

Review Article

The current state of Newman scholarship

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The volume of publications on, let alone by, John Henry Newman, is now so immense that they could scarcely be surveyed in a single article. However, the Victorian cardinal's recent canonization provides an opportunity to offer an overview of the more significant recent contributions towards and salient trends in Newman scholarship.

Even prior to the recent and ongoing outpouring of studies on Newman, theological, philosophical, educational, literary and biographical, to mark his canonization, various Newman anniversaries and landmarks over the last half century had already greatly added to the *corpus* of writing on Newman. In particular, the centenary of his death and being declared Venerable in 1990, and his Beatification in 2010, provided opportunities for reassessments and reappraisals of Newman's life and thought. In the case of the former, we owe such significant contributions as Fr Ian Ker's magisterial biography *John Henry Newman*, Sheridan Gilley's no less noteworthy *Newman and his Age*, Terrence Merrigan's edited special edition of *Louvain Studies* in honour of the Newman centennial, Merrigan's *Clear Heads and Holy Hearts*, *Newman after a hundred years* edited by Fr Ian Ker & A.G. Hill, David Brown's edition of *Newman: A Man for our Time*, Fr Halbert D. Weidner's edition of Newman's *Via Media* as well as the late David Newsome's *The Convert Cardinals*.¹ However, there was one collection of essays on Newman published at that time which

¹ Ian Ker, *John Henry Newman* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988); Sheridan Gilley, *Newman and His Age* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1990), *John Henry Cardinal Newman 1801-1890*, *Louvain Studies* 15:2-3 (1990); Terrence Merrigan, *Clear Heads and Holy Hearts: the religious and theological ideal of John Henry Newman* (Louvain: Peeters Press, 1991); Ian Ker and Alan G. Hill eds. *Newman after a hundred years* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990); David Brown ed. *Newman: a man for our time* (London: SPCK, 1990), *The 'Via Media' of the Anglican Church*, ed. H.D. Weidner (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), David Newsome, *The Convert Cardinals: John Henry Newman and Henry Edward Manning* (London: John Murray, 1993).

seemed to be deliberately intended to act as a ‘party spoiler’ – its provocative aim was that of supposedly ‘demythologising Newman’; its editors even asserting that most of their contributors would deny that Newman had ‘something true and important to say to the modern world.’² It was an extraordinary claim then (and of course even more so now) and ran in the face of the previous thirty or more years of scholarship that had proclaimed the precise opposite.

The era of the Second Vatican Council (1962–65) coincided with, if it did not actually contribute towards, what at the time was described as ‘the rediscovery of Newman’. This was the context for the launch of the massive project undertaken by the late Fr Stephen Dessain and the Birmingham Oratory fathers of the publication of a series of what was to become thirty-two volumes of the *Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*, the first of which was published in 1961, and the last as recently as 2008. The Birmingham Oratory had already in 1956 published the recently deceased Oratorian Fr Henry Tristram’s edition of Newman’s *Autobiographical Writings* (1874), and it commissioned Meriol Trevor’s two volume biography of Newman published in 1962.³ In Fr Ian Gornall, Fr Ian Ker as well as Fr Stephen Dessain, it was either Oratorians or Jesuit fathers who edited most of the earlier editions in the series of *Letters and Diaries*. There were other fruits of the revival of Newman studies fostered by the climate of Vatican II. A highly influential volume published in 1967, based on a conference held in Oriel College, Oxford, in the summer of 1966,⁴ was followed by the work of Günter Biemer, Martin Svaglic and Christopher Hollis.⁵ In the following decade, publications by John Coulson, Nicholas Lash, and Fr Paul Misner were all part of this post-Conciliar wave of Newman scholarship.⁶

² David Nicholls and Fergus Kerr, O.P. eds. *John Henry Newman: Reason, Rhetoric and Romanticism* (Bristol: The Bristol Press, 1991), see especially, ‘Introduction’, 1–12 at 4, and Valerie Pitt, ‘Demythologising Newman’, 13–27. This reviewer has to admit to being part of that company of contributors but he never accepted the presumptuous debunking of Newman claim made by the editors on behalf of them.

³ *Newman: the Pillar of the Cloud* (London: Macmillan & Co. 1962) and *Newman: Light in Winter* (London: Macmillan & Co. 1962). The volumes were critically, if not unsympathetically reviewed by David Newsome under the amusingly appropriate title ‘Newmania’ in the *Journal of Theological Studies*, 14 (Jan 1, 1963), 420–429.

⁴ J. Coulson and A. M. Allchin eds. *The Rediscovery of Newman: an Oxford Symposium* (London: SPCK, 1967). This followed an earlier work of Newman rediscovery by the same authors. See J. Coulson, A.M. Allchin and M. Trevor, *Newman: A Portrait Restored: An Ecumenical Reevaluation* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1965).

⁵ Günter Biemer, *Newman on Tradition* (London: Burns and Oates, 1967); Martin J. Svaglic ed. *Apologia pro vita su* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967); Christopher Hollis, *Newman and the modern world* (London: Hollis and Carter, 1967).

⁶ John Coulson, *Newman and the Common Tradition: a study in the language of Church and society* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1970); Nicholas Lash, *Newman on Development: the search for an explanation in history* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1975); Paul Misner, *Papacy and Development: Newman and the primacy of the Papacy* (Leiden: Brill, 1976); John Henry Newman, *The Idea of a University*, ed. I. T. Ker (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976);

It was a commonplace of this phase in Roman Catholic Newman scholarship that the legacy of John Henry Newman bore fruit not in his own nineteenth-century age but in the century to follow. International Newman conferences on the continent had been the brainchild of the Abbé Theis in Luxembourg, with four held in 1956, 1961, 1964, and 1970 respectively. Of course, generations of Anglican scholars had produced studies of Newman, notably F. L. Cross, who had focused upon Newman's Oxford Movement and Anglican career.⁷ Ecumenical overlap, however, was limited and different audiences and readerships were involved with the two rarely connecting.

The English participants of the continental Roman Catholic Newman conferences of 1956-64 recognised the need for a similar conference in England. This would further explore the distinctive English contribution to Newman studies with a recovery of an appreciation of the particular Anglican context in which he had first developed his ideas and which continental writing on Newman did not always capture. The Oriel conference on Newman in 1966 proved, according to one of its participants, the late Geoffrey Rowell, to be a landmark in ecumenical relations between Rome and Canterbury in the context of Vatican II, sometimes referred to as 'Newman's Council'.⁸ According to this emerging narrative, if the First Vatican Council was the apparent climax of much of what Newman was deemed to have deplored in the Catholicism of his day, then it became something of a theological truism that Vatican II with its ecumenical and reforming dimensions and move away from what was interpreted as papal authoritarianism, was 'Newman's Council' and that he was its 'godfather', even though he was scarcely quoted in Council debates or documents.⁹

Newman's *corpus* of writings have rightly come to be regarded as marking a watershed in the development of modern (especially Roman Catholic) theology – regarding the role of the early (especially Greek) Fathers, the concept of 'deification' and Indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the importance of historical-critical research, the idea of doctrinal development, the role of lived experience in the life of faith, the link between theology and literature, and the reinterpretation of the nature of Faith and its relation to Reason.

There has been a natural and understandable tendency for some modern Newman scholars, mainly theologians and philosophers, to systematise Newman's thought under well recognised doctrinal and

John Henry Newman, *An Essay in Aid of a Grammar of Ascent*, ed. Nicholas Lash (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1979).

⁷ Frank Leslie Cross, *John Henry Newman* (London: P. Allan, 1933).

⁸ For a classic statement of this viewpoint, see B.C. Butler, 'Newman and the Second Vatican Council', in Coulson and Alchin eds. *The Rediscovery of Newman*, 235-46.

⁹ Nicholas Lash, however, cites several examples where Newman was quoted in Council sessions. See N. Lash, 'Newman since Vatican II', in Ker and Hill, eds. *Newman after a hundred years*, 447-64 at 449-50.

philosophical topics and labels. There is no doubt that many theological and philosophical themes can be helpfully extracted, categorised and analysed from the *corpus* of his writings, especially such themes as Revelation, Faith and Reason, Conscience, Ecclesiology, Justification, Development of doctrine, Infallibility, Sermons and Preaching, and Hymnody. Some of the most significant recent studies of Newman follow this format, notably the *Louvain Studies* volume and *Newman after a Hundred Years*¹⁰, and the more recent *The Cambridge Companion to John Henry Newman*, and *The Oxford Handbook of John Henry Newman*.¹¹ In contrast, the editors of *Receptions of Newman* have followed a somewhat different structural model.¹² However, as the editors of the *Oxford Handbook of Newman* rightly remind us, ‘without historical analysis, Newman’s life, thought, and writings become strangely disembodied, escaping from the sort of contextualising that is needed to see and read him through the eyes of his contemporaries.’¹³ In short, ‘the Newman of history’ must not be ignored.

With Newman an awareness of the historical context of and tensions within his own writings is essential but has not always been sufficiently well observed. Some Roman Catholic authors have tended to treat Newman’s Anglican, let alone Evangelical period as a mere backcloth for discussion of his life and thought as a Roman Catholic, a trait which is evident in the biography by Wilfrid Ward and adhered to by Fr Ian Ker. Even Fr Stephen Dessain spent less than one-tenth of his Newman biography on what he merely calls ‘The First Thirty Years’, though half the volume does cover Newman’s Anglican career.¹⁴ There is a tendency in such works to ‘read back’ the later Newman on to the early Newman. Newman himself has been accused of this, as we shall see below. In fact, not only were Newman’s theological positions never static but they evolved considerably over time. Newman’s erstwhile Anglican friends claimed that in the *Apologia*, Newman resisted the temptation ‘to do injustice to his former self

¹⁰ See above, n. 1.

¹¹ Ian Ker and Terrence Merrigan eds. *The Cambridge Companion to John Henry Newman* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Frederick D. Aquino and Benjamin J. King eds. *The Oxford Handbook of John Henry Newman* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

¹² Frederick D. Aquino and Benjamin J. King eds. *Receptions of Newman* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

¹³ Aquino and King eds. *The Oxford Handbook of John Henry Newman*, 2.

¹⁴ Charles. S. Dessain, *John Henry Newman* (London: Thomas Nelson, 1966), 1–14 (out of 169). Ward’s two-volume biography published in 1912 devotes only 118 pages (out of more than 1100) to the first half of Newman’s life. The ratio is similar in Ian Ker, *John Henry Newman: A Biography* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 1–53 (out of 745), though is more evenly balanced in Meriol Trevor’s biography. My attention was drawn to these imbalances in relative coverage by Gerard Zuijdwegt. It is also significant that in 1961 when the editors based at the Birmingham Oratory undertook publication of *The Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman* they commenced at volume 11 with the letters composed on the day of his reception into the Catholic Church.

and his former position'.¹⁵ However, Newman increasingly sought to explain or correct his earlier by his later self, most obviously in the 1877 *Via Media*¹⁶ edition of his original *Lectures on the Prophetic Office of the Church* (1837), but also in his two volume 1871 edition *Essays Critical and Historical*, which comprised a collection of articles from his Tractarian Anglican years, mainly taken from the *British Critic* (which Newman edited from 1838-41).¹⁷ On the one hand, in the wake of his *Apologia*, Newman was anxious to enlist the sympathy of Anglican readers and thus made relatively minimal changes to the texts of articles first published in the 1830s and 1840s. On the other hand, he was aware that his earlier Anglican writings were still being used to defend the Anglican position – indeed he was even to be claimed as ‘the founder of modern Anglicanism’ by later exponents of the Anglo-Catholic tradition.¹⁸ Newman’s strategy, as Andrew Nash has shrewdly observed, was to show where the principles of the Oxford Movement really led – to the Roman Catholic Church.¹⁹ This was a methodology which reverted to that which he had employed in his more polemical post-convert *On Certain Difficulties felt by Anglicans in submitting to the Catholic Church* (1850). An Anglican appropriation of Newman has flourished into our own day, particularly with the scholarship of F.L. Cross, Geoffrey Rowell and Owen Chadwick.²⁰

Newman himself was notoriously reluctant to admit that he was a theologian at all²¹ but rather, a controversialist, as well as of course preacher, spiritual guide, poet and hymn writer. Of course one can question this reluctance as an underestimation of his own theological credentials but his unease points to a significant truth, too often overlooked - the unsystematic, if not random and ‘occasional’ nature

¹⁵ Richard W. Church, ‘Newman’s *Apologia*’ [*Guardian*, 22 June 1864], *Occasional Papers selected from ‘The Guardian’, ‘The Times’, and the ‘Saturday Review’, 1846-1890*, 2 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1897), 2:385.

¹⁶ *The Via Media of the Anglican Church by John Henry Newman*, ed. Halbert D. Weidner (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), J.G. Elamparayil, ‘John Henry Newman’s *Lectures on the Prophetic Office of the Church*: A Contextual History and Ecclesiological Analysis’ (PhD diss., Catholic University of America, Washington DC, 2012).

¹⁷ *Essays Critical and Historical by John Henry Cardinal Newman. Volume 1*, ed. Andrew Nash (Leominster: Gracewing, 2019).

¹⁸ Wilfrid Meynell, *John Henry Newman: the founder of modern Anglicanism and a Cardinal of the Roman Church* (London: Kegan Paul, 1890).

¹⁹ *Essay Critical and Historical*, viii-ix.

²⁰ Cross, *Newman*; F.L. Cross and Paul Elmer More, eds. *Anglicanism: the thought and practice of the Church of England, illustrated from the religious literature of the seventeenth century* (London: S.P.C.K., 1935); Geoffrey Rowell, *The Vision Glorious: themes and personalities of the Catholic Revival in Anglicanism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991); Owen Chadwick, *Newman* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983). For an earlier appraisal of the then state of scholarship on the Anglican Newman, see Peter B. Nockles, ‘The Anglican Newman: A Reappraisal’, *Anglican and Episcopal History*, 63:1 (March 1994), 73–86. Benjamin J. King and Mark D. Chapman are two outstanding current exponents of an Anglican understanding of Newman.

²¹ Nicholas Lash, ‘Was Newman a Theologian?’, *Heythrop Journal*, 17 (1976): 322–25. Cf. Terrence Merrigan, ‘Newman the Theologian’, *Louvain Studies* 15:2 (1990), 103–118.

and character of his writings. Newman mainly wrote in response to specific theological or spiritual challenges of the day. His writings, especially during his Anglican years as leader of the Oxford Movement, tended to be contingent on context and were always nuanced, subtle and evolving. It has been perhaps only too easy for later generations, both Anglican and Roman Catholic, to pick and choose those aspects of Newman and stages or phases in his lifelong religious journey with which they could most readily identify. Thus, we have an Anglican Newman, a liberal Roman Catholic Newman and an Ultramontane Roman Catholic Newman, though interestingly until a recent distinguished University of Leuven doctoral dissertation²², rarely an Evangelical Newman.

There is no doubt that after an eclipse in the era of the Modernist crisis when some Modernist authors drew illegitimate inferences from his writings, the significance of Newman's theological contribution re-emerged through the writings of such figures as Henri Bremond, Maurice Blondel, Henri de Lubac, Yves Congar, and Erich Przywara, in the run up to Vatican II. Some of the various Newman studies in the 1970s and 1980s also clearly had a post-conciliar reformatory theological message. A 'liberal Newman' could be claimed as a prop or foil in ongoing divisions within the self-understanding of the contemporary Catholic Church; an outlook to be found in some recent studies such as that of John Cornwell.²³ There is even an eloquent and nuanced echo in Eamon Duffy's recent work, where Newman is credited with championing ideas that were to be the basis in the 1960s and beyond of 'a radical re-imagining of what it was to be Catholic.'²⁴ On the other hand, others have warned against tying Newman to 'a *soi-disant* "Spirit of Vatican II"', whereby innovations and changes are accepted but which do not cohere to antecedent teaching or practice. Rejecting this approach, some have highlighted a counter-cultural (not merely conservative) and more polemical Newman 'against the liberals'. Works by Robert Pattison, the late Fr Stanley Jaki, a distinguished scientist, and by Edward Short, the latter in a trilogy of works, are the more obvious examples of this approach.²⁵ In the case of Pattison, Newman is an anti-liberal voice and prophet crying in the

²² Gerard. J. Zuidwegt, 'An Evangelical Adrift: the Making of John Henry Newman's Theology', (PhD diss., Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, 2019). Of course the late David Newsome and, more recently, Gareth Atkins have given rounded portraits of the Evangelical Newman. See n. 85.

²³ John Cornwell, *Newman's Unquiet Grave: The Reluctant Saint* (London: Continuum, 2010).

²⁴ Eamon Duffy, *John Henry Newman: a very brief history* (London: SPCK, 2019), 3.

²⁵ Robert Pattison, *The Great Dissent: John Henry Newman and the Liberal Heresy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991); Edward Short, *Newman and his Contemporaries* (London: T&T Clark, 2011), *Newman and his Family* (London: T&T Clark, 2013), and *Newman and History* (Leominster: Gracewing, 2017). See also Robert Barron, "A Great Mischief": Newman on Liberalism in Religion', in Philippe Lefebvre and

wilderness. In the case of Jaki, notably in his *Newman's Challenge* (2000) but also in an impressive list of other works and editions of Newman texts, Newman is fairly and creatively enlisted in defence of the supernatural and as one who always rejected the notion that unity should be pursued at the price of truth.²⁶ On the other hand, Short's writings, while full of insights and interest and based on wide reading in the sources, are somewhat marred by unsubstantiated and misleading criticisms of the work of other scholars, by sometimes irrelevant and long-winded digressions, and by an overly polemical and often accusatory tone.

Thus, while it is undeniable that Newman has proved to be a polarising figure for later generations as he was in his own lifetime, contestability need not be denominationally biased and indeed has not been for several decades.²⁷ A constructive method is to look for the underlying continuities and broader integrity and wholeness of Newman's lifelong quest for religious truth, wherever it took him, evaluating Newman on his own terms and in the context of his own times. Stephen Morgan, in a highly stimulating recent doctoral dissertation makes the point eloquently when he argues that the best methodology is to treat 'Newman at any point in [t]his history as a person with an open future, rather than reading back some future event, or an overarching polemic or apologetic meta-narrative'.²⁸ Newman scholars might try to avoid too much of a purely present-day ideological agenda in which Newman is enlisted in a particular cause. This is not to deny the propriety of Newman being properly appealed to in some of our current 'culture wars' in an appropriate context, such as in the medium of addresses to church meetings or in homilies, pastoral letters, encyclicals, etc. For Newman undoubtedly had a prophetic sense of a great battle looming between Christianity and secularity, that seems to be being fulfilled in our own times. However, when it comes to academic discourse, Professor Kenneth Parker has suggested that disputed theological questions in which Newman is enlisted on 'one side' or 'the other' so that the historical theologian remains either open to new interpretations of Church teaching or sees these as compromising the historic faith will partly

Colin Mason, eds. *John Henry Newman: Doctor of the Church*, (Oxford: Family Publications, 2007), 99–114.

²⁶ Stanley L. Jaki, *Newman's Challenge* (Grand Rapids, Mich: William B. Eerdmans, 2000); Stanley L. Jaki, *Newman to Converts: An Existential Ecclesiology* (Pinckney, Mich: Real View Books, 2001); Stanley L. Jaki, *The Church of England as viewed by Newman* (Pinckney, Mich: Real View Books, 2004). This is only a selection of works by the late Fr Jacki on Newman.

²⁷ Cyril O'Regan, 'Reception of Newman the Saint: An Analysis and Critique', in Aquino and King eds. *Receptions of Newman*, 214–32 at 214.

²⁸ Stephen Morgan, 'The Search for Continuity in the face of Change in the Anglican Writings of John Henry Newman', (D.Phil diss., University of Oxford, 2013), v.

be determined by the particular historical metanarrative that he or she employs.²⁹

It has been natural and right that in the years when Newman's cause was being promoted to first that of Venerable, then *Beatus*, and finally to Sainthood, that a plethora of works tracing and extolling his spiritual journey and life of holiness should have appeared. The more noteworthy of these include those by Fr Vincent Blehl, Fr John T. Ford, Fr Ian Ker and Fr Halbert Weidner.³⁰ These appeared alongside various editions of Newman's Anglican Sermons including one five-volume edition and the edition of fifteen University of Oxford sermons.³¹ The twenty years between the centennial of 1990 and Beatification in 2010 also witnessed an outpouring of distinguished biographical studies of Newman. These included the work of Fr Ian Ker, Cardinal Avery Dulles, Monsignor Roderick Strange, Peter Chisnall, Anthony Mockler, Dermot Mansfield and Thomas J. Norris.³² Other more *niche* and specialised Newman studies cover themes including Newman's philosophy and epistemology, Faith and Reason, and the *Grammar of Assent* (1870), Christology, Revelation, Conscience, Biblical Inspiration, the Fathers, Conversion, Justification, the Sacraments, the Development of Doctrine, mysticism, eschatology, education, Anglicanism, Evangelicalism, Oriel College, the Oxford Movement, the Oratory, political and social thought, science, historiography, the Caroline Divines, Ecumenism, Mariology, the Papacy and Infallibility, and Ireland. Space allows only some of the more important themes in recent Newman scholarship to be highlighted here. For example, the literature on Newman and conversion alone is vast. The best studies manage to integrate a specific theological or ecclesiological topic within a wider overarching treatment of Newman's

²⁹ Kenneth L. Parker, 'Re-visioning the Past and Re-sourcing the Future: the Unsolved Historiographical Struggle in Roman Catholic Scholarship and Authoritative Teaching', in Peter D. Clarke and Charlotte Methuen eds. *The Church on its Past*, Studies in Church History 49 (2013): 389–416.

³⁰ Vincent Ferrer Blehl, *Pilgrim Journey: John Henry Newman 1801-1845* (London: Burns and Oates, 2001); *Spiritual Writings: John Henry Newman*, ed. John T. Ford (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2012); Ian Ker ed. *The Genius of John Henry Newman* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989 and 2012); Vincent Ferrer Blehl, 'The Importance of the "Real" for the Interpretation of Newman's Spirituality and Holiness', *Louvain Studies* 15:2-3 (1990), 226–32; Halbert D. Weidner, *Praying with John Cardinal Newman: Companions for the Journey* (Winona, Minn: St Mary's Press, 1997).

³¹ *Newman: Sermons*, eds. Placid Murray, Vincent Blehl and Francis McGrath (Oxford: Clarendon Press (1991-2012); *John Henry Newman: Fifteen Sermons Preached before the University of Oxford*, eds. James David Ernest and Gerard Tracey (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

³² Ian Ker ed. *Newman and Conversion* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997); Ian Ker, *The Achievement of John Henry Newman* (London: Collins, 1991); Avery Dulles, *Newman* (London: Continuum, 2009); Roderick Strange, *John Henry Newman: A Mind Alive* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2008); Peter Chisnall, *John Henry Newman: A Very English Saint* (Leominster: Gracewing, first edition 2001; second edition 2010); Anthony Mockler, *John Henry Newman: Fighter, Convert and Cardinal* (Oxford: Signal Books, 2010); Dermot Mansfield, *Heart Speaks to Heart: The Story of the Blessed John Henry Newman* (Dublin: Veritas, 2010); Thomas J. Norris, *Cardinal Newman for Today* (Blackrock: Columba Press, 2010).

thought, as well, as we shall see, the historical context in which he wrote. My focus below will be on these select examples and will necessarily be far from being comprehensive.

A more synoptic multi-disciplinary, though essentially literary critical approach informed another recent contribution to Newman studies by Lawrence Poston which seeks to explore through Newman's writings the idea of Personality in the Christian tradition.³³ The literary and aesthetic dimension of Newman's contribution in terms of the novel, satire, poetry, letter writing, architecture, worship, music, liturgy, and preaching have also been creatively explored in the work of Alan G. Hill, Fr Ian Ker, Mary C. Frank, Stephen Prickett, Joyce Sugg, Eric Griffiths, Donald Withey, Sheridan Gilley, William Whyte, Guy Nicholls, and Eamon Duffy.³⁴ It is worth singling out Whyte's recovery of something too often overlooked by Newman scholars who rely too much on his well-known criticism of the Cambridge Camden Society: Newman's genuine interest in the symbolic spiritual importance of church architecture as exemplified in the extent of his involvement in the building of a new church at Littlemore in 1835 and 1836. Recent studies of Protestant critiques of the convert Newman also deserve a mention,³⁵ along with those on Newman's reception in France³⁶ and Germany.³⁷

³³ Lawrence Poston, *The Antagonist Principle: John Henry Newman and the Paradox of Personality* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2016). For an earlier example of this romantic literary theory methodology, see David Goslee, *Romanticism and the Anglican Newman* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1996), and for a more recent one, see Bernard Dive, *John Henry Newman and the Imagination* (London: T & T Clark, 2018).

³⁴ See A.G. Hill, 'Originality and Realism in Newman's Novels', in Ker and Hill, eds. *Newman after a hundred years*, 21–42; Ian Ker, 'Newman the Satirist', in *Ibid.*, 1–20; Mary C. Frank, 'The Literary Stylist', in Aquino and King, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of John Henry Newman*, 475–94; Stephen Prickett, 'Literary Legacy', in Aquino and King, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of John Henry Newman*, 578–96; Joyce Sugg, 'Newman the letter writer', in Philippe Lefebvre and Colin Mason eds. *John Henry Newman in his Time* (Oxford: Family Publications, 2007); Eric Griffiths, 'Newman: The Foolishness of Preaching', in Ker and Hill, eds. *Newman after a hundred years*, 63–92; Donald A. Withey, *John Henry Newman: The Liturgy and the Breviary: Their influence on his life as an Anglican* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1992); Percy M. Young, *Elgar, Newman and the Dream of Gerontius in the Tradition of English Catholicism* (Aldershot: Scholar Press, 1995); Sheridan Gilley, 'Newman's Poetry', *Etudes Newmaniennes*: Actes du Colloque de 2011: Newman et la civilisation britannique, no. 28–32 (2012), 61–82; William Whyte, *Unlocking the Church: the lost secrets of Victorian sacred space* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 31–39; Guy Nicholls, *Unearthly Beauty: The Aesthetic of St John Henry Newman* (Leominster: Gracewing, 2019); Eamon Duffy, 'The Anglican Parish Sermons', in Aquino and King, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of John Henry Newman*, 221–42.

³⁵ Erik Sidenvall, *Change and Identity: Protestant English interpretations of John Henry Newman's secession, 1845–1864* (Lund: Lunds Universitets Kyrkohistoriska Arkiv, 2002); and *After anti-Catholicism: John Henry Newman and Protestant Britain* (London: T&T Clark International, 2005). For a contemporary Evangelical critique of the Tractarian Anglican Newman on Justification, see Alister E. McGrath, 'Newman on Justification: An Evangelical Anglican Evaluation', in Terrence Merrigan and Ian Ker, eds. *Newman and the Word*, Louvain Theological & Pastoral Monographs: 27 (Louvain: Peeters Press/W.B. Eerdmans, 2000), 91–108.

³⁶ Keith Beaumont, 'The Reception of Newman in France at the Time of the Modernist Crisis', in Aquino and King, eds. *Receptions of Newman*, 156–76.

³⁷ Claus Arnold, 'Newman's Reception in Germany. From Dollinger to Ratzinger', The Newman Lecture 2011, Oriël College.

The sheer volume of Newman's own writings, published and unpublished, can be daunting for any Newman scholar, general reader, catechist or apologist, so the authors of Newman anthologies deserve a special debt of gratitude. Mention can be made here of the work of David Armstrong, and Monsignor Roderick Strange's one-volume compilation edition of Newman's published letters.³⁸ Newman scholarship has also been immensely enriched by the spate of first-rate new editions of Newman's published and unpublished writings, many being published in the Newman Millennium Edition (general editor, Fr James Tolhurst) by Gracewing and the University of Notre Dame Press over the last twenty years. Moreover, there have been excellent translations of Newman's writings into various European languages and also Japanese. The bibliographies in past volumes of *Newman-Studien* reveal the extent of the world-wide flourishing of Newman studies.

A fear has been expressed that Newman's elevation to sainthood might signal 'the taming and enfeebling of his legacy' and selectivity in the transmission of his teaching. As long ago as 1991 in the volume that attempted to 'demythologize' Newman, it was asserted that the 'attempt to make an objective assessment of Newman's significance is to some degree hampered by the movement for his canonisation'.³⁹ While a Newman biographer like Meriol Trevor had appeared to rationalise Newman's political and religious conflicts, viewing everything through his eyes and consequently faulted for lack of detachment,⁴⁰ lack of objectivity was never a necessary consequence of promoting his cause, though much hinges on what is perceived as 'objective'. In fact, Newman's life, thought and legacy have been explored in ever greater fullness since those editors in 1991 raised that spectre and now in the wake of the canonisation they seem more likely to be worked over than even before. Differences of interpretation and emphasis in evaluations of Newman are anyway hardly surprising given his own habit of qualifying and 'saying' and 'unsaying' as he drew towards a conclusion in argument. Moreover, as Cyril O'Regan has reminded us, 'sainthood' should be distinguished from moral excellence. He warns against a faulty understanding of sanctity,

³⁸ David Armstrong, *The Quotable Newman: A Definitive Guide to his Central Thoughts and Ideas* (Manchester, NH: Sophia Institute Press, 2012); *John Henry Newman: A Portrait in Letters*, ed. Roderick Strange (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015). See also Roderick Strange, *Newman: The Heart of Holiness* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 2019).

³⁹ Nicholls and Kerr eds. *John Henry Newman*, 4. See also the late William Oddie's comment in 1993: 'The nearer Newman approaches beatification, the greater the risk that he will become an unreal and somewhat anaemic "plaster saint" in the modern imagination'. *John Henry Newman: Apologia pro vita sua*, ed. William Oddie (London: J M Dent, 1993), xxiv.

⁴⁰ Newsome, 'Newmania', 421.

often presupposed by Newman's admirers and detractors alike.⁴¹ Unfortunately, one reviewer of *Receptions of Newman* in which O'Regan makes this point not only misses O'Regan's careful distinction here but totally misrepresents him as saying that Newman's sanctity was in doubt because 'he did not treat his controversial opponents with kid gloves'.⁴² This is actually a travesty of O'Regan's subtle argument and just one of many examples of Short's misrepresentations of other authors in that collection of essays. It is somewhat ironic that these distortions, which recur at various points in his *Newman and History*, are particularly evident in a chapter provocatively entitled 'Travesties of Newman'.

The most significant recent and potentially transformative development in Newman studies, however, lies in what can only be described as a digital revolution. The Newman digital archive programme is being spearheaded by the National Institute for Newman Studies (NINS) at Pittsburgh, Pa., under the direction of Professor Kenneth L. Parker and now Dr Ryan M. Marr. NINS has the largest single collection of published books, articles, and journals on Newman in the world. Within the next year, NINS will publish the majority of these resources online, with full-text search, including options to compare published works with the handwritten originals.⁴³ This is likely to revolutionize not only access to hitherto obscure or unpublished Newman materials but to influence and extend the scope and reach of Newman scholarship more widely. Future scholars are also going to be immensely indebted to the labours of Kenneth Parker in compiling over many years a database of Newman's reading and borrowing from the Oriel College Library while Newman was a Fellow (1822-45). NINS holds this never-seen-before database of Newman's borrowing from the Oriel College Library. This record makes it possible to compare what Newman was reading concurrent with his writing.

What makes the continued growth of Newman studies almost inevitable lies in the impact of a 'new wave' of scholarship linked to the NINS initiatives but predating it. This has been the emergence under the tutelage of Professor Kenneth Parker and Professor Grant Kaplan, of a so-called 'Saint Louis Circle' of Newman scholars, among whom can be listed Charles Michael Shea, Daniel Handschy, Ryan Marr, Matthew Muller, and the late and lamented Michael Pahls. They have set new standards of productivity and excellence in their doctoral dissertations and subsequent publications, and have fully utilised the new digital Newman archive resources and databases hosted by the NINS. Moreover, linked to the NINS, the *Newman Studies Journal*,

⁴¹ Cyril O'Regan, 'Reception of Newman the Saint', 215.

⁴² Edward Short, *Newman and History* (Leominster: Gracewing, 2017), 125.

⁴³ <https://digitalcollections.newmanstudies.org/>. Last accessed 18 January 2020.

a double-blind peer reviewed journal, dedicated to ‘promoting the study and spreading the knowledge of Newman’s life, influence, and work’, has become a major vehicle and showcase for the latest Newman scholarship.⁴⁴

One of the most striking features of contemporary Newman scholarship, particularly evident in the work of this new generation, has been a recovery of the historical contexts and contingencies of Newman’s writings. Newman might still be claimed as a prophet and as ahead of his time, but it is now better appreciated that Newman’s legacy manifested itself in his own age, especially the influence of the Anglican Newman. Above all, a whole series of recent theologically rich publications on Newman each closely examines the way in which external circumstances, both political and ecclesial, affected Newman’s evolving theological and ecclesiological and patristic understanding over a span of many decades from the 1830s through the 1880s. Works which stand out in adopting this approach include that of Benjamin King, Ryan Marr, Charles Michael Shea, and doctoral dissertations by the late Michael Pahls and Matthew Muller.⁴⁵

While it is well known that Newman was devoted to the Church Fathers, King draws on primary sources to explore how Newman interpreted specific Fathers at different periods of his life. For example, many scholars who have treated the *Arians of the Fourth Century* as straightforward patristic history overlooked its original context and how much the work depended on its time.⁴⁶ In short, King traces how Newman’s appropriation of patristic theology changed with the varying circumstances of his career. He characterises Newman’s method as ‘writing history in the first person’.⁴⁷ Crucially, he concludes that it was events in Newman’s life that changed his interpretation of the Fathers, not the interpretation of the Fathers that caused Newman to change his life. As Stephen Thomas in his *Newman and Heresy: the Anglican Years* (1991) and Rowan Williams argued in a key essay on Newman’s *Arians of the Fourth Century* (1833)⁴⁸ and more fully in his introduction to a new Gracewing/Notre Dame edition of Newman’s

⁴⁴ <https://newmanstudies.org/journal>. Last accessed 18 January 2020. The current managing editor is Dr Elizabeth A. Huddleston.

⁴⁵ Benjamin J. King, *Newman and the Alexandrian Fathers: Shaping Doctrine in Nineteenth-Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); Charles Michael Shea, *Newman’s Early Roman Catholic Legacy 1845-1854* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017); Ryan J. Marr, *To be Perfect is to have Changed Often: the Development of John Henry Newman’s ecclesiological Outlook, 1845-1877* (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2018); Michael Pahls, ‘Newman’s *Schola Theologorum*’ (PhD diss., St Louis University, 2015); Matthew Muller, ‘The Inspired Bible in the Anglican Career of John Henry Newman’ (PhD diss., St Louis University, 2017).

⁴⁶ King, *Newman and the Alexandrian Fathers*, 251.

⁴⁷ Benjamin J. King, ‘John Henry Newman and the Church Fathers: Writing History in the First Person’, *Irish Theological Quarterly*, 78/2 (2013): 149–61.

⁴⁸ Rowan Williams, ‘Newman’s *Arians* and the Question of Method in Doctrinal History’, in Ker and Hill, eds. *Newman after a hundred years*, 263–86.

Arians text (2001),⁴⁹ Newman's patristic scholarship was used to shape his rhetoric in the Oxford Tractarian controversies of the 1830s. Thomas had focused on the comparisons which Newman had drawn between his contemporaries and ancient heretics. King, on the other hand, shows that Newman not only focused on the patristic age's struggle against heresy as part of his contemporary battle against liberals but also as a positive blueprint for orthodoxy in his own day. Drawing on Newman's Christological sermons, King argues that Newman reasserted the positive doctrine of Christ's person and work. He even proposes an alternative chronology for dividing Newman's career – not so much that of pre- and post-1845 (the year of his conversion to Rome) but to three different overlapping periods in his use and application of patristic and (later) scholastic scholarship.

In the same spirit and consciously following King's template applied to a different area of Newman's theological development, Ryan J. Marr's study has sought to correct the impression left by many Newman studies on the subject that Newman's ecclesiological perspective was more static and systematic than it actually was. He sought to provide as a counterweight a synthetic, historically contextualised treatment of the development in Newman's ecclesiology during the 1850s, 1860s, and 1870s. From this perspective, it should no longer be axiomatic to refer to 'Newman's Catholic ecclesiology' as almost hermetically sealed from that of his Anglican period, with Marr demonstrating that even in his Roman Catholic period Newman's ecclesiological convictions underwent significant development, flowing outward from his initial perspective as a young convert to his mature vantage-point after three decades of active life in the Roman Catholic communion.⁵⁰

The third ground-breaking work in the trio of recent publications on Newman noted above belongs to Charles Michael Shea's scholarship. In the field of Newman studies, it is the chronological intellectual genesis of Newman's famous *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* (1845) along with the wider question of the causes of his conversion to Roman Catholicism that has received the most attention from scholars.⁵¹ Some have cautioned against an early date or complete originality in Newman's coming to grasp the concept of doctrinal development and have pointed to the role and influence of others,

⁴⁹ *The Arians of the Fourth Century*. By John Henry Cardinal Newman, introduction and notes by Rowan Williams (Leominster: Gracewing, 2001), xix-xxvii. For an analysis of how Newman related his understanding of the 'Elect Sect' and 'Eclectic Heresy' in his *Arians* to his view of contemporary liberalism at Oxford in the 1830s, see J.R. Griffin, 'Cardinal Newman and the Eclectic Heresy', *Heythrop Journal*, 52 (2011): 411–12.

⁵⁰ Marr, *To be Perfect*, 129–30.

⁵¹ The classic work in this field from an earlier continental scholarly generation is Jan Hendrik Walgrave, *Newman the Theologian: the nature of belief and doctrine in his life and work* trans. A.V. Littledale (London: Chapman, 1960).

notably that of Newman's disciple and friend the lawyer Samuel Francis Wood.⁵² Owen Chadwick dates Newman's 'crossing the Rubicon' of the idea of development to between 1841 and 1843 and stresses the influence of W.G. Ward.⁵³ On the other hand, others argue for much earlier roots or hints of the doctrine in Newman's own religious history.⁵⁴ Shea's recent monograph and his earlier articles on the subject⁵⁵ represent a hugely original contribution to both the origins and prehistory but more especially the reception of Newman's *Essay*. Shea takes issue with that earlier trend in Newman studies whereby Newman's own writings become a privileged, if not dominant source for historical inquiry. Shea goes beyond examining Newman's corpus in isolation or through the narrow lens of Newman's own notes and letters. He makes the case for a wider historical study that goes beyond partial approaches of examining merely the themes and tensions in Newman's own published writings. He explores often neglected or overlooked unpublished archival sources.

Shea points up the limitations of the Anglo-centric insularity in scholarship on the Oxford Movement and its relative lack of critical attention towards Roman Catholic theology on the European continent in the mid-nineteenth century. Consequently, the extent to which Newman's theory of development was actually well received in Rome and elsewhere has been overlooked.⁵⁶ Shea draws particular attention to the pivotal influential Roman figure of Giovanni Perrone (1794-1876) who, far from questioning or rejecting Newman's theory, emerges as a significant supporter. Shea's work builds on that of the late Owen Chadwick,⁵⁷ while offering a corrective to Chadwick's argument and conclusions as to the origins of and background to Newman's theory. What is clear is that such a revisionist study may

⁵² See James S. Pereiro, *At the Heart of Tractarianism. Ethos and the Oxford Movement* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 171; James S. Pereiro, *Theories of Development in the Oxford Movement* (Leominster: Gracewing, 2015), esp. 81-104; James S. Pereiro, 'S.F. Wood and an Early Theory of Development in the Oxford Movement', *Recusant History* 20 (1991): 540-41; Michael Peteburs, 'The Development of Doctrine', in *By Whose Authority? Newman, Manning and the Magisterium*, V. Alan McClelland ed. (Bath: Downside Abbey, 1996), 49-78; *An Essay on The Development of Christian Doctrine by John Henry Newman. With an Introduction, Notes and Textual Appendices by James Tolhurst DD.* Newman Millennium Edition. Volume XII (Leominster: Gracewing, 2018), xxii.

⁵³ Owen Chadwick, *From Bossuet to Newman* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2nd ed. 1987), 102, 111, 119-21.

⁵⁴ Morgan, 'The Search for Continuity', especially 215; Rune Imberg, *In Quest of Authority: The 'Tracts for the Times' and the Development of the Tractarian Leaders 1833-1841* (Lund: Lund University Press, 1987), 124-25; Ker, *John Henry Newman. A Biography*, 105.

⁵⁵ For example, see Charles M. Shea, 'Father Giovanni Perrone and Doctrinal Development in Rome: an overlooked legacy of Newman's *Essay on Development*', *Journal for the History of Modern Theology* 20:1, (2013): 85-116.

⁵⁶ See Kenneth L. Parker and Charles M. Shea, 'The Roman Catholic Reception of the *Essay on Development*', in Aquino and King eds. *Receptions of Newman*, 30-49.

⁵⁷ See above, n. 46.

not have been possible without the enhanced scholarly resources, especially digital ones, now available in the early twenty-first century.

The fourth significant recent contribution to Newman scholarship again emanates from the ‘Saint Louis circle’, that of Matthew Muller, though at present it is an as yet unpublished dissertation on Newman and biblical inspiration. Muller draws attention to the neglect of Newman’s engagement as an Anglican with the doctrine of biblical inspiration. Muller is critical of unhistorical attempts to view Newman’s views on the subject too much in terms of his apparent intellectual patronage of Vatican II - again a fault of reading backwards without due regard for context. He warns against a spirit of ‘Whiggish hindsight’.⁵⁸ The final contribution to this new wave of Newman scholarship can be seen in the writings of Gerard Zuijdwegt, cited above and below.⁵⁹

Some of this current Newman scholarship which privileges historical context and contingency as a factor in the development of Newman’s theological trajectory has been stimulated by the late Frank Turner’s highly controversial but seminal and innovative biography in 2002, and his 2008 edition of Newman’s *Apologia pro vita sua*, at the heart of which lay an attempt to recover ‘the Newman of history’.⁶⁰ All the studies in question here constructively engage with and apply in their respective fields Turner’s insights on this point. The impact of Turner’s biography has been likened to ‘a bomb in the playground of the theologians’,⁶¹ and it was as polarizing as the figure about whom he writes. However, some of its more reductionist and Freudian psychologising claims echoed those of Edwin Abbott, Geoffrey Faber in his *Oxford Apostles* (1933) and later articles by Fr P. J. FitzPatrick, taking Kingsley’s side in his controversy with Newman that triggered the *Apologia*.⁶² Significantly, that notoriously Newmanophobic collection of essays in 1991, *John Henry Newman: Reason, Rhetoric and*

⁵⁸ Muller, ‘The Inspired Bible’, 39.

⁵⁹ See above n. 20, and below n. 86. Another outstanding and highly original recent doctoral dissertation on Newman deserves notice: Damon McGraw, ‘Apocalyptic thought in John Henry Newman: Discerning Antichrist in Modernity’, (PhD diss. University of Notre Dame, 2014).

⁶⁰ Frank M. Turner, *John Henry Newman: the Challenge to Evangelical Religion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002). The phrase ‘the Newman of history’ repeatedly crops up in Turner’s ‘Introduction’ to his edition of *John Henry Cardinal Newman. Apologia & Six Sermons* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).

⁶¹ Marr, *To Be Perfect*, xx.

⁶² Edwin Abbott, *The Anglican Career of Cardinal Newman* (London: Macmillan, 1892); Geoffrey Cust Faber, *Oxford Apostles: a character study of the Oxford Movement* (London: Faber, 1933). See especially P. J. FitzPatrick, ‘Newman and Kingsley’, and ‘Newman’s *Grammar* and the Church Today’, in Nicholls and Kerr eds. *John Henry Newman*, 109-34, 135-52. Fr Fitzpatrick’s *Apologia Pro Charles Kingsley* had been published pseudonymously under the name ‘G. Egner’ (German, ‘opponent’). It should be noted, however, that FitzPatrick did not question the honesty of Newman’s delineation of his religious journey to Rome but only took issue with whether Newman had actually answered Kingsley’s specific charges made in his original review article which triggered Newman to write the *Apologia* in the first place. FitzPatrick, ‘Newman and Kingsley’, 89.

Romantism, has attracted less attention.⁶³ Yet nothing Turner wrote could match the animus of many of the contributors to that earlier collection, for example Valerie Pitt's explanation of Newman's conversion to Rome as the result of a 'complex process of psychological need and rational enquiry of a kind we should now call "cultural"' and her dismissal of his 'virtually inventing' a concept of 'development' in the Church 'to save his own appearances'.⁶⁴ Nor could it rival in reductionism, the late and then Vicar of Littlemore David Nicholls's characterisation in that volume of Newman's mistrust of the reality of material phenomena and admission that he was conscious of only two 'absolute and luminously self-evident beings', himself and God, as 'psychic individualism' and 'atomism'. Remarkably, Nicholls interpreted this as proof of Newman's inability to understand 'how people relate to each other in the context of community'.⁶⁵ Yet, it was not this but Turner's later revisionist reading which sparked huge debate and some outrage.

Turner invited Newman scholars in effect to 'meet Newman again for the first time' by paying closer attention to Newman's writings within their historical context and resisting the allowing of Newman's account of his spiritual journey to become the primary lens for understanding his life and writings. There are many flaws in Turner's use or misuse of evidence and in his invariably speculative conclusions as this writer has set out elsewhere,⁶⁶ but his methodology had much merit and in his own earlier edition of Newman's *Idea of a University* (1996) he had applied a model of historical contextualisation. In a lively debate in the pages of the *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* in 2010, Simon Skinner defended Turner's work for privileging history over hagiography with a clear swipe at a 'coterie of like-minded celebrants' of Newman among Roman Catholic Newman scholars.⁶⁷ Duffy responded in the same journal in 2012,⁶⁸ to which Skinner made a further reply.⁶⁹ Skinner's critique was taken as implying that in practice only secular-minded historians and not Roman Catholic theologians could objectively treat the Newman of history. In fact, there were Roman Catholic Newman scholars who appreciated that Turner's work had played a part in awaking 'some students of

⁶³ Edward Short is only slightly exaggerating when he states that 'the book met with total oblivion'. Short, *Newman and History*, 129. However, for a critical engagement with the Nicholls and Kerr volume, especially Pitt's essay, see Goslee, *Romanticism and the Anglican Newman*.

⁶⁴ Valerie Pitt, 'Demythologising Newman', 25.

⁶⁵ David Nicholls, 'Individualism and the Appeal to Authority', in Nicholls and Kerr eds. *John Henry Newman*, 195–96.

⁶⁶ Peter B. Nockles, 'Turner's Newman', *Albion*, xxxv. (Winter, 2004): 669–73.

⁶⁷ Simon Skinner, 'History versus Hagiography: The Reception of Turner's *Newman*', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* (hereafter *JEH*) 61.4 (2010): 764–781 at 769.

⁶⁸ Eamon Duffy, 'The reception of Turner's Newman: A reply to Simon Skinner', *JEH* 63 (July 2012): 534–68.

⁶⁹ Simon Skinner, 'A response to Eamon Duffy', *JEH* 63 (July 2012): 549–67.

Newman from their dogmatic slumbers',⁷⁰ while Skinner himself defended Turner's methodology but not all of his evaluative judgements. Moreover, as O'Regan argues, one should always 'be wary of claims to historical objectivity as if there was a way of immediately grasping truth and consequently avoiding the detour of interpretation and the pain of the conflict of interpretation'.⁷¹ Newman himself acknowledged his difficulties with others and was aware, at least in retrospect, of his own frailties, even on the eve of his conversion apologising to his brother Francis for overbearing behaviour towards him during his early days at Oxford.⁷²

Skinner, like Turner, had actually opened up a wider constructive debate. His timely intervention in this debate followed his seminal article in the same journal back in 1999. In that forensic and important article, Skinner had faulted Newman's sparing mention in the *Apologia* of his involvement as editor of the *British Critic*. This, Skinner argued, amounted to a hijacking of an old fashioned periodical previously managed by an older school of high churchmen, challenging head-on Newman's claim in the *Apologia* that he had allowed contributions from all schools and none.⁷³ Skinner's evidence undermined that claim. Turner citing this article was right to note that the concealment of the role and importance of the *British Critic* in Newman's *Apologia* enabled him to downplay his role as party leader in the Church of England, though it is debatable whether this was really Newman's deliberate intention.⁷⁴ Moreover, this reviewer had adopted a similar historical method in his essay on Newman and Tract 90 published as long ago as 1991.⁷⁵ Yet how much did any of this really prove?

Turner claimed that once you 'shake the historical adequacy of the *Apologia*' then 'other structures of historical understanding and religious devotion based on that foundation might collapse'.⁷⁶ This seems an unwarranted inference to draw and it grossly overstates the case. The kind of details regarding Newman's selection of writers for the *British Critic* or whether or not he had fairly interpreted a supposed agreement which he thought had been made with the Anglican bishops not to attack Tract 90 was never directly relevant to Newman's apologetic purposes in defending himself against Kingsley.⁷⁷ It is easy

⁷⁰ Zuijdwegt, 'An Evangelical Adrift', 5.

⁷¹ O'Regan, 'Reception of Newman the Saint', 221.

⁷² Martin J. Svaglic, 'Newman and the Oriel Fellowship', *Publications of the Modern Language Association*, 70/5, (Dec 1955): 1014-32 at 1020.

⁷³ Simon Skinner, 'Newman, the Tractarians, and the *British Critic*', *JEH*, vol. 50, no. 4 (October 1999): 716-59.

⁷⁴ John Henry Cardinal Newman. *Apologia pro vita sua & Six Sermons* ed. Frank M. Turner (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008), 14n.

⁷⁵ Peter. B. Nockles, 'Oxford, Tract 90 and the bishops', in Nicholls and Kerr eds. *John Henry Newman*, 28-87.

⁷⁶ Turner, ed. *Apologia pro vita sua & Six Sermons*, 3-4.

⁷⁷ Duffy, *John Henry Newman*, 100-101.

enough to show that Newman's own account of his life in his *Apologia* has overdetermined too much of the scholarship in the field. Yet such selectivity and bias is inherent in any autobiographical work. Although it is true that Newman denied that he was writing 'controversially' and that he 'wrote with the one object of relating things as they happened',⁷⁸ he was no less adamant in private correspondence that he was not writing objective or a complete history of the Oxford Movement 'but of me – it is an egotistical matter from beginning to end'.⁷⁹ In short, he was clear that he was being subjective and contemporary and later Roman Catholic readers and reviewers accepted the work in these terms as a defence of his own sincerity and convictions and record of his changes of view but not an autobiography or exact history.⁸⁰ Some commentators may subsequently have made a too one-dimensional reading of Newman's account in faulting it for historical accuracy.⁸¹ Newman himself should not be blamed for this. Thus, to some extent Turner was trying to 'slay' a 'paper tiger' or bogey of his own construction in so severely faulting the *Apologia* on this ground.⁸² On the other hand, Newman has been no less ill-served from an opposite quarter by one recent author who seems to view the *Apologia* precisely in such one-dimensional terms as pure autobiography while misrepresenting even those who defend Newman's veracity against his critics as 'disciples of Turner'.⁸³

⁷⁸ Svaglic, *Apologia*, 108; E. Jay, 'Newman's Mid-Victorian Dream', in Nicholls and Kerr eds. *John Henry Newman*, 215.

⁷⁹ J.H. Newman to W. J. Copeland, 19 April 1864, *Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*, xxi, eds. C. S. Dessain & E. Kelly (London: Nelson, 1971), 97. See also his comment: 'I am not writing a history of the Movement, nor arguing out statements'. J. H. Newman to R.W. Church, 26 April 1864, *Letters and Diaries*, xxi, 102.

⁸⁰ See *Dublin Review*, 3 (July, 1864), 'Newman's *Apologia pro vita sua*', 157. See also Jan Walgrave's comment that, had Newman written a real autobiography, 'he would probably have planned it on quite different lines'. J. H. Walgrave, *Newman the Theologian*, 313. See also for a similar nuanced treatment of the *Apologia*, M. J. Svaglic, 'The structure of Newman's *Apologia*', *Proceedings of the Modern Language Association*, 66 (January 1, 1951): 138–48; Owen Chadwick, 'A Consideration of Newman's *Apologia pro vita sua*', in Paul Vaisss ed. *Newman: From Oxford to the People* (Leominster: Gracewing, 1996), 163–85. See also William Oddie's comment that the *Apologia* 'stubbornly resists classification' and that 'as an autobiography it is notably deficient in the usual biographical details'. *John Henry Newman. Apologia pro vita sua*. ed. William Oddie, xv.

⁸¹ Walgrave criticises W. Houghton, *The Art of Newman's 'Apologia'* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1945) on precisely this ground. See Walgrave, *Newman the Theologian*, 317. For classic critiques of the *Apologia* for historical unreliability, see Abbott, *The Anglican Career of Cardinal Newman*, and G. Egner, *Apologia Pro Charles Kingsley* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1969).

⁸² See 'Editor's Introduction: The Newman of the *Apologia* and the Newman of History', Turner, ed. *Apologia pro vita sua & Six Sermons*, 1–115 at 1–6.

⁸³ Edward Short misrepresents Professor O'Regan as one of the 'disciples of Turner' and quite unfairly and misleadingly asserts that O'Regan in discussing the *Apologia* wishes 'to claim that Newman's account is nothing more than a tissue of self-serving lies'. Short, *Newman and History*, 127. For O'Regan's actual subtle and nuanced but admiring treatment of the *Apologia*, see Cyril O'Regan, 'Newman's Rhetoric in the *Apologia pro vita sua*'. *Loneran Review* 3:1 (November 2011), 88–101.

Ryan Marr, like Turner, rightly seeks to avoid viewing the relevant historical evidence for developments in Newman's theological perspectives entirely through the lens of Newman's construal of events. Any similarity of method, however, ends there. For unlike Marr, Turner went beyond the evidence in pure speculation and imposed his own psychologising and reductionist anti-Newman agenda to explain or discredit Newman's actions at every turn. Few have doubted the extent of Turner's research and grounding in the primary source material but unfortunately the evidence he unearthed often failed to support the highly speculative and tendentious conclusions which he drew. The problem about Turner's monumental effort is that ironically, as Zuidjwegt shrewdly points out, it is as history that his work falls short.⁸⁴

Turner was right to highlight Newman's Tractarian reaction against, if not hostility towards Evangelicalism during the 1830s and Newman's relative silence about this preoccupation in the *Apologia*, though he fails to allow for nuance and treats Evangelicalism too much as a monolith, overlooking its own internal tensions and even the differences between Evangelical Anglicanism and Evangelical Dissent. Newman's early Evangelical commitment was deep and its hold on him only gradually loosened.⁸⁵ Turner fails to account for Newman's shift from evangelicism to anti-evangelicism from any of the sources (and entirely overlooks those which would have enabled him to do so), but he strains the evidence when he speculates that Newman, in appearing to substitute liberalism for Evangelicalism in his own account in the *Apologia*, was merely projecting the pressing needs of the Roman Catholic Newman in the era of the *Syllabus of Errors* in the 1860s on to the Anglican Newman of the 1830s and 1840s who at that time had different concerns. Turner failed to recognise that Newman's critique of Evangelicalism, as in No. 73 of the *Tracts for the Times*, 'The Introduction of Rationalistic Principles into revealed Religion', was primarily on the ground that in its privileging of affective and practical religious feeling as a criteria test of true doctrine and in its neglect of ecclesial structures, Evangelicalism, albeit unintentionally, promoted or at least opened the door to liberalism in the longer term. Dogma was reduced to its spiritual and moral relevance and utility.⁸⁶ Turner ignored the fact that Newman's Tractarian polemic against evangelicism was premised on his earlier and ongoing rejection of liberalism. As Zuidjwegt makes clear, Newman came to reject evangelical Protestantism because he

⁸⁴ Zuidjwegt, 'An Evangelical Adrift', 5.

⁸⁵ See David Newsome, 'The Evangelical Sources of Newman's Power', in Coulson and Allchin eds. *Rediscovery of Newman*, 25. See Gareth Atkins, 'Evangelicals', in Aquino and King eds. *The Oxford Handbook of John Henry Newman*, 173-95.

⁸⁶ Colin Gunton, 'Newman's Seventy-Third Tract', in *Newman after a hundred years*, 309-22 at 317.

came to believe that it issued in liberalism or Socinianism.⁸⁷ For Newman, Evangelicalism was not liberalism *per se* but ‘liberalism lying in wait’. Moreover, as Eamon Duffy has concluded, ‘to treat the relative lack of emphasis on Evangelicalism in the *Apologia* as a smokescreen seems a crassly reductive characterization of one of the world’s masterpieces of confessional writing’.⁸⁸ Newman was still prepared in the mid-1830s to make common cause with Evangelicals in opposing the appointing of the liberal Renn Dickson Hampden to the Regius Chair of Divinity at Oxford. Moreover, as Andrew Nash reminds us, Newman’s most withering satire in what he called his ‘last words . . . as an Anglican to Anglicans’ in his article ‘Prospects of the Anglican Church’ in the *British Critic* in April 1839, was directed against latitudinarians and liberals in the Church of England, not Evangelicals.⁸⁹ Another way of looking at this issue has been recently suggested by Walter Conn: both liberalism and evangelicalism remained in Newman’s sights precisely both they were both, albeit different, manifestations of subjectivism.⁹⁰ Finally, Newman’s Evangelical inheritance continued to play a part in his later religious journey. In fact, it is possible to regard his conversion to Rome not as a repudiation but as a completion or fulfilment of his Evangelical past.

Turner identifies with Leslie Stephen’s and Thomas Huxley’s sweeping assertion that Newman’s No. 85 of the *Tracts for the Times*, ‘The Scripture Proofs of the Doctrine of the Church’, was a harsh and extensive attack on the religious and historical authority of the Scriptures and provided arguments against Christianity as powerful as any put forth by any unbeliever’.⁹¹ Turner seeks to clinch his argument that Newman was a ‘cultural apostate’ and sceptic (contemporary Evangelical critics of Tract 85 had made the same claim) by appealing to the later authority of such later nineteenth-century Sceptics and Rationalists as Leslie Stephen, James Fitzjames Stephen, and Thomas Huxley, Edwin Abbott, who following James Anthony Froude and Charles Kingsley, maintained that Newman defended credulity by means of scepticism. Far from offering a preservative for belief, Newman was blamed for the Victorian Crisis of Faith which his *Grammar of Assent* (1870) did nothing in their eyes to resolve. Against these claims, following earlier critiques of the Newman as Sceptic hypothesis by Fr John Griffin and Gerard Zuijdwegt⁹², Matthew

⁸⁷ Zuijdwegt, ‘An Evangelical Adrift’, 283.

⁸⁸ Duffy, *John Henry Newman*, 109.

⁸⁹ Nash, ‘Editor’s Introduction’, *Essays Critical and Historical*, xlv.

⁹⁰ Walter E. Conn, ‘Newman versus Subjectivism: The Context of Liberalism, Evangelicalism, and Rationalism’, *Newman Studies Journal*, 4/2 (Fall, 2007): 83–86.

⁹¹ Turner, *John Henry Newman*, 275.

⁹² John R. Griffin, ‘Cardinal Newman and the Origins of Victorian Scepticism’, *Heythrop Journal*, 49:6 (October, 2008): 980–94, G. Zuijdwegt, ‘Scepticism and Credulity: Victorian critiques of John Henry Newman’s Religious Apologetic’, *Journal of Modern History*, 20:1

Muller has convincingly argued that while Tract 85 sealed Newman's move away from his earlier Evangelical emphasis on internal evidences for the truths of Christianity, the only 'apostasy' involved was that from his own early Evangelicalism. As a child of Romanticism, what Newman now substituted for his earlier evidential defence of Christian orthodoxy was a new poetic theory of the divinely inspired illuminated imagination and a belief in the inspiration of the bible that was based on the witness of the early church.⁹³ The supernatural content of divine revelation remained sacrosanct for Newman but it could only be best communicated through the medium of indirect, symbolic or poetic forms.

Turner also appears to misunderstand the ascetic and spiritual dimension of Newman's direction of the Oxford Movement and in particular his *rationale* for Oriel tutoring and discipleship and for the community life at Littlemore. While it is true that psychological considerations and episodes in his family history, notably the shock over his father's bankruptcy in 1816, his epistolary conflict with his brothers Charles and Francis respectively, and the shock of the death of his adored younger sister Mary in 1828, had a place in Newman's religious journey and that some scholars have fruitfully explored them to the extent that 'the heart' was shown sometimes to have ruled 'the head',⁹⁴ contingency and psychoanalysis can be taken too far. Turner's particular type of psychologising has been characterised as 'remote and inexpert'.⁹⁵ Turner arguably oversteps the bounds with his unconvincing speculation that his devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary was related to his devotion to the memory of his dead sister Mary.⁹⁶ In short, in his over-zealous attempts to be anti-hagiographical, Turner ends up being blindly counter-hagiographical. Turner's Newman is too much of a one-dimensional caricature of a complex person.

(2013): 61–89. Both Wilfrid Ward and the Unitarian Richard Holt Hutton had defended Newman at the end of his life against the twin charges of credulity and scepticism. See Sheridan Gilley, 'Newman, Hutton and Unitarianism', in Merrigan and Ker, eds. *Newman and the Word*, 109–36 at 135–36. For Newman, doubt and scepticism were not to be conflated. See Meriol Trevor and Louise Caldecott, *John Henry Newman: Apostle of the Doubtful* (London: Catholic Truth Society, 2001).

⁹³ Muller, 'The Inspired Bible in the Anglican Career of John Henry Newman', 21–22.

⁹⁴ For examples, see Terrence Merrigan, 'Newman's progress towards Rome: A Psychological Consideration of his Conversion to Catholicism', *Downside Review*, 104 (April, 1986): 105–6. Robert Christie privileges the role of the heart, family dynamics and interpersonal relationships in shaping Newman's theological development. See Robert Christie, 'The Logic of Conversion: the harmony of heart, will, mind, and imagination in John Henry Newman' (PhD diss., Fordham University, 1997; Robert Christie, 'Newman's Spirituality in relation to his Conversion Experiences', in Philippe Lefebvre and Colin Mason eds. *John Henry Newman in his Time*, 223–42, especially at 233 where Christie even regards Mary's death as having provided the 'spiritual medicine' which 'checked the influence of liberalism'.

⁹⁵ Morgan, 'Search for Continuity', 13.

⁹⁶ Turner, *John Henry Newman*, 632–34.

Studies of Newman as both a philosopher of education and rhetorician of education are well represented in the writings of Katherine Tillman.⁹⁷ This reviewer and others have explored the practical roots of Newman's educational thought as acquired in his experience of the Oriel Common Room and as a tutor at Oriel College.⁹⁸ David Delio has also examined Newman's educational philosophy in association with his doctrine of the church in an insightful recent study of Newman's controversial *Lectures on the Tamworth Reading Room* published under the pseudonym 'Catholicus'⁹⁹ in *The Times* in 1840, though in many ways Dwight Culler's earlier study remains unsurpassed.¹⁰⁰ However, it is in the two interconnected areas of burgeoning Newman scholarship—Newman's educational ideals as expressed in his *Idea of a University*, and in the related Irish context of his involvement in the foundation of a Catholic University in Dublin in the 1850s—that the tendency to read Newman's words in isolation from Newman's actions has been most trenchantly and effectively challenged in recent scholarship.

Colin Barr has done more than anyone to expose what he calls 'the fatal flaw of Newman Studies: the failure to raise the gaze from the great cardinal and examine his surroundings'.¹⁰¹ Not only is Newman's *Idea* widely recognised as 'a classic of Victorian literature'¹⁰² but its influence as conveyed in Newman's original Dublin lectures in the 1850s and only later enshrined in the published *Idea* (1873), has helped shape and challenge current academic and higher educational thinking. In fact, Newman's ideas have been hotly contested on either side in debates over 'what are universities for?' The problem, as Barr shows, is not only the diametrically opposite conclusions that those on the political Right and Left have tended to draw from what Newman actually said or wrote but that too many have examined what Newman wrote on the subject incompletely or uncritically and read the *Idea* for whatever they wished to find there. The paucity of the then available source material that could be consulted and the fact that only Newman's writings were consulted did not help. In his attempts to set up a university in Ireland, as Paul Shrimpton in his recent study shows,

⁹⁷ M. Katherine Tillman, 'Philosophy of Education', in Aquino and King eds. *Oxford Handbook of John Henry Newman*, 416–33.

⁹⁸ Peter B. Nockles, 'Oriel and the Making of John Henry Newman – his Mission as College Tutor', *Recusant History*, 29:3 (May, 2009): 411–421; Peter B. Nockles, 'Newman and Oxford', in Philippe Lefebvre and Colin Mason eds., *Newman in his Time*, 21–46; Peter B. Nockles, 'An Academic Counter-Revolution: Newman and Tractarian Oxford's Idea of a University', *History of Universities*, x (1991):137–97.

⁹⁹ David P. Delio, 'An Aristocracy of Exalted Spirits': *The Idea of the Church in Newman's Tamworth Reading Room* (Leominster: Gracewing, 2016).

¹⁰⁰ Dwight Culler, *The Imperial Intellect: A Study of Newman's Educational Ideal* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955).

¹⁰¹ Colin Barr, 'Historical (Mis) understandings of *The Idea of a University*', in Aquino and King eds. *Receptions of Newman*, 114–33 at 128–9.

¹⁰² Owen Chadwick, *The Spirit of the Oxford Movement: Tractarian Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 99.

Newman was very much taken up with practical administrative details.¹⁰³ In fact, Newman justified the extent of his involvement in devising courses precisely on the ground that his writings and lectures on the subject of university education might be construed as too theoretical. The reasons for the apparent eventual ‘failure’ of the project were varied and complex, but for Barr, too much blame has been heaped upon Cardinal Paul Cullen and Newman’s side of the story (in a detailed memorandum dated 1873 Newman had indicted Cullen’s conduct) has too often been accepted uncritically.¹⁰⁴ He argues that Newman was insufficiently alive to Irish sensitivities and concerns, and tended to overlook the fact that the Catholic University was an Irish institution.¹⁰⁵ Barr concludes that any account of events in relation to the Catholic University in Ireland other than Newman’s own has allowed the latter to pass largely uncontested.¹⁰⁶ Above all, the *Idea*’s posthumous reputation has actually obscured Newman’s actual experiences as an educator, both in Oxford and Dublin.¹⁰⁷ Shrimpton’s study of this experience, complementing Barr’s, is thus to be welcomed, even if differences of interpretation of the record between the two are apparent.

Newman thus continues to provoke critical reaction as he did in his own lifetime. The apparently obsessive vehemence of some critiques, long before Turner’s, have been interpreted by one Newman scholar as evidence that Newman has come to represent ‘a permanent standard of judgment against the confident secularism of the modern world’.¹⁰⁸ However, while courtesy has sometimes been absent in the heat of contested scholarly interpretation, there has been a refreshing trend in recent and current writing to examine Newman’s life and thought and legacy constructively from the varying perspectives of philosophy, theology, history, education, and literature. In this respect, the recent *Oxford Handbook of John Henry Newman* emerges as a model of interdisciplinary investigation and understanding. It is a model that deserves to be followed more widely. ‘The Newman of history’ has been and is continuing to be recovered.

¹⁰³ Paul Shrimpton, *The Making of Men: The Idea and Reality of Newman’s University in Oxford and Ireland* (Leominster: Gracewing, 2014). For Newman’s other great educational interest, the Oratory School, see Paul Shrimpton, *A Catholic Eton? Newman’s Oratory School* (Leominster: Gracewing, 2005).

¹⁰⁴ See Colin Barr, *Paul Cullen, John Henry Newman and the Catholic University of Ireland 1845-1865* (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 2003). Only V. A. McClelland deviated from this line. See V. Alan McClelland, *English Roman Catholics and higher Education, 1830-1903* (London: Oxford University Press, 1972).

¹⁰⁵ Colin Barr, ‘Ireland’, in Aquino and King eds. *Oxford Handbook of John Henry Newman*, 48-69 at 60. Cf. Marvin R. O’Connell, ‘Newman and the Bishops’, *Newman Studies Journal*, 13/2 (Fall, 2016): 8–23 at 22-23.

¹⁰⁶ Barr, ‘Historical (Mis)understandings’, 133.

¹⁰⁷ Barr, ‘Ireland’, 48.

¹⁰⁸ David J. DeLaura, ‘Newman’s Apologia as Prophecy’ in *Apologia pro vita sua*, ed. David J. DeLaura (New York: Norton, 1968), 492–503 at 498.