

**Anglican Ritualism in Colonial South Africa:
Exploring Some of the Local Discourses Between
1848 and 1884**

by

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Signed

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... If you indeed cry out for insight,
And raise your voice for understanding;
If you seek it like silver,
And search for it as for hidden treasures...
Then you will find the knowledge of God.

Proverbs 2: 3 – 5 (NRSV)

ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines South Africa's colonial contribution to the spread of what is known in popular and academic literature as "ritualism" during the mid-nineteenth century. It also seeks to add a South African voice to the growing contemporary scholarship in this area. Three considerations shape the dissertation: definitions (high churchmanship, Tractarianism, ecclesiology, ritualism and Anglo-Catholicism); perceptions of what was often termed ritualism by clergy and laity; and portrayals of ritualism in public discourse. To understand these considerations in context, the study examines the role of South Africa's first Anglican bishop, and his creation of an independent local church, in fostering a climate conducive to ritualism. This is followed by an examination of the protests against some of the early developments which were considered ritualist by colonial congregations. Finally, a few examples of advanced ritualism are analysed. Three distinct waves of catholic revival are identified: early (1848 through to the mid-1850s) characterised by architecture and symbolism; middle (mid-1850s through to about 1870) characterised by lay opposition to recognised Anglican ceremonial; and late (mid-1860s through to the turn of the nineteenth century) characterised by the introduction of the "six points" of ritualism not sanctioned in the Anglican prayer book tradition. The author finds that after the middle period of fairly robust antagonism towards ritualism, a general movement towards ritualist practices began to emerge. The sources consulted for this dissertation include letters, newspaper and periodical articles, archival material and several unpublished theses.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

The search for Anglican identity has been a hallmark of Anglican studies for several decades.¹ Contesting theologies surrounding the ordination of women and homosexuality have tested the bounds of Anglican belief and practice to their breaking point in the recent past. Shifts in power dynamics have meant that decisions regarding theology and churchmanship are no longer the exclusive dominion of western white men, but rather of a much wider variety of voices, including those from the developing world. Contesting identities are nothing new in the Anglican Communion. Indeed, the very birth pangs of the Communion were initiated because of an identity crisis perpetuated by Bishop John William Colenso's challenge to traditional mid-nineteenth century biblical interpretations. In reality, Anglican identity has been in flux from its birth during the English Reformation.

Long before the idea of an Anglican Communion was ever conceived,² factions within the established Church of England resulted in two polarised camps, namely evangelicals³ and high churchmen. In the sixteenth century these two camps were the Reformed-minded on the one side, and those who wanted to keep the church broadly Catholic, but without the Pope, on the other. Those on the more Protestant side contested a number of issues from the beginning, namely the retention of much of the Latin liturgy (simply translated into English – the *Book of Common Prayer 1549* for the most part stuck quite closely to the Sarum Rite), ceremonial, celebrations of certain saints' days and vestments. In fact some radicals left the Anglican Church altogether and developed what has been called the Puritan movement. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, these two camps gradually evolved into distinct strands of theological thought and worship practice. By the early nineteenth century, crises in politics and church administration prompted a call for reform from a splinter group of the high church faction. This group came to be called the Tractarians.

"Tractarianism" was a movement of both reform and revival within in the Church of England related to a much older strand of Anglican practice, which focused on making Anglicans aware of the Catholicity of their church. As a movement it has been characterised as a scholarly and theological phenomenon, but its practical outworking has also received

¹ Authors such as Paul Avis have made the study of Anglican identity their primary endeavour. Others, such as erstwhile Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, have also contributed to the dialogue.

² Colin Podmore claims that the first time the term "Anglican Communion" with its modern meaning was used was in 1847. See Podmore, Colin. "The Anglican Communion: Idea, Name and Identity", *International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church*, vol. 4, no. 1: 42.

³ Anglican Evangelicalism is not discussed in depth in this dissertation, but a brief historical and theological note is necessary here. Historically, in Anglicanism there have been waves of Evangelicalism: the advent of Methodism (sometimes considered an Evangelical breakaway of Anglicanism); the influence of William Wilberforce (1759-1833 and the anti-slavery movement; the Clapham Sect (founded in 1780); and the nineteenth century revival of Evangelical zeal in relation to mission work (the Church Missionary Society, in particular, was strongly supported by Anglican Evangelicals). For the most part, Evangelicals focused on atoning sanctification and were often characterised as "enthusiastic". For a detailed description of Evangelicalism in Anglicanism during the nineteenth century, see Atherstone, Andrew. "Anglican Evangelicalism" in *The Oxford History of Anglicanism: Partisan Anglicanism and its Global Expansion, 1829 – c.1914*, Rowan Strong (ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.

more attention recently. This movement, and others related to Tractarianism, will be clearly defined for the purposes of this research in chapter two. Successive generations of Tractarians pushed the idea of Catholicity further than just theological concepts and began looking to Rome for models of architecture, liturgy, ceremonial and music.

The outer vesture of Catholicity within Anglicanism has often been termed “ritualism” in both popular and academic literature. Indeed, for some early critics, discussed in chapter four, ritualism embraced doctrine and symbolism as well. In this study ritual refers to an oral recitation, series of actions, or set of symbols which informs some kind of regular performance, usually related to religious worship.⁴ In Anglican history, though, ritualism generally refers to the ceremonial practices which were used to augment and underpin the theology of a ritual (mostly Baptism and the Eucharist). Thus ritualism can include vestments, manual acts such as crossing oneself, genuflection, dressing the altar, and can extend to architecture and the symbolic nature of worship. This study is an exploration of ritualism within the colonial South African Anglican context. As in Nigel Yates’ work, in this dissertation “the word ‘ritualism’ [covers] those ceremonial developments in the Church of England [and colonial Anglicanism in South Africa] that were considered at the time to be making its services approximate more closely the services of the Roman Catholic Church...”⁵

Background and location of the study

While working on my PhD in liturgical musicology, and during subsequent research on Anglican music in colonial South Africa, I often came across archival material related to Anglican ritualism which intrigued me because of its polemic nature. At the time I was teaching a second-level undergraduate module in Anglican Studies at the College of the Transfiguration (Anglican seminary in Grahamstown, South Africa), and was keen to explore ritualism at a deeper level in order to introduce its historical context within Anglicanism to my students. There is a fair amount of published scholarship on this topic related to the Church of England and, more recently, about other autonomous churches in the Anglican Communion, but almost nothing about the South African development and interpretation of ritualism. Given that the local church has been influenced so strongly by ritualism, this study seeks to provide some international context to the movement and an analysis of some archival material concerning ritualism as it unfolded and developed in South Africa.

The timeframe for the research is from the official beginning of the Anglican Church in South Africa (1848 is when the first Bishop of Cape Town arrived to take office in his see) to 1884 when published material concerning extreme ritualist parishes begins to emerge fairly regularly. As the dissertation seeks to demonstrate, this time period reflects a natural development of ritualism, broadly concomitant with trends in the wider Anglican Communion, but slightly later than similar developments and protests in England, that is the periphery was slightly behind the metropolitan.

This is an historical study which relies on archival material drawn from a number of South African libraries and archives. The material is limited to the Anglican Dioceses of Cape Town, Grahamstown and Natal (according to their boundaries during the mid- to late nineteenth century). The study examines published material and letters only.

⁴ Ritual forms the basis of a modern scientific field called ritual studies which examines human behaviour. Its findings are particularly useful to anthropologists, sociologists and psychologists. Ritual has three main characteristics: patterns; repetition; and function. Ritual, in this definition, is not limited to Christian or religious activity. Rituals form an integral part of society in general. See White, James F. *Introduction to Christian Worship* (3rd ed.). Nashville: Abingdon, 2000, 19.

⁵ Yates, Nigel. *Anglican Ritualism in Victorian Britain, 1830-1910*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999, 1.

Research approach

The majority of historians in this particular field do not employ an explicit theory through which to analyse their data, although one could argue that many are intuitively using hermeneutical tools. William Pickering is alone when he specifies his theoretical framework.⁶ He addresses ritualism (which he calls “Anglo-Catholicism”) using sociological theories. However, he does not claim to provide an historical account of ritualists, but only a sociological analysis *based on historical sources*. My aim is not to propose a sociological question, but rather to uncover perceptions of ritualism by analysing what clergy and laity wrote about it. My main approach is to review historical archival material through comparison with similar contemporary international contexts documented through recent historical research. Comparisons with similar colonial situations may shed light on whether there were cultural biases and trends which emerged through contact with Anglican ritualism. Like George Herring, I will try to allow the historical material to speak for itself by providing as much contextual background as possible.⁷ However, I do not assume that an *urtext* can ever fully reveal its meaning, especially at a distance of nearly 150 years, nor through a single researcher’s prejudiced lenses. Thus, I am more clearly allied to processes and theories of projective hermeneutics, in which the researcher seeks to discern historical meaning by providing extensive historical contextual background, and “that the interpreter plays an active role in creating the interpretation”.⁸

Methodology

My approach to this research is to provide a broad Anglican context within the wider culture of British imperialism in order to analyse specific local case studies of anti-ritualism and ritualism. The framework of projective hermeneutics will inform the interpretations of texts throughout. The dissertation is divided into two parts. The first part investigates the historical context of ritualism in chapters two and three; while the second part examines selected South African cases of opposition to ritualism in chapter four and examples of advanced ritualism in chapter five.

At first, an introduction to the history of high churchmanship, Tractarianism, ecclesiology and ritualism is presented as a general guide to the theology and practices of each movement, and how they originated. Then the South African context before the arrival of Bishop Robert Gray is presented. A significant part of the story of the success of ritualism in South Africa is the role of Gray. It was his general toleration of Tractarianism and his determination to create an independent church free of state interference that proved so foundational to the development of ritualism. As will become apparent in chapter three, Gray was not a supporter of rituals which did not conform to the *Book of Common Prayer 1662*. Yet, the constitution of the local independent church allowed for review *and* revision of the liturgy – ultimately a catalyst for far-reaching changes in the twentieth century.⁹

Chapter four examines cases of opposition to ritualism and briefly compares them with similar situations elsewhere in the local church and the Anglican Communion to offer a clearer idea of South Africa’s position globally. To understand local responses to ritualism,

⁶ Pickering, W. S. F. *Anglo-Catholicism: A Study in Religious Ambiguity*. London: SPCK, 1991, 1-3.

⁷ Herring, George. *The Oxford Movement in Practice: The Tractarian Parochial World from the 1830s to the 1870s*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016, viii.

⁸ Patterson, Michael and Daniel Williams. *Collecting and Analysing Qualitative Data: Hermeneutic Principles, Methods, and Case Examples*. Champaign: Sagamore, 2002, 12.

⁹ Bethke, Andrew-John. “A Brief History of Anglican Liturgy in Southern Africa: Liturgical Developments from 1908 - 2010” – *Journal of Anglican Studies*, vol. 51, no. 1 (2017): 58 – 87.

an understanding of how clergy and laity defined it is necessary. Evidence of reactions to ritualism for this dissertation has been found mostly in church newspapers, personal letters and secular newspapers (as well as in some secondary sources) which are housed in archives around the country – primarily the College of the Transfiguration and Cory Library (Grahamstown); Wits University (Johannesburg) and the National Archives (Cape Town).

One focus of my study, which runs through chapters four and five, is how the approaches to and protests against ritualism changed over time. In the late 1840s and early 1850s the interpretation of ritualism in South Africa seems to have changed quite dramatically. However, in the later 1870s, and going forward, ritualism took on a much more advanced and Catholic meaning both for laity and clergy. This significant shift may be related to the formal foundation of the Church of the Province of South Africa in 1870 as an autonomous entity, legally detached from the Church of England, and thus not answerable to the secular courts in England.

Chapter five focuses on several cases of advanced ritualism in South African parishes, comparing their ideas of progression with similar Anglican contexts elsewhere in the world. As in the cases of opposition to ritualism, most of the evidence of advanced ritualism appears in church newspapers, personal letters and secular newspapers. Again, the comparisons will help to situate South Africa within the overall discourses on Anglican ritualism.

This research focuses only on colonial parishes and clergy, primarily because the approach to ritualism in colonial congregations was quite different from those in mission stations. In missions, ritualism could be introduced as a norm, whereas in colonial congregations, existing expectations negated sudden changes. My work limits itself to archival material. Specific instruments exploring oral memory have not been employed for this research. The result is that stories which may exist in the existing oral tradition do not form part of the conclusions.

Analysis of historical archival material is always provisional in nature because there is no way to thoroughly verify the veracity of opinions and assumptions of remaining documents/pictures, etc. (cf. projective hermeneutics in the theoretical framework above). For example, some voices may not be represented because their opinions have not been recorded in writing. While historians can never fully negate such difficulties, they can provide thorough contextual analysis and comparisons with similar situations, where these are documented, or they can retrieve the oral memories of the communities. These analyses help to nuance the existing documents which are recorded in archives. Another important point is to acknowledge any personal biases which may affect interpretations of the text. My approach is to provide both international and local context, allowing contrasting voices to co-exist in order to provide nuanced meanings to developments and specific situations; to offer the views of the enthusiasts *and* detractors of ritualism where these exist; and to compare local situations with similar international situations to see if what occurred in South Africa mirrored or prompted international currents. In this way the history I document and analyse will contribute to a wider conversation which is always open to debate, correction and augmentation.

Scope of Study

The study confines itself to the earliest waves of ritualism in South Africa, i.e. 1848 – 1884. Limiting the time period obviously limits the number of primary sources, but there is enough to make some provisional conclusions, especially in relation to international currents of the same period.

The focus of this study is only on immigrant (colonial) congregations. The trajectory of the mission churches and the opinions of the first black converts on Anglican liturgy

require separate, but necessary, attention. There are three reasons for this. Firstly, mission congregations did not tend to share the colonists' prejudices relating to the Reformation and Roman Catholicism at this stage. Thus, if mission congregations were introduced to Christianity by ritualist clergy, their understanding of the faith would have been deeply coloured by ritual from the start and their possible resistance to it, if there was any, may have been for different reasons. Secondly, in the Diocese of Natal (one of the dioceses covered by this study) the story of mission work is extremely complex because it relates directly to Bishop Colenso and the subsequent arguments over Zulu evangelisation. Such complexity requires careful description and interpretation and cannot easily be accommodated within the required length of this dissertation. Finally, the first black and white Anglican clergy in South Africa were trained mainly through "reading" theology with a mentor (usually a senior white clergyman).¹⁰ The churchmanship of the mentor, therefore, could largely determine the likelihood of ritualist tendencies in black clergy and, as a result, in their congregations. A separate study of the mentors and their relationships with their trainee clergy would be valuable in determining the effects of ritualism on the local burgeoning black convert community. Thus, to gain a fuller perspective of ritualism in Southern Africa, an examination of architecture, liturgy and mission work will need to supplement and elaborate what is presented here.

Literature review

In the past few decades there have been a number of substantial academic studies on the phenomenon of Tractarianism and the ritualist movement which followed in its wake.

The earliest study which is relevant to this dissertation is Pickering's.¹¹ He provides a sociological analysis of what he calls Anglo-Catholicism by unpicking some of the inherent ambiguities of the proponents and practices of this movement in England from its beginnings in the 1830s through to its modern incarnations in the late twentieth century. Thus, his focus is on the behaviour and traits of Anglo-Catholic clergy and their supporting laity. He also offers interesting insights into why ritualism may have come to the fore in the first place. In relation to my work, his findings concerning the training and context of English clergy form a helpful basis, primarily because most clergy in early South African Anglicanism were born and trained in England.

Peter Nockles followed soon after Pickering with an historically-based contextual review of Tractarianism based on a thorough analysis of existing archival sources.¹² Of particular value to my work is his section on the various names the movement has accumulated in its history. He defines each name and shows how it is historically more accurate to consider Tractarianism as a movement within the context of numerous closely related movements of similar aims. However, Tractarianism was not necessarily the progenitor of ritualism or, more specifically, advanced ritualism.¹³

Another important work is John Reed's analysis of the cultural politics which surrounded Tractarianism and ritualism.¹⁴ Together the work of Reed and Nockles provide a thorough contextual basis for the development of Catholic thought within Anglicanism. What is notable about Reed is that he begins to question the long held belief that ritualism was a

¹⁰ Denis, Philippe. "The Beginnings of Anglican Theological Education in South Africa, 1848 – 1963", *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, vol. 63, no. 3 (July 2012), 518.

¹¹ Pickering, *Anglo-Catholicism*.

¹² Nockles, Peter. *The Oxford Movement in Context*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

¹³ Herring, *The Oxford Movement in Practice*, viii-ix.

¹⁴ Reed, John Shelton. *Glorious Battle: The Cultural Politics of Victorian Anglo-Catholicism*. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1996.

natural outgrowth of Tractarianism – although, sadly, he does not pursue this at great length. A much more recent monograph by Herring on this topic provides convincing evidence that Reed is correct and, thus, undermines a great many previous historical assumptions.¹⁵ Interestingly, these assumptions even emerge in the historical sources in South Africa, i.e. the linking of Edward Pusey’s name with so-called ritual innovations – Pusey was one of the leaders of the Tractarian movement (discussed in chapter two). Herring’s work is based on a PhD thesis he completed several decades ago, but his work has clearly been augmented over years of continuous and focused research on this one topic. His book appears to be his only publication and represents a vast resource of accumulated and related knowledge. Neither Reed nor Herring are without critics, and their conclusions are sometimes controversial. In terms of my work, what is interesting is that their conclusions appear to hold true for the South African context; a context which was not so encumbered by English religious establishment norms nor national legislation regarding ritual and liturgy.

Yates has often been considered the leading scholar in the field of British Tractarianism, ritualism and the related fields of church architecture and liturgy. He has written extensively about these topics, but his most relevant books for this dissertation revolve around Victorian Anglo-Catholicism.¹⁶ Yates’ attention to the sources is of importance, because he goes to great lengths to prove his conclusions through various means, amongst others using census details to ascertain the true demographics of ritualist activity. However, Herring somewhat trumps him by going one step further. He investigates the clergy with Tractarian credentials to see if the success of the movement was as great as it purported to be.¹⁷ Nevertheless, Yates does offer great insight into the religious ferment in England at the time of the Victorian Tractarians and ritualists, and this is helpful for comparison with Reed and Nockles.

Focused case studies which impact this research relate to the essence of Tractarian practice; class and churchmanship; and movements against ritualism. William Franklin offers fascinating insight into the mind of Edward Pusey.¹⁸ He argues that Pusey’s main aim was to centre entire communities around their parish church, which itself would offer numerous outlets for Christian worship, work and charity. Franklin shows that this ideal was inspired by Pusey’s time in Germany and his experience of communal Catholicism. Experimental parishes in Leeds and Wantage, which Pusey financed, are contrasted in Franklin’s study to demonstrate Pusey’s yearning to fulfil these aspirations (discussed more fully in chapter two).¹⁹ However, as he concludes, the long-term legacy of Pusey was not this community-based approach to Christian life, but the *Tracts for the Times*²⁰ and, sadly, as a second fiddle to John Henry Newman (another of the leading lights of the Tractarian Movement who eventually converted to Roman Catholicism – see chapter two). Comparing Pusey’s practical work with the mission and diocesan work of several early South African clergy definitely

¹⁵ Herring, *The Oxford Movement in Practice*, 192.

¹⁶ See Yates, *Anglican Ritualism in Victorian Britain*.

¹⁷ Herring, *The Oxford Movement in Practice*, ix-x.

¹⁸ See Franklin, R. William. “The Impact of Germany on the Anglican Catholic Revival in Nineteenth-Century Britain”, *Anglican and Episcopal History* (December 1992), vol. 61, no. 4: 433 – 448; and Franklin, R. William. “Puseyism in the Parishes: Leeds and Wantage Contrasted”, *Anglican and Episcopal History*, vol. 62, no. 3 (September 1993): 377 – 395.

¹⁹ Franklin, “Puseyism in the Parishes: Leeds and Wantage Contrasted”.

²⁰ The *Tracts for the Times* was a series of ninety essays, some as short as a page, others resembling full scale treatises. They were written by the founding theologians of the Tractarian movement, mainly John Keble, Edward Pusey and John Newman. Their subject matter was mostly related to doctrine (see chapter two).

shows significant correlations and the possible strong influence of Pusey, rather than the more radical ritualists.²¹

The social class of clergy and the laity played an important role in the growth and acceptance of Tractarianism and ritualism. In 1851, when the English government commissioned a largescale census of religious worship, the commissioners found that class was a significant determinant of religious affiliation. Towns and cities with large “genteel” populations tended to garner more Anglican support, whereas those which had greater working class populations tended to prefer non-conformist worship.²² Thus, Anglicanism tended to cater to the needs of the upper and middle classes in England itself. This phenomenon seems to have travelled along with Anglicanism as it moved out into the colonies. Joseph Hardwick is an authority on this particular aspect of Anglican history.

The reforms towards Catholicism in Anglican theology and practice began in the two major English universities, namely Oxford and Cambridge. It was, likewise, the men who went to these institutions who were most influenced by the ferment of ideas which surrounded Catholicity. University education was largely a privilege of the upper and middle classes; most lower class clergy were trained in colleges.²³ Hardwick shows that in the initial waves of church expansion in the Empire during the mid-nineteenth century, recruiting clergy with a university education (and thus, a high social standing) proved difficult. He also shows that the bishops of these new areas of expansion lamented the low society of the clergy serving in the colonies.²⁴ Most colonial bishops appointed after the 1840s were funded by the Colonial Bishops Fund, a movement supported mainly by high churchmen and laity.²⁵ There were three consequences related to this movement and its support of colonial bishops. Firstly, the conception of mission they adopted was grounded in high church and Tractarian doctrine, i.e. the bishop represents the unity of spiritual authority and thus establishes the church wherever he is present.²⁶ Secondly, the church played an educational role as the bearer of English culture.²⁷ Thirdly, the selected colonial bishops tended to have been university educated with high church leanings and sometimes Tractarian sympathies. The resulting social standoff between the predominantly lower class clergy active in the colonies and newly appointed high class clergy was, at times, heated.

An important part of this dissertation will be analysing the backlash against ritualism, what actually constituted ritualism in the minds of ordinary people, and why they reacted so strongly against it. James Whisenat’s study on anti-ritualism in England in the 1870s is a yard stick against which some of my own findings can be measured.²⁸ Another recent study, which examines popular opposition to ritualism in Newfoundland, especially during the tenure of Bishop Edward Feild, provides further material for comparison.²⁹ In Calvin Hollett’s

²¹ See, for example, Frappel, Leighton. “‘Science’ in the Service of Orthodoxy: The Early Intellectual Development of E.B. Pusey”, in Perry Butler (ed.), *Pusey Rediscovered*, 1 – 33.

²² Coleman, Bruce I. *The Church of England in the Mid-Nineteenth Century: A Social History*. London: Historical Association, 1980, 34-36.

²³ Hardwick, Joseph. “Anglican Church Expansion and the Recruitment of Colonial Clergy for New South Wales and the Cape Colony, c. 1790 – 1850”, *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, vol. 37, no. 3 (September 2009): 361 – 381.

²⁴ Hardwick, “Anglican Church Expansion and the Recruitment of Colonial Clergy for New South Wales and the Cape Colony”, 371.

²⁵ Le Couteur, Howard. “Anglican High Churchman and the Expansion of Empire”, *Journal of Religious History*, vol. 32, no. 2 (June 2008): 193 – 215.

²⁶ Le Couteur, “Anglican High Churchman and the Expansion of Empire”, 196.

²⁷ Le Couteur, “Anglican High Churchman and the Expansion of Empire”, 199.

²⁸ Whisenat, James. “Anti-Ritualism and the Moderation of Evangelical Opinion in England in the Mid-1870s”, *Anglican and Episcopal History*, vol. 70, no. 4 (December 2001): 451 – 477.

²⁹ Hollett, Calvin. *Beating Against the Wind: Popular Opposition to Bishop Feild and Tractarianism in Newfoundland and Labrador, 1844 – 1876*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2016.

assessment, the tension between social classes (the ordinary people as opposed to the bishop and factions of the clergy) seems to have driven most of the strife; that alongside a strong pro-Methodist and equally robust anti-Roman-Catholic ethos, also related to the social and racial make-up of the colony (many of the Irish immigrants, for example, being Roman Catholic). Perhaps most strikingly, Hollett concludes that the leadership model of the brand of Tractarianism which Feild espoused was at odds with the more democratic nature of colonial life.³⁰ Hardwick has termed the colonial penchant for democratisation “informal Presbyterianism”³¹ – a phenomenon which was certainly alive in South Africa at the time too.

Victorian anti-ritualism was, undoubtedly, related to anti-Catholicism. John Wolffe investigates “organised, explicit anti-Catholicism, a phenomenon primarily apparent in white settler colonies”.³² He attributes some of the reaction against Roman Catholicism to the Catholic Emancipation Act in 1829 and the rise of Protestant evangelicalism.³³ In other words, at least some of the reaction was rooted as much in politics as religion. Imperial aspirations, and their theological underpinnings, also played a part. There were those, for example, who believed that the rise of the British Empire was a sign of the triumph of Protestantism over Catholicism.³⁴ Interestingly, anti-Catholicism was also associated with the liberties of English society, i.e. the perceived tyranny of Catholicism and, in particular, the papacy, went against the hard won independence of English politics and religion. It is not difficult to see how, in the popular mind, Catholicism and a sense of enslavement, or at the very least dependence, were intertwined. Such sentiments travelled to the colonies and were already being disseminated in pamphlets in the Cape Colony in 1823.³⁵ As late as 1868, Wolffe demonstrates that Grahamstown (the second oldest Anglican see in South Africa) witnessed a strong anti-Catholic surge in the local press, led by an Anglican clergyman.³⁶ However, the strength of ultra-Protestantism did not last in South Africa. By the turn of the century, beyond the ambit of this study, the Imperial Protestant Federation (an English body established to maintain the Protestant ethos of the British Empire) was “concerned... with High Church tendencies in the (Anglican) Church of the Province of South Africa”.³⁷

Most of the literature above relates directly to Tractarianism and ritualism in Victorian England. However, there is a growing body of scholarship which documents the movement’s work around the Anglican Communion.

The most recent is a collection of essays edited by Steward Brown and Nockles.³⁸ In it, they and their fellow historians, trace the advancement of Tractarianism in Wales, Scotland, Europe, Australia and the USA. Significantly, though, there is no chapter on South Africa, or indeed on Zanzibar (another strong-hold of Anglican ritualism). What is of help with this collection is that it provides an international context for the developments which occurred in South Africa. Ritualism did not occur in a vacuum, but “flourished” because of

³⁰ Hollett, *Beating Against the Wind*, 294.

³¹ Hardwick, Joseph. *An Anglican British World: The Church of England and the Expansion of the Settler Empire, c. 1790 – 1860*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014, 8.

³² Wolffe, John. “Anti-Catholicism and the British Empire, 1815-1915” in Hilary Carey (ed.). *Empires of Religion*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008, 44.

³³ Wolffe, “Anti-Catholicism and the British Empire”, 45.

³⁴ Wolffe, “Anti-Catholicism and the British Empire”, 45.

³⁵ Wolffe, “Anti-Catholicism and the British Empire”, 46. Wolffe’s account of Parker (Protestant) and Bird (Catholic) in the Cape is revealing (46-47). Bird was eventually relieved of his colonial position because he refused to make an anti-Catholic oath.

³⁶ Wolffe, “Anti-Catholicism and the British Empire”, 47.

³⁷ Wolffe, “Anti-Catholicism and the British Empire”, 55.

³⁸ Brown, Stewart J. and Peter B. Nockles. *The Oxford Movement: Europe and the Wider World 1830 – 1930*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

international conditions and figures which promoted it. There are case studies in this volume which will link well with material I have already found for the South African context.

A case study of advanced ritualism outside of England has also been particularly important. Warren Platt's detailed history of Rev. Thomas McKee Brown's influence on advanced ritualism in New York City reveals a similar context which became increasingly the norm in South Africa: a sympathetic bishop; considerable media interest; and sufficient lay support.³⁹ There are several studies concerning ritualism in the Anglican Church in Canada which are of interest and which mirror aspects of the South African context, including Christopher Headon⁴⁰ and Laura Morgan's⁴¹ work.

What was the aim of the colonial Anglican Church and how did this inform ritualism? Hardwick suggests that one primary motivation of the church was "to keep existing believers within the Christian fold"⁴² rather than focus on overt mission work. In other words, "by fostering closer ties between colonial institutions and their English counterparts, as well as emphasising the idea of a pan-global 'Christian Commonwealth' through the auspices of the established church, it was believed that the loyalty of settlers throughout Britain's empire could be secured".⁴³ An equally important goal was to cement and perpetuate British (more accurately English) culture within the colonies. Alex Bremner's work on British colonial gothic architecture is just one study which examines the far reaching impact of English culture on the world. It also highlights the extent to which a culture and power of cathedrals, and their concomitant hierarchical strata of status, dominated Anglican colonial activity.⁴⁴ The Gothic revival which Bremner examines had a far wider ambit than Tractarian and ritualist Anglicanism but, as has been noted above, the class of bishops which ministered in the colonies certainly influenced the type of British culture which was exported abroad.

The South African contributions to the study of Anglican history all consider the influence of Tractarianism. Peter Hinchliff's history of the Anglican Church of South Africa sometimes reads like a defence of Tractarianism through some selective readings of the sources.⁴⁵ However, his work still stands as the basis from which much can be gained and compared. Ian Darby challenges Hinchliff on a number of points regarding ritualism, and indeed, Darby's consistency to the existing sources paints a much more balanced picture of emerging Anglicanism in South Africa (particularly in Natal).⁴⁶ Another important collection of essays, edited by Franck England and Torquil Paterson, offers some insight into aspects of South African Anglicanism's ethos.⁴⁷ In particular, England discusses the Tractarian impact on South African Anglicanism and shows some of the most important legacies of this influence. Some of his insights have been helpful in relating to the flourishing of ritualism in particular areas of South Africa. While there are a number of further important historical

³⁹ Platt, Warren C. "The Rise of Advanced Ritualism in New York City: The Rev. Thomas McKee Brown and the Founding of the Church of St Mary the Virgin", *Anglican and Episcopal History*, vol. 85, no. 3 (September 2016): 331 – 369.

⁴⁰ Headon, Christopher. "Developments in Canadian Anglican worship in eastern and central Canada, 1840-1868", *Journal of Canadian Church Historical Society*, vol. 17 (1975), 26-36.

⁴¹ Morgan, Laura. *Class and Congregation: Social Relations in Two St John's, Newfoundland, Anglican Parishes, 1877-1909*. Memorial University of Newfoundland MA thesis, 1996.

⁴² Hardwick, *An Anglican British World*, 3.

⁴³ Bremner, G. Alex. *Imperial Gothic: Religious Architecture and High Anglican Culture in the British Empire c. 1840-1870*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013, 3.

⁴⁴ Bremner, *Imperial Gothic*.

⁴⁵ Hinchliff, Peter. *The Anglican Church in South Africa: An Account of the History and Development of the Church of the Province of South Africa*. London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1963.

⁴⁶ Darby, Ian. *Anglican Worship in Victorian Natal*. University of Natal MA thesis, 1977.

⁴⁷ England, Franck. "Tracing South African Anglicanism" in *Bounty in Bondage: The Anglican Church in Southern Africa*, Franck England and Torquil Paterson (eds.). Johannesburg: Raven Press, 1989, 14-29.

studies which detail historical events and documents,⁴⁸ they do not focus specifically on ritualism. John Suggit and Mandy Goedhals do include important insights into the character of Robert Gray (the first Anglican bishop in South Africa) which is an important aspect of the contextual aspect of this dissertation.⁴⁹ For my work on ritualism in the Diocese of Natal, Jeff Guy's biography of Colenso proved helpful as it discussed a number of incidents related directly to ritualism.⁵⁰

Summary

This chapter has provided an overview of the aims, theories and methods from which this study will operate. In summary, this research is an examination of a particular identity of colonial Anglicanism as it unfolded in South Africa, and as reflected in existing archival material, examined through the lens of projective hermeneutics. I have also included an introduction to the field of Anglican Tractarian and "ritualist" research and how it relates to aspects of this particular dissertation. While the literature review is not exhaustive, it does address work by the most representative scholars, especially Yates, Nockles, Reed, Pickering and Herring. Other scholastic work related to anti-Catholicism, Anglicanism and classism and Anglicanism and British imperial ambitions has also been included. The next chapter is an historical introduction to Tractarianism and ritualism.

⁴⁸ Lewis, Cecil and G. E. Edwards. *Historical Records of the Church of the Province of South Africa*. London: SPCK, 1934; Suggit, John and Mandy Goedhals (eds.) *Change and Challenge: Essays Commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the Arrival of Robert Gray as First Bishop of Cape Town (20 February 1848)*. Cape Town: CPSA, 1998; Suberg, Olga Muriel. *The Anglican Tradition in South Africa: A Historical Overview*. Pretoria: UNISA Press, 1999.

⁴⁹ Suggit and Goedhals, *Change and Challenge*, 7-25.

⁵⁰ For example, see Guy, Jeff. *The Heretic: A Study of the Life of John William Colenso 1814 -1883*. Johannesburg: Raven Press, 1983, 56-61.

PART ONE

CHAPTER TWO

Anglican ritualism in the nineteenth century

In everyday Anglican speech the terms “high churchmanship”, “Tractarianism”, “Anglo-Catholicism” and “ritualism” are often used interchangeably. For the most part, too, “high church” tends to be a multipurpose expression for theology, doctrine or worship which in some way tends towards perceived notions of Catholicism. Despite their varied popular use, these terms often have very specific meanings in context and in this dissertation will carry particular nuances which require explanation. This chapter provides historical context for high churchmanship, Tractarianism, ecclesiology, ritualism and Anglo-Catholicism and introduces some of the reasons for opposition towards these movements.

Early Anglicanism has been described as adopting “Calvinist theology whilst at the same time maintaining an almost completely pre-Reformation administrative structure and a liturgy that tried... to offer a bridge between the two”.⁵¹ Yet, while Calvinist attitudes about church architecture, worship and music triumphed in England for the most part until the mid-nineteenth century, experiments with and waves of revival of pre-Reformation ceremonial rose occasionally within high church ranks. For example, despite the relatively narrow guidelines proscribed in the *Book of Common Prayer 1559* and Archbishop Matthew Parker’s (1504 – 1575) *Advertisements*, bishops and clergy were able to revive a number of rather advanced ceremonies⁵² in the decades immediately preceding the English Civil War (1642 – 1651).⁵³ These bishops and clergy became known as Laudians, after the Archbishop of Canterbury William Laud (1573 – 1645), their unofficial leader. Importantly, though, they were not *introducing* these innovations, but *reviving* them. In essence, they were reminding the church of its past connection with the ancient Christian traditions of Catholicism, while maintaining its Protestant ethos.

In the eighteenth century, the non-juror⁵⁴ bishops created their own liturgies, which allowed for a ritualistic interpretation, particularly because they assumed the doctrine of the real presence at the Eucharist.⁵⁵ But these liturgies were not officially used in the mainstream English Anglican Church, although they influenced the Scottish Episcopal Church. There is evidence that pockets of ritualist activity continued throughout the eighteenth century, and that pastoral activity and faithful worship were sustained.⁵⁶ Thus, it was probably exaggeration when Tractarians, ecclesiologists and ritualists claimed that the church had reached a low ebb of devotion during the eighteenth century. Likewise, it cannot be claimed that the work of the Tractarians and ritualists completely refashioned Anglicanism. It is probably more accurate to say, as Herring suggests, that “the real historical significance [lies] in viewing the Tractarian clergy as part of a broader picture of reform and revival evident

⁵¹ Yates, *Anglican Ritualism in Victorian Britain*, 12.

⁵² East-facing altars, candles on the altar, incense, bowing and crossing, some vestments and even an elaborate celebration of Candlemas. See Yates, *Anglican Ritualism in Victorian Britain*, 18-21.

⁵³ Yates, *Anglican Ritualism in Victorian Britain*, 17-20.

⁵⁴ Non-jurors in England were those who, having sworn an oath of allegiance to James II, felt compelled to maintain that oath after the sitting king had been deposed and replaced by William III.

⁵⁵ Yates, *Anglican Ritualism in Victorian Britain*, 25.

⁵⁶ Yates, *Anglican Ritualism in Victorian Britain*, 27-38.

within the Church of England from at least the 1830s".⁵⁷ However, as this dissertation will show, ordinary people and clergy alike interpreted the changes taking place in the church as ritualist or Romanist, even if the developments were not necessarily partisan.⁵⁸ In that sense, at least, it may have seemed to nineteenth century Anglicans that there was an imminent threat that the Church of England was making moves towards Roman Catholicism (and in their minds papal tyranny). For this reason, and within this broad understanding of nineteenth century reform and revival, I briefly examine the historical context of high churchmanship, Tractarianism, ecclesiology and ritualism so that the full range of theological ideas and practices which were often termed "ritualist" can be understood in later chapters.

High Church

Two distinct and historic factions existed in mainstream Anglicanism in the opening decades of the nineteenth century, namely the high church camp on the one extreme; and the evangelical on the other. The high church party had been a consistent feature of Anglicanism from its birth. At some points, high churchmanship was characterised by beauty in worship, through incorporation of candles on the altar, use of incense, use of Eucharistic vestments and so forth. Clerics such as Laud in the early seventeenth century were of this mould. Strongholds of this type of high churchmanship seem to have existed well into the eighteenth century. Yet, high churchmanship was not confined by these characteristics. Indeed, as is shown below, it took on a more intellectual character related to doctrine more than to the externals of worship. Thus, when Tractarians, ecclesiologists and ritualists emerged (all discussed below), they were not reinventing Anglicanism. They were, in reality, reviving aspects of its character which had been active for much of its history, but which had, for the most part, been periphery in nature. Indeed, even high churchmen were allied to aspects of a Catholic revival, particularly in terms of liturgy and decorum, but not necessarily ceremonial.

"High church" has accumulated shades of meaning since its first use in Anglicanism during the seventeenth century.⁵⁹ By the early nineteenth century a proponent of high church ideals was usually someone who valued the apostolic succession and its expression through the traditional three-fold ordained ministry (deacon, priest and bishop); the inherited liturgy and sacraments of the church; the supremacy of the Bible, along with the accepted creeds; the importance of the Early Church and its witness; sacramental grace and its outworking in good works, embodied in self-denial and charity (as opposed to the evangelical focus on individual spiritual conversion and ecstatic experiences); and a belief in the divine right of a royal line of rulers, exemplified in a strong bond between church and state.⁶⁰ In short, they were theological and spiritual conservatives willing to accept and perpetuate the received *status quo*. Their conservative stance earned them the title "orthodox" in some literature.⁶¹

In the early decades of the nineteenth century there appears to have been a fair amount of fluidity and contact between different strands of Anglican thought which broadly held many or all of the abovementioned ideals. Such conservative schools of thought tended to be characterised by serious intellectual discourse on matters of faith, but did not lead into Unitarian or Dissenting positions. Any scholars, for example, who challenged the doctrine of

⁵⁷ Herring, *The Oxford Movement in Practice*, 8.

⁵⁸ For example, Reed claims that lay people, in particular, could use the accusation of "ritualism" against a priest in an attempt to settle scores. See Reed, *Glorious Battle*, 35.

⁵⁹ Nockles, *The Oxford Movement in Context*, 27.

⁶⁰ See Nockles, *The Oxford Movement in Context*, 25-26 and Platt, "The Rise of Advanced Ritualism in New York City", 332.

⁶¹ Nockles, *The Oxford Movement in Context*, 28-31.

the Trinity would not have been considered orthodox high churchmen. Likewise, anyone who tended towards Dissenting views of church polity would not have been accepted.

By the mid-nineteenth century high churchmen continued to hold the ideals described above, but in an effort to negate the effects of liberalism on the one hand and burgeoning ritualism on the other, their beliefs about liturgy, ritual and theology became more rigidly conservative, so that not all intellectuals could be accommodated under the umbrella term of “high church”. Because of their traditional tendencies and reluctance to rock the political boat, high churchmen were sometimes nick-named “high and dry”. Yet, while they tended not to be “pioneers, exploring and expanding the limits of acceptable belief and ceremonial... they often sheltered those who were, and they were responsible for many of the most significant changes brought about in the course of the Church revival...”⁶²

Tractarianism

The two historic and polarised camps of Anglicanism could not contain the wide variety of thought which began to ferment in the established church as responses to the high-tide of Romanticism, the staggering growth of the British Empire and the Industrial Revolution. Numerous efforts to address these fermenting currents arose in what historians generally agree were multifaceted waves of ecclesiastical transformation, each with specific priorities.⁶³

One of these broader movements sought to revive an awareness of the Catholicity of Anglicanism. It centred around three theologians at Oxford University (hence the “Oxford Movement”) – John Keble (1792 – 1866), Edward Pusey (1800 – 1882) and John Newman (1801 – 1890) – and emerged in the 1830s around the time of John Keble’s *Assize Sermon* (discussed below). Several sympathetic groups sprang up soon afterwards with what at first glance appeared to be similar aims. While these groups generally traced their geneses to the influential group of Oxford theologians, they tended to advance new, more specifically Catholic teachings, seldom looking to the triumvirate for acceptance or guidance. For that matter Keble, Pusey and Newman did not always view developments made in response to their teachings favourably.⁶⁴ Nevertheless, it was with these three scholars that much of the serious nineteenth century Catholic ferment took shape and entered mainstream English thought.

The term “Oxford Movement” is not the only descriptor of this initial influential group of priest-dons. In fact, in academic literature the term Tractarianism seems to be preferred, perhaps because it refers to the published tracts which cemented the theology and beliefs of the movement in the popular imagination (discussed below). Nockles says, “There were theological, literary and cultural precursors [to Tractarianism] elsewhere, parallel awakenings on the European continent, but at heart, it was the University of Oxford and its colleges, and in particular, though by no means exclusively, one college, Oriel, which provided the *genius loci* for its birth, growth, early struggles and its denouement”.⁶⁵ Indeed, a fair number of the early Tractarian enthusiasts had been students at Oriel, and had been tutored by Keble, Pusey or Newman. The significance of this academic genesis is that the movement originally focused on concerns of the university at the time, i.e. raising academic

⁶² Reed, *Glorious Battle*, 112.

⁶³ See Nockles, *The Oxford Movement in Context*, 25-43; Pickering, *Anglo-Catholicism*, 17-23; and Reed, *Glorious Battle*, 3-28.

⁶⁴ See Reed, *Glorious Battle*, 16-21.

⁶⁵ Nockles, Peter B. “The Oxford Movement on a Oxford College” in *The Oxford Movement: Europe and the Wider World 1830 – 1930*, Stewart J. Brown and Peter B. Nockles (eds). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012, 12.

standards and, as a result, religious and moral behaviour.⁶⁶ The outworking of this was a concern for strong theological underpinnings (the academic side), which were then demonstrated in related codes of living (the religious and moral side).

The formal beginning of the Tractarian movement was pinpointed by Newman as the *Assize Sermon* titled “National Apostasy” given by Keble on 14 July 1833 and it lasted well into the nineteenth century (mainly through the first generation of Tractarians). National apostasy in this instance refers to a political decision by the English Parliament to suppress several Irish bishoprics in an effort to rationalise state spending. While Keble may have been generally sympathetic to the unwieldy workings of the Anglican Church and its consequent over-expenditure, what he strongly detested was the interference of a lay parliament (some of whom were not practicing Anglicans) in church matters.⁶⁷ Thus, the formal birth of Tractarianism was not directly related to worship in the church, but rather a protest against the strong links between state and church and the practical implications associated with these historical links. The sermon fell on fertile ground: there was a similar feeling among several others that the independence of the church was crucial if it was to perform its spiritual function.

The result of the sermon was a series of ninety essays entitled *Tracts for the Times*, published between 1833 and 1841. It was these tracts which provided the foundation for Tractarian thought, although not all clergy who associated themselves with the movement accepted their entire contents. In effect, since the tracts were essentially theological treatises it meant that their readership was limited to those who had an intellectual background (both ordained and lay) and those with a particular interest in theology. The subsequent acceptance or rejection of the tracts thus ultimately lay with the intellectual elite who understood their contents.⁶⁸

The tracts provide hints of the theological stance of a typical Tractarian. In summary, these included belief in apostolic succession; divine right episcopacy; the Church as legitimate interpreter and custodian of Scripture as mediated through the Catholic traditions of antiquity; priestly vocation and anointing; the real presence at the Eucharist; Eucharistic sacrifice; baptismal regeneration; the power of the ordained clergy to forgive sins; the autonomy of the church from the state.⁶⁹ Yet, as with high churchmanship, to define Tractarianism too narrowly is perhaps to miss the point. Once the last of the tracts had been published in 1841, Tractarian thought and practice continued to develop and those subscribing to the title “Tractarian”, while sharing many similar beliefs, often disagreed on certain points. Nonetheless, there are some rather striking instances of general consensus in terms of the practice of faith. For example, an ascetic lifestyle, including fasting and charitable giving; regular Communion; auricular confession; keeping of the sanctoral cycle; a sense of economy and reserve; celibacy; reviving adherence to the *Book of Common Prayer 1662* rubrics; and the revival of monasticism.⁷⁰ Broadly, though, Tractarians were Anglicans who believed that “the Church of England had a catholic heritage and was therefore Catholic in essence [lower case and capitalisation of the word “catholic” is original to the source]”.⁷¹ Here it is necessary to add that while they may have treasured Catholic essentials, they did not subscribe to adopting Roman Catholic liturgy, ceremonial, vestments or aspects of its

⁶⁶ Nockles, “The Oxford Movement on a Oxford College”, 17.

⁶⁷ For a detailed, if slightly light-hearted, account of Victorian English political workings in relation to the church, see Chadwick, Owen. *The Spirit of the Oxford Movement: Tractarian Essays*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, 63-85.

⁶⁸ Reed, *Glorious Battle*, 62.

⁶⁹ Herring, *The Oxford Movement in Practice*, 6 and Pickering, *Anglo-Catholicism*, 17.

⁷⁰ Herring, *The Oxford Movement in Practice*, 6 and 11-13.

⁷¹ Pickering, *Anglo-Catholicism*, 17.

architecture wholesale. Indeed, the attributes of economy and reserve characterised their approach to what many of them would have considered non-essentials. The mere fact that large numbers of Tractarians who did not secede to Rome were often vocally anti-Roman, seems to emphasise this point.⁷²

However, Tractarianism was certainly not only an intellectual movement. Franklin shows how Pusey, unlike Keble and Newman, tried to influence parish life directly through his beliefs. In particular he wished to create visible Bodies of Christ – close-knit communities centred in the local parish church. These communities were to be places where Christ's message of the unity of humanity could be demonstrated through regular celebrations of the Eucharist and non-segregated seating (i.e. no pew rents). Pusey's work in his own parish (his foundation of St Saviour's in Leeds), his support of Wantage (a parish in Oxfordshire), his generous financial giving and his sermons all point to this conclusion. In particular, for both St Saviour's and Wantage, he tried to create centres of spirituality around the parish church, including not just religious services, but social guilds for church members, outreach programmes and so forth. Pusey's concern for the church's impact in an ever mechanised society was prophetic. He foresaw the gradual secularisation of England, and felt that the only way to curb this powerful tide was to create the kind of all-encompassing parish life which he sought to embody at Leeds. While his dreams of Christian community were never fully realized at St Saviour's, they did succeed at Wantage. Indeed, the idea seems to have borne incredible fruit there.⁷³ Pusey was not alone. Herring documents the patient pastoral work of numerous clergy who identified themselves as Tractarians.⁷⁴

One of the results of the initial wave of Tractarian thought was a number of secessions to the Roman Catholic Church - the most notorious was Newman who seceded in 1845. In 1850 a new system of dioceses was established by the Roman Catholic Church in England. The upshot was strong popular opposition under the banner "Papal aggression". The backlash was not only among ordinary people, but reached all the way to the English Parliament which passed an anti-Catholic bill entitled the Ecclesiastical Titles Act in 1851. The furore around Catholicism drew attention to advocates of Tractarianism, primarily because a number of them had moved over to Rome. Thus, opposition grew and resulted in several riots (discussed below). Nevertheless, those Tractarians who remained in the Anglican Church continued to uphold their principles and, largely due to their characteristic attributes of economy and reserve, slowly effected their ideals. Indeed, time was of the essence for Tractarians. Many of them realised that a thorough reimagining of and re-educating about the Catholicity of the church would be a long-term endeavour fraught with misunderstanding and conflict, but worth the wait.⁷⁵

In terms of Tractarianism's global reach, that the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG) had Tractarian sympathies⁷⁶ meant that some of its most important tenets would travel to the colonies. Thus, ideals such as apostolic succession, ecclesiastical authority and the bishop as the centre of unity and leader of mission meant that many colonial churches were bound to absorb something of the movement's character.⁷⁷ Additionally, the Colonial Bishops Fund, which was established to finance the creation and maintenance of

⁷² Chapman, Mark. "The Oxford Movement, Jerusalem and the Eastern Question" in *The Oxford Movement: Europe and the Wider World 1830 – 1930*, Stewart J. Brown and Peter B. Nockles (eds). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012, 225.

⁷³ See Franklin, "Puseyism in the Parishes: Leeds and Wantage Contrasted", 377-395.

⁷⁴ Herring discusses the parochial work of Tractarian clergy at length in chapter 3 of Herring, *The Oxford Movement in Practice*.

⁷⁵ Herring, *The Oxford Movement in Practice*, 4-5.

⁷⁶ Hardwick, *An Anglican British World*, 144 and 241.

⁷⁷ Bremner, *Imperial Gothic*, 13.

several colonial sees, had as its trustees several Tractarian sympathisers. This resulted in numerous university educated, Tractarian sympathisers being appointed as colonial bishops.⁷⁸

There were numerous other names for developments associated with the movement in popular consciousness, mostly with negative associations. For example, “Puseyite” (a term which appears frequently in this dissertation and which is derived from Edward Pusey’s name), which was usually used to describe a person who in some way embodied so-called Catholic leanings. Likewise, “Romish” or “Popish” are common pejorative terms, having the same associations. There are many more, but these are the most widely used.

Ecclesiology

Tractarianism was only one movement among a wave of other Catholicising initiatives within Anglicanism. Yates identifies two contemporary stirrings, namely ecclesiology and ritualism, which are sometimes directly associated with Tractarianism, but which more likely draw on historical trajectories which long pre-date the 1830s.⁷⁹ These movements were related in varying ways to the theological underpinning which found voice in the ninety *Tracts for the Times* but appear to be more directly a result of historicism and Romanticism. Initially these developments flourished in Cambridge under the zealous guidance of John Mason Neale (1818 – 1866).

Theology and practice were not the only aspects of ecclesiastical life that were reformed during the nineteenth century. At the University of Cambridge a group of young scholars, enthused by the *Tracts of the Times*, began a society to reform church design. Neale was famously quoted as saying that the, “Tract writers missed one great principle... Aestheticks [sic]”.⁸⁰ So was born the Cambridge Camden Society in 1839. Their work was to encourage the study of Christian art, to restore existing ancient churches and to provide “correct” (in their minds “Gothic”) plans for newly planned ones. They achieved this mainly through their periodical *The Ecclesiologist* which was published regularly between 1841 and 1863. There was a related movement in Oxford, although not as famous or notorious, called the Oxford Society for Promoting the Study of Gothic Architecture. Both groups were instrumental in creating general acceptance of what would become the Gothic Revival in architecture in England. It was such a popular phenomenon that it soon spread beyond the confines of the church, so that buildings across the British Empire began to embody this characteristic style. Astonishingly, at first, the Cambridge Camden Society managed to garner support from across the Anglican Church party spectrum (and indeed, beyond the confines of Anglicanism itself). It may be that the society’s appeal to antiquity, rather than Catholicity, encouraged such widespread support.⁸¹ It was only when Neale openly identified his Tractarian sympathies that it became necessary to rename the group as the Ecclesiological Society in 1846.⁸² The influence of ecclesiology outlasted many of its early proponents, and in essence full-blown ritualism (described below) was probably more of an outgrowth of ecclesiology than Tractarianism. However, while it is easy to pinpoint the start of the movement (1839), it is not as easy to determine its end-date. Like Tractarianism, it was largely overtaken in the next generation by ritualism.

It was Neale’s enthusiasm for what he and his disciples named the “science of ecclesiology” (which he took to mean the study of the aesthetics of church design, furnishing

⁷⁸ Bremner, *Imperial Gothic*, 13.

⁷⁹ Yates, *Anglican Ritualism in Victorian Britain*, 48.

⁸⁰ As quoted in Bremner, *Imperial Gothic*, 13.

⁸¹ Reed, *Glorious Battle*, 43.

⁸² Reed, *Glorious Battle*, 28 and Pickering, *Anglo-Catholicism*, 101.

and worship)⁸³ which fueled the imaginations of numerous clergy and laity, such that they came to be known as “ecclesiologists”.⁸⁴ Thus, while there was a primarily intellectual movement in Oxford,⁸⁵ there were other groups which envisioned the practical implications of Catholic theological teaching. At the beginning, ecclesiologists focused their attention mainly on church architecture, with a particular penchant for “correct” Gothic structures. These “correct” churches usually had stone altars, choir stalls in the sanctuary, smaller pulpits set off to the side of the sanctuary entrance (as opposed to the three-decker pulpit so popular in the seventeenth century), and open pews (rather than rented box pews). Quite often they accepted the theological tenets of the Tractarians, including the attribute of reserve.

Ecclesiologists focused mainly on art and architecture, but also explored and expounded on church furnishings, vestments and hymnody. For example, Neale was the first major advocate of open pews (as opposed to box pews).⁸⁶ It was his passionate work in this regard which eventually won universal support in the Church of England. Additionally, Neale and a number of his supporters, were among the first to regularly use a chasuble when celebrating Communion. Neale’s most enduring contribution, however, was his memorable translations of ancient Latin and Greek hymns which are still used today.⁸⁷

Not all Tractarians were ready supporters of ecclesiology. In fact, it seems that only a minority of the members of the Cambridge Camden Society were actually Tractarian sympathisers.⁸⁸ For the most part, these Tractarians were deeply suspicious of the “fundamentalism of these so-called ecclesiologists”.⁸⁹

Ritualism

Several authors agree that a new wave of Anglo-Catholic revival began in the early 1860s.⁹⁰ Reed identifies the riots of 1860 against ritualist innovation at St George’s in London (in this case, the wearing of Eucharistic vestments and intoning the service) as the official starting point.⁹¹ Only a year before, a body of Tractarians, ecclesiologists and ritualists had formed the English Church Union to protect the legal interests of their movements.⁹² Reed argues that the furor which accompanied the publication of the theologically liberal collection of *Essays and Reviews* (1860), as well as Colenso’s commentaries on Romans (1861) and the Pentateuch (a series of seven volumes starting in 1862), provided something of a respite for

⁸³ In the context of Anglicanism during the mid-nineteenth century, the term “ecclesiology” referred to both Neale’s movement and the formal academic study of the church. In the context of this dissertation, the former meaning is adopted throughout. Indeed, scholarly writing concerning Anglo-Catholicism (as defined below) uses the former meaning.

⁸⁴ Sometimes Neale’s disciples were called “Camdenites” (derived from the Cambridge *Camden Society*).

⁸⁵ The notion that Tractarianism was simply an intellectual endeavour is challenged below.

⁸⁶ Herring, *The Oxford Movement in Practice*, 85.

⁸⁷ Reed, *Glorious Battle*, 73-74

⁸⁸ Herring, *The Oxford Movement in Practice*, 89.

⁸⁹ Michael Chandler’s sympathetic, but balanced, biography of Neale includes a specific chapter on his contribution to psalmody and hymnody. See Chandler, Michael. *The Life and Work of John Mason Neale*. Leonminster: Fowler Wright, 1995, 171-201.

⁹⁰ See, for example, Reed, *Glorious Battle*, 57-58 and Pereiro, James. “The Oxford Movement and Anglo-Catholicism” in *The Oxford History of Anglicanism: Partisan Anglicanism and its Global Expansion, 1829 – c.1914*, Rowan Strong (ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017, 201. Herring places the beginning of ritualism two years earlier in 1858. See Herring, *The Oxford Movement in Practice*, 197.

⁹¹ Reed, *Glorious Battle*, 57-59.

⁹² Originally the union was named the Church of England Protection Society. Their initial aim was to challenge the jurisdiction of secular courts in matters of faith and worship. Later they defended particular clergy against the Public Worship Regulation Act of 1874 (discussed below in the main text).

ritualists in which their early campaign could regroup and grow.⁹³ The reserve of the Tractarians had, for the most part, kept over-enthusiastic clergy with ritualistic tendencies contained in favour of a gradual acceptance of theological principles and minor liturgical changes. By the 1860s, however, a new generation of clergy was emerging with aesthetic concerns, closely related to those which had been expounded by the Cambridge Camdenites, but more fully expanded and defended. This renewed wave of Catholicisation lasted well into the twentieth century.

The terms “ritualism” and “ritualist” are actually older than the movement described here. John Jebb (1805 – 1866), a well-known English Anglican cleric, spoke of “ritualism” as early as 1856 in a published sermon entitled *The Principles of Ritualism Defended*. It seems that it was only in the mid-1860s that the term was used to describe a particular type of theological and practical standpoint,⁹⁴ although it is highly probable that it was used in a more general pejorative sense much earlier.⁹⁵ Bishop Robert Gray used the terms “ritualism” and “ritualist” at about this time (c. 1867 or 1868) in a letter to Bishop Thomas Welby of St Helena Island implying the theological and practical meanings (Welby features more prominently in this dissertation in chapter four).⁹⁶ It is difficult to establish if Gray’s use of these terms is the earliest South African usage. It is likely that those who opposed any form of ritualism in South Africa were using the term earlier or at about the same time. However, as is shown in chapter four below, even opponents of ritualism in South Africa were using pejorative terms such as “Romanising” in the 1860s, rather than “ritualism”.

But what was the essential difference between Tractarians and the ritualists, or between the ecclesiologists and ritualists? Primarily it was how the two groups defined antiquity and how they acted on their archaeological and scholastic research. A Victorian Tractarian sympathiser, Philip Freeman, suggested that while the Tractarians looked to the Early Church for inspiration and guidance, the ritualists only went as far back as the medieval era.⁹⁷ However, even while valuing the contribution of the Early Church, Tractarians did not try to emulate the exact liturgical performances of the first three-hundred years of Christianity. The ritualists, in contrast, seemed intent on reviving liturgical replicas from the medieval past – a characteristic also of the ecclesiologists. Also, while the Tractarians revived long-ignored rubrics from the Anglican *Book of Common Prayer 1662*, they did not appeal to the medieval liturgical or ceremonial revivals (many associated with the Sarum Rite) which the ritualists so prized.⁹⁸

Theologically, one of the most important underpinnings of the later ritualist wave of revival (from the 1860s onwards) was related to the doctrine of the real presence at the Eucharist which had gradually been developing since the 1830s. For the early Tractarians real presence was a “spiritual” reality; but for the ritualists it had become a physical one.⁹⁹ The ritualists affirmed the sacrificial nature of the Eucharistic offering, with the priest acting as “vicarious representative of Christ in heaven, eternally offering himself in sacrifice to his father”.¹⁰⁰ The reality of the physical presence required, in their minds, the appropriate

⁹³ Reed, *Glorious Battle*, 59-60.

⁹⁴ See Thurston, Herbert. “Ritualists”, *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 13. New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1912.

⁹⁵ Although historians such as Yates speak about ritualism emerging in the 1830s, I have not found an explicit statement of when the term was first used. It is unclear whether their use of the term is anachronistic (i.e. a historical extrapolation), or if it was already in regular usage in the 1830s.

⁹⁶ Beckman, Alan Peter. *A Clash of Churchmanship: Robert Gray and Evangelical Anglicans 1847 – 1872*. North-West University MA thesis, 2011, 86 – 87.

⁹⁷ Herring, *The Oxford Movement in Practice*, 226.

⁹⁸ Nockles, *The Oxford Movement in Context*, 215.

⁹⁹ Herring, *The Oxford Movement in Practice*, 201.

¹⁰⁰ Herring, *The Oxford Movement in Practice*, 203.

liturgical and ceremonial context; hence the revival of Roman ceremonies and manual acts, as well as the introduction of incense. While it seemed to the ritualists that their theological beliefs were natural steps in a gradual progression of logical thought, the general English public was not ready for such advanced imitations of Roman Catholicism. Additionally, there was the problem of the Church of England as an established church, unequivocally linked to the state and thus beholden to its laws. The law did not seem to allow for the advancement of the ritualists, and while the legal system had not been used to challenge ceremonial practice for a long time, the liturgical and ceremonial experiments of the ritualists provided just the right circumstances for such legislation to be tested. However, the ritualists were ready for their opponents, and proved fairly adept at interpreting the law quite creatively (see below).

The unfortunate result of the confidence, and sometimes hard-headedness, of ritualists was increased feelings of frustration among the evangelical camp and those from mainstream Anglicanism who viewed the ritualists with deep suspicion because of their affiliation to Roman Catholic doctrine and practice.¹⁰¹ It is likely that both the evangelicals and the anti-Catholics were concerned about the implications of ritualism. On the one hand, could a move towards Catholicism lead towards “voluntaryism” (when the church no longer fosters direct links to the state and membership becomes entirely voluntary) and the ultimate triumph of dissent?¹⁰² Or, on the other, could Romeward initiatives lead to authoritarian tyranny under the Pope. Both ideas were probably equally worrisome to Victorian Anglicans, who themselves were often trying to uphold and maintain the *status quo*.

To curb the growth of ritualism, as some called it, the English Parliament intervened, producing in 1874 the Public Worship Regulation Act.¹⁰³ The bill was promoted by the Archbishop of Canterbury at the time, Archibald Tait (1811-1882), who was concerned about the growth of ritualism and its consequences, in ordinary parish churches in particular, and to the authority of bishops in general. The act created a new court which could hear cases related to the regulations of Anglican worship as guided by the *Book of Common Prayer 1662*. Section 8, in particular, was directed at ritualism.¹⁰⁴ The effect of its process through Parliament and its testing in the courts was controversial from the beginning. Notable politicians and sections of the public of the day expressed their misgivings about the law and its outworking. In all, five clergy were imprisoned in terms of the law, and numerous others

¹⁰¹ Cf. anti-Catholicism discussed in the literature review above

¹⁰² Norman, Edward. “When the Faith was Set Free” in *Not Angels but Anglicans: A History of Christianity in the British Isles* (revised and updated edition), Henry Chadwick (ed.). Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2010, 213-214. The constitutional quandary of allowing non-Anglicans into the Parliamentary system, which would have resulted with the introduction of religious volunteerism, would have compromised the integrity of an Erastian Church of England whose head was the monarch and whose governing body was Parliament. See Norman, “When the Faith was Set Free”, 218. Could non-Anglicans govern the Anglican Church? And if they could, what would the consequences be for Anglicanism. In a sense, this is exactly what Tractarians had initially clubbed together to protest against.

¹⁰³ For a detailed analysis and contextual history of the act, see Graber, Gary W. *Ritual Legislation in the Victorian Church of England: Antecedents and Passage of the Public Worship Regulation Act, 1874*. Lewiston: Mellen, 1993.

¹⁰⁴ That in such church any alteration in or addition to the fabric, ornaments, or furniture thereof has been made without lawful authority, or that any decoration forbidden by law has been introduced into such church; or, 1. That the incumbent has within the preceding twelve months used or permitted to be used in such church or burial ground any unlawful ornament of the minister of the church, or neglected to use any prescribed ornament or vesture; or, 2. That the incumbent has within the preceding twelve months failed to observe, or to cause to be observed, the directions contained in the *Book of Common Prayer* relating to the performance, in such church or burial ground, of the services, rites and ceremonies ordered by the said book, or has made or has permitted to be made any unlawful addition to, alteration of, or omission from such services, rites and ceremonies... See Douglas, David Charles. *English Historical Documents, 1833 - 1874*. London: Routledge, 1996, 404-406.

were tried, but in retrospect, the law was a failure.¹⁰⁵ While it may have curbed some enthusiasts, it seemed to encourage others. Additionally, ritualism's encounters with the law courts helped them to concentrate their aims. The English Church Union provided "six points" of worship which they felt were worth challenging in court, should the need arise. They were: Eucharistic vestments; eastward celebration of the Communion; candles on the altar; mixed chalice; wafer bread; and incense.¹⁰⁶ These six points certainly do not represent the full spectrum of ritualist practice, which included benediction of the sacrament, reserved sacrament tabernacles, veneration of saints (and their relics) and so on, but at least give a minimum set of characteristics.

The main organ of the ritualists was a newspaper, still in existence, called the *Church Times*, although today it is not so strongly partisan. This paper unashamedly promoted and debated advanced ritualism, commented on all manner of church news and reviewed literature, including that which they found offensive.¹⁰⁷

"Ritualism" appears to have emerged as a pejorative slogan, but the ultimate long-term influence of the ritualists knocked some of the tarnish from the negative nuances of this label. There appear to have been two waves of ritualism, the earlier one closely allied to the description of Tractarianism described above, while the other, starting in about 1860, was more forthrightly and deliberately controversial. For the most part, ritualists were clergy and laity who valued the outward architecture, liturgy, ceremonial (including manual acts such as bowing, crossing oneself, etc.), vesture, decoration and music which characterized selected aspects of medieval western Christianity. For them, to a greater or lesser degree, these features of the place and conduct of worship situated the church within the heritage of Catholicism, and thus aligned them with the theological direction of the Oxford Movement. However, the underlying antiquarian, medievalist and Romantic stirrings, which found acceptance throughout Europe in the mid- to late-nineteenth century, also played a role in shaping this particular brand of Anglicanism.¹⁰⁸ The terms "ritualism" and "ritualist" were definitely being used from the 1860s right through to beyond the turn of the nineteenth century. Depending on the context, they could refer to any of the separate movements described above. In the sources, the terms are used widely for a variety of different revivals and innovations both by those who supported ritualism, and those who opposed it. The definition of ritualism as described here is a later historical designator for the most radical movement of the renewal of Anglican worship within the high church camp.

The Tractarians, ecclesiologists and ritualists displayed varying degrees of consistency in terms of the interpretation of the nature of Catholic heritage. Depending on their priorities, antiquity was interpreted as the Early Church, the Church before the great schism of western and eastern Christianity, medieval western Christianity, Eastern Orthodoxy or Tridentine Catholicism.

¹⁰⁵ Professor Machin suggests that the strong reaction to ritualism was related to the anti-Catholic ethos of English culture at the time. However, he also suggests that the formal legislation which was passed to contain Catholicism gaining ground (the abovementioned act and the Ecclesiastical Titles Act 1851) were both ultimately failures. See Machin, G. I. T. "The Last Victorian Anti-Ritualist Campaign, 1895-1906", *Victorian Studies*, vol. 25, no. 3 (Spring 1982), 278.

¹⁰⁶ Reed, *Glorious Battle*, 69.

¹⁰⁷ For examples of the type of material which was carried by the paper, see its list of articles and reviews for 1866 which is particularly rich in ritualist defence and opposition to Colenso and other liberals.

¹⁰⁸ See, for example, Yates's discussion on these three influences on ritualism: Yates, *Anglican Ritualism in Victorian Britain*, 41-45. He concludes that these influences were fundamental in shaping and fueling both the Cambridge Camden Society and the Oxford Society for Promoting the Study of Gothic Architecture.

Other definitive terms

The term “Anglo-Catholicism” is more difficult to define. As a descriptive title, it had been claimed exclusively by all four groups identified above at some time during the nineteenth century. To muddy the waters even more, for some (well into the mid-nineteenth century), Anglo-Catholic carried its original meaning, i.e. the reformed Church of England.¹⁰⁹ Today it is common to use Anglo-Catholicism as an umbrella term for movements on the Catholic pole of the Catholic-evangelical Anglican spectrum. It will be used in this dissertation as a descriptive term incorporating Tractarianism, ecclesiology and ritualism, but not including the older high church faction.

The primary sources which form the basis of this study do not use the terminology as defined above in any consistent way. For the most part they tend to interpret any type of change in worship as “ritualist”, “Romish” or “Puseyite”. The value of the more precise definitions above is that they help to distinguish what was actually ritualism from the earlier and more understated movements of Tractarianism, ecclesiology or mere natural change. Additionally, assigning so-called “innovations” some kind of identity provides a slightly clearer view of what was migrating from the metropole to the periphery.

The premise of this research is that clergy and laity perceived changes in different ways, assigning them meaning without reference to the greater international conversation and movements within Anglicanism at the time. What becomes clear, particularly in terms of the colonial laity, is that any change which was sanctioned by some kind of colonial authority was quickly dubbed “Romish” or “Popish”. This reveals the strong democratic and anti-institutional ethos of the colonies in the Southern African region.¹¹⁰

English public revolt over ritualism

The points above about volunteerism and anti-Catholicism cannot be overstated in connection with any investigation of ritualism. There appears to have been a strong sense of English identity linked to the established nature of Anglicanism and the idea of England as a sovereign state apart from papal jurisdiction, particularly among the middle and upper classes. This political stance originated in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In other words, reactions against ritualism were not only religious, but political in nature. The middle and upper classes were, after all, the ones who benefitted from the *status quo*. As a result, any threat to this identity was quickly challenged. Also, it is important to see that theological ideals meant little to the general public. What they saw and reacted to were external changes. As early as the mid-1840s when the Bishops of London and Exeter had requested that clergy wear a surplice in the pulpit and thus obey the *Book of Common Prayer 1662* rubrics, public riots against this development ensued.¹¹¹ Neither of these changes were Tractarian, ecclesiological or ritualist. Again, on the matter of box pews or open pews, tempers flared. While the idea of abolishing box pews was pioneered by an ecclesiologist, it soon gained favour across the board; so this too was not a party matter. Yet, reaction against open pews was strong. Such reactions were probably simply human responses to what appeared to be significant physical changes in the fabric of life – a life in which rapid change was becoming the norm – or a threat to class distinctions. The fact that so many protests against ritualism included such guttural reactions as physical violence, throwing of fruit and vegetables and

¹⁰⁹ Nockles, *The Oxford Movement in Context*, 42-43.

¹¹⁰ Cf. discussion of anti-Catholicism in the literature review above.

¹¹¹ Herring, *The Oxford Movement in Practice*, 198.

defecating on church pews show just how raw this particular public nerve was.¹¹² Thus, it is important to view any backlash against perceived ritualism within the light of this particular form of English identity. But, importantly, anti-Catholicism, began to wane in the latter half of the nineteenth century. An increasingly secular society was disinterested in the “bigots” who held extreme religious views. Thus, this particular political form of English identity was being questioned from the mid-nineteenth century onwards.¹¹³

As the British Empire grew and came into contact with other cultures, it was challenged with “otherness” and usually reverted rigidly to what it perceived as English mores and values. Likewise, as Scots, Welsh and Irish immigrants began moving to England in great numbers during the nineteenth century, again, English identity was challenged. To a large extent, then, it seems that much of the reactionary momentum which manifested in England and the colonies in the nineteenth century can be linked to an ever wavering sense of what Englishness actually entailed. Perhaps it was to be expected that the reaction was explosive!

In the 1840s, civil unrest related to “ritualism” was limited mainly to the wearing of a surplice in the pulpit. While priests generally vested in a surplice for the liturgical sections of the service, it had been customary to wear a Geneva preaching gown in the pulpit. Tractarians had suggested that the prayer book rubrics required that the priest go directly from the altar (where the service was read) to the pulpit without changing vestments *en route*. Thus, wearing a surplice in the pulpit became a party badge for a time (cf. the discussion above of the Bishops of London and Exeter who required the wearing of a surplice in the pulpit, but had to rescind their requirements due to vigorous opposition). However, as the century progressed, even moderate evangelicals adopted the use of the surplice and even started wearing stoles. Other minor innovations, such as intoning the service, or introducing robed choirs and sung services, at first caused opposition in numerous parishes, but soon became popular and even fashionable. It was incense, Eucharistic vestments, lighted altar candles, wafer bread, mixing the chalice and elevating the chalice which were to become the most contentious issues.¹¹⁴ The legal system did not favour the ritualists, but it soon became clear that the differing judicial views on ritual and doctrine undermined the verdicts. It was because of these inconsistencies that the Public Worship Regulation Act was eventually passed. Action against ritualists continued right into the early twentieth century,¹¹⁵ but eventually lost momentum.

Negative sentiment against ritualism may not have been exclusively an English identity crisis, or a reactionary move from those benefitting from the *status quo*. There are many and nuanced reasons for an adverse reception of a Catholic movement within the church. One of them must have been the continuing theological crisis within Anglicanism, referred to in the introduction to chapter one and above. The early prayer books and formularies of the Church of England appear to espouse a strong influence from Calvin. In fact, Gregory Dix, one of the major Anglican liturgical historians of the twentieth century, claimed that Archbishop Thomas Cranmer was aiming beyond Calvin for a Zwinglian Eucharistic rite.¹¹⁶ There is enough evidence musically, at least, that Calvin’s influence infiltrated more than just the rites of the church.¹¹⁷ Metrical Psalmody, some of which had

¹¹² See Reed, *Glorious Battle*, 57-58 for more details.

¹¹³ Whisenant, James. “Anti-Ritualism and the Moderation of Evangelical Opinion in England in the Mid-1870s”, *Anglican and Episcopal History*, vol. 70, no. 4 (December 2001), 452.

¹¹⁴ For a succinct summary of the development of anti-ritualism in England, see Whisenant, “Anti-Ritualism and the Moderation of Evangelical Opinion in England in the Mid-1870s”, 456-464.

¹¹⁵ See Machin, “The Last Victorian Anti-Ritualist Campaign, 1895-1906”.

¹¹⁶ Dix, Gregory. *The Shape of the Liturgy*. New York: Seabury Press, 1982, 657.

¹¹⁷ Stipp, Neil. “The Music Philosophies of Martin Luther and John Calvin” in *The American Organist* (September 2007), 68.

been borrowed directly from the Genevan Psalter, formed the backbone of Anglican parish music-making from the late sixteenth century all the way through to the mid-nineteenth century.¹¹⁸ Indeed, even English church architecture was influenced by Calvin.¹¹⁹

Briefly, Calvin believed that there was no intermediary in the relationship between a person and Christ except scripture and the sacraments (for him Baptism and the Lord's Supper). In essence, the need for a sacramental priesthood, as well as numerous other practices such as the veneration of saints and external rituals (including vestments) which acted in some form of intermediary role were no longer necessary for Christians. Anglicanism, because of its adoption of the three-fold ministry of bishops, priests and deacons, alongside overhauled sacramental rites, created the theological ambiguity alluded to above. This was displayed in a number of ways in the tension between parish churches and cathedrals in England, where the former tended to display strong Calvinistic tendencies, while the latter tended to uphold a broad Catholicity through the adaption of medieval governance systems, music traditions and in some cases even ceremonial.

Thus, for a great many Anglican clergy and laity, a delicate balance of Calvinism on the one hand, with Catholicity on the other, was the norm. The Calvinistic influence was felt most strongly through the sacraments, rather than through the full-blown Presbyterianism of Scotland. One can understand, then, why the a move towards a Catholic interpretation of the sacraments, symbolised by Catholic-like architecture, ritual, ceremonial and plainsong hit such a raw nerve for many nineteenth-century Anglicans.

Summary

This chapter has defined four terms which will be used in this dissertation. The high church camp of Anglicanism has existed since the denomination's birth in the sixteenth century. At different times it has emphasised different aspects of what it means to be "high church". At the beginning of the sixteenth century, for example, Laudians were promoting ceremonial which was technically outside the limits set by the *Book of Common Prayer 1559*. By the nineteenth century, however, high churchmen were religious conservatives with a vested interest in the established nature of the church. While it is true that some orthodox high churchmen sympathised with the theological and aesthetic views of the Tractarians and ecclesiologists, they seldom went so far as to endorse or encourage full blown ritualism. The high church camp existed throughout the nineteenth century, without losing its basic essence, i.e. that of the conservative wing of Anglicanism supporting the existing British *status quo*.

The Tractarians sought to renew a sense of its Catholic identity in the Anglican Church, particularly because of its maintained apostolic succession. Additionally, they protested against the state interfering in church doctrine and worship. Their campaign started in 1833 and lasted late into the nineteenth century, although some historians claim that it all but died once Newman had seceded to Rome in 1845. While it seems that the movement did not actually die then, clergy committed to the teaching of the tracts acted with economy and reserve, which meant that their transformative work went largely under the radar. As a consequence, the movement was largely superseded by the more overt ritualists in the 1860s.

Ecclesiologists were mainly sympathetic to the Tractarian cause, but wanted to express the theological views of the Oxford Movement aesthetically. Their work began in

¹¹⁸ See Bethke, Andrew-John. "The Theology behind Music and its Performance in Anglican Worship: An Historical Exploration of Anglican Theological Attitudes to Music, Starting with the 1549 Book of Common Prayer and Finishing with An Anglican Prayer Book 1989", *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, vol. 153 (November 2015): 46 – 61.

¹¹⁹ Guillery, Peter. "Suburban Models, or Calvinism and Continuity in London's Seventeenth-Century Church Architecture", *Architectural History*, vol. 48 (2005), 97.

about 1839 and their influence extended throughout the remainder of the nineteenth century, although their publications ceased in the mid-1860s. They concentrated primarily on reviving medieval architecture, but also led the revival of Eucharistic vestments, hymnody and plainsong.

By the 1860s, a new group of clergy began reviving medieval liturgy and ceremonial with an unrestrained confidence which had been absent in Tractarianism. Their influence reached well into the twentieth century when they began celebrating widespread success in terms of the adoption of ritual in mainstream Anglicanism. For the ritualists, the basic aim was to introduce the “six points” which they considered essential for faithful sacramental worship. Yet, some clergy went far further than the six points in terms of ceremonial and liturgy.

Tractarians, ecclesiologists and ritualists are part of the broader reform movements which affected the Anglican Church during the nineteenth century. What this chapter has also shown is that while there were definitely separate groups with unique aims within the Catholic spectrum of Anglicanism, in public discourse, all three were often conflated. Part of the aim of this dissertation is to discern which developments in South Africa were actually ritualist in the academic and historical sense, and those which belonged rightly to Tractarians and ecclesiologists.

CHAPTER THREE

South African Anglicanism and ritualism

There is general agreement among historians that Anglicanism in South Africa has a strong Anglo-Catholic ethos.¹²⁰ It is not only historians who agree on this interpretation. By the end of the nineteenth century the Anglo-Catholic leanings of Anglicanism in the Cape and Natal colonies had aroused the suspicions of the Imperial Protestant Federation.¹²¹ This is not surprising given that the colony's first bishop was supported by the Colonial Bishops Fund (CBF), and that a great deal of additional backing for clerical stipends and church building was granted through the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG), both institutions which, in the mid-nineteenth century, were highly influenced by high churchmen and Tractarians.¹²² However, Anglicanism in the Southern African colonies did not always embody this ethos.

Anglican congregations in South Africa before Bishop Gray

The “English Church”,¹²³ as it was known in the Cape and Natal Colonies in the early nineteenth century appears, for the most part, to have been a reflection of the dominant churchmanship in Britain during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries; namely middle-of-the-road Calvinism. The last chapter discussed the theological tension which has been inherent in Anglicanism from its birth. Indeed, the Calvinist-tendencies of the Church of England prayer-book-rites and parish churchmanship sat uneasily alongside the hierarchy of the three-fold ministry and cathedral system inherited by Anglicanism from Rome. Indeed, the term “presbyter”, as opposed to “priest”, seems to have been preferred in some places in order to assert the non-sacerdotal ministry of full-time clergy. It seems that Anglican settlers coming to South Africa carried the broadly Calvinistic sense of worship and worship-space with them. Consider the earliest church buildings of South Africa, of which St John's in Bathurst (built in 1829) is a typical example: simple rectangular white washed interior, with clear-glass windows and little in the way of furnishings besides a pulpit, reading desk and communion table.¹²⁴ Pew rents determined congregational seating patterns along class

¹²⁰ See, for example, Davenport, Rodney. “Settlement, Conquest, and Theological Controversy: The Churches of Nineteenth-century European Immigrants” in *Christianity in South Africa: A Political, Social and Cultural History*, Richard Elphick and Rodney Davenport (eds.). Cape Town: David Philip, 1997, 57; England, “Tracing Southern African Anglicanism”, 17-20; Hinchliff, *The Anglican Church in South Africa*, 137 and 191; and Nuttall, Michael. “The Province of Southern Africa” in *The Oxford Guide to the Book of Common Prayer: A Worldwide Survey*, Charles Hefling and Cynthia Shattuck (eds.). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006, 318.

¹²¹ Wolffe, “Anti-Catholicism and the British Empire”, 55.

¹²² For a detailed investigation into the development and work of the Colonial Bishops Fund, see Hardwick, *An Anglican British World*, 99-131. For a brief introduction to the high church nature of the SPG, see Le Couteur, “Anglican High Churchmen and the Expansion of Empire”, 202.

¹²³ Darby, *Anglican Worship in Victorian Natal*, iii. Darby notes that to use the word “Anglican” for this period in history is really anachronistic. He chooses to avoid anachronisms. I, on the other hand, choose to use “Anglican” and “Anglicanism” simply for convenience.

¹²⁴ Cecil Lewis and G. E. Edwards speak of the British Colonial state paying for a building to seat 1 100 – 1 200 people, including a pulpit, reading desk, clerk's desk and an altar. Lewis and Edwards, *Historical Records*, 20.

lines.¹²⁵ Vestments tended to be simple: clergy wore a surplice for most of the service, but changed into a Genevan-style gown for preaching.¹²⁶ Consider also the descriptions of spirited metrical psalmody in Cape Town Anglican congregations from the late 1820s, indicative of Reformed practice, rather than the hymnody which was characteristic of Methodist and Congregational worship of the time.¹²⁷ Even in matters such as Christian conduct and spirituality, a strongly Reformed character was discernable.¹²⁸ Such congregations also shared a desire to remain independent, content to function along congregational lines rather than under centralised Diocesan authority.¹²⁹ Additionally, the clergy coming to South Africa to minister as colonial chaplains appear to have been mostly evangelical in character, particularly those sponsored by the Colonial Church Society.¹³⁰ For such clergy and laity, theological and ceremonial developments which signified a move away from Calvinist teaching on the unmediated relationship between an individual believer and Christ would have been offensive at best. For them, defending the church from a perceived Catholic advance may have been paramount to defending the true Christian faith. Yet, despite this independence and the Calvinistic influences on churchmanship, there were requests for a local bishop through the SPG to the government in Britain.¹³¹

Equally important, though, was that the colonial Anglican Church in South Africa at the time was dominated by lay involvement and a strong sense of the democratic rights of its church members.¹³² Because of the Cape Colony's history as a military garrison, the ministrations of Anglicanism began through military chaplains, but was extended to civilian chaplains once non-military settlers began arriving.¹³³ It was the burgeoning lay settler groups in Cape Town, Grahamstown and Port Elizabeth which supported and galvanised the church.¹³⁴ Thus, Hardwick is probably correct when he says, "The laity in South Africa..."

Hardwick suggests that "Churchmen in both Canada and the Cape claimed that colonists built churches simply because they wanted 'something respectable to build'". See Hardwick, *An Anglican British World*, 73.

¹²⁵ Hinchliff, *The Anglican Church in South Africa*, 23.

¹²⁶ Note the strong negative response of the congregation at St Paul's in Durban when a priest tried to preach in a surplice (1856 – 57) – discussed below in Chapter Four. See Darby, *Anglican Worship in Victorian Natal*, 169-170. Note also the cries of "No Popery" from the St George's congregation in Cape Town when their priest preached on fasting during Lent in 1840. See Lewis and Edwards, *Historical Records*, 25.

¹²⁷ Smith, Barry. *An Historical Survey of Organs, Organists and Music at St George's Cathedral from 1834 – 1952*. Rhodes University MA thesis, 1968, 49

¹²⁸ For example, the accusation of "Popery" from the St George's congregation in Cape Town when their priest preached on fasting during Lent in 1840. See Lewis and Edwards, *Historical Records*, 25.

¹²⁹ See Hinchliff, *The Anglican Church in South Africa*, 22-24 and 35. Also see Whibley, Pauline Megan. *Merriman of Grahamstown*. Cape Town: Howard Timms, 1982, 46. Hinchliff notes that clergy were not necessarily against the diocesan structures that a bishop would bring, but the congregations themselves seemed to prefer the independence they had become accustomed to. Democratization of hierarchical ecclesiastical models was not unique to Anglicanism nor to the Cape. Indeed, the Roman Catholic congregation in Cape Town before the arrival of Bishop Griffith in 1838 also fostered a strong lay leadership model, along with Catholics in the USA. See Denis, Philippe. *The Dominican Friars in Southern Africa: A Social History (1577 – 1990)*. Leiden: Brill, 1998, 75-82.

¹³⁰ See Beckman, *A Clash of Churchmanship*, 36. Beckman also lists all the clergy in the Cape Colony with a brief biography, see Beckman, *A Clash of Churchmanship*, 30 – 35.

¹³¹ See Hinchliff, *The Anglican Church in South Africa*, 24-26. Even evangelical clergy were requesting the appointment of a bishop. See Beckman, *A Clash of Churchmanship*, 110.

¹³² Hardwick, *An Anglican British World*, 8 and 67. Hewitt claims that the colonial clergy of the time were not licensed and were only subject to the governor of the Cape Colony. See Hewitt, James Alexander. *Sketches of English Church History in South Africa from 1795 - 1848*. Cape Town: Juta, 1887, 1.

¹³³ For a full list of clergy stationed at the Cape Colony from 1795 – 1847, see Hewitt, *Sketches of English Church History in South Africa*, Appendix F.

¹³⁴ Lewis and Edwards, *Historical Records*, 12-25 and Hinchliff, *The Anglican Church in South Africa*, 10-18. Much of Anglicanism's early history in South Africa appears to be based on a series of articles which appeared in the *Church Chronicle* in 1884 by written James Hewitt. Hewitt later produced a book entitled *Sketches of*

helped transform a military chaplaincy into a civilian church".¹³⁵ Perhaps it was this vested interest in the church which shaped the special role lay members played in the early growth of the church. Hardwick, speaking of colonial Anglican churches in general, adds, "...the colonial Church grew because it was supported by a diverse lay community that was highly mobile and highly proficient in raising money and building networks of recruitment. The colonial Anglican laity was, however, a shifting, heterodox population who could voluntarily join the Church and voluntarily leave it".¹³⁶

Also important is the nature of respectability which was linked with Anglican worship in South Africa during the early days of the colony under British rule. It seems that numerous Dutch colonists, who were actually members of the "established" Dutch Reformed Church, attended Anglican services to increase their standing and respectability.¹³⁷ Some even claimed that the Dutch enjoyed Anglican liturgy.¹³⁸ Indeed, the *Book of Common Prayer 1662*, which inherited much from its 1549, 1552 and 1559 progenitors, contained a great deal of Reformed doctrine (see above).¹³⁹ In a few cases, such strategic allegiance converted into actual adoption of Anglicanism, as in Graaff-Reinet where fifteen Dutch settlers were among the signatories of a petition for an Anglican clergyman.¹⁴⁰ Indeed, the man who came in response to this plea was a staunch evangelical whose preaching style suited the theological stance of both the small British settlers and the large Dutch population.¹⁴¹ In other circumstances, attendance did not necessarily convert to acceptance of Anglican rituals and membership. It is possible that the strong Calvinistic influence of the Dutch attendees in Anglican churches resulted in a stronger sense of Reformed doctrine and practice. Additionally, there appears to have been significant fluidity between Christian denominations in the colony, such that rules of membership were fairly flexible. Hardwick relates an incident where the voting rights of lay members of a vestry meeting in Grahamstown were called into question by the resident clergyman, John Heavyside. He thought that only members who received Anglican sacraments were entitled to vote. His vestry, on the other hand, felt that anyone who attended church regularly should be considered a member, and therefore an eligible voter.¹⁴² Thus, historians have found it tricky to gauge the accuracy and reliability of attendance records for Anglican churches.

There was no Anglican bishop in South Africa before the arrival of Robert Gray in 1848. While newly consecrated bishops *en route* to their dioceses in India and Australia had performed episcopal duties, the secular role of bishop was designated to the governor.¹⁴³ Thus, there was no specific system of parishes, nor for that matter, clerical formation and support. Significantly, there was no specific authority figure to promote particular doctrines or to regulate worship before his arrival.

English Church History in South Africa (1887) incorporating these articles. It is presumably Hewitt's book which Hinchliffe uses as a source in his history, even though it is not always cited. Hewitt does not venture before 1795, so where Hinchliff got his earlier records is a mystery.

¹³⁵ Hardwick, *An Anglican British World*, 89.

¹³⁶ Hardwick, *An Anglican British World*, 72.

¹³⁷ Hardwick, *An Anglican British World*, 68.

¹³⁸ Hardwick, *An Anglican British World*, 68.

¹³⁹ See, for example, Devereux, James A. "Reformed Doctrine in the Collects of the First *Book of Common Prayer*", *The Harvard Theological Review*, vol. 58, no. 1 (January 1965): 49-68.

¹⁴⁰ Hardwick, *An Anglican British World*, 72.

¹⁴¹ Beckman, *A Clash of Churchmanship*, 109-111.

¹⁴² See Hardwick, *An Anglican British World*, 76.

¹⁴³ Lewis and Edwards, *Historical Records*, 18-23 and Davenport, "Settlement, Conquest, and Theological Controversy", 52.

Robert Gray, high churchman or Tractarian?

It was into this context that Robert Gray (1809 – 1872), the newly appointed metropolitan Bishop of Cape Town, arrived in the Cape Colony on 20th February 1848 to take up residence in his diocese.¹⁴⁴ Recent historians have been alternately scathing¹⁴⁵ or indifferent¹⁴⁶ concerning Gray's contribution to South African history. Only a few paint him in a guardedly positive light.¹⁴⁷ In current church and social history, he is overwhelmingly overshadowed by the figure of John Colenso (1814 – 1883), first Bishop of Natal (see below). Nevertheless, it is clear that he was respected during his lifetime and in the immediate decades after his death, most particularly by clergy and laity with Tractarian leanings. Notwithstanding his current position in the greater historical narrative, historians agree that Gray should be remembered for two contributions: for his untiring energy, visiting vast swathes of his diocese and establishing numerous churches on the way; and his ambition to secure independence for the Anglican Church in South Africa.

The aim in this section is not to evaluate whether his contribution to history was positive or negative, nor to analyse his personal leadership style as a bishop, but to see to what extent he enabled the growth of ritualism in the Province he helped to shape. An important aspect of this aim is to determine where Gray's sympathies lay, primarily through his actions as a bishop. Was he a typical high churchman? Did he, as Howard Le Couteur suggests of colonial high church protagonists, envision an "organic society held together by bonds of deference, affection, and habit... a conception of society as hierarchic and authoritarian, in which a person's station in life was defined by private (landed) property (or lack of it)"?¹⁴⁸ Additionally, was he a conservative upholder of the *status quo* who was known neither as a pioneer nor innovator?¹⁴⁹

Gray told a colleague that his aim in his new diocese was to "engraft a new system – a new phase of religion – upon a previously existing one".¹⁵⁰ From the context detailed above, this entailed imposing an episcopal and hierarchical model, influenced by Tractarian theologies of episcopacy espoused by the CBF, upon a strongly democratised and Calvinistically influenced laity. If funding is anything to go by, the financing of the new Cape Town Diocese, which was initially administered by the CBF, showed just how nominal the interest in a local bishop was. Indeed, of the £17 700 required to establish the diocese, local fundraising had accumulated a mere £193!¹⁵¹ When the Diocese was eventually created and Gray consecrated, he was warmly welcomed by a good many of the clergy and congregations in the Cape Colony, but not everybody was quite as happy; after all, clerical and lay independence was being severely curtailed by episcopal authority, even if that authority was essentially "conciliatory".¹⁵² Interestingly, historical accounts seem to dwell equally on the

¹⁴⁴ Gray's diocese covered what is now the geographical region of South Africa. It was one of the largest dioceses in the world at the time.

¹⁴⁵ See Guy, *The Heretic*, 39 and 114, and Beckman, *A Clash of Churchmanship*, 87.

¹⁴⁶ Nicholas Southey supplies an excellent list of contemporary historians' views. See Southey, Nicholas. "Robert Gray and His Legacy to the Church of the Province of Southern Africa" in *Change and Challenge: Essays Commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the Arrival of Robert Gray as First Bishop of Cape Town (20 February 1848)*, John Suggit and Mandy Goedhals (eds.). Cape Town: CPSA, 1998, 18.

¹⁴⁷ Southey is such an example. See Southey, "Robert Gray and His Legacy to the Church of the Province of Southern Africa", 18-25.

¹⁴⁸ Le Couteur, "Anglican High Churchmen and the Expansion of Empire", 196.

¹⁴⁹ Reed has suggested that high churchmen embodied such characteristics. See Reed, *Glorious Battle*, 112.

¹⁵⁰ Hardwick, *An Anglican British World*, 118.

¹⁵¹ Hardwick, *An Anglican British World*, 109. Interestingly, Hinchliffe puts the figure closer to £18 000 – a small difference in our modern thinking of currencies, but a fairly large sum in the nineteenth century.

¹⁵² Hinchliff, *The Anglican Church in South Africa*, 35 and 38.

clerical *and* lay opposition to episcopal oversight. Indeed, all the South African bishops of the 1850s were at some point or another challenged for their so-called tyrannical leadership and ritualist tendencies; Gray was not the only target.¹⁵³ The point is that independence was not only a lay phenomenon. If the popularity of the *idea* of a bishop is laid aside, to what extent did Gray conform to the authoritarian model which seems to have been so feared by democratically-minded settlers? The answer lies in the type of historical source you consult. “Supporters spoke in praise of his principled determination and single-mindedness, opponents of an authoritarian rigidity and inflexibility”.¹⁵⁴ Perhaps what was missing from Gray’s approach was a concerted effort to adjust to local sensibilities, mainly working class,¹⁵⁵ before making major liturgical and structural changes reflecting upper class sensibilities. On the other hand, a form of diocesan government may never have evolved if Gray had not been strongly resolute in his approach to impose structure. Whatever antagonistic clergy and laity thought of Gray’s leadership style, he did seem to value the voice of the laity, even if guardedly. After all, he was willing to go against his mentors in England, and some clergy in South Africa, and give the laity a voting voice within local Provincial and Diocesan governing systems.¹⁵⁶ His reason was that in a voluntary church system, the bulk of the funds would come from the laity. Thus they were entitled to a say in its governance.¹⁵⁷

Most historians agree that Gray was a Tractarian sympathiser.¹⁵⁸ Nicholas Southey goes so far to suggest that he was “profoundly” influenced by Tractarianism.¹⁵⁹ Gray often consulted Samuel Wilberforce (1805 – 1873),¹⁶⁰ then Bishop of Oxford, who was the unofficial leader in high church circles. It seems that Gray considered Wilberforce a mentor or, at the very least, a confidant. It is likely, then, that he too considered himself a moderate high churchman. Indeed, it seems that he considered himself as a moderate churchman.¹⁶¹ But was Gray’s ministry in South Africa typically high church?

In chapter two, high churchmen were characterised as valuing: the apostolic succession expressed through the traditional three-fold ordained ministry; the inherited Anglican liturgy and sacraments of the church; the supremacy of the Bible and accepted creeds; the importance of the Early Church and its witness; sacramental grace and its outworking in good works; and a belief in the divine right of a royal line of rulers, exemplified in a strong bond between church and state. If these criteria are examined alongside the evidence of Gray’s life, the following conclusions can be deduced.

Firstly, he accepted apostolic succession and the three-fold ministry as well as the hierarchy which it implied. Importantly, he seems to have accepted this tenet with particularly high church nuances, where the bishop represented *and* embodied the church in a given geographical place.¹⁶² Thus, when Gray appointed Charles Mackenzie (1825 – 1862) as missionary bishop to the Zambezi, he was putting into practice the model of sending a bishop

¹⁵³ See, for example, Hinchliff, *The Anglican Church in South Africa*, 43-45 and 48-53.

¹⁵⁴ Southey, “Robert Gray and His Legacy to the Church of the Province of Southern Africa”, 20.

¹⁵⁵ In Gray’s own words, on his visitation of the eastern part of the diocese, “The people are too often coarse and offensive...”, Hinchliff, *The Anglican Church in South Africa*, 39.

¹⁵⁶ Southey, “Robert Gray and His Legacy to the Church of the Province of Southern Africa”, 22.

¹⁵⁷ Southey, “Robert Gray and His Legacy to the Church of the Province of Southern Africa”, 22.

¹⁵⁸ Hinchliff, *The Anglican Church in South Africa*, 30; Southey, “Robert Gray and His Legacy to the Church of the Province of Southern Africa”, 20; Beckman, *A Clash of Churchmanship*, 87; and Brember, *Imperial Gothic*, 208.

¹⁵⁹ Southey, “Robert Gray and His Legacy to the Church of the Province of Southern Africa”, 21.

¹⁶⁰ Hinchliff, *The Anglican Church in South Africa*, 83.

¹⁶¹ Beckman, *A Clash of Churchmanship*, 87.

¹⁶² This was in direct opposition to Venn’s evangelical missionary outlook which stressed the building up of a local community from the base. This local base would later elect/appoint their own episcopal leaders.

as the centre of a missionary endeavour, rather than appointing someone once local congregations had already been established (see discussion below). In other words, the bishop launches the church, rather than consolidating it. Perhaps he was responding to his own hard experience of shepherding an existing loose structure of churches, hoping that starting from scratch would be more expedient. Thus, Gray was an exponent of the bishop as head of the local church. One of his first sermons once arriving in Cape Town was on “the subject of episcopacy – the Scriptural argument for it, its duties and responsibilities...”¹⁶³ Additionally, Gray seems to have accepted the idea of hierarchy and deference. For example, he appears to have been taken aback that Colenso would treat him as an equal, rather than as his superior.¹⁶⁴

Secondly, in terms of theology and liturgy Gray was not a trendsetter. For example, he remained a devotee of the *Book of Common Prayer 1662*, requiring his clergy to sign a declaration that they would “conform to the Liturgy of the United Church of England and Ireland, as it is now established”.¹⁶⁵ Indeed, he seems to have merely been intent on adhering to the existing prayer book rubrics, much as high churchmen were advocating and Tractarians were teaching. For example, when Colenso introduced a newly written prayer for afternoon and evening services at one of the Durban churches in Natal, Gray accused him of “liturgical innovation and of going beyond the proper canonical authority of a bishop”.¹⁶⁶ However, one cannot argue that he fitted the high church mould entirely in this principle. For example, he introduced daily services to the Cathedral in Cape Town,¹⁶⁷ not an innovation as such, but certainly a trademark of Tractarianism.¹⁶⁸ Perhaps more to the point, he introduced these daily services without first building rapport with Cathedral congregation – hence their antagonism to him. He also encouraged the keeping of Lent through fasting,¹⁶⁹ without investigating the congregation’s reaction to such introductions in the past.¹⁷⁰ Again, this was not particularly advanced practice, but it was a mark of Tractarianism rather than high churchmanship. However, it could be argued that the principles of economy and reserve would have characterised a true Tractarian (qualities which Gray did not seem to embody), and perhaps induced a more gradual pastoral approach.

Thirdly, in his approach and reaction to Colenso’s biblical criticism of the 1860s, he showed himself a typical high churchman. Like Wilberforce, he was consistent in his apprehension in relation to Colenso’s early writings, and later in his uncompromising defense of the Bible, particularly its divine inspiration and accepted teachings regarding its composition. For example, he was horrified that Colenso would question the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. Here again, the line between high churchmen and Tractarians is rather blurred. Both groups reacted strongly against liberal biblical criticism; high churchmen because it challenged the *status quo*, and Tractarians because it brought into question the authority of scripture and the traditions which had been developed to interpret it. Where did Gray fall in this spectrum? It is more likely that he, as the son of a bishop and of the educated

¹⁶³ Lewis and Edwards, *Historical Records*, 35.

¹⁶⁴ Guy, *The Heretic*, 112.

¹⁶⁵ Declaration by James Barrow (October 1848) – Cory Library, MS 16 653.

¹⁶⁶ Hinchliff, *The Anglican Church in South Africa*, 50.

¹⁶⁷ Smith, *An Historical Survey of Organs, Organists and Music at St George’s Cathedral*, 54.

¹⁶⁸ Reed, *Glorious Battle*, 76.

¹⁶⁹ Lewis and Edwards, *Historical Records*, 34.

¹⁷⁰ In 1840, the congregation had accused their chaplain of “papism” for advocating fasting and wearing a surplice. See Hardwick, *An Anglican British World*, 75.

elite, fell on the side of the high churchmen. It was not only the Bible he was defending, but the entire structure on which British society, and indeed the British Empire, was built.¹⁷¹

Fourthly, he valued the high church and Tractarian focus on the Early Church.¹⁷² His appeal for synodical government and a church unfettered by establishment were indicative of this. Indeed, his supremely negative experience with the established nature of the Church of England through the law courts, and its consequences for what he, and many of his contemporaries, felt were spiritual issues, must have cemented his determination to form an autonomous church. This is actually where he splits with the high church definition quite markedly. While maintaining establishment was generally an accepted focus of high churchmen, it seems that Gray was more strongly allied to the Tractarian position; for very much the same reasons which Keble articulates in his *Assize Sermon* (see discussion on this sermon in chapter two).

Fifthly, in terms of the sacraments, Gray would probably be considered high church. His views on Communion never took him to the Tractarian extremes which James Green (1821 - 1906),¹⁷³ one of his clergy recruits, espoused. He tended to accept what he had received without any change. Likewise, in terms of baptism, he did not rock the boat, although it seems that he advocated baptismal regeneration.

Seventhly, high churchmen have been characterized as “high and dry” by some commentators, and by others as staid. And yet, Gray can be viewed as a pioneer of sorts: particularly in the sense that he had the foresight to found a church independent of the English establishment, and that he covered huge areas of geographical land to administer and expand Anglican work.¹⁷⁴ But, as has been stated above, he was not a theological innovator, nor did he test the boundaries of inherited liturgical norms. Indeed, he seems to have been genuinely perplexed at the extreme views of James Green in terms of Eucharistic theology. He may well have looked askance at the genuinely ritualistic developments which occurred in the 1880s in South Africa after his death.¹⁷⁵

Eighthly, towards the end of his episcopacy Gray became more and more interested in developing a religious community in Cape Town. Eventually he established a sisterhood called the St George’s sisters in 1869, a few years before his death. That some of the sisters were originally “disciples” of John Mason Neale,¹⁷⁶ perhaps gives an indication of their Tractarian and ecclesiologist sympathies and formation. It also shows where Gray was looking for suitable candidates for religious life, namely Neale, the leader of the ecclesiologists. Gray’s willingness to consider establishing a religious community provides a possible sign of his developing attitudes towards Tractarianism. Would a traditional high churchman have encouraged and actually started religious communities? Perhaps he was moving more decidedly towards a Tractarian outlook as his episcopacy came to a close.

Ninthly, Gray seems to have had ecumenical leanings. He shared amicable relationships with the Dutch Reformed Church’s leaders and he initiated talks about a

¹⁷¹ For a detailed historical account of the ‘Colenso controversy’ see Guy, *The Heretic* and Draper, Jonathan (ed.). *The Eye of the Storm: Bishop John William Colenso and the Crisis of Biblical Inspiration*. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster, 2003.

¹⁷² Hinchliff, *The Anglican Church in South Africa*, 49.

¹⁷³ James Green was recruited by Gray to accompany him to South Africa in 1848. He was eventually appointed Dean of the newly created Diocese of Natal in 1854 and was to become a thorn in Bishop John Colenso’s side. Green became increasingly ritualistic throughout his ministry. See Chapter 12 in Darby, *Anglican Worship in Victorian Natal*.

¹⁷⁴ Southey, “Robert Gray and His Legacy to the Church of the Province of Southern Africa”, 22 and 24.

¹⁷⁵ Note Hinchliff’s comments regarding Gray’s disapproval of the lionising process in which James Green was involved – Hinchliff, *The Anglican Church in South Africa*, 191.

¹⁷⁶ Lewis and Edwards, *Historical Records*, 107.

possible merger between 1848 and 1870.¹⁷⁷ In the end, the talks stalled because the two churches could not agree about polity – Gray and the Anglicans insisted on episcopal authority, whereas the Dutch Reformed clergy rejected this hierarchical system. Nevertheless, that Gray was willing to consider merging with a Calvinistic church shows his willingness to look beyond the bounds of Anglicanism itself. It also possibly demonstrates his own Calvinistic sympathies, even if they were subconscious, perhaps absorbed over many years of Anglican worship through the strongly Calvinistic *Book of Common Prayer 1662*. The Tractarians in England would have frowned on Gray’s relationship with the Dutch Reformed Church. They had strongly opposed the creation of a bishopric in association with the Lutherans in Jerusalem, expressly because the Lutheran Church could not demonstrate apostolic succession through their episcopal lineage.¹⁷⁸ In reality, that Gray did not compromise on the three-fold ministry with bishops at the head, probably reinforces the idea that he was essentially wedded to apostolic succession and thus, at the very least to the high church agenda.

Tenthly, as Alan Beckman notes, the clergy he appointed were either Tractarian sympathisers or fully-fledged Tractarians.¹⁷⁹ He also sought to block the appointment of Henry Cotterill (1812 – 1886), a staunch evangelical, as Bishop of Grahamstown, preferring Nathaniel Merriman (1809 – 1882), the Archdeacon of Albany at the time.¹⁸⁰ Merriman has been characterised by one recent historian as a practicing Tractarian.¹⁸¹ Thus, in terms of sympathies, it is clear that Gray favoured Tractarians against evangelicals.

Finally, one of the defining characteristics of Gray’s episcopacy was the neo-Gothic architecture of the church buildings he commissioned. His wife, Sophy, was an avid amateur architect, and it was her designs, along ecclesiologist lines, which dominated during Gray’s tenure. He also established a periodical called *The South African Church Magazine and Ecclesiastical Review*. Bremner claims that its first editor was a staunch Tractarian, and also an ecclesiologist, whose Romantic ideals concerning architecture were to flower in this regular publication.¹⁸² Perhaps indicative of Gray’s approach to the existing church which he encountered in South Africa can be linked to his comments on the Cape Town Cathedral (based on St Pancras, London): “throw it overboard”.¹⁸³ He makes no mention about the congregation’s feelings about the existing building, nor of their attitude towards possible architectural change. Thus, in this sense, at least, Gray certainly espoused an ecclesiologist stance.

Was Gray more of a high churchman or a Tractarian? It is quite difficult to make a definitive conclusion. The evidence seems to support the idea that he started his episcopal ministry very much in the high church camp, but that the circumstances he encountered in South Africa propelled him increasingly to a Tractarian position. In the long run, in terms of the Province of South Africa, Gray’s influence and actions meant that the ideals of

¹⁷⁷ For a fascinating discussion regarding this merger see chapter six “An attempt at unity” in Le Feuvre, Philip. *Cultural and Theological Factors Affecting Relationships between the NGK and the CPSA in the Cape Colony, 1806 – 1910*. University of Cape Town PhD thesis, 1980, 94-105.

¹⁷⁸ See Strong, Rowan. “The Oxford Movement and the British Empire: Newman, Manning and the Jerusalem Bishopric” in *The Oxford Movement: Europe and the Wider World 1830 – 1930*, Stewart J. Brown and Peter B. Nockles (eds). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012: 78-98.

¹⁷⁹ Backman, *A Clash of Churchmanship*, 87. Beckman notes that Colenso was the only non-Tractarian Gray appointed.

¹⁸⁰ See Beckman, *A Clash of Churchmanship*, 83-85.

¹⁸¹ Bremner, *Imperial Gothic*, 210.

¹⁸² Bremner, *Imperial Gothic*, 210.

¹⁸³ Bremner, *Imperial Gothic*, 255.

Tractarianism, and later ritualism, could begin to characterise Anglicanism¹⁸⁴ throughout the area; and because the church was not linked to government, ritual and doctrine were not a matter of secular law in the South African context.

Other contributors to the Anglo-Catholic ethos of Anglicanism in South Africa

Hinchliff makes an interesting observation regarding the Anglo-Catholic nature of the South African Anglican Church:

One of the effects of the Colenso controversy [over biblical literalism and interpretation] was to make the Province the great “Catholic” part of the Anglican Communion. In that Gray put the Church before the individual, the controversy did come between those who held a “high” and those who held a “low” doctrine of the Church. It was not a battle between Tractarians and Evangelicals... [but] the controversy, nevertheless, labelled the Province a “high church” province.¹⁸⁵

His suggestion is that the ritualist nature of the province can be attributed to the fallout from the Colenso saga which ravaged the local and international church between 1861 until Colenso’s death. Colenso, being an Erastian and latitudinarian of sorts, was so demonised by the worldwide Anglican Church that contemporary opinion favoured a complete distancing from his churchmanship, missionary style and biblical commentaries.¹⁸⁶ Colenso’s philosophy was shaped by his encounters with Frederick Maurice (1805 – 1872) and his reading of theologians such as Coleridge and Arnold. In particular, Maurice’s views about God’s presence in all cultures and his work in comparative religions were to find fulfilment in Colenso’s mission work with the Zulus in Natal. His mission work and published works did not endear him to his dean nor the metropolitan and he was eventually excommunicated by a church court, however, history has been far kinder towards him than either the dean or Gray.¹⁸⁷

The constitutional shape of the church in South certainly did owe much to the Colenso fallout. In particular, the idea that secular courts could make decisions regarding doctrine and practice disturbed church members all over the Anglican world. To what extent could secular authorities, some of whom were not even Anglican, decide on matters pertaining to spirituality? The Colenso saga, and the general crisis of legal insecurity for Anglican churches outside of Britain, precipitated the first Lambeth Conference in 1867.¹⁸⁸ Gray and his colleague George Selwyn (1809 – 1878), the Bishop of New Zealand, advocated for a system of provincial and diocesan synods, the latter being subordinate to the former. This was accepted and mechanisms for the developing of local constitutions were created by a sub-

¹⁸⁴ Overall Gray’s leadership appears to have had a similar effect to that of Bishop John Henry Hobart of New York, a high churchman in the Episcopal Church, who exercised the role of setting the scene for ritualism to flourish, see Platt, “The Rise of Advanced Ritualism in New York City: The Rev. Thomas McKee Brown and the Founding of the Church of St Mary the Virgin”, 332.

¹⁸⁵ Hinchliff, *The Anglican Church in South Africa*, 190-191.

¹⁸⁶ See Hinchliff, *The Anglican Church in South Africa*, 190.

¹⁸⁷ Green, in particular, has increasingly disappeared into obscurity. His name is glossed over by most historians, except in narratives in what appears to have been rather childish behaviour in making life difficult for Colenso. See Guy, *The Heretic*, 154-157.

¹⁸⁸ Lambeth Conference is usually held every ten years, depending on circumstances. All the bishops of the Anglican Communion are invited to attend. For many years, the bishops passed resolutions concerning the governance, ethos, discipline and standards of faith. These resolutions were not binding on autonomous Provinces and Dioceses, but did provide a “temperature gauge” of the Communion at large. More recent conferences have focused more on dialogue and prayer between bishops, rather than resolutions.

committee of the Conference.¹⁸⁹ In reality, Gray and Selwyn had hoped for a further tier of authority, that is, the Anglican bishops from around the world sitting in synod to debate and promulgate international church law, discipline and doctrine.¹⁹⁰ Their vision was hierarchical and fell very much within the ambit of Tractarian teaching regarding the authority of the bishop within the governance of the church, and the episcopacy's independence from the state. In the political climate of Britain, where some bishops were sceptical of the Lambeth Conference in the first place, the chances of adopting the highest tier framework were fairly weak, and in the end did not materialise. Since then, Lambeth Conference has not been a legislative body, but rather one which consults and advises.

It was within this context that South Africa's Anglican constitution was drafted in the 1860s and passed in 1870 at the church's first Provincial Synod. The synod adopted the standards of faith of the Church of England, its doctrines, sacraments and disciplines, as well as its general ethos (including the *Book of Common Prayer 1662*) and the English Bible. However, unlike its English mother body, it was specifically created as a voluntary association which voluntarily accepted the diocesan boundaries, the authority of bishops and the respective legislative synods.¹⁹¹ Significantly, it did not allow any interference from secular legal bodies, unless the church specifically requested their advice – a direct reaction against the numerous secular battles which had characterised the episcopal mission of the 1850s and 1860s. It also allowed for the amendment of liturgy, practice and doctrine provided that any change was done in the spirit of the general Anglican ethos and did not infringe on the *Book of Common Prayer 1662*, the accepted creeds and the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion.¹⁹² It was these specific concessions which allowed for Anglo-Catholic doctrine and practice to begin to take root. While it was only much later that formal liturgical change was enacted (after the turn of the nineteenth century), as we shall see, clergy and congregations began taking liberties long before then.

As has been noted above, the consecration of missionary bishops was, in a sense, a flowering of high church and Tractarian ideals of episcopacy. While I have shown Gray's allegiances through the consecration of Mackenzie, the ideal itself was much bigger than

¹⁸⁹ Hinchliff, *The Anglican Church in South Africa*, 113.

¹⁹⁰ Hinchliff, *The Anglican Church in South Africa*, 112.

¹⁹¹ Hinchliff, *The Anglican Church in South Africa*, 114.

¹⁹² "The Church of the Province of South Africa, otherwise known as the Church of England in these parts: First, receives and maintains the Faith of our Lord Jesus Christ as taught in the Holy Scriptures, held by the Primitive Church, summed up in the Creeds, and affirmed by the undisputed General Councils: Secondly, receives the Doctrine, Sacraments, and Discipline of Christ as the same are contained and commanded in Holy Scripture according as the Church of England has set forth the same in its standards of Faith and Doctrine, and it receives the Book of Common Prayer, and of Ordering of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, to be used, according to the form therein prescribed, in the Public Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments and other Holy Offices; and it accepts the English version of the Holy Scriptures as appointed to be read in Churches; and, further, it disclaims for itself the right of altering any of the aforesaid Standards of Faith and Doctrine. Provided that nothing herein contained shall prevent the Church of this Province from accepting, if it shall so determine, any alterations in the Formularies of the Church (other than the Creeds) which may be adopted by the Church of England, or allowed by any General Synod, Council, Congress, or other Assembly of the Churches of the Anglican Communion; or from making at any time such adaptations and abridgements of, and additions to, the services of the Church as may be required by the circumstances of this Province..." (Article 1, *Constitution of Church of the Province of South Africa* (1870), WITS Historical Papers, AB2891). Further, "The Provincial Synod shall have the power to make such adaptations and abridgements of, and additions to, the Services of the Church as may be required by the circumstances of this Province; but all such adaptations, abridgements, and additions shall be regarded as provisional, until they shall be confirmed at a subsequent Session of the Provincial Synod as being consistent with the spirit and teaching of the Book of Common Prayer. All adaptations, abridgements, or additions, allowed or made by any Bishop of this Province for his own Diocese, whether in his Diocesan Synod or otherwise, shall be open to revision by the Provincial Synod" – Article X, *Constitution of Church of the Province of South Africa* (1870).

Gray, and pulsed through the South African church and the burgeoning Anglican Communion. Even though Mackenzie's mission ended in failure when he died after only two years in the field, the scene was set for a new model. For one thing, it firmly established the unique high church and Tractarian position on mission against the prevailing evangelical policy. The Church Missionary Society (the evangelical wing of international Anglican mission work) preferred the ideals of Henry Venn (1796 – 1873). He espoused a vision where missionaries evangelised groups of people, helped them to establish church communities, and then allowed them to raise their own indigenous leaders. In essence, this policy came to maturity in the consecration of the first black Anglican bishop in Nigeria, Samuel Crowther (c. 1809 – 1891). In reality, though, Venn's fullest plans were too advanced for most Victorian missionaries. Sadly, while Crowther's consecration was monumental for evangelical work, the increasing racism of British colonial settlers in Nigeria meant that the full impact could not be realised; in the end, white clergy refused to be under the authority of a black bishop. Ultimately, then, neither the Tractarian nor the evangelical models had actually been altogether successful. The realities of the mission field, coupled with the pressures of colonial government policy and the breakdown of traditional African societies, meant that any evangelisation would be an uphill battle. Yet, lack of success did not dampen spirits in the long term. The Tractarian model was used elsewhere, particularly as the Universities' Mission to Central Africa established its reach in Zanzibar and later Malawi.

Frank England has suggested that the "Oxford Movement's most particular contribution to the [Anglican Church in South Africa] was its influence which led to the formation of religious communities in the latter part of the nineteenth century".¹⁹³ While they played an important part in mission work in some dioceses, they were not very influential during the period this study investigates.¹⁹⁴ Before the turn of the nineteenth century, religious communities had been established in only a few places, most especially by the Diocese of Bloemfontein; first in 1865 under the diocese's first bishop, Edward Twells (1823 – 1898) with the Society of St Augustine,¹⁹⁵ and further extended under his successor Alan Webb (1839 – 1907).

Conclusions

This chapter has provided historical context related to the church in which Anglican ritualism was to take root. The earliest days of the church were characterised by autonomous congregations, served by unlicensed clergy, which operated broadly according to a democratic system where laity held a great deal of power. Clergy themselves often met head on against the laity, much as bishops did decades later. Essentially, then, groups of lay congregants and a few clergy, enjoyed the freedoms of colonial life and seemed to resent official power which was forced upon them. This can, perhaps, be attributed to the fact that many of them were originally from the British working classes who, back home, were not able to exercise political power in any meaningful way at the time. Nevertheless, it was these tenacious lay people and their colonial chaplains who managed to create some sense of parochial life in a vast colony. It is unlikely that such an independently minded church would ever concede easily to episcopal authority, especially the kind of authority Bishop Robert Gray was keen to exercise. Indeed, the passage from independent congregations to organised parochial, diocesan and provincial structures was far from easy.

¹⁹³ England, "Tracing South Africa Anglicanism", 19.

¹⁹⁴ For a brief, but helpful, summary of Anglican religious communities in South Africa, see Hinchliff, *The Anglican Church in South Africa*, 225-229.

¹⁹⁵ Lewis and Edwards, *Historical Records*, 401-404.

Bishop Gray's encounter with this lay-organised church seems to have forced him to reconsider his initial high church leanings. For one thing, he needed to concede to lay leadership and lay voting rights, given that ordinary congregants were, to a large extent, financing the church. It is difficult to make concrete conclusions regarding Gray's own allegiance in terms of church parity. The evidence I have presented above seems to point towards a man who started out very much in the vein of his father, also a bishop: a conservative and conscientious high churchman who wished to perpetuate the *status quo*. Yet, as his ministry in South Africa continued, he seems to have moved ever progressively towards the teachings, and practices, of the Tractarians. The evidence, though, shows that he was not always in harmony with the Tractarian leaders. Whatever his churchmanship, it is clear that the branch of Anglicanism which he established in South Africa was constitutionally wide enough to foster the growth of Anglo-Catholicism.

What was it about the South African Anglicanism which encouraged Anglo-Catholics to emigrate there? It is likely that the independence of the church from the state was one of the reasons. An independent episcopal church, voluntary by nature, was not answerable to the state on matters of doctrine, liturgy and ceremonial. The highest authority in these matters was now the metropolitan bishop of the province. If the metropolitan was broadly receptive to Tractarian, ecclesiologist and ritualist ideas, then it was likely that they would eventually be able to flourish. Here, it is also important to note that while the church was voluntary, its members also voluntarily accepted the authority of their local bishop. If the bishop was supportive of the clergy in matters of worship, the laity were not in a strong position to oppose them.

Perhaps another draw card was that the province's constitution allowed for changes to existing models of Anglicanism if the need should arise. While it is likely that such changes were intended to accommodate the local need for different languages and prayers (not on behalf of the English monarch, but for local leaders), Anglo-Catholics would later take the opportunity to use such a doorway for their own ends, even if this took place after the period this study examines.

Finally, the fact that Bishop Gray was willing to consecrate a missionary bishop showed ordinary Tractarian and ritualist clergy that he was positioning himself directly within the auspices of the general Catholicising movement within Anglicanism. An evangelical or latitudinarian bishop is unlikely to have taken such a bold step, especially since it entailed creating a bishopric outside of the British Empire. Such a move would, no doubt, have lifted popular Tractarian, ecclesiologist and ritualist opinion of him fairly high, and thus encouraged young men of such tastes to opt for South Africa.

PART TWO

CHAPTER FOUR

Opposition to and perceptions of ritualism in South Africa

The previous chapters have examined the contextual background of ritualism in Anglicanism and some of the conditions which supported the growth of ritualism in South Africa. This chapter explores two related concepts by examining perceptions of what ritualism constituted, and the consequent opposition to its introduction.

The formal definition of ritualism as it is now generally employed in historical writing was outlined in chapter two, but, as was indicated then, clergy and laity alike were not bound by academic definitions. For them ritualism had various connotations; for some positive and progressive, for others negative and regressive. The vignettes below demonstrate which specific practices were considered ritualist at certain times during the nineteenth century. The evidence shows a gradual increase in tolerance towards that which in the mid-nineteenth-century would have caused public riots, but by the turn of the century was generally accepted across the board – in academic terms what might be considered a gradual narrowing of the popular definition of what ritualism constituted. Nevertheless, reactions against ritualism, however it was popularly defined at the time, continued unabated throughout the century. The evidence points to strong guttural reactions related to change, whether it constituted ritualism or not. I argue below that change itself was sometimes the precipitant of discomfort and reaction, rather than the actual practice of ritual.

Another important point is that the umbrella terms “ritualism”, “Puseyism” and “popish practices”, as they were used in a negative sense in this context, applied not only to ritual in the technical sense. Rituals are ceremonies, gestures and corporate actions (often religious in nature) which are governed by specific conventions or approved texts. Thus, kneeling at specific times, making the sign of a cross, corporate processions, the use of candles and incense, and so forth, constitute ritual. In nineteenth-century Anglicanism, however, accusations of ritualism extended to other aspects of church life including architecture, furnishings and governance. For example, the use of a crucifix could, and did, cause offence, as well as the allegation of ritualist tendencies. Likewise, any type of leadership which was considered tyrannical (and the definition of tyrannical could vary widely) was often labelled ritualist. For this reason, such matters are included and discussed below, alongside specifically ritualistic actions.

In the next two chapters, newspaper articles and letters form an extensive part of the evidence which is presented and discussed. Le Couteur makes some helpful observations regarding the interpreting of history from such sources. They inform my own interpretations.

Newspapers can be an equivocal historical source and are not necessarily mirrors of social practice and attitudes. Letters written to the editor of a newspaper come from people who are highly motivated to present their point of view, which may well be that of a minority. There is an element of theatricality in newspaper letters. The choice of writing style, the stance of the writer and the *nom-de-plume* adopted often reveal how the writer represents him or herself; the use of Latin and Latinisms may represent a claim to be “educated”, a *nom-de-plume* may identify the writer as a member of a party, or be a way of claiming special privilege to legitimate a point of view... There is often an element of performance in the way proceedings

of meetings, including parish and church-related meetings, were reported in the papers. If a reporter were present, speakers were capable of performing for his benefit.¹⁹⁶

Symbols and theology

The transition in South African Anglicanism from a broadly Calvinistic character described at the beginning of chapter three to one more openly tolerant of ritualism was turbulent in some congregations. As in the Church of England, there were strong voices from the laity and clergy which protested against so-called “popish” rituals¹⁹⁷ or “Puseyisms”.¹⁹⁸ The reasons for such protests seem to have been numerous and depended largely on local circumstances. Thus, historians have offered several interpretations based on available evidence.

Pauline Whibley argues that the fear of ritualist innovation in South Africa was precipitated because of “... a desperate effort to cling to the security of the Mother Church...”¹⁹⁹ Jeff Guy, speaking about the difficulties faced by Colenso, offers a slightly different view:

The initial quarrels between the Bishop and the laity were caused, in part at least, by anti-clerical feelings derived from religious and class antagonism which the colonists had experienced, directly or indirectly, when still in Britain. Their freedom from an established church and an episcopal hierarchy was threatened, they chose to argue, by the arrival of the Bishop of Natal.²⁰⁰

As a result of the antagonism, Colenso was accused of being a “high churchman”²⁰¹ even though he did not espouse high church sensibilities, neither did he sympathise with the Tractarians²⁰² (and certainly not the ritualists).²⁰³

In his travels around the eastern part of the Cape Colony, Merriman found that fear of anything remotely different, whether theological, liturgical or ceremonial, was dubbed “Romish” or an influence of Pusey. According to Merriman, kneeling for prayer was considered suspect in Uitenhage in the late 1840s.²⁰⁴ Vestments also proved a point of contention. The wearing of a surplice in the pulpit had caused protests in Britain in the 1840s, being labelled “the rag of popery”.²⁰⁵ In the early 1850s Merriman’s wearing of a surplice earned him great scorn at a parish in which he occasionally presided as archdeacon.²⁰⁶

¹⁹⁶ Le Couteur, Howard. “Upholding Protestantism: The Fear of Tractarianism in the Anglican Church of Early Colonial Queensland”, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, vol. 62, no. 2 (April 2011), 301.

¹⁹⁷ The Roman Catholic Relief Act had been promulgated in 1829, but the suspicion of Catholics and their worship continued throughout the nineteenth century.

¹⁹⁸ “Puseyism” was a derogatory insult derived from the name of Dr Edward Bouverie Pusey. He was accused of introducing ritual practices into English worship. However, being a moderate man, his intention was to reform what he perceived to be the dullness of English worship and to ensure a reverence for God in church services. See Whibley, *Merriman of Grahamstown*, 6 – 8; and Franklin, “Puseyism in the Parishes: Leeds and Wantage Contrasted”, 377 – 395.

¹⁹⁹ Whibley, *Merriman of Grahamstown*, 29.

²⁰⁰ Guy, *The Heretic*, 56. Hardwick and Le Couteur would probably agree with Guy’s assessment. See Hardwick, *An Anglican British World*, 8 and Le Couteur, “Anglican High Churchmen and the Expansion of Empire”, 201.

²⁰¹ Guy, *The Heretic*, 57.

²⁰² Colenso did commend the leaders of the Tractarians in their early days for prompting people to think deeply about their faith, but he did not ever espouse and accept their theology or general practices.

²⁰³ Guy, *The Heretic*, 11.

²⁰⁴ Whibley, *Merriman of Grahamstown*, 28.

²⁰⁵ Whisenant, James. “Anti-Ritualism and the Moderation of Evangelical Opinion in England in the Mid-1870s” 456-458.

²⁰⁶ Whibley, *Merriman of Grahamstown*, 36.

Ironically, it was that same parish, St Mary's in Port Elizabeth, which would later become a leading example of advanced ritualism (see chapter five).

But, as mentioned above, accusations or concerns about Romish tendencies were not limited to ceremonial and vestments. The earliest evidence considered in this chapter is from 4 March 1850. It concerns architecture, crucifixes and baptismal regeneration (ecclesiological and Tractarian penchants respectively). The evidence is a letter from Thomas Welby (1811 – 1899), a clergyman based in George,²⁰⁷ to Dr White (no dates available) based in Swellendam (the two towns were about 200km apart on the east Coast of the Cape Colony). Welby's letter is a response to a lost original by White. White had evidently complained about articles in an early edition of *South African Church Magazine and Ecclesiastical Review*. The magazine in question was started and edited by William A. Newman, who, as it turns out, was also Gray's dean at St George's Cathedral in Cape Town.²⁰⁸ Bremner describes him as "a keen ecclesiologist, [who] regularly [included] articles on church architecture... His own writing on the subject was rather turgid, expressing a deeply romantic, near saccharine adoration for the image of English medieval architecture".²⁰⁹ It is likely, then, that Newman was the writer of at least one of the articles against which White complained. Indeed, the first objection which Welby addresses concerns such romantic writing:

You are alarmed at certain passages in an Article on [Ecclesiastical] Architecture such as "Churches, whose very atmosphere is sanctity" – "almost divine" – "conception of a structure" – "the Solemnity of a fabric filling us with devotion".²¹⁰

White seems to have objected to the idea of the beauty of a building eliciting holy thoughts. To this Welby responds:

Now I really cannot understand, why a man may not have his devotional feelings "excited", his spirit solemnized, & elevated – and worldly thoughts more entirely shut out from his heart – by entering one of those magnificent temples to the Living God, which have been erected in our own father-land, and in other countries – and yet worship God "in spirit and in truth" – and protest as honestly, faithfully and courageously against the corruptions and superstitions of Rome, as one who worships God in the meanest, and most unadorned apartment.²¹¹

Welby's prose itself has an air of romanticism, although perhaps not quite as pronounced as Newman's. His claim that an appreciation of medieval architecture should not be equated with the "corruptions and superstitions of Rome" shows that he is firmly in the ecclesiological and high church schools which continued to distrust Roman Catholicism, even if promoting some of its outward symbols. He goes on to appeal to a part of the poem *Il Penseroso* by John Milton, suggesting that its sentiments demonstrate that there is a

²⁰⁷ At the time, the town was called Georgetown or George Town.

²⁰⁸ The incumbent at St George's when Gray arrived was Robert Lamb (1811 - 1901). Lamb was an evangelical and it seems that Gray took a dislike to him. Without consulting with the congregation, Newman was appointed Dean, and Lamb was not allowed to preach. Eventually he was moved to Holy Trinity Church in the suburbs of Cape Town. He and Gray continued to clash and ultimately Lamb's congregation ceded from Gray's episcopal oversight. See Beckman, *A Clash of Churchmanship*, 89-90.

²⁰⁹ Bremner, *Imperial Gothic*, 210.

²¹⁰ Welby, Thomas Earl. Personal letter to Dr White (Georgetown, 4 March 1850) – WITS Historical Papers, AB 341, 1.

²¹¹ Welby, personal letter to White, 1-2.

spirituality in the beauty of architecture.²¹² He adds the claim, hoping to bolster his argument, that Milton was anything but Roman Catholic.²¹³

White seems to have been concerned with another article in the magazine which described a person's landing at the Cape of Good Hope. Apparently the article referred to the symbol of the cross. Seemingly White was worried that these references represented allusions to a crucifix and the adoration of the cross.²¹⁴ For him there seems to have been a real fear that the writer of the article would convert to Roman Catholicism.²¹⁵ The crucifix and adoration of the cross, like medieval architecture, were symbolic for some English people of the type of tyrannical and superstitious religion from which they had been "freed" during the English Reformation. The open distrust of practicing Roman Catholics continued well into the twentieth century (see chapter one), but was beginning to be questioned by the mid-nineteenth century. White seems to have been of the old school who still held strong feelings on this subject. He may have preferred what was more common in England at the time. In place of a crucifix in the sanctuary, usually the Ten Commandments was placed on either side of the altar and, at best, an empty cross was in the middle. Perhaps the empty cross represented the victory of Christ over death on the cross. Welby does not give us enough in the way of quotes from White's original letter to be sure.

Finally, White appears to have turned in his letter from denominational symbols to pure theology; he questions the doctrine of baptismal regeneration. We only have snippets of White's original letter as quoted by Welby, so can only surmise his complete argument. He is reputed to have written in his original letter that, "Baptism is not regeneration, nor is there any warrant for such an assertion in the Word of God".²¹⁶ The Gorham Controversy concerning baptismal regeneration was busy raging in England at the time. Briefly, Gorham did not accept the doctrine of baptismal regeneration and, as a result had been denied a particular position in the Diocese of Exeter. His belief was that the effects of infant baptism were conditional on the person later confirming these promises as their true faith. The Bishop of Exeter felt that this was an unsuitable theological position and withheld permission for the proposed parish appointment. Gorham appealed to secular courts who overturned the Bishop's decision. The controversy actually centred on the authority of a secular court to determine church doctrine, but it elicited lively theological debate as well. There appear to have been some, including White in this case, who agreed with Gorham. Interestingly, such people seem to have considered the Tractarian representation at the secular courts during the Gorham case as a reason for linking baptismal regeneration with Tractarians and high churchmen. In fact, this doctrine was widely held by people from very different church parties.

In this letter, then, we have evidence of a concern for symbols and their effects on those who accept or use them, as well as for theological positions which were associated with catholicising elements within Anglicanism. And indeed, this accords with international trends at the time. Reed, remarking about the first decades in which Tractarians were active, says:

At this time most of the marks [of Tractarianism] seem to have been doctrinal rather than ceremonial, although [evangelical evidence warned] against the teaching "that there is much

²¹² This is the section Welby alludes to: "...But let my due feet never fail / To walk the studious cloister's pale, / And love the high embowed roof, / With antique pillars massy proof, / And storied windows richly dight, / Casting a dim religious light. / There let the pealing organ blow, / To the full-voic'd quire below, / In service high, and anthems clear, / As may with sweetness, through mine ear, / Dissolve me into ecstasies, / And bring all Heav'n before mine eyes..."

²¹³ Welby, personal letter to White, 2.

²¹⁴ Welby, personal letter to White, 2.

²¹⁵ Welby, personal letter to White, 2.

²¹⁶ Welby, personal letter to White, 3.

religion in bowing and kneeling, and observing the outward forms of worship” and against “pictures, and the crucifix, and candles”.²¹⁷

This letter is representative of a first wave of catholic revival within Anglicanism which in South Africa began about the same time as Bishop Gray arrived in South Africa (1848) and lasted into the mid-1850s. Arguments against changes in the church, related to a gradual move towards catholicism, were not only about symbols and theology.

Power of the laity

Colenso’s encounter with accusations of ritualism deserves an extended discussion at this point for three reasons. Firstly, the extreme and protracted nature of the events shows how seriously some colonists considered the issues. Secondly, because it demonstrates from the part of the colonists that there were no clearly articulated reasons for protest, except that the introduction of certain practices was considered an alignment with ritualists in England.²¹⁸ Thirdly, the series of events has been documented and considered by several historians.²¹⁹ I have chosen to treat Darby as a quasi-primary source here because he appears to provide the most varied primary evidence; including articles from local and international newspapers *and* the surviving diaries and letters of those involved in the saga. And saga it certainly was, for it lasted well over two years, and included the burning of an effigy of Colenso.

It all began on 9 April 1855 at the Easter vestry meeting of St Paul’s church in Durban. Here we encounter a persistent issue: that of popular revolt against imposed clerical authority. In chapter three, reference was made to a vestry meeting some two decades earlier in Grahamstown where the incumbent’s ideas of church membership were questioned, and his authority as chair overturned. Here we find a similar situation. The presidency of the meeting, which the incumbent assumed was his, was disputed by lay members in attendance.²²⁰ In a later meeting a new incumbent was outvoted as chair by the laity. Instead they chose a church warden sympathetic to the colonist’s alleged “majority”²²¹ views.²²² At least once during the saga, two concurrent meetings were held, one by the incumbent, the other by the “majority” lay faction.²²³ Likewise, membership of the church and the authority to vote proved to be contentious. Colenso, like Gray, required that voting members of the vestry must be communicating members of the Church of England.²²⁴ The lay “majority” felt differently. As in Grahamstown, they believed that anyone who attended regularly should be considered a member, irrespective of whether they took Communion or not. Mackenzie, the second incumbent mentioned above, seemed ambivalent himself. He said in a letter to a friend: “What do you think – does a man lose his right of voting, in the eyes of the [church] because he neglects the duty of Communicating...”.²²⁵ In the end, it was through democratic voting that the authority of the bishop and the incumbents within the parish were continually rejected by the “majority” of the congregation. In fact, some of the lay leaders of the congregation went so far as to recommend that it be governed along the lines of two other

²¹⁷ Reed, *Glorious Battle*, 29.

²¹⁸ Darby, *Anglican Worship in Victorian Natal*, 177.

²¹⁹ They include Darby, *Anglican Worship in Victorian Natal*; Wirgman, *Life of James Green*; Hinchliff, *John William Colenso and Burnett, Anglicans in Natal*.

²²⁰ Darby, *Anglican Worship in Victorian Natal*, 169.

²²¹ I say “majority” because it is unclear just how many people actually held the ideas which were reported in the press, or how many other dissenting voices may have been silenced in a volatile situation.

²²² Darby, *Anglican Worship in Victorian Natal*, 173.

²²³ Darby, *Anglican Worship in Victorian Natal*, 171.

²²⁴ Darby, *Anglican Worship in Victorian Natal*, 179-180.

²²⁵ Darby, *Anglican Worship in Victorian Natal*, 180.

independent Anglican churches (one in Cape Town, the other in Graaff-Reinet).²²⁶ Their bid to institute this independence was rejected in the law courts. Nevertheless, the lay “majority” faction asserted real political power.

Where ultimate authority resided appears to have been the main reason for the protests which occurred during the saga but, as so often in history, proxy battles proved fertile grounds for the antagonism between parties. What is significant for this study is that the label of Tractarianism, ritualism and popism were employed by colonists to characterise their battle over authority.

At one point or another open seating, taking an offertory,²²⁷ baptisms during the main Sunday service, keeping of saints’ days, preparing bread and wine at the altar and the wearing of a surplice in the pulpit were labelled as ritualist. In response to the proposed “innovations”, the leaders of the lay “majority” of the congregation created the Church of England Defence Association – a body which they claimed would function as the ultra-Protestant Church Association in England.²²⁸ They even managed to create a counter collection after services, in protest against plate offertories introduced by the bishop, to fund-raise for the Association.²²⁹ In essence, therefore, they were claiming to defend Protestantism against Catholicism. In reality, though, they were reacting to changes in authority and in worship practice; important symbols of culture and class.

An interesting side note is worth mentioning. It appears that the protests, and the most drastic action within them, were supported mostly by men.²³⁰ Le Couteur’s argument about gender roles in anti-Catholic protests, as he documents them in the Australian context, is equally valid in this context.²³¹ The gender *status quo* of Britain, therefore, as represented in “muscular Protestantism”, was alive in numerous places across the empire.

Vocal lay people were quite clear what they thought ritualism was, but what did the clergy think? Colenso seems to have been quite bemused by the whole saga.²³² He was not making unreasonable demands on the congregation, only requiring that the rubrics of the prayer book of the Church of England be followed. He was not a supporter of Tractarianism, and had already promised the congregation that he would not introduce Tractarian or Popish rituals.²³³ He was true to his word. In his eyes he had not, he had only required that existing rubrics, in place since at least 1662, be followed.²³⁴ He seems to have been genuinely shocked and alarmed that people would go to the symbolic lengths of burning his effigy.

²²⁶ Darby, *Anglican Worship in Victorian Natal*, 171.

²²⁷ In the primary sources which are discussed in this thesis, “offertory” is not used to denote the Catholic sacramental meaning, i.e. the offering of the bread and wine during the Eucharist. While it did take on this meaning in the twentieth century, an “offertory” in Anglicanism at this time denoted an offering of alms.

²²⁸ Darby, *Anglican Worship in Victorian Natal*, 171-172.

²²⁹ Darby, *Anglican Worship in Victorian Natal*, 172.

²³⁰ See for example, Darby, *Anglican Worship in Victorian Natal*, 172.

²³¹ Le Couteur, “Upholding Protestantism”, 316-317.

²³² Guy, *The Heretic*, 57.

²³³ Darby, *Anglican Worship in Victorian Natal*, 171 and 177-178.

²³⁴ The rubrics in the *Book of Common Prayer 1662* concerning each of the colonialists’ grievances are as follows:

Offertory - “Whilst [the offertory sentences are being read], the Deacons, Church-wardens, or other fit person appointed for that purpose, shall receive the alms for the poor, and other devotions of the people, in a decent basin to be provided by the Parish for that purpose” (Cummings, Brian (ed.). *The Book of Common Prayer: The Texts of 1549, 1559 and 1662*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011, 394);

Baptism during the main service - “The people are to be admonished, that it is most convenient that Baptism should not be administered but upon Sundays and other holy-days, when the most number of people come together...” (Cummings, *The Book of Common Prayer*, 408);

Keeping of saints days - the rubrics provide a list of fifteen saints, two celebrations of Mary, and all saints which it says “are to be observed in the Church of England” (Cummings, *The Book of Common Prayer*, 234);

Mackenzie, the second incumbent mentioned above, wrote a number of letters to friends concerning the events. A couple of them have survived in the USPG archives. Mackenzie, while perhaps slightly over confident of his rapport with the people at first at St Paul's, does not attribute Tractarianism or ritualism as a motivation for any of the changes he introduced. He was, for the most part, following the requirements of Colenso.²³⁵ Again, like Colenso, he seems to have been baffled by the ferocity of response of the "majority" group. Interestingly, though, Mackenzie's impression was that the "majority" group was much smaller than what the press reported.

This series of incidents, and the ones discussed below, demonstrate that imposed religious authority from England was often characterised by the colonists as "possibly Tractarian, or even Puseyite and...dangerous to the...peace of the colony".²³⁶ Both Whibley and Guy are probably correct in their analyses above, but there are two other possibilities. One is that settlers were simply fearful of change, particularly change relating to aspects of life that they *themselves* had carefully nurtured and promoted far away from their homeland, despite difficult circumstances (see discussion above on the lay involvement in transforming the military nature of colonial congregations to a more civilian one). The result, sometimes, was that the much discussed alleged ritualist tendencies of churchmen abroad was a convenient label for anything new and foreign. Another is that the divisions between denominations was not as clearly defined in the colonies, such that institutional practices from one denomination easily migrated to others and *vice versa*. Indeed, the lines between Protestant, and more specifically Reformed, denominations themselves were blurred considerably in South Africa for the lay population (as shall be demonstrated below). In this way, the power of the congregation, as exercised in denominations such as Presbyterianism and even more so in Congregationalism, could and did infiltrate traditional models of authority in Anglicanism. For example, members of the Dutch Reformed Church in Graaff-Reinet attended and supported the building of an Anglican church because they appreciated the beauty of the liturgy, i.e. they retained their Dutch Reformed affiliation, but materially supported the Anglican Church.²³⁷ Hardwick adds, "We should...draw a distinction between the core of active laity who gave time and money to the Church and a much broader community of churchgoers whose adherence to a denomination could be based on a range of personal, familial or pragmatic factors".²³⁸

South Africa was not unique in this type of reaction; other colonies experienced similar responses.²³⁹ Le Couteur, writing about nineteenth century Australian Anglicanism, suggests that "Wariness of any form of innovation was an expression of conservatism in theological, social and political matters".²⁴⁰ He continues by suggesting that anything linked to a person with known Tractarian or ritualist sympathies was automatically considered suspect:

Preparing the bread and wine during the service - just after the offertory, the rubrics say, "... the Priest shall then place upon the Table..." (Cummings, *The Book of Common Prayer*, 394);

Wearing of a surplice - see "Concerning the Service of the Church" and "Of Ceremonies" (Cummings, *The Book of Common Prayer*, 212-216).

²³⁵ Darby, *Anglican Worship in Victorian Natal*, 176-180.

²³⁶ Guy, *The Heretic*, 56. The author of this quote does not define the difference between "Tractarian" and "Puseyite" tendencies – it may be that one represented theological moves towards catholicism, the other ceremonial.

²³⁷ Hardwick, *An Anglican British World*, 67-68.

²³⁸ Hardwick, *An Anglican British World*, 68.

²³⁹ Le Couteur, "Upholding Protestantism", 302-305.

²⁴⁰ Le Couteur, "Upholding Protestantism", 300.

Anxiety about Tractarianism especially focused upon changes to the received patterns of worship, and could arise out of the colonists' ignorance. What clergy wore, how a church was arranged and how a service was conducted were all scrutinised for changes that might be Tractarian "innovations". For example, when Bishop Short of Adelaide first wore his new doctoral hood, after a visit to England, some people mistook it for a chasuble, a symbol of ultra-ritualist innovation.²⁴¹

The example above provided some idea of what the congregation at St Paul's believed were "Tractarian" or "Popish": the use of offertory; the use of a surplice in the pulpit; baptism during the normal Sunday service; the keeping of saints days; and preparation of the bread and wine during the service.²⁴² While the abolishing of pew rents was not actually labelled ritualistic, its link with the introduction of an offertory is significant enough. Interestingly, *all* of these disputed practices were required by the rubrics of the *Book of Common Prayer 1662*. Yet, it was the Tractarians who encouraged following the rubrics accurately, rather than selectively. Thus, such liturgical changes could easily be linked with and interpreted as Tractarian, even though they did not actually highlight specific aspects of Tractarian theology. This particular saga is a rather extreme example of a second wave of catholic revival within Anglicanism in South Africa. It was characterised by so-called innovations which were in reality embedded within the *Book of Common Prayer* tradition. The reactions in this time period appear to have been more heated than the initial wave. The time period for this second wave was from the mid-1850s through to early 1870s.

What could the reasons be for such guttural reactions against the changes which were proposed or introduced at St Paul's in Durban?

Pew rents and offertories considered

The offertory already had a brief history in South Africa. Bishop Gray passionately advocated weekly offertories and the abolishing of pew rents. Offertories were a practical necessity given that Anglican clergy were not funded directly by the local colonial government after the mid-nineteenth-century, i.e. the church was not established in a legal sense.²⁴³ Thus, funding for clergy stipends, the building or maintaining of churches, and the housing of clergy was increasingly met through lay generosity. By allowing for a volunteer church system and acknowledging that it was only through the financial generosity of congregants that the church could run effectively, Gray was giving lay people a fair amount of political power within the local church. However, offertories were more than simply a financial necessity; after all, pew rents and building subscriptions could have raised necessary funds. They can be interpreted as representing something more partisan. Consider that offertories were not only being introduced in colonial churches, where volunteerism was necessary, but also in the Church of England (an established church supported by the government and landed benefactors), where the concept of non-commercial fundraising, through the collection plate rather than through a bazaar or festival, was being promoted especially by Tractarians.²⁴⁴

²⁴¹ Le Couteur, "Upholding Protestantism", 303-304.

²⁴² Darby, *Anglican Worship in Victorian Natal*, 170 and 174.

²⁴³ Hardwick notes that "the Cape government provided £100 towards ministers' salaries if the local community and Church could raise the same amount". Hardwick, *An Anglican British World*, 73-74.

²⁴⁴ Turner, Frank. Review of *Tractarians and the 'Condition of England': The Social and Political Thought of the Oxford Movement*, (review no. 644), <https://reviews.history.ac.uk/review/644> (accessed 28 February 2020).

Rented box pews were common in early nineteenth century English churches, not just in Anglican parishes. Such rents had provided income for colonial parishes beyond funding they received either from state grants, individual benefactors (usually land owners) or wealthy incumbents. However, the thought of paying for a seat, and perhaps leaving it empty, so that visitors and those without the means to pay rent were relegated to the back of the church, became increasingly abhorrent. Suffice to say, rented box pews were going out of fashion across the board for a number of reasons.²⁴⁵ But such a system benefitted laity with sufficient income, and provided them with status within the church building itself – an assertion of class distinction. The message of the Christian Gospels contrasts markedly with the class system common in Britain at the time. That these social distinctions had become part and parcel of Christian worship spaces began to knock on the consciences of clergy and laity of all theological persuasions.

However educated clergy and sympathetic laity viewed the merits of offertories and the offense of pew rents, the reality is that ordinary people were accustomed to the systems that pew rents engendered.²⁴⁶ They imported them to the colonies, after all, thus perpetuating distinctions even within more democratically structured societies. As a consequence, promoting open seating, whether or not it was a matter of good Christian ethics, was essentially like trying to disturb generations of inherited tradition. When South African clergyman like Merriman held the view concerning rented pews that, “Exclusiveness... was not right for God’s house where all meet as equals”,²⁴⁷ people may have agreed with him in heart, but they may well have opposed the change as it affected beloved furnishings and local custom. New colonial clergy arriving in existing parishes were often completely oblivious that they, more often than not, were from landed and educated classes. Their lofty ideas of equality, while no doubt noble in sentiment, were often contingent on maintaining the *status quo* in other respects, most particularly a decorous English civilization. Open seating did not guarantee a sense of equality, as has been demonstrated in South Africa’s segregated history time and again. The mere fact that only those with sufficient education to be able to write in or to local newspapers in protest, meant that the voices of many ordinary people who had come to the colonies in search of a better life beyond the slums of England, were likely to be unheard at best, or ignored as irrational at worst. Their best means of being heard was through physical protest *en masse*, and this they resorted to on several occasions.

Interestingly, though, it was not only the poor or voiceless who protested, but also those with social mobility, and those who were not even church-goers. Why did they react against offertories and the abolishing of pew rents? For church-goers, one reason could be that by renting a pew, a congregant could lay claim to a material part of the church building, i.e. something was theirs. With an offertory, people were giving money, but without any specific benefit or material gain. For non-church-goers, subscriptions for church buildings through shares seem to have depended somewhat on pew rents in that individuals could invest in the building of a church and then receive dividends through pew rents. Without these rents, they stood to lose their regular cash dividends.

²⁴⁵ The main reason given by Anglo-Catholics was to ensure that the prayer book rubrics were being followed, and to encourage equality among congregants. See Yates, Nigel. *Buildings, Faith, and Worship: The Liturgical Arrangement of Anglican Churches 1600 – 1900* (revised ed.). London: Oxford University Press, 2001, 159.

²⁴⁶ The English parish system relied, to a large extent, on endowment from the landed classes. In essence, this meant that the clergyman’s stipend and the upkeep of the church building were funded through interest of large endowments. For poorer people from England, therefore, the offertory may have seemed a slight. Why should they have to contribute to the clergyperson’s stipend and for the upkeep of the church building? They might have seen this as the responsibility of the wealthy.

²⁴⁷ Whibley, *Merriman of Grahamstown*, 35.

Colenso and Merriman²⁴⁸ agreed with Gray's sentiments regarding pew rents and offertories, and were strong promoters of both practices, untiringly introducing them across what was to become the Dioceses of Cape Town, Grahamstown and Natal. The new ideas were accepted without much fuss in some places (Merriman reported that Grahamstown had accepted both relatively quickly²⁴⁹), but in others they met with fierce resistance (particularly at Port Elizabeth, Uitenhage and Graaff-Reinet in the Cape,²⁵⁰ and, as related above, at Durban in Natal²⁵¹).

The offertory was obviously a contentious issue for many colonists, because the *South African Church Magazine* in November 1851 decided to run an article by an anonymous author (probably William Newman, see discussion above) concerning the merits of the offertory. This is how it begins:

As the result of a very general enquiry, I believe that much of the opposition so irreligiously attempted, a few years back, in some of the parishes in England, to the weekly offertory, arose solely from worldly covetousness. Men too selfish to part with any portion of their worldly substance to their fellows' need, or to God's glory, thought to throw suspicion upon, and thus to hinder, the good example of those who would bring back the apostolic custom, plainly enjoined by St. Paul...²⁵²

Was this an attempt to calm the growing antagonism to offertories in the new Diocese of Cape Town? It certainly seems to have been an attempt to situate the idea of the offertory in Scripture, and thus to appeal to the evangelically minded:

There appears now a growing conviction that weekly collections are not only most advisable, but also that the practice is one of the signs of reviving life and earnestness in the Church of Christ. Men are beginning to understand that it is a privilege to the pious heart to give to God... Many have thanked their ministers that they have afforded them stated opportunities of 'honouring God with their substance...'”²⁵³

Here we see a link between the offertory and tithing, a theme which was developed extensively through the article, and perhaps another attempt at winning evangelical hearts. But at no point does the author refer to offertories as a substitute for pew rents – perhaps wisely! The article does not seem to have paid much in the way of dividends, because opposition to the weekly offertory continued.

Other contested “rituals”

An unusual debate about the “Romanising” of the church arose in the Diocese of Grahamstown in 1867.²⁵⁴ In May that year the *Grahamstown Journal*, a local biweekly newspaper, printed an open letter from the churchwardens, civil commissioner and other concerned citizens in Alice addressed to Bishop Henry Cotterill (Bishop of Grahamstown

²⁴⁸ Merriman was Archdeacon of the Eastern Cape (1848 – 1871) and then Bishop of Grahamstown (1871 – 1882).

²⁴⁹ Whibley, *Merriman of Grahamstown*, 28.

²⁵⁰ Whibley, *Merriman of Grahamstown*, 46-47 and 57.

²⁵¹ Darby, *Anglican Worship in Victorian Natal*, 169-192.

²⁵² *The South African Church Magazine and Ecclesiastical Review* (November 1851), 336.

²⁵³ *The South African Church Magazine and Ecclesiastical Review* (November 1851), 336.

²⁵⁴ By this time, the massive original Diocese of Cape Town had been split into three separate dioceses: Cape Town, Grahamstown and Natal.

1856 - 1871) complaining about the Romanising of the church. One could expect a letter which condemns a local clergyperson for introducing vestments or candles on the altar.²⁵⁵ Instead the letter attacks unnamed parishes for introducing suspect furnishings and rituals such as "... crosses, postures, and genuflections, the changing of garments and the gorgeous display of vestments, the intonation and monotonous into which the service is rendered..." It continues by lamenting how this state of affairs is undermining the work of the "Reformed" church.²⁵⁶ There was no complaint against the local Anglican rector, J. R. Wilson, and indeed no reference to the parish in Alice at all, except that it thoroughly disavowed itself from so-called "popish" practices. In essence, the letter reflects the attitude of suspicion related to anything slightly Roman Catholic – the same suspicion which Merriman encountered so often in his travels around his archdeaconry and which Colenso had come against in Durban. Interestingly however, the letter does not imply that the signatories had actually experienced any of these "Romish" practices. Since the offending parishes are not named, they could refer to congregations in England rather than in South Africa which may disprove Whibley's argument above – after all, if English parishes were being attacked in this letter, then the sentiment was not necessarily nostalgia for the Mother Church, but the *Reformed* Mother Church or for the nature of Reformed church structures which appear to have been so common in South Africa at the time.

The initial letter was not the end of it. A week later the Bishop of Grahamstown replied in the same newspaper. Cotterill was an Evangelical who tolerated the high church tendencies of a number of his clergy. In an ironic set of circumstances, he landed up drafting the local church's constitution in 1870 which allowed Anglo-Catholicism to flower and flourish.²⁵⁷ Yet, it is clear from the bishop's response to the letter from Alice that while he worked closely with moderate high church and Tractarian clergy, he was uncomfortable with, and weary of, any doctrinal shifts which would undermine the Reformed nature of the Church of England. He stopped short of condemning or even mentioning ritualist tendencies, probably because there were ritualist sympathisers in his own diocese.²⁵⁸ His solution was a church not linked in any way to the state, and thus free to make its own laws and decisions. He felt that an independent church would be able to eliminate any "Romish" doctrine.²⁵⁹ How wrong he was. When the South African Anglican Church asserted its independence in 1870, the Province which Cotterill helped to create embraced numerous Tractarian doctrines and much ritualism, as shall be demonstrated in the following chapter. In fact, the independence of the church from the English state meant that clergy were free from being charged according to state litigation relating to both ritualism and liturgy. In essence, they were only answerable to their bishops, many of whom were Tractarians or ritualists themselves or at least sympathetic to their cause.

A further letter, published on 7 June, demolished the original signatories, questioning their motives and suggesting that they check their sources before making public statements about "Romanizing".²⁶⁰ The author, "True-Blue",²⁶¹ is scathing about the financial contribution the small Alice congregation had made to the wider diocese, and further questioned which Reformation they claimed to be part of; Henry VIII's, Luther's, Calvin's, Wesley's or John Knox's?²⁶² By attacking the financial contribution of the Alice

²⁵⁵ *Grahamstown Journal* (24 May 1867) – Cory Library.

²⁵⁶ *Grahamstown Journal* (24 May 1867).

²⁵⁷ Hinchliff, *The Anglican Church in South Africa*, 115.

²⁵⁸ *Grahamstown Journal* (31 May 1867) – Cory Library.

²⁵⁹ *Grahamstown Journal* (31 May 1867).

²⁶⁰ *Grahamstown Journal* (7 June 1867) – Cory Library.

²⁶¹ "True Blue" can refer either to someone who is loyal and committed to the cause or, significantly in this case, to political allegiance to the British Conservative Party (Tory).

²⁶² *Grahamstown Journal* (7 June 1867).

congregation, “True Blue” may have been suggesting that to be able to make criticisms, you must be pulling your weight in the wider church. If this is the case, “True Blue” is questioning where active membership of a church lies, i.e. through taking of Communion three times a year (as the prayer book required), or contributing financially towards the running of the church (presumably through offertories or pew rents – more likely the former, given that pew rents could probably have provided some sense of stable and sizable income). Alternatively, “True Blue” may have been suggesting that the size of financial contribution determined how legitimate your voice in public discourse was, i.e. a matter of class. Was the author of this letter suggesting that the questionable class of the original letter writers somehow undermined their argument? It is difficult to tell given the brevity of the letter, but the *nom de plume* could be suggestive of a high social class (many landed gentry and high ranking churchmen in Britain were Tories). Equally important in this case is that Anglo-Catholicism tended to be supported by upper and upper-middle class people in Britain. “True Blue” does not actually suggest that he/she supports Romanising in any way, but only questions the logic of the original writers, which may imply that the letter is an attack on class and education more than anything else.

While this was perhaps a minor spat in a relatively small local newspaper, the letters do show that there were communities deep into the 1860s which still harboured prejudices against any form of ritualism, whether by ceremonies, vestments or furnishings. Their reasons for this may have been nostalgia or a mistrust of Roman Catholics and a perception of their growing influence in English society, but by this stage it surely could not have been related to the imposition of episcopal authority (which had been in place in the area by that stage for 20 years); especially given that the local bishop actually agreed with the aggrieved signatories.

Another newspaper debate of interest was published in 1884, showing that concerns surrounding ritualism still periodically arose in South Africa despite the widespread acceptance of Tractarian theological perspectives and ritualist ceremonial. In December of that year, “A Broad Churchman”²⁶³ wrote to the *Church Chronicle*, South Africa’s Anglican Provincial monthly newspaper: “It may be noticed in a few Churches, as well here as in England, that it is a custom for clergy and for some members of the congregation from time to time to make obeisance to the Lord’s Table – indeed each time the Church is crossed it is the habit of certain Clergy to bow towards the altar.”²⁶⁴ The writer continues, claiming that: “The general argument in favour of the custom is this, viz.: “That *bodily altar-worship is a means to promote and assist that of the mind!*” [Italics original]”²⁶⁵ According to the correspondent the idea that the altar can function as a mediatory means for Godward adoration is tantamount to image-worship.²⁶⁶ Instead, he/she argues that worship be directed straight to God, removing the intermediary.²⁶⁷ In essence, the letter represents an understanding that God can be approached without appealing to any intermediary such as saints, relics and symbols. Some would argue that such a position is decidedly Protestant.

²⁶³ The so-called “broad church” movement in Anglicanism, sometimes called latitudinarianism, has not been discussed in this dissertation in detail. However, a brief note is necessary here. Between the two opposing poles of the High Church and Evangelical factions lay a much larger group of Anglicans who tolerated a broad range of theological stances and ceremonial preferences. Broad Anglicans were represented by, among others, Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834), Frederick Maurice (1805-1872) and the writers of *Essays and Reviews* (1860). Bishop Colenso’s most controversial writings, which focused on Biblical criticism, were also extreme examples of this movement, although not all broad Anglicans approved of his work. As the nineteenth century progressed, broad churchmanship was often equated with Christian liberalism and social justice.

²⁶⁴ *Church Chronicle* (vol. 5, December 1884) – College of the Transfiguration Library, 390.

²⁶⁵ *Church Chronicle* (vol. 5, December 1884), 390-91.

²⁶⁶ *Church Chronicle* (vol. 5, December 1884), 391.

²⁶⁷ *Church Chronicle* (vol. 5, December 1884), 391.

The editors, themselves self-proclaimed proponents of ritual bowing to the altar, responded that they were “utterly at a loss to discover where our correspondent heard or found the ‘general argument’”.²⁶⁸ They go on to claim that if bowing is concomitant with altar-worship, they too would reject the custom.²⁶⁹ Instead they assert that this interpretation must be “puritan” and that the correspondent’s view is narrow rather than that of “A Broad Churchman”.²⁷⁰ Their defence of the custom revolves around its historical precedent. They argue that: bowing to the altar was a custom developed in the Early Church (although they do not provide any evidence to prove this); its use in England and Ireland before and after the Reformation was common; and it was commended in an English canon in 1640 *not* passed by parliament (ironically at a time when high church tendencies were sparking nationwide revolution in England).²⁷¹ While the response defends the historicity of the custom, it never supplies a convincing theological explanation as to why it still prevailed. The editors do, however, equate the practice with similar ceremonial in the secular world where soldiers salute at the hoisting of colours and peers bow before the throne in the British parliament, i.e. invisible power represented by a symbol.²⁷² Why defend the practice only by appealing to its antiquity and the secular world? Why not simply appeal to some biblical precedent, which, it could be tentatively claimed, provides theological backing, e.g. Psalm 94? Perhaps the Victorian penchant for historicism, already evident in much ritualistic revival, was the principle guiding motive for ceremonial. If this is so, such a defence more than demonstrates the overarching intentions behind revival (a word, interestingly, which is at the heart of the editors’ defence²⁷³). Yates is of the opinion that historicism (or antiquarianism, as he calls it) was a mainstay of the ritualists.²⁷⁴

While the conflicts related to the “innovations” discussed above were heated and in some cases quite prolonged, they centred on issues which today seem quite minor in significance. For the most part the furores about vestments, for example, focused on the surplice. By comparison, in the 1850s, in some very advanced ritualist parishes across the world, full Eucharistic vestments were slowly being introduced. Such innovations did not characterise churchmanship in South Africa at this point except for on one isolated Pentecost Sunday in 1857.

On that particular day, Rev John Lake Crompton (1815 – 1889) celebrated the Eucharist in the newly consecrated parish church of Pinetown using full Eucharistic vestments.²⁷⁵ Even in terms of the advanced parishes in England, this was ambitious, especially as the vestments were worn without any prior permission or consent from the congregation. Crompton had been trained in several ritualist parishes in London. He immigrated to Natal in 1857 to improve his ailing health.²⁷⁶ A colourful character, perhaps more aptly described as harmlessly mischievous, he managed to become notorious in Natal as

²⁶⁸ *Church Chronicle* (vol. 5, December 1884), 391.

²⁶⁹ *Church Chronicle* (vol. 5, December 1884), 392.

²⁷⁰ *Church Chronicle* (vol. 5, December 1884), 392.

²⁷¹ *Church Chronicle* (vol. 5, December 1884), 392-96.

²⁷² *Church Chronicle* (vol. 5, December 1884), 393.

²⁷³ *Church Chronicle* (vol. 5, December 1884), 395.

²⁷⁴ Yates, *Anglican Ritualism in Victorian Britain*, 68-69. He includes, alongside antiquarianism, the rejection of the English Reformation, the magnification of the church’s ministry and sacraments by Tractarians in opposition to traditional high churchmen, the ecclesiological movement and its emphasis on beauty and symbolism, the rise of the Roman Catholic Church in England at the time, and the colourful ceremonial and theology of the Catholic Apostolic Church.

²⁷⁵ Darby documented the full story, quoting reports from the press and the subsequent letters to and from the laity and the Bishop of Natal. See Darby, *Anglican Worship in Victorian Natal*, 192-197.

²⁷⁶ Darby, *Anglican Worship in Victorian Natal*, 193

a ritualist. One press article described him as “genus Rome – species Anglican”.²⁷⁷ Colenso, on the advice of his chapter, refused Crompton’s application for a license, but he was asked to officiate at Pinetown on Whitsunday 1857 because the parish minister was only in Deacon’s orders.²⁷⁸ The press enjoyed the saga, relating the drama of the service as “Rome Unveiled”.²⁷⁹ Letters of protest also flooded into Colenso’s office. One can only imagine the flared tempers if surplices had caused offense elsewhere! This was an isolated event, but the ritualist tendencies of both Crompton and Green (mentioned above) would continue to develop with gradual intensity and with equally ferocious responses from the laity.²⁸⁰

These last few examples point towards a third wave of catholic revival within Anglicanism which in South Africa lasted from as early as the mid-1860s right into the early twentieth century (well beyond the ambit of this study). As has been demonstrated, the opposition to innovations in this wave related directly to ceremonial which lay outside of the *Book of Common Prayer* tradition. Indeed, in England at the time, they were considered illegal. The examples above only touch lightly on this third wave, but the next chapter deals with more advanced examples which also characterise this third wave.

Concluding remarks

This chapter has examined both conceptions of and protests against perceived ritualism. The earliest evidence presented here, from 1850, is characteristic of the first wave of protests against what was often termed “a movement towards Rome”. These early antagonists of ritualism tended to understand the catholicising movement in terms of symbol and theology. Thus, certain types of church architecture and other symbols such as crucifixes were considered “popish”. Likewise, theological positions regarding the Eucharist and Baptism, specifically the doctrines of real presence (although not discussed here) and Baptismal regeneration, were suspect. In the letter conversation between Welby and White, we find two highly educated men challenging each other through intellectual means, perhaps reflecting the intellectual nature of the Tractarian movement itself. Both protagonists appeal to English culture in defence of their position, even if obliquely. White takes a typically conservative English approach in terms of church architecture and Biblical interpretation, embodying broadly Calvinistic traits. Welby, on the other hand, appeals to a respected Reformed English poet in his defence of Gothic architecture’s possible spiritual qualities. A discussion of this nature points to a very specific type of colonist, from a certain stratum of English society, namely landed, university-educated leaders of society: one a doctor, the other a priest. Significantly, both writers are men. As has been demonstrated above, most of the protagonists in the “ritualist wars” were men, although the gender of anonymous writers to the newspaper cannot be conclusively proved.

The second example, from only five years later, shows a very different approach to ritualism. Here we have what appears to be a dispute between clergy and laity concerning the exercise of authority. In this case, the proposed introduction of certain practices and the phasing out of others appear to have become proxy battle grounds to demonstrate where real power resided. While it is true that the proposed introductions were associated with the high church, Tractarian and ecclesiological parties of the church, none of them exceeded the

²⁷⁷ The same article related: “This gentleman [Crompton] on entering the church, reverently bowed to the altar; (a gentleman sitting near the aisle, mistaking it for a personal salutation, returned the courtesy)”. Darby, *Anglican Worship in Victorian Natal*, 193.

²⁷⁸ Darby, *Anglican Worship in Victorian Natal*, 194.

²⁷⁹ Darby, *Anglican Worship in Victorian Natal*, 194-195.

²⁸⁰ Darby provides a balanced and detailed view of Green’s work at Pietermaritzburg Cathedral, where he was Dean. See Darby, *Anglican Worship in Victorian Natal*, chapter 8.

norms or tenets of Anglican doctrine. In fact, most of them were simply an attempt to align worship more closely to the *Book of Common Prayer 1662*. Groups of the laity, however, saw these introductions as a challenge to their communal authority to govern the congregation's worship customs. The congregation was, after all, *their* congregation: a group of people who had gathered together of their own free will even before a clergyman had been appointed to meet their needs. Through their protests, some very extreme, they eventually accomplished their aim: to restore worship basically to its original form before the Bishop of Natal had arrived. Notably, though, this particular argument over power demonstrates what some lay people considered to be ritualist practices. At one time or another they attacked offertories, Baptism during the main Sunday service, the wearing of a surplice in the pulpit, the keeping of saints days and preparing the Eucharistic elements during the service, rather than beforehand. This list is quite different from the three concerns of Dr White, and less intellectually based. In fact, they are all linked exclusively with the practice of worship, rather than the theological aspects which underpin it. Perhaps this shows that the people who formed the laity at St Paul's in Durban were not necessarily university educated. They were, however, up against a prominent and respected mathematician in Colenso and the evidently well-educated Mackenzie. Nevertheless, it was the masses, not the elite, who proved their mettle.

The two newspaper discussions which have been presented as evidence above display several other possible nuances in how ritualism was interpreted. In the series of letters which appeared in the *Grahamstown Journal* in 1867, ritualism was characterised in terms of posture, vestments such as the chasuble, and the intoning of prayers. This is a development from the first two examples: one of which was theological, the other about the interpretation of existing prayer book rubrics. I propose that this shows a movement towards a narrower understanding of what ritualism actually constituted. The initial letter to the paper was a protest against ritualism not aimed at a particular priest or congregation, but more generally at the "Reformed" Church. A response from an anonymous reader of the newspaper (with, as mentioned earlier, the *non de plume* "True Blue") provides an interesting vignette of the possible defenders of ritualism, placing the argument for and against ritualism specifically in the realms of politics and class. In this sense, it is very much like the events which occurred in Durban at St Paul's, namely a political and societal elite are pitted against the general populace. The one side used intellectual logic to defend and attack, whereas the other group used a ground swell of popular power as its main strategy.

The second series of newspaper letters appeared in the *Church Chronicle* nearly two decades later. As in the other newspaper dialogue, this example is more definite about what ritualism is, in this case bowing. In this letter the author provides what he or she claims is a popular theological interpretation of the custom – the first time in the evidence provided thus far that a defender of Protestantism tries to think through the lenses of someone in the Anglo-Catholic camp. The editors of the paper respond, inadvertently nailing their colours to the mast. They provide numerous defences for bowing: historical and secular but, interestingly, not Scriptural or theological. Arguments surrounding bowing so late in the nineteenth century seem somewhat outdated. After all, as the next chapter will show, some parishes had gone much further ritualistically. Yet, perhaps it shows just how long the actual transition from broadly Calvinistic to broadly catholic took.

What is clear is that antagonism towards ritualism continued throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century. The reasons for this antagonism and the actual definition of ritualism gradually changed, showing a number of changing fault-lines in colonial society. The evidence above seems to indicate that ritualism was, at least in some cases, projected onto other issues; mainly the exercise of power, fear of change and class distinctions. In other words, ritual was a convenient topic through which an argument could be debated. Some

clergy and laity, sadly, seem to have got caught in the cross-fire in these debates. They may not have specifically supported high churchmen, Tractarians or ritualists, they were just in the wrong place at the wrong time. Such “innocent” participants seem to have absorbed much scorn and ridicule. Consider, for example, Mackenzie, who, in the end, bore the brunt of the attack and had to leave the parish. There were never really winners in these debates either. While one side may, in some cases, seem to have emerged as victors, neither side ever really changed their views, and it was only as time wore relentlessly on that newer ideas and battles took the foreground so that ritualism could quietly take root and develop.

Significantly, only one example above alludes to one of the “six points” of more advanced ritualism (see chapter two), namely the letter in the *Grahamstown Journal* in its reference to candles. Thus, the first waves of antagonism in South Africa were actually more clearly related to Tractarianism and ecclesiology, rather than to the ritualism which characterised the 1860s in Britain. In the next chapter, however, evidence of parishes which actively promoted the six points, as well as other forms of advanced ritualism, will be presented and examined.

CHAPTER FIVE

Strongholds of ritualism and examples of wide-spread ritualism

The fourth chapter concentrated exclusively on examples of opposition against ritualism. This chapter offers a slightly different perspective. Although instances of opposition are included here, the examples discussed below demonstrate that in some places ritualism eventually co-existed with or superseded earlier worship patterns. The overwhelming difference in the evidence presented in this chapter from that of the previous is that it reveals a determination on the part of some clergy to push ahead with ritualist programmes despite opposition; a determination that was not as strong in previous decades. A possible reason for this change was that the ideals of Tractarian theological ferment could lead organically to blatantly Catholic interpretation. There was a small minority of highly ritualist clergy who originally subscribed to Tractarianism, but who were largely subdued by the leaders of the movement (in deference to the qualities of economy and reserve so characteristic of Tractarianism in general). However, as the second generation of clergy schooled in Tractarian ideals were ordained, they seem to have heralded a much more conscious appeal to Catholicism. The result in South Africa was a number of ritualist strongholds. Eventually some distinct ritualist innovations became quite popular, such as a three-hour devotional service on Good Friday (as discussed below). The overall picture here, then, is one of determination on the part of some clergy and their ultimate triumph despite being unpopular in some quarters. Another important difference is that the examples below all concern what were considered by both clergy and laity alike as ritualist innovations, i.e there was no dispute about them being in some way sanctioned by the rubrics of the *Book of Common Prayer 1662*. Indeed, most of the innovations discussed below were ceremonial practices specifically defended as the essential “six points” of *bona fide* ritualists discussed in chapter two. Additionally, all the examples below are representative of the third wave of ritualism (discussed in chapter four).

The previous chapter covered a time period from the 1850s through to the mid-1880s. Hardwick, examining ritualism in South Africa a decade earlier, notes,

In South Africa it was striking how high church clergy were willing to risk conflict with a largely evangelical settler laity by introducing Anglo-Catholic forms of worship. Some clergy would not negotiate at all. Edward T. Scott, who arrived in George in South Africa in 1845, said he was warmly received by both English and Dutch, but that this “soon cooled down, when they found I did not think it right to come into all their ways”. George Booth, minister at Fort Beaufort, refused to preach in a Methodist chapel and to – as he put it – “amalgamate our church with dissenting Methodists”... Men who took these kinds of stances did not last long. Scott, for example, resigned his post in 1849.²⁸¹

This quote confirms the evidence from the last chapter, namely, that a number of different contextual conditions led to fairly robust opposition to ritualism *and*, in a number of cases, the abandoning of so-called ritualist innovations. But, during the period of roughly thirty-five years while protests were raging in some quarters, other parishes, led primarily by zealous

²⁸¹ Hardwick, *An Anglican British World*, 88-89.

clergy, overcame their initial reservations about ritualism and became increasingly adventurous; if at the expense of losing longstanding members *en route*.

In 1870 the Church of the Province of South Africa became an independent branch of the Anglican Church. By declaring independence it freed itself from state control in England and by introducing its own constitution, established an independent bench of bishops and standardised a local system of synodical government. The church remained part of the burgeoning Anglican Communion, but asserted its right to make its own decisions within the ambit of Anglican standards, including amendments or revisions to the *Book of Common Prayer 1662*. The independence of the local church allowed it to sidestep the legal implications of priests introducing ceremonial which was considered illegal in England at the time and, if prosecuted, could carry jail sentences. As a result, although ritualism may still have been interpreted as suspect in some places by the 1870s, if a bishop had given approval for certain innovations, and the synod of bishops and the metropolitan Archbishop of Cape Town supported him, there was no further route for appeal. In addition, if an incumbent was headstrong enough, he could disregard the bishop's directives and continue undisturbed. Such an incumbent's only concern may have been losing his license. As we shall see, this seldom happened; and if it did, revoking a license seemed to take a long time. Thus, ritualist clergy found a conducive environment in the new Province. From 1870 onwards, then, there was greater impetus on the part of some clergy to develop more overt ritualist traditions. Thus, by the end of the 1870s such parishes were already quite advanced in terms of ritualism, as will be demonstrated by the examples below.

The "six points" in Natal

In the last chapter it was noted in the conclusion that only two of the protests against ritualism presented as evidence included any of the "six points" which became marks of full-blown ritualism in 1860s Britain. These "six points" comprised Eucharistic vestments; eastward celebration of the Communion; candles on the altar; mixed chalice; wafer bread; and incense. Colenso's great adversary, James Green, had introduced eastward Eucharistic celebrations and the elevation of the chalice at the cathedral as early as 1865.²⁸² Significantly, these introductions only appeared *after* Colenso had been deposed in 1863. Green had already asserted his position on Eucharistic theology five years earlier in 1858. Surprisingly for an Anglican in the 1850s, he held "that the definition of the Council of Trent was the only possible orthodox position".²⁸³ In Anglicanism at the time, such an interpretation would have been considered unusual at best, and incompatible with the teachings of the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion at worst.²⁸⁴ Colenso, on the other hand seems to have espoused a more Zwinglian position – an interpretation which was less dissonant with the Thirty-Nine

²⁸² Darby, *Anglican Worship in Victorian Natal*, 322.

²⁸³ Hinchliff, *The Anglican Church in South Africa*, 82.

²⁸⁴ Article twenty-eight of the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion says, "The Supper of the Lord is not only a sign of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves one to another, but rather it is a Sacrament of our Redemption by Christ's death: insomuch that to such as rightly, worthily, and with faith, receive the same, the Bread which we break is a partaking of the Body of Christ; and likewise the Cup of Blessing is a partaking of the Blood of Christ. Transubstantiation (or the change of the substance of Bread and Wine) in the Supper of the Lord, cannot be proved by Holy Writ; but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a Sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions. The Body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten, in the Supper, only after an heavenly and spiritual manner. And the mean whereby the Body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper, is Faith. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was not by Christ's ordinance reserved, carried about, lifted up, or worshipped". See *Articles of Religion*. http://anglicansonline.org/basics/thirty-nine_articles.html (accessed 5 March 2020).

Articles.²⁸⁵ It was this doctrinal difference of opinion which prompted Green to initiate what would ultimately become Colenso's trial of excommunication. Whatever the doctrinal position of clergy in Natal in the 1850s and early 1860s, ceremonial highlighting Green's narrow interpretation was not actively encouraged nor allowed by the bishop. Indeed, the extreme example of Compton's wearing the Eucharistic vestments at Pinetown was condemned by the bishop.²⁸⁶

Green's introduction of eastward Eucharistic celebrations and vestments were to remain the only two of the six points to be actively promoted in Natal until fifteen years later. From 1878 onwards a combination of events led to a rapid movement to introduce all six. This started while Green was away in England on long leave. One of his assistants, an avowed ritualist, began introducing genuflexions, the sign of the cross, the mixed chalice and wafer bread.²⁸⁷ The cathedral congregation was quick to respond. Through a number of letters sent to the vicar general (the bishop too was on long leave), congregants made clear their distaste of the ritualist innovations.²⁸⁸ Green, whose obstinacy was to become a thorn in the Bishop of Maritzburg's side, chose to support and join his assistant upon his return, openly defying the bishop's request that he desist from using incense and lighted candles.²⁸⁹ It would seem, in fact, that Green and his assistant had been in collusion concerning these innovations from quite early in the saga.²⁹⁰ Interestingly, Green claimed the authority of the Old Testament to give legitimacy for his use of incense and other ceremonial.²⁹¹ Yet, he seems to have ignored the Old Testament prophetic writings which sometimes pointedly scorned the use of ritual (e.g. Isaiah 1:10 – 17). The immediate result was that three-quarters of Green's congregation left, and the income of the parish fell dramatically.²⁹² In fact, the clergy of the cathedral had their monthly salaries halved as a direct result. This dramatic fall in popularity did not seem to affect Green's resolve. He continued, seemingly unconcerned that his method of ministry did not meet the majority of his congregation's taste or spirituality. He did, however, lose a great deal of respect through these actions. Indeed, a number of his earlier supporters left the cathedral in protest. The bishop eventually revoked the assistant's license in the mid-1880s for continued disruptions and misuse of church funds, but a motion against Green at the diocesan synod was not passed, and so he continued undeterred.²⁹³ After this saga had played out at synod and in the press, one wonders if Colenso's detractors had begun to reconsider if taking Green's accusations of heresy seriously had been premature and somewhat overstated.

Darby notes that Bishop Gray had been faced with a similar situation a decade earlier in 1869. Gray responded by allowing those innovations which did not go against the Prayer Book, but condemned those which did.²⁹⁴ Thus, advanced ritualism, which included most of the six points, was being practiced as early as 1869 in the Cape, although not without protest. Hardwick's comments, cited above, seem justified then. However, unlike the 1840s, ritualist clergy were beginning to last in their positions! Some clergy were particularly strong willed and determined to achieve their ritual goals. The independence of the church may well have contributed to the confidence of the clergy. Nevertheless, the fallout from the laity at this stage was, it seems, quite substantial.

²⁸⁵ Hinchliff, *The Anglican Church in South Africa*, 82.

²⁸⁶ Darby, *Anglican Worship in Victorian Natal*, 195.

²⁸⁷ Darby, *Anglican Worship in Victorian Natal*, 323 and 325.

²⁸⁸ Darby, *Anglican Worship in Victorian Natal*, 323.

²⁸⁹ Darby, *Anglican Worship in Victorian Natal*, 337.

²⁹⁰ Darby, *Anglican Worship in Victorian Natal*, 331.

²⁹¹ Darby, *Anglican Worship in Victorian Natal*, 326.

²⁹² Darby, *Anglican Worship in Victorian Natal*, 332.

²⁹³ Darby, *Anglican Worship in Victorian Natal*, 328-330.

²⁹⁴ Darby, *Anglican Worship in Victorian Natal*, 341-342.

Beyond the “six points”

Two parishes in the city of Port Elizabeth were centres of ritualist developments during the 1880s. These church communities were regular correspondents with the Provincial newspaper the *Church Chronicle* in which they documented recent festivals, confirmations or ordinations. These accounts often reveal evidence of advanced ritualism together with a confident air of triumphalism, perhaps suggesting that the congregations were trying to prove a point about the value of ceremonial and correct decorum in terms of worship. The most astounding feature of one of these churches, St Mary’s, is that it had been described in the 1850s and -60s as a congregation where sentiments of ritualism were strong (concomitant with a strong dislike of anything which perhaps resembled Roman worship).²⁹⁵ Unfortunately the existing contemporary sources do not give any indication of whether an older generation of evangelicals in the congregation had died out, or if they had slowly changed their minds about ritualism.²⁹⁶ One possibility is that the evangelical members moved to another parish (Port Elizabeth had been known as an evangelical stronghold during Merriman’s term as archdeacon of Grahamstown).²⁹⁷ However, there is no definitive evidence for this supposition. Another possibility is that the growing population at Port Elizabeth may have included a number of middle-class professionals – a group of people more likely to be open to ritualism. But again, there is no conclusive evidence pointing in this direction.

St Peter’s in Port Elizabeth by the early 1880s was experimenting with the most advanced ritualist ceremonies. A report in the February 1881 edition of the *Church Chronicle* reads as follows:

The ancient custom of singing the Greater Antiphons before and after the Magnificat during the week before Christmas was observed in this Church. On Christmas Day... to meet the feelings of weaker brethren, incense was not used at the 8 and 10 o’clock services. [At the 11 o’clock service] the choir, preceded by Thurifer, Incense boat and Cross bearers, properly vested, entered the Church singing the *Adeste Fideles*, which was heartily taken up by the congregation. All the music in this church (excepting hymns) is plain song, and one could not help contrasting the volume of praise then going up, to the sounds of ribaldry once heard, at this season, in days we hope never to return.²⁹⁸

A year later the same newspaper reported:

A Confirmation was held by the Bishop on the evening of January 21... The Acolytes, properly vested in scarlet cassocks and albs, were first confirmed, then the choir men and boys, next men and women of the congregation. At this Church the Bishop sits near to and confirms at the Chancel steps, which is far more in accordance with the spirit of the Holy Rite than when he administers at the Altar rail... The very hearty way in which the congregation joined in the service speaks well for their appreciation of plain song [sic]...²⁹⁹

Several important aspects of ritualist churchmanship are apparent in these two extracts. The first is the revival of an ancient liturgical practice (the Advent Greater Antiphons); the second is the use of incense; the third the vesting of the altar party; the fourth the use of plainsong. The idea of historicism as an important foundation of ritualist worship is immediately evident in the first extract. Here, an ancient liturgical custom (the singing of the Advent Antiphons

²⁹⁵ Whibley, *Merriman of Grahamstown*, 28 and 35-36.

²⁹⁶ Sadly, the minute books for the early period of the parish are no longer available.

²⁹⁷ Beckman, *A Clash of Churchmanship*, 83-85.

²⁹⁸ *The Church Chronicle* (vol. 3, February 1881) – College of the Transfiguration Library, 58.

²⁹⁹ *The Church Chronicle* (vol. 3, February 1882), 58.

before and after the Magnificat seven days before Christmas), which had died out or been suppressed during the English Reformation, was revived at evening services. The Greater Antiphons had been included in Thomas Helmore and Neale's *Hymnal Noted* in 1854 and formed part of the recovery of Latin liturgical hymnody.³⁰⁰ Given the fact that the St Peter's was using plainsong, it is not unreasonable to surmise that they were familiar with, or even singing from, Helmore and Neale's publications. The texts of these antiphons, or slight revisions of them, were to become increasingly popular, eventually being included in the South African revisions of the *Book of Common Prayer* in 1954 and 1989 respectively. Of interest is that the author felt the need to include mention of the antiphons in his/her report at all. Clearly such a revival was a novelty in South Africa, and its inclusion demonstrates that the author is keen to show that the parish is an advanced example of ritualist worship – a badge of liturgical honour, perhaps.

The use of incense seems to have been a contentious issue in this congregation, even if the most popular services included it. The author suggests that those who did not appreciate incense, for whatever reason, were "weaker brethren". In other words, those who have accepted ritualist practices are to be admired as advanced Christians. Since we do not have commentary from any of the disaffected worshippers, it is difficult to gauge why they objected to incense. Were they allergic to it? Were they concerned that it represented a movement towards Roman Catholicism? Or were they sceptical of its theological underpinning? We are not told how many people appreciated or rejected the use of incense, so it is difficult to tell how popular it actually was. Returning to the author's perspective, what prompted the need to defend the use of incense so strongly, belittling those who disliked it? There may have been tension surrounding this development, and while it seems that the majority were willing to tolerate it, some were unhappy enough to attend incense-free services. It seems that only a small percentage of parishes used incense in England at this time, as in the United States,³⁰¹ which suggests that St Peter's was among the vanguard of ritualist Anglican churches in South Africa.³⁰²

The third matter of interest is the vesting of the altar parties. In both extracts the author was careful to note that the ministers were "properly vested". Here it seems likely that he/she was either trying to show that the parish was keeping up with the English ritualist agenda (i.e. "we compare favourably"), or that the church was trying to set a local standard, showing the way for others (i.e. "look at us, we get it right"). The author could, in fact, espouse both attitudes. What is important to note in both extracts is that the reference to vesting is in connection with altar parties, as though their correct attire was of particular importance. Interestingly, the author makes no reference to the vestments of the clergy. This is rather odd. Why speak only of the laity when full Roman vestments would surely have been an aim in this context? Perhaps the clergy themselves had not yet introduced chasubles and maniples. In England in the early 1880s, the use of vestments, while slightly more popular than incense, was still relatively limited.³⁰³ There had been the early pioneers such as St Saviour's in Leeds, where vestments had been in use since 1848.³⁰⁴ And at Leadenham some clerical vestments were being introduced as early as 1841 – 2.³⁰⁵ Equally, in the United

³⁰⁰ Rainbow, Bernarr. *The Choral Revival in the Anglican Church 1839 – 1872*. Martlesham: Boydell, 1970, 94.

³⁰¹ Platt, "The Rise of Advanced Ritualism in New York City", 346 and 358.

³⁰² Yates, *Buildings, Faith, and Worship*, 144. Yates cites a survey in 1882 suggesting that 1.1% of London parishes and 0.1% of English and Welsh parishes used incense.

³⁰³ Yates, *Buildings, Faith, and Worship*, 144. The same survey suggests that vestments were being used in 4.1% of London parishes and 2.8% of English and Welsh parishes. Reed seems to corroborate what Yates claims, see Reed, "'Ritualism Rampant in East London': Anglo-Catholicism and the Urban Poor", 384.

³⁰⁴ Yates, *Buildings, Faith, and Worship*, 139.

³⁰⁵ Yates, *Anglican Ritualism in Victorian Britain*, 59.

States, several parishes were buying chasubles in the 1860s.³⁰⁶ So why not mention the priest's vestments here? It is possible that the extracts were written by the priest at St Peter's, and that, out of a sense of humility or the desire not to exacerbate tensions, he wished not to draw attention to himself. This would certainly be ironic, given that priestly vestments draw significant attention.

The revival of medieval plainsong was another of the historicisms of the ritualists, and it is clear from the extracts above that its presence at St Peter's was a sign of the parish's intention to be at the forefront of liturgical innovation. The extracts speak of congregational plainsong "excepting hymns" which suggests that the responses and psalms were sung according to psalm tones, but that plainsong hymnody was not necessarily in vogue – a type of compromise where the austerity of an exclusively plainsong service was avoided. Pioneers in Anglo-Catholic music in England had already been experimenting with monotone chanting, psalm tones and Gregorian hymns in the 1840s and -50s, as had some parishes in the United States.³⁰⁷ The apex of these experiments was Helmore's³⁰⁸ *Psalter Noted* (1849), followed closely by his *Canticles Noted* (1850),³⁰⁹ and finally, and most influentially, his collaboration with John Mason Neale to create the *Hymnal Noted* (1851 and 1854). Also influential was the revival of Merbecke's *Common Prayer Noted* (1550) in 1843 which was used as a prototype for congregational plainsong and which may have been used at St Peter's. In essence, ritualists wanted to ensure that the congregation participated as fully as possible in the responses and hymns of the church. In their opinion, metrical psalmody was not conducive to lively participation; thus they sought to revive Latin hymnody (and later Greek hymnody too) as well as composing new poems for congregational use. Both Bernarr Rainbow and Yates agree that the use of plainsong was deeply connected to ritualist worship,³¹⁰ and thus it received its fair share of negative press. In particular, St Mark's College Chapel in London witnessed many a riot against its routine use of plainsong.³¹¹ The writer of the extracts above does not mention any negative responses concerning plainsong at St Peter's, but he/she does view the so-called musical "ribaldry" of the recent past with scorn, hoping that it will never return. What was this ribaldry? Could it have been metrical psalmody? And why dismiss it with such disdain? Such attitudes of ritualist superiority did not endear parishes and their clergy to broader minded Anglicans, and in so doing made life for themselves far more difficult than it need have been.

St Mary's in Port Elizabeth was another ritualist church, although some decades earlier it had been one of the strongest opponents of "popery". One example will suffice to demonstrate its churchmanship. The extract below describes aspects of a confirmation service at the parish on the Friday of Passion Week 1881.

It is almost unnecessary to add that during the service, His Lordship [the bishop] wore his Mitre, and that his Chaplain carried his Pastoral Staff, for no one ever expects now to see the Bishop exercising his office in Church without them... The prayers were intoned by the

³⁰⁶ Platt, "The Rise of Advanced Ritualism in New York City", 341.

³⁰⁷ Platt, "The Rise of Advanced Ritualism in New York City", 340.

³⁰⁸ The name Thomas Helmore carried such weight, even in South Africa, that appeals were made to his authority in terms of local musical matters. In a letter to the *Church Chronicle*, C. J. H. Eberlein defended attacks against his recommendation of *Chants Ancient and Modern* (edited by Baker and Monk), in an earlier edition of the paper, on the grounds that Helmore had approved of the psalter [*Church Chronicle* (vol. 3, February 1882), 61]. So final was this appeal that it brought an end to a debate in the newspaper which had spanned several months.

³⁰⁹ Rainbow, *The Choral Revival in the Anglican Church*, 86.

³¹⁰ Rainbow, *The Choral Revival in the Anglican Church*, 68-69 and Yates, *Anglican Ritualism in Victorian Britain*, 58.

³¹¹ Rainbow, *The Choral Revival in the Anglican Church*, 68-73.

Rector... Since we last chronicled anything in connection with this Church, the Sanctuary has been completed, and to the handsome carved Reredos and hangings have now been added some costly tiles... On the super-altar are some large brass candlesticks... Altogether S. Mary's is quite a different place from the very plain and somewhat dusty edifice of days gone by.³¹²

Several points of interest deserve commentary here. Firstly, mention of the bishop's vestments is significant. The phrase "... no one ever expects now to see the Bishop exercising his office in Church without them..." seems to suggest (particularly with the word "now") that the bishop did not always use the symbols of his office.³¹³ Did this signify that the Diocese of Grahamstown was becoming more amenable towards vestments, and by consequence ritualism? Certainly the bishop of the time, Nathaniel Merriman (earlier discussed in this paper when he was still an archdeacon), was a Tractarian sympathiser, but has not been characterised by his biographer as a ritualist. If he was amenable to such ritual developments, did he represent a class of clergy who had originally sided with the Tractarians and moved gradually towards sympathising and agreeing with the later ritualists?³¹⁴ Clearly the author who witnessed the confirmation approved of this development.

A second sign of ritualism at St Mary's was the intoning of prayers. As has been demonstrated above, any sign of sung services with monotonous or plainsong pointed towards ritualist sympathies. What is not clear, though, is if plainsong was used regularly in the parish. None of the other vignettes from the parish mention plainsong, so from this historical distance it is difficult to determine what their regular routine was.

Finally, mention of the church furnishings are of importance. Notice that a reredos had been erected behind the altar, and that, directly below this, a super-altar – a ledge just above the altar proper on which a cross and candlesticks can be placed. While no mention is made of a cross, candlesticks do make an appearance. Additionally, "costly tiles" (probably encaustic patterned tiles) and hangings form part of the decoration in the sanctuary. The author does not mention if there were candles in the candlesticks and if they were ever lit – a sore point in England at the time.³¹⁵

Good Friday as a sign of ritualism

One last observation, which almost ubiquitously characterised the celebration of Holy Week in early 1880s, is necessary since it firmly situates both the Dioceses of Cape Town and Grahamstown within the ritualist fold. In the 1870s a three-hour devotion on Good Friday was being counted a ritualist practice in England.³¹⁶ In 1875 the Society of the Holy Cross had advocated

³¹² *Church Chronicle* (vol. 2, May 1881) – College of the Transfiguration Library, 139.

³¹³ This was Bishop Merriman's second last year as bishop. He had faced numerous attacks concerning his churchmanship and leadership from the Dean of Grahamstown Cathedral. For him to openly display his allegiance must have meant that his presence in the parish was welcomed.

³¹⁴ If this is the case, Herring's recent thesis which distinguishes the early Tractarians (who tended to be pastorally aware in their innovations and kept the peace within their congregations) from the later ritualists (who tended to be less pastoral in their approach and thus cause more overt tension in congregations) may require a subsection of clergy and laity who represented both camps over a period of time. See Herring, *The Oxford Movement in Practice*.

³¹⁵ Frederick Oakeley, for example, recommended that his church have candlesticks, but that the candles not be lit lest it offend some. See Yates, *Anglican Ritualism in Victorian Britain*, 61.

³¹⁶ Yates, *Anglican Ritualism in Victorian Britain*, 281.

... the use of the Three Hours' Devotion on Good Friday and *Tenebrae* on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday evenings in Holy Week; Holy Communion was to be celebrated on the mornings of Maundy Thursday and Holy Saturday but not, despite a long High-Church Anglican tradition to the contrary, on Good Friday.³¹⁷

Interestingly, the Society stopped short of recommending an evening Eucharist on Maundy Thursday, a practice which had already been instituted at St Saviour's in Leeds as early as 1848.³¹⁸ While in South Africa a three-hour devotion service was already taking place in a fair number of churches by at least 1884,³¹⁹ a Maundy Thursday evening Eucharist was not the practice until the 1950s, when it still seems to have been something of a taboo – the thought of an evening Eucharist was considered evangelical and, more importantly, precluded a period of fasting beforehand.

As early as 1882 there is reference to a three hour devotion at St Mary's in Port Elizabeth.³²⁰ There it is described as “the usual *Three Hours' Service* [italics original]”,³²¹ which implies that it had been a regular annual event. This is not surprising given that the parish, along with St Peter's discussed above, had for some time been taking a strong ritualist stance. In 1884 at St George's Cathedral in Cape Town a three hour devotion with sermons focusing on the Seven Words of the Cross (as they apparently related to the seven deadly sins) was led by the Dean. A commentator writing about the services said, “The Passiontide and Easter Services at the Cathedral were of a particularly solemn and impressive character, and show a great advance in devotion and Churchmanship on previous years”.³²² This seems to suggest that the three hour devotion was a new introduction there, and that the ritualist agenda was becoming more focused. At St Mary's in Robertson, also in 1884, another commentator said, “On Good Friday, the ‘Three Hours’ were observed as usual, addresses being given by the Priest in charge on the ‘Words of our Lord on the Cross’”.³²³ Here the inference is that the custom had been established some years before. At St Mary's in Papendorp (a small village on the west coast of South Africa) in 1884 a three hour service was held on Good Friday and on Easter morning altar candles were lit.³²⁴ As has been shown above, in England to light altar candles would probably have been fairly provocative, and perhaps the move at St Mary's was equally adventurous; yet no complaints appear in successive editions of the *Church Chronicle*, unless they were suppressed. Interestingly, there is no mention anywhere in the *Church Chronicle* in the early 1880s of a Eucharist being celebrated on Good Friday. The *Book of Common Prayer 1662* provides a collect, and Eucharistic readings for Good Friday, implying a celebration of the Eucharist. Evidently this tradition dating from the Reformation had fallen out of favour, with a strong ritualist pattern emerging.

Concluding remarks

This chapter has presented a number of examples which represent advancements of the ritualist campaign. In them is evidence of a change in the approach of clergy from that which was typical in the previous chapter. The later generation of ritualists appear to have been far

³¹⁷ Yates, *Anglican Ritualism in Victorian Britain*, 281.

³¹⁸ Yates, *Buildings, Faith, and Worship*, 139.

³¹⁹ *Church Chronicle* (vol. 5, May 1884), 160-161. Copy in College of the Transfiguration Library.

³²⁰ *Church Chronicle* (vol. 5, May 1882), 156. Copy in College of the Transfiguration Library.

³²¹ *Church Chronicle* (vol. 5, May 1882), 156.

³²² *Church Chronicle* (vol. 5, May 1884), 160.

³²³ *Church Chronicle* (vol. 5, May 1884), 164.

³²⁴ *Church Chronicle* (vol. 5, May 1884), 161.

more tenacious and thick skinned than the earlier generation. They were determined to see at least the “six points” of advanced ritualism introduced and, as the later examples demonstrate, even more advanced ritualism such as plainsong, revivals of long-forgotten liturgical texts (such as the Advent Antiphons) and vested altar parties. In all cases presented here, the wishes of the actual resident congregations seems to have been of little concern. Herring’s premise that true Tractarians tended to be more pastorally aware than their later ritualist brethren seems to hold true in the South African context too. Certainly Gray and Bishop William Macrorie of Maritzburg (1831 – 1905) seemed to have fallen into the former camp; allowing for those ceremonial introductions which were legal, but requesting the suppression of those that were not until congregations were ready for such “innovations”. Yet, the freedom afforded by the church’s constitution in South Africa meant that clergy with a strong enough personality could push their innovations upon unwilling congregations without much in the way of sanction from their bishops.

This later generation of clergy also seemed intent on defending their innovations in interesting ways. Consider Green’s appeal to the authority of the Old Testament. For an intelligent man such as Green, such an appeal seems ludicrous. Surely he was opening himself to accusations of not adhering to Levitical requirements, such as dietary restrictions, if he was going to claim that certain actions were required in Old Testament worship? Why not appeal to the New Testament, particularly the book of Revelation? Another interesting point is that the extreme ritualists did not hesitate to belittle those in their congregations who did not agree with them. As has been shown in chapters two and three, belittling congregants because of their churchmanship was not a mark of Tractarians; on the contrary, their approach seems to have been based on conciliation.

The majority of the examples above describe extreme cases of ritualism. They caught the attention of the press and prompted letters of complaint precisely because they were extreme. They do not represent the typical worship patterns of parishes around South Africa during the 1870s and -80s. However, the mere model of some parishes, especially as they were reported in the *Church Chronicle*, would have encouraged other clergy to attempt their own innovations, or at the very least made it seem acceptable to be a ritualist. The more acceptable it became to be a ritualist, the quicker the movement must have grown. That the celebration of a three-hour devotion was already quite widespread in the Dioceses of Cape Town and Grahamstown by the 1880s seems to indicate that ritualist tendencies were becoming a normal part of worship trends at least in some places. Yet, it is important to bear in mind that the evidence above, especially that from the *Church Chronicle*, is from a church periodical with decidedly Anglo-Catholic leanings (as was demonstrated in the previous chapter). Considering it as conclusive or completely reliable evidence would be a mistake. It only points towards what ritualist clergy imagined was their own image of success. There is no readily available evidence which contradicts the position at either St Peter’s or St Mary’s in Port Elizabeth, for example. Were the congregations as excited as the clergy about these innovations, or was the success merely a figment of the clerical imagination? There is only one certainty: South African Anglican worship was increasingly characterised by all six points in a majority of parishes by the twentieth century. Thus, at some point at least, congregations did begin to accept ritualism. Whether it was as early as the 1870s and -80s is debatable. It is more likely that most congregations transitioned slowly from one tradition to another, absorbing the six points piecemeal over time, rather than in one go.

CONCLUSION

Waves of Catholic revival in the Anglican Church of South Africa

This dissertation has probed how Victorian Anglican colonial clergy and laity perceived and reacted to movements of ritualism in South Africa. It has addressed three main points: firstly, how clergy and laity defined ritualism; secondly, how they reacted to ritualism; and thirdly, how they portrayed their definitions and reactions in public discourse. The evidence presented in the chapters above point to three developmental and overlapping waves of catholic revival in South Africa: the first from late 1840s to mid-1850s; the second from mid-1850s to the 1870s; and the third from the mid-1860s onwards.

The earliest wave, which focused mainly on symbolism and theology, was essentially concomitant with the arrival of episcopal authority in South Africa, roughly from 1848 to about the mid-1850s, perhaps slightly beyond. It was characterised by public unease at minor innovations such as the offertory and surplice, as well as contesting theologies of aesthetics within the church and the sacraments. The second wave, concentrating on matters related to the interpretation of the *Book of Common Prayer 1662* and probably undergirded by a strong sense of the democratic rights of the laity, arose in the later 1850s and continued well into the 1870s. It was characterised by fierce battles over what today seem minor innovations, but which at the time challenged the *status quo*. The final wave, which promoted advanced ritualism through the introduction of the “six points” as well as other ceremonial and liturgical innovations, began as early as the mid-1860s, but gathered momentum after 1870 when the Anglican Church in South Africa became an independent entity apart from the Church of England. This third wave continued well beyond the ambit of this study. It was characterised by less heated exchanges through the press and a strengthening of resolve on the part of the clergy.

Perceptions of ritualism

Now to answering the main questions of the dissertation directly. What did the colonial clergy and laity perceive as ritualism and ritualist theology? The answer is nuanced, because the meaning of ritualism appears to have changed in the subsequent waves of renewal and revival.

Before answering the question formally, a brief outline of the characteristics of clergy and laity throughout the period this study investigates is necessary. For the most part, Anglican clergy seem to have formed a close-knit community in South Africa. In other words, they were suspicious of the denominational fluidity that had developed in the colony and held fiercely to their interpretation of the sacraments. As the century progressed, this attitude hardened so that Bishop Gray’s approach to the Dutch Reformed Church with the intention of cementing communion between the two churches, seemed unthinkable to clergy. At the time neither the Anglicans nor the Dutch Reformers could agree on polity – especially the three-fold ministry of bishops, priests and deacons. Thus, while at an official level, at least, the church was open to dialogue, on the ground the clergy were more apprehensive. Additionally, that the church could have even considered amalgamation with a Reformed body would have been abhorrent to the later generation of clergy, who looked more to Rome.

In the early days of Anglicanism in South Africa, the emphasis was on ministering to the existing English colonists who were already Anglican, and saving them from backsliding. Of course, this was motivated by politics as well as spirituality. Maintaining Anglicanism in the colonies, after all, helped to maintain the English *status quo* (see chapter two). As demonstrated in Chapter Five, Anglican clergy were worried about fostering links with dissenting churches such as the Methodists. Some even refused invitations to preach in other denominational churches or chapels. It is difficult to gauge how widespread this antagonism was.

Lay people, on the other hand, were much more fluid. They migrated easily between denominations – hence the democratic influences which they had experienced in Presbyterianism and Congregationalism. One of the reasons is that the requirement in England that all civil servants and graduates nominally profess and participate in the Anglican faith, did not apply in South Africa, and so released lay people from having to consider their affiliation before applying for certain jobs. For them, the Reformed nature of the church seems to have been an important aspect of colonial culture and identity. They shared this, of course, with the Dutch settlers, who tended to be staunchly Reformed. Indeed, members of the Dutch Reformed Church often worshipped with Anglicans, perhaps because the liturgy was underpinned by Reformed theological tenets. This sense of fluidity continued throughout the period of this study. In later decades the lay community would also become, like the clergy, less willing to compromise on matters of theology and worship, but to some extent at least, they continued to practice free will in terms of movement between parishes and denominations.

From the perspective of the laity the first wave of catholic revival concerned two main agendas, namely symbolism and theology. It seems that for them, ritualism was anything which was related to the doctrines of baptismal regeneration and Eucharistic sacrifice (see chapter four for a detailed discussion of the baptismal regeneration controversy in nineteenth century Anglicanism), as well as leadership models which emphasised episcopal authority. They were also suspicious of architecture and symbols which pointed towards a magnification of what they defined as Catholicism. For them the neo-Gothic architectural revival, the use of crucifixes, kneeling for prayer and the use of a surplice in the pulpit were all indicative of Catholicism. Why? Mainly because the Anglican Church had for a long time been heavily influenced by Calvinistic theologies of the sacraments (Eucharist as a symbol), church architecture (simplicity as standard) and ceremonial (as a rule ceremonial was not required). The *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion* and the *Book of Common Prayer 1662* were undergirded by such theologies and thus tacitly engendered them within Anglican worship. Indeed, the presence of the Dutch Reformed Church in the colony may have exacerbated the situation slightly. Changes which took the church beyond these broadly Calvinistic parameters seem to have unsettled the laity even if they were introduced sensitively. For the most part, though, clergy and bishops seem to have been rather too quick when introducing change, creating a rather charged situation.

From the perspective of the clergy in the first wave, issues such as baptismal regeneration were firmly within the greater Anglican tradition, even if they had tended to be peripheral. Thus, introducing such theologies through preaching and mooted the use of neo-Gothic architecture were not innovations or revivals so much as continuing within a legitimate stream of Anglican spirituality. Throughout this wave, clergy tended to display strong tendencies towards Romanticism and historicism.

During the second wave, the laity redefined ritualism, concentrating more on external worship rather than theology. For them the offertory, baptisms during the main Sunday service, keeping of saints days and preparing bread and wine on the altar were all signs of a move towards Rome. What is striking in this wave is how the laity escalated their protests

against such innovations. Yet, while they listed their grievances quite clearly, the laity appear to have been revolting more against power being exercised over them by colonially-appointed leaders rather than ritualism *per se*. Indeed, the issue of the power of clergy and bishops remained a sore point throughout this wave. In essence, then, ritualism was an effective proxy for battles over power.

For the clergy, the protests from the laity came as a surprise. They were working from what they considered a rational point of view, namely that the Prayer Book rubrics actually sanctioned the ceremonial they were trying to introduce. Indeed, the rubrics were printed proof that all they were mooting was actually an original requirement of legal Church of England worship. However, as noted above, it seems that clergy tended to be a little over confident when it came to reading the mood within their congregations. A more pastoral approach might have ensured a smoother process. However, because the imposed leadership of the church was enforced upon the local colonial church, rather than elected or nurtured from within it, it is likely that even with a pastoral approach, the laity would have reacted unfavourably towards any change.

The third wave was characterised by protests against “crosses, postures, and genuflections, the changing of garments and the gorgeous display of vestments, the intonation and monotonies into which the service is rendered”.³²⁵ During this period the laity again refined their understanding of what ritualism constituted. Now the definition was more clear, i.e. ceremonies which fell outside of the Prayer Book’s actual rubrics and teachings. Since neither Anglican theology nor the Prayer Book supported most of the ceremonial which the laity opposed, ordinary Anglican church-goers were now on firm ground theologically and legally. However, they do not seem to have reacted quite as strongly as in previous waves, except occasionally through the press.

Ritualist clergy, on the other hand, seem to have regarded their innovations as essential for authentic worship. For them proper decorum and using the correct ceremonial was of prime importance, since both pointed towards a sacramental theology which they seem to have believed embodied the truth of salvation. That this theology was deeply rooted within the Roman Catholic tradition, rather than Anglican, seems not to have been particularly important to them. In particular, clergy were willing to sacrifice their reputations to achieve the “six points” the English Church Union promoted. For the most part, the clergy who were active advocates of ritualism during this wave tended to be much more robust in the defence of their positions, even if they were on questionable ground within the Anglican tradition of the time.

Reactions to ritualist innovation

How did clergy and laity react to “ritualist” innovation in South Africa? The sources seem to indicate that the laity tended to react negatively towards ritualism. There are many reasons for such negative feelings, related mainly to identity formation. The end of chapter two provided a brief examination of anti-ritualism as it grew out of the English context and transferred to the colonies. It seems that the general historical consensus is that opposition to ritualism emerged because of an English identity crisis. English identity, reflecting the intense anti-Catholic rhetoric which had underpinned sixteenth and seventeenth century politics, was being questioned and undermined by major political shifts precipitated by colonial expansion and immigration. Therefore, as a response, those with vested English interests dug in their heels against any changes which seemed to support a watering down of English culture. For the most part, though, it seems that the anti-ritualists were on the fringe –

³²⁵ *Grahamstown Journal* (24 May 1867).

a loud minority who held political sway. The South African situation seems to confirm what contemporary historians have deduced about anti-ritualists, especially in parts of Australia (see chapter four). Indeed, most local historians have pointed towards similar themes, adding strong democratic tendencies and feelings of anti-classism in the colonies. Practically, the reactions of the laity varied quite widely. To voice their feelings they turned to writing of letters of protest to local newspapers or to clergy, walking out of church services, organising public protest meetings, withholding money from the church, rioting and appealing to secular law courts. How widespread anti-ritualist feeling actually was is difficult to assess.

The clergy reacted somewhat differently. Many of those at the centre of ritualist debates had been university educated and had been, to varying extents, influenced by Tractarian teachings. At first clergy seemed completely oblivious of the implications of their revivals or innovations – certainly during the first two waves of catholic revival. Why otherwise react to lay opposition with such bewildered surprise? The underpinnings of their innovations seemed completely rational to them. They were, after all, simply following prayer book rubrics or presenting aesthetically pleasing views of church architecture. Yet, by the time the third wave started, some clergy were actively pushing the boundaries of Anglicanism's tolerance. This muscular perseverance on the part of these clergy seems to have created a momentum within the local church which led to a gradual acceptance of fairly advanced ritualism, such that by the turn of the nineteenth century Protestant societies in England were concerned about the strong catholic ethos of South African Anglicanism.³²⁶ Undoubtedly, the independence of the South African Anglican Church allowed a certain latitude for clergy which was not available in England. Perhaps this encouraged "advanced" clergy to relocate to South Africa so that a concentration of ritualists eventually characterised the local professional clerical class. For the most part, clergy in South Africa tended to confine their arguments for (or against) ritualism to the press and personal letters. Except for a few exceptional cases, the clergy tried to keep their responses to ritualism rooted within clearly defined and legitimate organs of communication.

Portrayal of ritualism in public discourse

How did clergy and laity portray their understandings of ritualism in public discourse? Before answering this question, it is important to reiterate that the media is not a neutral source. As the portrayal of ritualism tended to be represented in local and international newspapers, it is important to balance such sources with contextual analysis, otherwise a strongly biased view may emerge.

For the most part, the laity offered negative responses through the press. They used the press to articulate what they thought ritualism was and why they felt it was not appropriate. Their arguments did not always unfold logically, which meant that their detractors could easily undermine their conclusions. In the early wave, public discourse was used by the clergy to defend their positions – usually appealing to history or the tradition of the church. In the second wave, more drastic measures characterised the lay reaction. They tended to use the press to create a type of mass hysteria around their cause – it seems, for example, that the numbers quoted in the press concerning support of anti-ritualists were inflated. This meant that the clergy and supporters of innovations were almost always on the back foot when responding to accusations through the press or through personal letters. In the third wave, clergy used sympathetic local church newspapers effectively to advertise their innovations – showing off what they had been able to accomplish. In the same ritualist supported periodicals, objections to ritualism occasionally appeared. These objections were

³²⁶ Wolffe, "Anti-Catholicism and the British Empire", 55.

often subjected to unusual treatment by the ritualist editors – mainly by appeals to selected history and tradition – their main aim, no doubt, was to show up the gaps in objectors' history education and thus humiliate them. If the laity had been strong enough, they might have been able to blow holes through the ritualists' selective appeals to historical precedent.

Further research and recommendations

This dissertation has concentrated exclusively on colonial Anglicanism in South Africa. As a consequence, its conclusions are only one part of the overall story of ritualism in the local Anglican Church. Indeed, there is a glaring gap in international scholarship relating to the role of missionaries in disseminating the ritualist agenda. In South Africa, the influence of ritualist missionaries was significant. The problem which researchers may encounter is that source material relating to ritualism within mission stations is quite limited. Yet, sources do exist, and even a probing study would be worthwhile. However, for the most part, these sources are almost exclusively from the perspective of the missionaries, not their converts. Indeed, occasionally the converts' voice is so weak that one wonders if it will ever be heard by modern historians.

Another important note is that many of the sources in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa's official archives seem to support the ritualist perspective – perhaps because ritualism became an identity maker which needed historical support. Studies which explore the archives of the Church of England in South Africa would likely balance this bias in favour of ritualism. Indeed, Beckman's master's dissertation would be a helpful starting point.

Of course, the time confines of this study (1848 – 1884) mean that numerous stories of later ritualist adventures and innovations are not told here. This is another important avenue for future study, especially the period from 1885 to 1915 after which there is quite substantial existing documentation.

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