial studies.

This is hardly a novel statement. That Anglicanism, as a worldwide phenomenon, is in a postcolonial phase has been an explicit theme in Anglican Studies for a number of years. A tremendous body of work on how the Anglican Communion as a whole and Anglican churches in various contexts have come to terms and continue to grapple with the implications of their postcolonial condition has been produced over the last 25 years or so.¹ I do not see that focus changing any time soon. I do, though, wonder if the postcoloniality of the object of Anglican Studies is in the midst of a shift. I wonder whether the shape of its postcolonial reality has become so apparent, not only to Anglican scholars but to *Anglicans*, people around the world practicing Anglicanism, that the resulting forms that Anglicanism takes demands approaches to Anglican Studies that are designed to apprehend and interpret worldwide Anglicanism slightly differently than up to now.

Before explaining what I mean by this, it is important to issue a caveat or two. First, I take Anglican Studies to be a subset of the wider discipline of Religious Studies, and I have only a working knowledge of the theory and methods of that area of inquiry. Second, I am an Anglican theologian, not a scholar of Anglicanism. My grounding in Anglican Studies, properly speaking, is not as firm as it is in the doing of Anglican theology. Where my work intersects with Anglican Studies in the formal sense is that I am concerned with Anglican forms of ecclesiality, what they communicate about us, how they form us, and how they can unite or divide us. All of this is to say that I am not exactly qualified to assess the current, let alone future, shape of Anglican Studies. I am making a turn toward that discipline, here. And I am doing so precisely because, as one who teaches in an Anglican seminary and as one who writes on and thinks about Anglican ecclesiality, I myself

¹See, for example, Ian T. Douglas and Kwok Pui-lan (eds.), *Beyond Colonial Anglicanism: The Anglican Communion in the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Church Publishing, 2001); Robert S. Heaney and William L. Sachs, *The Promise of Anglicanism* (London: SCM Press, 2019); William L. Sachs (ed.), *The Oxford History of Anglicanism. V. Global Anglicanism, c. 1910–2000* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2018); William L. Sachs, *The Transformation of Anglicanism: From State Church to Global Communion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); and Andrew Wingate, Kevin Ward, Carrie Pemberton, and Wilson Shitshebo (eds.), *Anglicanism: A Global Communion* (London: Mowbray, 1998).

need to better understand the implications of Anglican postcoloniality, what it means for me, my students, and my church, in order to provide better seminary formation and to do better theology. It is in that spirit that I suggest what the future of Anglican Studies might be, especially where the particular case of how Anglican ecclesiology is studied is concerned.

My overall question about the future of Anglican Studies from an ecclesiological perspective has to do with whether Anglican Studies needs to shift slightly, from describing Anglicanism's postcolonial reality to examining its decolonizing processes. I realize that this is probably too crude and unnuanced a distinction, but what I'm asking is whether Anglican Studies could emphasize not quite as much where Anglicanism finds itself in its post colonial condition as what Anglicanism is doing to carry through its decolonial project.

What do I mean? As Robert Heaney points out in his new book on *Post-Colonial Theology*,² the process of decolonization has two broad components. The first is geo-political. It has to do with the cessation of colonial status, when an imperial power relinquishes its control of a colonized people and territory, which are then granted a sovereign autonomy that establishes them as an independent nation-state among the other nation-states of the world. Once this first movement in the decolonization process has taken place, the former colony can be said to find itself in a postcolonial condition, with all that Frantz Fanon, Homi Bhaba, Kwok Pui-lan, and many others have so crucially said that entails. The second movement in the decolonization processes of those in the postcolonial condition concerns the ways in which a people decolonizes itself that is, the ways in which it seeks to divest itself of the vestiges of subjection as colonial subjects: internalized cultural marginalization; suppression of traditional languages, arts, and lifeways; subjugation of local epistemologies to those of the former colonizer; and so forth.³ These are messy, unruly processes. They do not proceed in a uniform or straightforward way. They do not even always proceed in a conscious way. But they do proceed.⁴ And the implications and impacts of them are wide-ranging and powerful.

It seems to me, therefore, that the task of the field of Anglican Studies going forward, as distinct from the production of its theology, ecclesiastical history, ethics, or liturgies – though certainly in close conversation with those disciplines – will be to focus on how and with what effects those processes are unfolding in Anglican contexts. I think this is important not only because there is hardly a more pressing need facing the study of Anglicanism at this moment, but because practitioners in the Anglican world – theologians, historians, ethicists, clergy – are all contending directly with the effects of these processes in the work they do, regardless of the degree to which they are conscious of this.⁵ To the extent that a theologian's or ethicist's or bishop's or liturgist's or parliamentarian's work is an Anglican project and is identified as such and is intended for an Anglican audience, that work will almost

²Robert Heaney, *Post-Colonial Theology: Finding God and Each Other amidst the Hate* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2019).

³Heaney, *Post-Colonial Theology*, p. 4.

⁴A classic theoretical text here is Homi Bhaba, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994).

⁵See, for example, Marion Grau, *Rethinking Mission in the Postcolony: Salvation, Society and Subversion* (London: Continuum, 2011).

of necessity be an encounter with the legacies of colonialism and with the effects of decolonization. The immediate future of Anglican Studies, it seems to me, is to detail the specific forms that decolonizing Anglicanism is taking, to name the effects they are having, and, in so doing, to make explicit what up to now has been largely implicit in the Anglican context.⁶ As an academic endeavor, this will make a signal contribution to understanding better the dynamics of decolonizing processes in postcolonial contexts, a valuable piece of work for the wider field of Religious Studies. As a theologian, I think it would also inform work in constructive Anglican ecclesiology and help us better understand what we, those of us who look at Christian communities theologically, are actually seeing in them.

Let me draw out what I mean by this by way of a few ecclesologically shaped examples. Christopher Craig Brittain and Andrew McKinnon, in their recent study *The Anglican Communion at a Crossroads*,⁷ report on a number of matters around which Anglicans in various locales have come into conflict in recent decades. Their extensive interviews surface, for example, great concern among Anglicans with matters of orthodoxy and heresy. As a perennial issue, this is perhaps not immediately noteworthy. However, Brittain and McKinnon demonstrate how the language of orthodoxy and heresy gets mobilized along fault lines in the Communion that are themselves the products of decolonizing processes and they examine the theo-political purposes they are made to serve. This, it seems to me, is both enlightening and worth deeper investigation and theorization.

Moreover, it is part and parcel of a larger dynamic they and others perceive clearly. Ecclesialogists such as Paul Avis,⁸ Bruce Kaye,⁹ Ephraim Radner,¹⁰ and Ellen Wondra,¹¹ among others, have made very clear in recent work that the driving issue in Anglican ecclesiology – both that produced by academic theologians and that produced by church and Communion-wide bodies charged with doing so – is the question of authority: who has it, where it resides, how it is properly constellated, the way it is rightly deployed. Throughout the Anglican world, anxiety over the shape of ecclesial authority runs very deep. While most theologians perceive that this anxiety manifests itself in different ways depending upon the character of the specific postcolonial context that is in view, and some even mention the connection of this anxiety with the colonial legacy,¹² few examine with focus and depth how the

⁶To that extent, it would be to do something similar in the specific context of Anglican Studies that was done in Latinx and Latin American Studies by the contributors to Raimundo Barreto and Roberto Sirvent (eds.), *Decolonial Christianities: Latinx and Latin American Perspectives* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019).

⁷Christopher Craig Brittain and Andrew McKinnon, *The Anglican Communion at a Crossroads: The Crises of a Global Church* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2018).

⁸Paul Avis, *In Search of Authority: Anglican Theological Method from the Reformation to the Enlightenment* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014).

⁹Bruce Kaye, *Conflict and the Practice of the Christian Faith: The Anglican Experiment* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2009).

¹⁰Ephraim Radner, *Church* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2017).

¹¹Ellen K. Wondra, *Questioning Authority: The Theology and Practice of Authority in the Episcopal Church and Anglican Communion* (New York: Peter Lang, 2018).

¹²See, for example, Miranda K. Hassett, *Anglican Communion in Crisis: How Episcopal Dissidents and their African Allies Are Reshaping Anglicanism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007).

perceived crisis of authority in worldwide Anglicanism intersects with decolonizing processes, save where doing so advances specific theological – and often socio-cultural – interests of a particular ecclesiologist.¹³ It seems to me that this is a missed opportunity. If we understood the dynamics in play better, employing the anthropological, sociological, and ethnographic tools that researchers in Anglican Studies, being Religious Studies scholars, would bring to bear on the issue, our work as Anglican ecclesiologists would be more honest, more charitable, and more useful.

Now, as you can see, I cannot help bringing all of this back to theology. It is true that my personal investment here is to deepen my engagement with Anglican Studies in order to do better Anglican ecclesiology. But that does not mean I do not see the merit of doing this work on its own terms. Anglican Studies, given the uniqueness of its subject, has the potential of supplying a rich case study of the dynamics of decolonization as they play out globally and locally. That alone makes this line of inquiry well worth taking.

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The Future of Anglican Studies with Regard to Biblical Studies

When Anglicans talk about their relationship to biblical studies and what distinguishes Anglican approaches to Scripture, we primarily address what we don't do: We are not fundamentalists, we do not have doctrines of inerrancy, we are not biblicists. Although I believe these assertions are true, they say little to nothing about the actual interpretative practices of Anglican biblical scholars and they underwrite the claim that there is no such thing as *an* Anglican approach. In the brief space available to me in this essay, I will speak about the future of Anglican Studies with regard to biblical studies from the perspective of a biblical scholar. I will make three points. They will be assertive, compressed, and certainly overly simple. The aim is to spark discussion rather than to write the final word.

The first point is to note that although there are many superb biblical scholars who are Anglican, there is not an Anglican style of biblical studies. The first language for Anglican and non-Anglican biblical scholars is 'critical biblical scholarship' in either its German or English dialect. One cannot enter the guild of professional biblical scholars without displaying a high level of skill in deploying the habits, practices, and idioms of critical biblical scholarship. This is true even

¹³Exemplifying an exception to this is Janet Trisk, 'Authority, Theology, and Power', in Mark D. Chapman, Sathianathan Clarke, and Martyn Percy (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Anglican Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), pp. 608–19 (especially pp. 615–18).

as one recognizes that critical biblical scholarship was never monolithic and is even less so now.¹

The important point to recognize with regard to Anglicanism and Anglican Studies is that no Christian confession has been as comprehensively successful in forming scholars in the way that the academy has done for biblical scholars. Even Roman Catholicism in the light of the encyclicals *Providentissimus Deus* and *Divino Afflante Spiritu* has adopted critical biblical scholarship with a vigor and speed that means there is now little interesting difference between Catholics and Protestants in this area.² Even those, like myself, who are dissatisfied with such formation and want to move in different directions, still see value in this native tongue and can revert to it when necessary. This reality is not likely to change anytime soon. Even though there are a large number of scholars dissatisfied with various aspects of critical biblical scholarship, there are no real institutional alternatives to the formation of academic biblical scholars.³ Even if one could identify a distinctively Anglican approach to biblical studies, there is certainly no Anglican institution that could provide formation in such a style. Recognizing this reinforces the importance of formation within institutions. It makes little sense to argue over whether or not there is a distinctively Anglican way of doing anything unless there are institutional structures to form and support the formation of the relevant habits, practices and dispositions in Anglicans. Further, even if such an institution existed, I am not sure it would be a good thing for biblical scholars. On the whole, the study of the Bible benefits from Jews, Christians, non-believers, and others from across the globe having a common way of addressing biblical texts. This is true even for those of us eager to bring theological concerns or the concerns of our specific contexts to bear on the study of the Bible. Our disagreements and dissatisfactions are always voiced against a background of our common formation.

It is crucial for Anglicans to study this common formation of biblical scholars. No other scholarly development has had as much impact on a large majority of Anglicans as the rise of critical biblical scholarship. This is the case if one looks at the debates around the rise of biblical criticism in England in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries or its widespread acceptance in the nineteenth century.⁴ The influence of critical biblical scholarship is even broader when one looks at the fact that the faculty of all seminaries in the USA and most other Western countries come from academic institutions where they have been deeply formed by and are fluent in critical biblical scholarship. As a result, all seminarians are introduced to this language and encouraged to learn it. The amount of training they receive, however, leaves them far from fluent. They know there is this language, but they cannot use it well. They recognize it is very

¹There are a number of scholars who make this point and have done so for many years. See Mark Brett, *Biblical Criticism in Crisis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); the many writings of Elizabeth Schüssler-Fiorenza including, *Rhetoric and Ethic: The Politics of Biblical Studies* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1999); Stephen Fowl, *Engaging Scripture: A Model for Theological Interpretation* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998).

²This is most clearly evident in the document from the Pontifical Biblical Commission, 'Interpretation of the Bible in the Church'. The English version can be found in *Origins* 23 (1994), pp. 497-524.

³See Stephen Fowl, 'Theological Interpretation of Scripture and its Future', *Anglican Theological Review* 99.4 (2017), pp. 671-90.

⁴See Henning Graf Reventlow, *The Authority of the Bible and the Rise of the Modern World* (trans. John Bowden; London: SCM Press, 1984) and John Rogerson, *Old Testament Criticism in the Nineteenth Century: England and Germany* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1985).

different from the theological and homiletical training they receive, but they have even less formation in bringing the biblical, the theological and the homiletical together. It would be hard to overestimate the impact of this situation on preaching, and, subsequently, on congregational engagement with Scripture.⁵

This far from adequate situation applies in the ideal case of someone doing a three-year residential program at an Anglican seminary. It is, therefore, even more worrying that in the USA the three-year residential model is under considerable pressure. There are financial pressures on many seminaries. Further, it makes less and less sense for students to take out loans for such an education when the number of full-time parish positions is in decline. It seems reasonable to expect that fewer and fewer students will have the benefit of three-year residential formation in a seminary context. Without a great deal of imagination one can foresee a situation where a diocese will have a small number of parishes that can afford clergy who have been formed in the standard residential model and a large number of parishes staffed by part-time or bi-vocational clergy whose formation will be haphazard. I am not critical of the gifts and passion such people bring to their ministries. Rather, I am recognizing the limits on their formation. I do not believe there is a distinctively Anglican way of addressing these challenges, but this situation calls out for serious reflection.

This is connected to my next point: The Episcopal Church (maybe Anglicanism more generally) will need to develop or improve the three- or four-way conversations between the church (particularly its bishops), faculty in seminaries (many of whom are ordained) and faculty who are teaching in other institutions (many of whom are lay). One can also include Anglicans on the faculty of non-Anglican seminaries as a fourth group. This point may be most applicable to the US context, but probably extends further. I believe this point is true for all theological disciplines, but particularly true for biblical studies.

To see the importance for Anglicanism of having all these (and other) voices in the conversation, let me offer a contrast. The list of contributors to this symposium includes many of the types of voices that should be in such a conversation. We have lay and ordained theologians; those teaching in Anglican seminaries; some from non-Anglican seminaries and a few who work in university contexts. The initial gathering that led to these articles, however, took place under the auspices of the American Academy of Religion. As far as I know there were no bishops in attendance and no other representatives of the ecclesial institution with which we are all also affiliated.⁶

Alternatively, when I meet as a member of the House of Bishops' Theology Committee, the ecclesial institution is front and center. Nevertheless, it is clear that most bishops have very little sense of the landscape of academic theology outside of our seminaries and the few lay theologians they happen to encounter on the committee. I think they would be surprised and pleased to learn how many top-notch scholars in our fields are lay Episcopalians. These are scholars who worship in local contexts and may serve there, but who largely work outside of any church-wide conversations. They fly under

⁵This is one of the central points of Dale Martin's *Pedagogy of the Bible* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 2008).

⁶There are, of course, other venues for such discussion such as the Anglican Association of Biblical Scholars. Despite the many excellent programs this group supports at the Society of Biblical Literature annual meeting, it only includes some of the constituencies I believe should be part of the discussion.

the episcopal radar. They would, if my experience is anything to go by, jump at the chance to be more involved and to bring their scholarly gifts to the service of the church. Moreover, my time on this committee has shown that bishops have welcomed the insights and work of theologians (lay and ordained) when it comes to addressing clearly theological topics. They see us as allies and resources. As a committee we have not been as successful in thinking theologically about the institutional and operational issues that must comprise the great bulk of a bishop's time. When that has happened it is almost by accident, though the results have been good as far as I can tell.⁷

I have contrasted two separate contexts, an American Academy of Religion meeting and the House of Bishop's Theology Committee, where some, but not all, of the parties that should be in conversation come together. Moreover, even within those contexts, the focus of the discussions can be too truncated. There is little about these challenges that would not be improved by more time and more money. For the most part, that would have to come from the ecclesial side of things or perhaps investment from seminaries in the on-going health of theological reflection in the church.

My third and final point is that any approach to Anglican biblical studies must engage the scholarship coming from Anglicans in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. One benefit of the fact that all biblical scholars learn the language of critical biblical scholarship is that it allows for interested parties across the globe to get conversations off the ground where other disciplines might struggle. I recognize that most biblical scholarship coming out of these contexts in the global south is not standard historical criticism. Nevertheless, the common formation of biblical scholars allows for people to communicate the ways they deviate from this formation and the reasons for doing so in a manner that is more accessible to other biblical scholars across the globe.

Of course, there is a danger that biblical scholars end up only engaging the work of others to the extent that it conforms to their preferred idiom. We should avoid the situation where participation in the conversation is open only to the extent one fits within the norms of that conversation. Biblical scholarship from outside of Europe and the USA and Canada challenges us to open our eyes and ears to see and hear different things. That benefit could be stifled or lost if it must conform to the standards of critical biblical scholarship in a rigid way. The table should be large, and sitting at the table should not come at the expense of one's distinctive identity and approach.

These then are my three points regarding an Anglican approach to biblical studies. First, there is not an Anglican style of biblical studies. Instead, all biblical scholars regardless of confession are formed in the habits and practices of critical biblical scholarship. Recognizing and engaging the power and scope of this formation is essential for Anglicanism and in particular its scholars and bishops. Second, such

⁷I want to avoid the naïve expectation that all bishops can or should participate in this conversation. Just as I would not expect all lay people to learn Greek and Hebrew, I do not expect that all bishops will have the desires or capacities to engage in these conversations. As long as some do, I would be satisfied.

necessary engagement can only happen by expanding the scope and nature of the conversations and engagements between scholars from a wide variety of contexts and bishops. Finally, it is essential to recognize, and welcome on their own terms, voices from the global south.⁸

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Conclusion: Directions for Anglican Studies

It is always a complex task to respond to such a wide set of diverse reflections on a broad theme: at first sight Anglican Studies might seem relatively tightly defined, but the different contributions have shown just how rich and varied a range of disciplines and subjects are under consideration. An earlier effort to define the field of Anglican Studies in the *Oxford Handbook of Anglican Studies* revealed that the different contributors had very different perceptions of the sorts of studies required to address the phenomena described by adjective 'Anglican'. There are, it would seem, many Anglicanisms and many contexts in which 'Anglican' churches have developed and many churches that might be described as 'Anglican' in the sense of being included within the Anglican Communion that are in fact post-denominational ecumenical churches (as on the Indian sub-continent). There is consequently something important in the distinction between Anglicanism and Anglican Studies – 'isms' imply some sort of clearly defined essence whereas 'studies' imply something far less tangible and even contested. And some churches that are proud of the term 'Anglican' are not part of the Anglican Communion (as with the Anglican Church of North America). Alongside history, the study of such a diverse set of phenomena seems to require sociology, anthropology, geography, cultural studies and theology all laced with a strong dose of postcolonialism.

There are of course scholars of Anglicanism who do not have any particular difficulty with describing a reified thing called Anglicanism. Perhaps the most obvious scholar of Anglicanism as a distinctive ecclesial identity with its own form of theology is Paul Avis, at least in the Church of England, whose prolific writings have sought to identify a set of key methods that can be used to describe Anglican ecclesiology.¹ It is quite clear, however, that not all Anglicans would agree with his analysis (including the author of this article). Even though their picture of Anglicanism is quite different, there are resonances in Avis's work with Stephen Sykes's writings from the 1970s with his quest for a distinctive theological identity for Anglicanism

⁸I am extremely grateful to the Revd Dr Joseph Pagano for his comments and reflections on an earlier draft of this paper.

¹See, for example, Paul Avis, *The Vocation of Anglicanism* (London: T & T Clark, 2016) and *Anglicanism and the Christian Church: Theological Resources in Historical Perspective* (2nd edn; London: T&T Clark, 2002).

against what he saw as the incoherence of the ideology of comprehensiveness imposed through the influence of F.D. Maurice and Michael Ramsey.² My own work challenged any sort of essentialism by emphasizing the contested nature of Anglican identity as based on the often competing stories Anglicans tell one another.³

In my view, these contextual and partisan stories form the principal subject matter of Anglican Studies and require a wide range of disciplines for their proper investigation. In my own principally historical work I have deliberately sought to challenge common understandings of Anglicanism (such as the ‘three-legged stool’ of Scripture, Tradition and Reason), and consequently to deconstruct any essentialist understanding taken from one place or party or time. Indeed, it would not be unreasonable to suggest that the complexity and contested histories and identity of Anglicanism make any sort of clear dogmatic or ecclesiological formulations at the very best highly problematic and at worst little more than wishful thinking or attractive nostalgia (and here one might ask questions as to why it is that Richard Hooker’s theology has proved so popular among North Americans). Against any such essentialism, Anglican Studies allows for breadth and diversity and can range across the whole variety of disciplines – without prescribing or favouring anything other than an effort at some degree of academic neutrality in the analysis of a more or less tightly defined set of phenomena across time and space – which have been referred to as Anglican (although even that word is now contested, especially in North America).

That said, even if there may not be such a thing as ‘Anglicanism’ in an essentialist sense, there are nevertheless themes around which Anglican Studies coalesce, even if these are not necessarily theological. The first is context and the second is the legacy and response to colonialism or more properly colonialisms. And from these twin themes stems the common denominator which might be summarized under the heading of ‘conversation’.

1. **Context:** on the one hand, the idea of context is straightforward in the sense that what might now count as Anglican has developed in a huge range of different contexts, many of which are perhaps quite unexpected given the wider history of the societies in which they have emerged (as, for instance, in Brazil or the Democratic Republic of Congo). This wide range of contexts means, as Sheryl A. Kujawa-Holbrook has noted, there are more and more studies of specific regions and countries through history and also in the contemporary situation. The emphasis on context, however, raises serious questions about the use of the term ‘global’ when applied to Anglicanism. ‘Global’ is another word which leads down the trajectory of essentialism (as noted especially by Kwok Pui-lan).⁴ At the same time, the particular expressions of Anglican identity in different social contexts can themselves be specific micro-contexts within the wider culture: for instance, being Anglican might be different from being Catholic in Mexico despite the same broader social and political context. And, of course, being an Anglican in Japan or another

²See Stephen W. Sykes, *The Integrity of Anglicanism* (London: Mowbray, 1978).

³See especially Mark D. Chapman, *Anglican Theology* (London: Bloomsbury, 2012).

⁴The word ‘global’ was used in William Sachs (ed.), *The Oxford History of Anglicanism. V. Global Anglicanism, c. 1910–2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017); and Kevin Ward, *A History of Global Anglicanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

predominantly non-Christian environment is inevitably a highly complex identity. Another aspect of context is that of aesthetic milieu which has led to a number of works on the impact of Anglicanism on literary culture.⁵ What also emerges from a number of the contributors to this volume is the economics of scholarship in different contexts: a paucity of research funding can mean that local studies produced in some contexts are few and far between, which can easily lead to issues of financial dependency or being uprooted from context in order to research. The promotion of grass-roots scholarship in context might well become a key part of the agenda for Anglican Studies as it develops into the future; this would mean trying to work out the most effective mechanisms for enabling non-imperialist models of scholarly interchange.

At the same time, contexts do not remain distinct: one of the most important fields of research for the future will be that of 'hybridity' as different contexts rub alongside and influence one another. Stephen Fowl has noted this in relation to biblical studies, but similar themes can be seen within other areas of study. Equally important is the way in which the inter-relationships between contexts affect practice in such areas as liturgy, social action and even activities as apparently mundane as approaches to childcare and family relationships. Another aspect of hybridity is the way in which mass population shifts have had a massive effect on expressions of Anglicanism: in London, for instance, different Anglican contexts rub alongside one another often within the local parish church. Similarly, pan-evangelicalism and different varieties of Pentecostalism have led to huge changes in liturgical and theological expressions of different churches and factions within the Anglican Communion, which again challenge any essentialist reading: in some parts of the world Anglican liturgical practice is quite indistinguishable from charismatic evangelicalism. Liturgical identity, which might have provided a key feature of Anglican churches in earlier times, has disappeared in some parts of the Communion, including the Church of England.

2. Postcolonialism. What might be termed 'fluid contextuality' and hybridization are obviously closely connected to the second main theme that emerges from the papers in this volume, that of postcolonial studies. This is now hardly contested and obviously relates to the specific circumstances of Anglican missionary history and its complex relationship to the British Empire and the process of independence. Much ground-breaking work has been done both inside and outside former colonies as well as in Britain itself. Scott MacDougall's challenge towards decolonization is crucial for Anglican Studies into the future; and yet it is important to note that decolonization is never an uncontested idea. There are complex and contested relationships with economic migration, mass movement of refugees in times of warfare, and cultural hegemony, not least of the English language, which raise enormous questions about the role of indigenous or minority languages and the place of multicultural congregations, which in some parts of the world are common (as in parts of England) but are rare in other multicultural contexts with very different histories (as in the United States or South Africa). Under-researched is the role of Anglican

⁵See, for instance, Judith Maltby and Alison Shell (eds.), *Anglican Women Novelists from Charlotte Brontë to P.D. James* (London: T & T Clark, 2019) and Jane Shaw, *Pioneers of Modern Spirituality* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2018).

churches in the education of postcolonial elites, or the impact of Anglican cultural assumptions on the categorization and understandings of other religious world views or ethical codes. Here there are obvious theological questions around the authority of cultural and theological assumptions developed in Western academia and churches. In postcolonial studies there will be many presuppositions that will need to be challenged which may make such studies both controversial and contested in any effort at what is called over-simplistically as decolonizing the mind. There is a vast amount of work to be done in this area and again the question of funding will be crucial.

3. **Conversation.** This leads on to the third theme, which is that of conversation. The huge complexity of historical, theological, contextual and postcolonial themes will require the most highly attuned skills in conversation between many different disciplines. Historians will need to engage in dialogue with mission theologians and sociologists and demographers. As Stephen Fowl notes, there are different languages that have to be brought into debate. My feeling, however, is that we have only just begun to engage in this task and nothing will be as easy as it seems; sometimes some very raw nerves will be exposed. Conclusions might be unexpected and highly challenging.⁶ Anglican Studies, especially with its need to address issues in transnational histories may well find it difficult to remain dispassionate in an academy that is becoming increasingly polarized around an unnuanced applications of an increasingly globalized form of contemporary political discourse ('culture wars'). As Mandell Creighton, possibly the greatest and certainly the wittiest Anglican bishop-historian of all, put it, nothing is wholly good and nothing wholly bad: 'I am hopelessly tempted to admit degrees of criminality, otherwise history becomes a dreary record of wickedness. . . . the actors were men like myself, sorely tempted by the possession of power, trammelled by holding a representative position In the past I find myself regarding them with pity: who am I that I should condemn them? Surely they knew not what they did.'⁷

This challenging quotation from Creighton points to a crucial point that seems to me to be of the utmost importance for the future of Anglican Studies. There is a widespread acceptance of the polycentric nature of contemporary expressions of Anglicanism and much of the discourse of postcolonialism has emphasized this. But within decentred Anglicanism the question of power still remains central. There may be many centres but not all are as powerful ('central') as others. And here I think there is a need to problematize the concept of colonialism, especially as it has been applied to Anglican Studies. For obvious reasons of history the logical focus of postcolonial studies in Anglican Studies has been on churches that grew within the British Colonies and Dominions. This, however, needs to be significantly expanded. There was, after all, a significant Anglican Church that developed quite separately from 1776 and which arguably at least was as important in the formation of Anglican identity as the Church of England, especially in distancing the Anglican

⁶See Mark D. Chapman, 'Exporting Godliness: The Church, Education and "Higher Civilization" in the British Empire from the late Nineteenth Century', in M. Ludlow, C. Methuen and A. Spicer (eds.), *Churches and Education* (Studies in Church History, 55; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), pp. 381-409.

⁷Cited in Louise Creighton, *Life and Letters of Mandell Creighton* (2 vols.; London: Longmans, Green and Co, 1913), I, pp. 374-75.

Communion from English and reformation formularies.⁸ Provocatively put, the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral and the Lambeth Appeal of 1920 can be interpreted as the recasting of Anglicanism in the American revolutionary mode.⁹

Less controversial is the claim that the Episcopal Church was a missionary church almost from its very beginnings and was closely associated with the expansionist drive of the United States both inside and outside North America. Trying to engage with this colonialist past and neo-colonialist present will be crucial if there is an intention not simply to describe but also to decolonize Anglican Studies. There are huge flows of money between north and south which means the economics of Anglicanism cannot be under-estimated – there is much left to explore from the 1960s and the work of Stephen Bayne and the cash flows that accompanied ‘Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence in the Body of Christ’. Anglican culture wars cannot be understood without serious reflection in this area, which has been pioneered by Miranda Hassett¹⁰ and Chris Brittain.¹¹ It would be feasible to describe much of what has happened over questions of sexuality in the past 25 years as the mutation of Anglicanism into an expression of American culture wars.¹²

This brief overview has sought to describe the scene and point to ways forward. It is set against an increasingly polarized world and an increasingly polarized church which may well mean some of the lingering virtues of at least one Anglican discourse that has emphasized tolerance and comprehension will be under threat. My sincere hope is that Anglican Studies will play its part in promoting the idea of liberality and openness even to those who have very different world-views.¹³ Such humility and tolerance is an aspect of the inner logic of the Christian religion, but it requires jealous guarding. For this reason, Creighton could never concur with famous sparring-partner Lord Acton that ‘the moral law is written on tablets of eternity’. Anglican Studies will consequently need the humble discipline of critical and ongoing academic study lest it too become one of the competing narratives that constitute Anglican identity.

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⁸See Bruce Kaye, *The Rise and Fall of the English Christendom: Theocracy, Christology, Order and Power* (London: Routledge, 2018) and Alexander Ross, *A Still More Excellent Way: Authority and Polity in the Anglican Communion* (London: SCM Research, 2020).

⁹See Mark D. Chapman, ‘Un-Protestant and Un-English: Anglicanism and the 1920 Lambeth Conference “Appeal to All Christian People”’, *Ecclesiology* 16 (2020), pp. 159-74.

¹⁰Miranda K. Hassett, *Anglican Communion in Crisis: How Episcopal Dissidents and their African Allies Are Reshaping Anglicanism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007).

¹¹Christopher Craig Brittain and Andrew McKinnon, *The Anglican Communion at a Crossroads: The Crises of a Global Church* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2018).

¹²Mark D. Chapman, ‘“Homosexual Practice” and the Anglican Communion from the 1990s: A Case Study in Theology and Identity’, in Mark D. Chapman and Dominic Janes (eds.), *New Approaches in History and Theology to Same-Sex Love and Desire* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), pp. 187-208.

¹³The phrase ‘liberality’ is from Alec R. Vidler. See his *Essays in Liberality* (London: SCM Press, 1957).