

# THE TRANSFORMATION OF ANGLICANISM

*From state Church  
to global communion*

WILLIAM L. SACHS

*Assistant Rector, St. Stephen's Church, Richmond  
Visiting Professor, Union Theological Seminary in Virginia*



**CAMBRIDGE**  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE  
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK  
40 West 20th Street, New York NY 10011-4211, USA  
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia  
Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain  
Dock House, The Waterfront, Cape Town 8001, South Africa

<http://www.cambridge.org>

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First published 1993

First paperback edition 2002

*A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library*

*Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data*

Sachs, William L., 1947-

The transformation of Anglicanism: from state Church to global  
communion / William L. Sachs.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0 521 39143 1

1. Anglican Communion -- History. I. Title.

BX5005.S23 1993

283'.09-dc20 92-11486 CIP

ISBN 0 521 39143 1 hardback

ISBN 0 521 52661 2 paperback

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## CHAPTER ONE

### *The dawn of modernity*

#### THE PROBLEM OF ANGLICAN IDENTITY

##### *The modern dilemma*

“The real truth about the Church,” Frank Weston wrote in 1916, “is that she is the human race as God meant it to be.” An Anglican bishop in Zanzibar, Weston believed that Europe’s war clarified the Church’s task. “She is a society . . . for the accomplishing of a work that must be done unless Europe is to be permanently at the mercy of brute force. That work is the enshrining in an international society of the Christ-idea.”<sup>1</sup> Without realizing it, Weston expressed both the Church of England’s historic self-conception and the modern dilemma which beset it. In the modern world the Church of England has become an international communion of Anglican churches attempting to be both a human society and a valid expression of apostolic Christianity.

Anglicans prize the ideals of Church life which Weston set out. But modern circumstances have complicated the task of being both human and divine. A decade after Weston wrote the above words, A. E. J. Rawlinson, an English theologian, repeated the Bishop of Zanzibar’s thesis in four lectures before London clergy. Rawlinson declared that the Church “originates in the creative activity and the redemptive purpose of God.” The Church of England retained this conception of its nature when it became a national Church at the Protestant Reformation. Moreover, “even under modern conditions,” the Church valued “close national associations and national ties.” Rawlinson observed, however, that “the Anglican Church is no longer specifically English,” but was, rather, global, free of state control, “shaking off limitations,” and thinking of itself “in relation not to Englishmen merely, but to mankind.”<sup>2</sup>

Weston and Rawlinson sensed the emergence of a confusion which

has permeated modern Anglican life. By the late twentieth century the Anglican communion has acquired global scope while uncertainty about the Church's identity has reached crisis proportions. Issues such as revision of the Church's Prayer Book, the Church's relation to the state, the ordination of women, and challenges to traditional sexual mores strain the Church's ability to uphold historic Christian forms and convictions while affirming an array of human experiences. Anglicans lack a definitive means of mediating between their deposit and their contemporary settings. Thus English theologian Paul Avis asks "what is distinctive about Anglicanism? What is its peculiar contribution to world Christianity?" What binds the Church of England and "the sister churches of the Anglican communion together?"<sup>3</sup>

These nagging questions have produced a variety of proposals for defining Anglicanism. Avis suggests that Anglicanism is "sociological Catholicism," a Church of universal scope which reveres traditional structures of ministry and worship while expressing "a deep, unquestioned, implicit integration of life and faith, world and church, nature and spirit." Anglicans, he believes, cherish their ability to adapt a Catholic form of Church to the authority and life of a "secure, territorial, social basis in a culture and life of a people." Identity, from this Anglican view, suggests "*continuity*" and "*tradition and structure*," as well as the "*idea of the group*" and "*interaction with similar but not identical groups*."<sup>4</sup> The question of identity, and the terms of Avis' answer, reveal the influence of Stephen Sykes' *The Integrity of Anglicanism*, which in the late 1970s framed the debate's contours. Sykes, a Cambridge theologian and English bishop, has elicited widespread agreement that the churches in communion with the Church of England lack assurance of their identity and mission. Certain common features, such as English descent, structures of global scope, Catholic forms, cultural malleability, and Reformation heritage pervade this family of churches. Yet Anglicans have no coherent sense of identity and no apparent means to resolve their uncertainty. An uncertainty over the Church's nature has arisen under the impact of modern circumstances.

The idea of Anglicanism itself is a product of modern times. The Tractarian movement in England, which began in the 1830s and whose legacy I shall discuss in detail subsequently, criticized control of the Church by the state and insisted upon the Catholic nature of the Church of England's worship and ministry. John Henry Newman, a leader of that movement, suggested that the Church was Anglican, and not merely English, because its ancient offices transcended a

purely English heritage. Newman awakened the idea of an Anglican identity that was broader than its English heritage and which he attempted to ground in apostolic precedent. This work recalled the High Church movement of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century. However, Newman converted to Roman Catholicism in 1845, for he concluded that Anglicanism was not truly apostolic, but based in national life. An influential segment of Tractarian opinion, associated with Edward Bouverie Pusey, remained within Anglican boundaries and has found Newman's idea of Anglicanism alluring. Yet his fear that the Church's nature was confused anticipated subsequent controversies. A succession of figures have sought secure rootage for Anglicanism in antiquity, the Reformation, or the sixteenth century, as well as in modern life.<sup>5</sup> The search for rootage illustrates the problem Newman encountered, namely, the uncertain basis of Anglican identity.

By the late twentieth century the integrity of Anglicanism had become the Church's central concern. Why did this challenge arise? How did Anglicans succeed in expanding globally yet ultimately doubt their resolve? This book has two objectives in response to these questions. It offers a broad, chronological narrative of Anglican history from 1800 to 1978, a compendium of major figures and movements. Such a synthesis draws on myriads of contemporary studies to present within one volume a broad overview of the Church's modern life. The book risks being unwieldy because I want to illustrate the variety of forms of Anglicanism and the abundance of persons who have spoken to the issue of Anglican identity. I use both familiar and unfamiliar primary and secondary sources to construe the Church's diversity in terms of a succession of persons and movements which have attempted to adjust the Church to modern life and to resolve its nature. The Anglican response to modernity has included both social and intellectual movements within which various ideas of Anglicanism have prevailed. Thus, this is neither purely social nor purely intellectual history. It is the story of a search for a clear idea of the Church's nature under the impact of modern social and intellectual life.

That story assumes a coherent pattern in repeated attempts by Anglican clergy and laity to apply historic ideals of Church life to rapidly changing conditions. The problem of Anglican identity has concerned the uncertainty of standards of Church life from the past as normative models for modern Church identity. Anglicans, for

instance, have historically been England's established Church, rooted in equal appreciation of Scripture, Tradition, and Reason. How these ideals translate into a modern Church in non-English circumstances is not clear. A cacophony of voices with equal claim to being normatively Anglican has arisen without a means to mediate among them. Thus the history of modern Anglican life reveals a bewildering profusion of claims to be Anglican and a pervasive tension between order and community. That is, in manifold ways, Anglicans have sought a definitive way to be both grounded in diverse cultures and genuinely apostolic. The profusion of modern Anglican forms points to a common search for coherent identity. But coherence, as I shall show, has proven elusive.

Words such as "modern," "modernity," and "modernization" risk analytical bankruptcy, as historian Martin Marty acknowledges. The terms have become sufficiently imprecise to become banal. A secondary concern of this book is to contribute to discussion of the meaning of the modern world for religious life. Although, as Marty explains, "modern" simply demarcates a general category of time, as opposed to ancient or medieval, the modern world is generally presumed to have been unhealthy for religious beliefs and institutions. Marty uses the metaphor of a hurricane to describe the impact of modernity. Modernity has bred anxiety and dislocation among religious people. Modern life is generally equated with skepticism and the loss of traditional systems of belief.<sup>6</sup>

The harmful effects of modern circumstances upon revered traditions are acknowledged by respected observers. Jaroslav Pelikan's *The Vindication of Tradition* cites the decline of the Church and other social repositories of tradition. He hopes that historical-critical scholarship might inspire a recovery of appreciation for tradition. Edward Shils agrees that "traditions as normative models of action and belief are regarded as useless and burdensome." Tradition has been equated with dogma, superstition, autocracy, and resistance to change. Traditions seem the antithesis of progress and enlightenment, individuality and spontaneity, affect and experience. The idea of received wisdom, accepted uncritically as authoritative from the past, goes against all that modern sensibility values. Religion stands first and foremost among those inheritances which modernity seems to have demolished.<sup>7</sup>

Religious life necessitates an appropriation of tradition; belief "exists in a faith-world" of received meaning. A communal identity,

belief requires “vehicles of duration,” structures to perpetuate the contents of religious belief and life. Tradition encompasses “theology’s comprehensive, material reference, that religious determinacy which makes theology’s setting and symbol system a specific historic faith and not just general ontology.” It demands a particular, historic set of actions, places, and objects. Beliefs must be perpetuated with specific references, traditions which encapsulate the content of revelation.<sup>8</sup> Yet modern life has seen the progressive application of rational analysis to tradition, suggesting alternative forms of legitimation for social institutions and criteria for truth. Christianity, dependent upon a focal set of historic events and an institution designed to vivify them, has been challenged in the modern world by critical historical scholarship. Miracles and even the resurrection have been challenged by modern thought.<sup>9</sup>

*The appeal of liberalism*

For religious life modernity’s bane has been the historical consciousness which subjects inherited interpretations to rigorous scrutiny. Some observers have argued, however, that modernity’s effects have not always been destructive of religious life. Max Weber’s classic thesis that the “Protestant ethic” contributed to the process of modernization illustrates the complexity of modernity’s meaning for religion. Religious institutions encouraged the rise of modern life in various ways and have benefitted from modern circumstances. The rise of modernity transformed the Church of England from a state Church to a global communion, shifting the nature of its identity from English to Anglican. As Newman first envisioned, the possibility arose that a Church intended for English civilization alone might uncover within its deposit a religious essence of ancient origin which could encompass all civilizations. When the Church of England began to spread beyond English circumstances, implicit features of its nature were rendered in explicit form. Sociologist S. N. Eisenstadt argues that the modern world compels the explication of cultural assumptions. That necessity encouraged the Church to use modern experience to realize the universal possibility of Anglican identity.

As the established Church of the British throne, the Church of England presumed its identity as the religious expression of a particular culture. Eisenstadt adds, however, that modernity has been characterized by the autonomy of religious life which had

formerly been integrated with social institutions of a given culture.<sup>10</sup> As the Church of England's established status became problematic, many Anglicans retained the ideal of a Church expressing the values of a host culture, yet drawing that culture closer to the divine society enshrined in Catholic forms. For Anglicans the concept of "unity" has reflected the vision of a confluence of all Christians, and of a union of these earthly societies with the heavenly one, with the Anglican tradition as the means to that end. Many Anglicans believe that modern life makes possible such an historic union. If the Church adapted itself to the modern world, these figures maintained, the intentions of its tradition would be fulfilled.

There have also been repeated Anglican protests against modern life. The Tractarian movement, out of which the idea of Anglicanism arose, resisted alignment of the Church with the modern world, and the spiritual legacy of this protest has remained powerful among Anglicans. The notion that the Church takes its identity from its cultural locus has troubled a succession of groups within the Church producing a fundamental tension between those concerned to defend its apostolic order and those anxious to extend its understanding of community. The fear that Anglicans might abandon apostolic order arises from a belief that modern life abrogates, rather than fulfills, Catholic tradition. Nevertheless, the preponderance of the Anglican world adopted the values of liberalism. A diffuse concept, liberalism connoted such personal qualities as generosity and breadth of vision until the American and French Revolutions, when it also meant freedom from autocratic rule. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, when liberalism became the source of social philosophy, its meaning expanded to include an emphasis upon scrutiny of inherited ideas. Religious liberals have believed that modern techniques must reconstruct Christian dogmas and institutions to suit present experience.

Modernization has meant that a new social order could emerge by the development of new forms of political consensus. Liberalism suspects that each culture possesses an inherent goodness which uncritically accepted traditions have obscured. As Adolf Harnack – a foremost liberal Christian – believed in his historic studies of early Christianity, a religious essence, freed of doctrinal overlays, could be revealed. That conviction inspired numerous Anglicans to search for an inherent unity between Anglican Christianity and non-English cultures. As liberalism has become problematic, however, a crisis of

Anglican identity has arisen. I am mindful of Stephen Sykes' conviction that liberalism has challenged inherited beliefs without providing a definitive new center of authority.<sup>11</sup> Tolerating diversity without reconciling it, liberalism has proven a tenuous modern foothold for Anglicans. The lack of a definitive way to relate to culture has stranded the Church between its ideal of apostolic order and a search for modern religious community.

Though intentionally broad in scope, this book does not offer a comprehensive history of modern Anglicanism as previous works have done.<sup>12</sup> These works were blemished by an uncritical confusion of the Church's ideals with its experiences, of Anglicanism in theory and the multiplicity of forms of Anglican life. In what follows I risk a diffuse narrative for the sake of illustrating modern Anglicanism's many faces. The Church's struggle for identity cannot be grasped until the bewildering variety of its responses to modern life are traced. Although the forms of Anglicanism multiplied, common convictions emerged among Anglicans about the Church's nature and mission. As the Church entered the twentieth century, however, this confidence in its identity would soon be dashed by social disintegration.

Each chapter of the book assesses a set of themes as the Church's search for secure identity unfolded. Thus, the book's flow is both chronological and topical. Chapter 2 addresses the revision of the meaning of English religious establishment which began early in the nineteenth century and signaled the onset of modernity for Anglicans. Ending with a section on the American shift from colonial to national circumstances, I cite the impact of social and intellectual circumstances upon the historic idea of the Church of England. Chapter 3 considers new Anglican initiatives in mission in response to changing social conditions. As the formal nature of religious establishment was eroded, the Church initiated programs to extend its ministry in hopes of functioning as an established Church in a changing world. Chapter 4 shows that while the Church was adapting the idea of establishment, fundamental theological changes were underway. The idea of Anglicanism emerged out of Tractarianism and blossomed into a sense that the Church was Liberal Catholic in nature. The idea of Liberal Catholicism afforded Anglicans a coherent sense of identity which seemed to secure the Church's adaptation to modern life.

By the early twentieth century Anglicanism referred to a Church that had absorbed modern life without apparent compromise of its heritage. Despite challenges to this Anglican synthesis from more

rigorous modernists and traditionalists, the Church seemed to have found an effective pattern of adaptation. Thanks to its proximity to empire, as chapter 5 discusses, the Church spread globally and turned to a synodical form of government. The modern Anglican achievement seemed to be a definitive theological posture of global scope. As chapter 6 suggests, this modern identity was incomplete. The Church's increasing cultural diversity revealed its dependence upon Anglo-Saxon, male leadership and uncomfortably close tie to empire.

Modern Anglicanism's frustration is that its apparently coherent identity has been steadily eroded during the twentieth century. The Church's alliance with Western, liberal values was undermined by social crisis. Following the First World War a palpable disarray in society was accompanied by an Anglican search for stability. In chapter 7, however, I show that the magisterial efforts of William Temple embodied a last burst of assurance in the Church's nature and social role. Temple inspired a sense of balance between the Church's locus in society and distinctiveness from it. Resolute through the Second World War, such conviction began to disintegrate in the 1960s under the weight of social stresses. By the last quarter of the twentieth century the Anglican Church had become both influential globally and pervasively uncertain about its identity. Modern life has fostered the Church's growth to an astonishing but unwieldy profusion of forms.

Thus this book is the history of the modern idea of being Anglican. It poses that identity as a conversation between an ecclesiastical inheritance and social and intellectual forces. Throughout this dialogue Anglicans have idealized a balance between respect for tradition and alignment with culture. The achievement of such a balance, of the Church's reliance upon its English locus yet search for an apostolic nature, occurred in the religious settlement which developed in England between 1660 and 1760. The origins of this ideal of balance, however, lay in the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century. The importance of the Reformation for Anglicans must be noted before the emergence of an English establishment can be understood.

#### *The Reformation heritage*

“Anglicans everywhere love to appropriate the phrase ‘the *via media*’ – the middle way. It is a phrase that characterizes Anglicanism as an

institution that is at once Catholic, episcopal and Protestant,” a “middle ground between the extremes of medieval Roman Catholicism and Anabaptism” in the Reformation context. African theologian John Pobee further explains that Anglicans now must translate Church principles from their Reformation origins into modern, non-Western, settings. The Reformation remains the origin of the Church of England but not the realization of its historic intention of being England’s established Church.

Histories of Anglicanism characterize the Reformation era as the creation of a definitive Anglicanism. In fact the Reformation outlined a set of Church principles without a definitive exposition of them.<sup>13</sup> Those principles were refined over more than half a century of disparate attempts to formulate a religious settlement. Henry VIII’s Act of Supremacy in 1534 installed the sovereign rather than the Pope as head of the English Church. Under Edward VI the Prayer Books of 1549 and 1552 compiled by Thomas Cranmer took the first steps toward codifying the religious standards of this national Church. Cranmer also influenced the Forty-two Articles in 1553, which became the basis of the Thirty-nine Articles in 1571, the clearest hint of an Anglican doctrinal framework. Collectively these articles reveal Cranmer’s hope for breadth of doctrine and practice. Comprehension became the Church’s earliest ideal as it aspired to be a means of encompassing England’s Catholic and Protestant factions. From 1558 to 1603 the reign of Elizabeth I lent stability to efforts at a comprehensive settlement and Parliament enforced the sovereign’s role as the Church’s governor.

During Elizabeth’s reign a cluster of articulate Anglican defenders suggested the nature of a lasting religious settlement. John Jewel’s *An Apology of the Church of England* in 1562 identified the Church with Protestantism but included appeals to ancient Church leaders as valid interpreters of Scripture. The Reformation ideal of Scripture alone, Henry Chadwick comments, “is not, after all, a principle that can be derived from Scripture alone.” Jewel argued that the English Church preserved the trinitarian and christological formulas of the early Church councils which were embodied in the Nicene and Athanasian creeds.<sup>14</sup> Anglicans blended scriptural and patristic sources to ground the Church’s authority. As continental reformers grew selective in their usage of early Christianity, Anglicans stressed early Christian forms of exegesis and ecclesiology. Jewel “insisted that the Church of

England had departed not from the Catholic Church but from the errors of Rome.”<sup>15</sup>

The characteristic figure of this era was Richard Hooker, who endowed Anglicans with a number of marks by which they might identify their Church. His *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* suggested that Scripture–Reason–Tradition together guaranteed the Church’s authority. Hooker stressed the idea of the unity of the Body of Christ, seeing in Baptism a manifestation of God’s Kingdom. Unlike Roman Catholic ecclesiology or Protestant “marks of word, sacrament and discipline,” the Anglican Church finds its identity in its “outward profession of faith,” that is, its proclamation of Christian unity in an earthly society.<sup>16</sup> That affirmation grew after Elizabeth’s accession as hope for greater reformed influence upon the Church rose in England. Hooker opposed Walter Travers, an articulate Puritan, who hoped to replace episcopacy and Catholic ceremonial with Presbyterian usages. Unity of Church and nation, the linchpin of Hooker’s system, was an impossible ideal.

From the Reformation through the Puritan Commonwealth of the seventeenth century (c. 1529 to 1660) the Church of England emerged as a series of efforts at a comprehensive, religious settlement. The idea of a distinctive, English view of the Christian life appeared at the same time from Richard Hooker through the Caroline divines. Perceiving Romans and Puritans alike as enemies, figures such as William Laud and Henry Hammond enhanced the idea that this Church was a Catholic form of Christianity which had been reformed. Jeremy Taylor upheld the Church as a moderate Catholicism which married an ancient spiritual tradition to Reformation tenets and national circumstances. His protégés, who included Laud and Joseph Hall, accepted this framework but insisted upon the primacy of its Catholic aspects. This early High Church party prized the authority of Scripture but urged that a Catholic context was necessary for its proper exposition.

Thus the English Church included a variety of disparate measures of its authenticity including such principles as comprehensiveness, unity, the national Church, and the *via media*. Because Puritanism marked the failure to achieve a religious establishment, however, the Church’s first century must be treated cautiously as a reference point for Anglican identity. Early Anglican principles failed to find definitive expression but served as ideals for the achievement of establishment during the century from the Restoration of 1660 to the

accession of George III in 1760. The basis of modern Anglicanism, I argue, must be found in the eighteenth-century religious establishment. Here the Church of England approached the realization of its aspiration to be a comprehensive, English Church, blending Protestant and Catholic forms, grounded in Scripture, Reason, and Tradition. Understanding the nature of Anglicanism and the Church's modern transformation requires an assessment of the eighteenth-century achievement.

THE SEARCH FOR COMPREHENSION, 1660-1714

*The reality of Dissent*

*The Restoration*

The arrival of Charles II in England to assume the throne ended the Puritan Commonwealth, but did not eradicate Puritans as a force to be reckoned with. In 1660 they hoped for a Church of England that offered a comprehensive religious establishment acknowledging their sensibilities. Their hopes rose as Charles II, in his Declaration of Breda and in successive Declarations of Indulgence, called for compromise with those who were not Anglicans. A broad religious consensus seemed distinctly possible and could have produced a Church virtually coextensive with moderate, reformed Christianity in England.

The Act of Uniformity, which appeared in 1662 with a new Book of Common Prayer, made comprehensiveness on such a scale impossible and led to the Great Ejection, in which as many as one thousand Puritan clergy vacated positions in the Church of England. Even notable moderates such as Richard Baxter felt compelled to become religious Dissenters rather than be bound against conscience. Dissent hardened into denominations as non-Anglicans created religious structures outside the Church of England. As late as 1667 a proposal for comprehensiveness in Parliament failed and the image of a Church unifying the nation remained an unrealized ideal. The form of Anglicanism which triumphed placed greater emphasis upon Church structure than upon its social breadth.

The reason for this lack of conciliation was bound up in the circumstances surrounding the Savoy Conference in 1661, when Puritans and Anglicans attempted a resolution. Moderate Anglicans such as Gilbert Sheldon (a future Archbishop of Canterbury) did not

deliberately scheme to force Puritans out; but they did hold to a “prescribed common worship and a minimum standard of ceremonial” as “indispensable safeguards of the Church’s unity.” Episcopal ordination became the crucial issue because the office of bishop seemed a visible link with the past and an embodiment of the unity Anglicans looked for within the nation. Episcopacy’s reestablishment seemed to Sheldon the natural complement to the reappearance of parish and diocesan structures and the return to monarchy.<sup>17</sup>

However, the character of the restored Church of England stemmed less from the opinions of clergy than from the influence wielded by politicians. Robert Bosher holds that a few laity sympathetic to the views of William Laud from two decades previously swung the Church decisively toward episcopacy, vestments, and liturgy; and while doubting that a coherent Laudian group existed, I. M. Green acknowledges that the return of Anglicanism was orchestrated in political circles. Edward Hyde, the Earl of Clarendon, argued that the Church should be an extension of the political structure which antedated the Puritan Commonwealth. Clarendon opposed Charles II’s interest in maintaining a Puritan–Anglican balance and won over influential country gentry to his point of view in Parliament.<sup>18</sup> The “Clarendon Code” gradually put the seal upon refurbished Anglicanism. The Code consisted of a series of Acts in Parliament, including the Corporation Act of 1661, the Act of Uniformity of 1662, the first Conventicle Act of 1664, and the Five Mile Act of 1665. Taken as a whole, this body of legislation defined unity in the nation in terms of adherence to a form of religious establishment comparable to the times of Elizabeth I and James I.

The Code gave credence to the idea that establishment required an historical precedent by which the Church was bound. But the Church also played a synthetic role in the social fabric and fell under the influence of political forces. Modern Western sensibilities, accustomed to secularization, might wonder if parliamentary control compromised the Church’s identity; however, the Church’s integrity lay in its ability to unite religious and social life. The fundamental question concerned the form that such unity should take and, consequently, the shape of ecclesiastical order. The Restoration settlement was not able to proscribe non-Anglican forms, but cast them into disadvantaged political straits. The Clarendon Code required that officeholders participate minimally in the Church of

England, and that Dissenting places of worship register with public authority.

Despite its exclusive tendency, the restored Church of England reflected a broad national consensus and displayed impressive variety and vitality. An important element in the Church became the Latitudinarians, whose principal figures included Edward Stillingfleet and John Tillotson. This group emerged at Cambridge under the influence of the Cambridge Platonists, who called for rationalism and breadth in philosophical inquiry. Descended intellectually from the sixteenth-century Anglican distinction between *diaphora* and *adiaphora* – things essential and nonessential – the group also drew on earlier seventeenth-century figures such as John Hales and William Chillingworth. Devoted to a spirit of inquiry rather than a particular program, the Latitudinarian group believed doctrine and Church life should be construed broadly, since the essentials of the faith were few, but the possibilities for expressing them were manifold.

Latitudinarians also believed that the Church's form should be left to royal authority. Insisting on the necessity of the Church's subjection to government, Stillingfleet "ascribed to the magistrate the power to define the religion to protect in the nation even if he judged wrongly." Members of the Church were also subjects of the realm who "were obliged to obey the civil magistrate in ecclesiastical affairs." The Church possessed no separate power but must cooperate with government to create public order. Public consensus mattered more than protection of individual opinion and expression.<sup>19</sup> This curious blend of breadth and narrowness, latitude and Erastianism (a belief in the Church's subordination to the state) reflected Anglican fear of the excesses which appeared to characterize Puritanism. Diversity of belief seemed appealing so long as public order prevailed. Stillingfleet believed that individual conscience must curb its impulses to preserve a national consensus. Thus he stressed the need for a comprehensive Church, not one which was tolerant of all religions. The Church's historical example could become coextensive with national life, uniting the English people in the profession of apostolic faith. Latitudinarians saw no conflict between apostolic precedent and the Church's national role.

This perspective proved compatible for the time being with a new High Church group which gained strength after the Restoration. In 1678 William Sancroft became Archbishop of Canterbury, an appointment implicitly acknowledging the influence of this new