Cambridge
Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-00866-2 - A History of Global Anglicanism
Kevin Ward
Excerpt
More information

CHAPTER I

Introduction: 'not English, but Anglican'

The Anglican communion describes itself as a 'fellowship' or 'communion' of autonomous Christian churches, united by a common history, confessing a common faith and (traditionally) a common liturgy. There are thirty-eight distinct and independent Anglican churches or 'provinces', existing in a particular country or spread over a number of countries. Provinces vary in size from the big churches such as the Church of England (26 million baptised members), the Church of Nigeria (17.5 million), the Church of Uganda (8 million) and the Episcopal Church of Sudan (5 million) to the tiny communities of the Southern Cone of America (22,490), Mexico (21,000), the Anglican Church of Korea (14,558) and the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East (10,000).[1]

This book is an attempt to write a history of the Anglican communion from its inception as a worldwide faith, at the time of the Reformation, to the present day. While it does not ignore the contribution of the Church of England or of those of British extraction who have established Anglican churches in other parts of the world, its emphasis is on the activity of the indigenous peoples of Asia and Africa, Oceania and America in creating and shaping the Anglican communion. In the British Isles, attention is paid to Welsh, Irish and Scottish contributions, not least because they played a disproportionate part in the establishment of Anglican churches in other parts of the world, both as colonists and as missionaries.

[1] These figures are taken from the 2004 *Church of England Year Book* (London: Church House Publishing, 2004). The statistics are based on the reporting of numbers by the individual churches and vary from a very precise enumeration in some of the smaller churches to the rough estimates commonly used in calculating the numbers of the bigger churches. Only the entry for the Church of England uses the category 'baptised members' in these statistics. All the others talk simply of 'membership', which may well hide very different rules for inclusion (baptised/confirmed/active membership/adherents).

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-00866-2 - A History of Global Anglicanism
Kevin Ward
Excerpt
More information

In areas of the world where the church is largely white, attention will be paid to the role of minority communities: Native Americans, African Americans and Hispanics in the United States, First Nation peoples and Haitians in Canada, Aboriginal people in Australia and Maoris in New Zealand. In Britain itself, the contribution of black 'ethnic-minority' people to the Church of England will be explored. In areas traditionally seen as the 'subject' of missionary work from Britain and America – India, China, Africa – the emphasis will be on the local appropriation of the faith rather than on missionary activity as such. This is not meant to devalue missionary work. In fact, one of the important themes which this approach highlights is the importance of missionary work engaged in by Anglican Christians who were not British, and who worked outside their own homeland. The often remarkable missionary work of Tamils, Chinese, Baganda and Yoruba, to name a few, needs general recognition for making Anglicanism what it is.

Anglicanism is commonly seen as incorrigibly English, a hangover of the British Empire, an anachronism. Its very name seems to proclaim its limitations. Human beings normally don't choose their names. Some are proud; others feel resentful and wish their parents had given the matter more consideration. Christian churches are sometimes named after great theological themes: *Catholic*, *Orthodox*, *Evangelical*, *Pentecostal*, *Aladura*. Some recall important founders: *Luther*, *Kimbangu*, *Wesley*. Some point to important organisational principles: *Reformed*, *Methodist*, *Congregational*. The Anglican communion seems peculiarly unfortunate in being saddled with what appears to be either a specific place or a particular ethnic group. 'Anglican' is, after all, simply another word for 'English'. How can a communion be truly worldwide with such a parochial name? How can it be truly *local* in Ghana or Uganda, Barbados or Brazil?

Some churches have solved this conundrum by abandoning the term 'Anglican' altogether in their title. And so, on the model of the 'Church of England', but without the English connotation, we have the 'Church of the Province of Southern Africa' or the 'Church of Uganda'. (In colonial days, Ugandan Anglicans belonged to the 'Native Anglican Church' – a strange contradiction: 'native' and 'English'.) Some have preferred the term 'episcopal', such as the churches of the United States, Brazil or the Sudan. But this usage may seem just as problematic as 'Anglican', suggesting a hierarchical pattern of organisation rather than the whole people of God. Most provinces have been content to include it in their title. Kenyan Anglicans for a long time called themselves the 'Church of the Province of Kenya'. But they have recently decided

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-00866-2 - A History of Global Anglicanism
Kevin Ward
Excerpt
More information

officially to be known as the 'Anglican Church of Kenya'. The name is widely recognised and understood by Kenyans generally, in a way that the 'Church of the Province' never was.

People learn to live with their names, to triumph over them. It is generally better to be open about one's origin than to try to hide it. Anglican Christians in Africa, as in other parts of the world, cannot hide the fact that their history is intimately bound up with colonialism. Anglicanism was and remains strong wherever British rule was exercised. It was and remains weak in parts of Africa which were not at some time British. 'Anglicane? Qu'est-ce que c'est? Vous êtes chrétien? C'est une secte, ou quoi?' asks a local in Lubumbashi, in the Congo Democratic Republic, when asked the way to the Anglican church.[2] The surprising thing may be that there is an *église anglicane* in the Congo Democratic Republic or Madagascar, Rwanda or Burundi, Haiti or Quebec.

The British Empire had more Muslim subjects than the Ottoman and Persian empires combined, boasted one Anglican missionary in Cairo in 1909. 'Who would doubt the issue of this glorious conflict?', he concluded, confident that Islam would wither away under the combined onslaught of Christian mission and colonial rule. But he himself lived to see the disadvantages of British colonial rule in Palestine when he became bishop in Jerusalem, with a largely Arab membership. There can be little doubt that belonging to the 'dini ya Queeni' (the religion of Queen Victoria and her successors) had had a powerful prestige in the colonial period itself. Anglicanism easily slotted into an 'establishment' mentality. If Christianity and 'power' (political/educational/cultural) went together, then Anglicanism was a form of Christianity which had its attractions for those whose lives were dominated or circumscribed by the colonial reality. Few missionaries could be sanguine about the future of African Anglicanism in the era of the independence struggle of the 1950s. That Anglicanism has not only survived but flourished in Africa since independence is a fact of great significance whose consequences have yet fully to be realised in understanding what Anglicanism is.

The term 'Anglican' originated in the medieval Latin designation for the Catholic Church in England, *Ecclesia Anglicana*: a geographical location rather than a theological description. At the Reformation, the reformed Church of England asserted its identity and continuity with that medieval church. But the term 'Anglican' only developed its modern

[2] Tim Naish in Andrew Wingate, Kevin Ward, Carrie Pemberton and Wilson Sitshebo (eds.), *Anglicanism: A Global Communion* (London: Mowbray, 1998), pp. 161–5.

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-00866-2 - A History of Global Anglicanism
Kevin Ward
Excerpt
More information

use in the nineteenth century, first of all as a theological identity marker rather than a geographical description. The Tractarians used the term to signify participation in the universal church, but as a unique branch distinguished from Roman, eastern and Protestant Christendom. By the 1860s the term 'Anglican communion' was becoming a useful descriptor for churches outside Britain. In appealing for a General Council of Churches, the Provincial Synod of the Canadian Church in 1865 urged the Archbishop of Canterbury to look for ways 'by which the members of our Anglican Communion in all quarters of the world should have a share in the deliberations for her welfare, and be permitted to have a representation in one General Council of her members fathered from every land'.[3] Archbishop Longley, however, avoided using the term when he issued his invitation:

> I request your presence at a meeting of the Bishops in visible communion with the United Church of England and Ireland, purposed (God willing) to be holden at Lambeth, under my presidency . . .[4]

Indeed, the term 'Anglican' only gradually came to be used within the Church of England itself. English people, whether communicants or not, identified themselves as 'Church of England' rather than as part of a wider communion. But, by the late twentieth century, the term 'the Anglican Church' had come popularly to be used (in the press and elsewhere) as a synonym for the established Church of England.

Anglicanism ceased to be the established religion in Ireland in 1867 and in Wales in 1922. It has never been the established church in Scotland. Anglican establishments in Canada and the Caribbean were dismantled in the nineteenth century. In India, although the Anglican Church was officially an establishment until well into the twentieth century, it was always understood to be the established church for English people in India, not for the native population. In this case, both the East India Company and its imperial successor utilised the fact of establishment as a way of inhibiting the extension of Anglicanism among the native Hindu, Sikh and Muslim population. There were no similar religious sensitivities to conciliate in much of sub-Saharan Africa, and missionaries were not discouraged from evangelising. But the British were careful to maintain an official neutrality, both between religions and between different Christian denominations. They were particularly sensitive to aggressive evangelism in predominantly Muslim areas. Perhaps with the Irish

[3] [Davidson,] *The Six Lambeth Conferences 1867–1920* (London: SPCK, 1929), p. 4. [4] Ibid., p. 5.

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-00866-2 - A History of Global Anglicanism
Kevin Ward
Excerpt
More information

experience in mind, they were also anxious not to offend Catholic missions. Nevertheless, the Anglican church was perceived to be the church of the government in much of British Africa. In 1914 Yoswa Kate of Uganda denounced the cathedral at Namirembe in Kampala as a *ssabo* (shrine) of the English traditional religion. The cathedrals of Nairobi in Kenya and Salisbury in Southern Rhodesia were even more closely identified with the colonial administrations, in this case largely because they were dominated by the white settler community.

WRITING ABOUT ANGLICANISM

Books which consider 'Anglicanism' as their overall theme have largely been written from theological perspectives, typically with a strong interest in ecclesiology: they attempt to locate Anglicanism as a distinctive part of classical Christianity, examining its 'Catholic', 'Reformed', 'Evangelical' and 'Liberal' characteristics, and how these characteristics relate to, and are in tension with, each other. In encapsulating what is special about Anglicanism, writers often emphasis its privileging of common prayer over doctrinal uniformity; its preference for a familial rather than a centralised and bureaucratic structure; its role in reconciling Catholic and Reformed understandings of the faith. The Indian priest Emani Sambayya expressed this sense of Anglicanism well in an essay entitled 'The Genius of the Anglican Communion', written in 1948. After his conversion as a young man and employment by the Student Christian Movement in India, he finally decided to seek ordination in the Anglican church. His preference for Anglicanism arose from the sense of common worship, rather than the individualism of other Protestant bodies, enshrined in the Book of Common Prayer, which he saw as 'a precious heirloom for posterity' and one which 'lends itself to adaptation by various peoples, according to their peculiar temperaments and needs'. Alive to the colonial and class bias of Anglicanism, he nevertheless found it 'possible to envisage the emergence of the catholicism of the African people, or of the Chinese, or of the Indian nation within the confines of Anglicanism'. Sambayya rejoiced in the 'double heritage' of Anglicanism – Catholic and Reformed. He was thankful for its freedom from excessive emotion, but critical of its failure to commit itself in the nationalist struggle from which India was just emerging in 1948.[5] This theme of the

[5] E. Sambayya, 'The Genius of the Anglican Communion' , in E. R. Morgan and Roger Lloyd (eds.), *The Mission of the Anglican Communion* (London: SPCK and SPG, 1948), pp. 18–29.

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-00866-2 - A History of Global Anglicanism
Kevin Ward
Excerpt
More information

'genius' of Anglicanism is perhaps more redolent of an Anglo-Catholic than an Evangelical temperament. Anglo-Catholics have felt greater need than Evangelicals to give a justification for the distinctive location of Anglicanism in the Christian world. Evangelicals traditionally have had more pragmatic, utilitarian reasons for being Anglican.

In recent decades, Stephen Sykes in England and John Booty in the USA have been active in developing a rigorous theological understanding of Anglicanism and its ecclesiology. They describe their 1988 collection of essays *A Study of Anglicanism*[6] as an 'introduction to the history and ethos of the Churches which constitute the Anglican Communion'. They recognise that the days of 'classical Anglicanism' may be numbered with the global shift of Christianity to the south. One of the chapters, by the Ghanaian theologian John Pobee, speaks of the 'Anglo-Saxon captivity of the church'. But he is the only representative of the 'South' in this collection. This, and similar books whose theme is the nature and ethos of the Anglican tradition, are largely still bound within those 'classical' patterns of thinking. *The Anglican Tradition*,[7] 'a handbook of sources', is organised on a chronological schema. The majority of extracts relate to England, though there is a good attempt to include material from other parts of the world in the final chapters. *Love's Redeeming Work: The Anglican Quest for Holiness*[8] also adopts a chronological pattern. Only in Part 3 (1830–2001) is there much attention to material from outside Britain. The writings of South Asian Christians (mainly Indian) are represented by 10 entries, out of the 136 in this section.[9] The only other 'non-white' included is Ini Kopuria, the founder of the Melanesian Brotherhood. Surprisingly, perhaps, there are no extracts at all from African Anglicans, partly because of the editorial decision to include only extracts from those who had died, partly perhaps because of the lack of opportunities for Africans to publish internationally and in English. Bishop John V. Taylor died just in time to be included, with a generous selection of his meditations and poems – but none draw directly from the African experience which shaped his life.

6 Stephen Sykes and John Booty (eds.), *The Study of Anglicanism* (London: SPCK, 1988).
7 G. R. Evans and J. Robert Wright (eds.), *The Anglican Tradition: A Handbook of Sources* (London: SPCK, 1991).
8 Geoffrey Rowell, Kenneth Stevenson and Rowan Williams, *Love's Redeeming Work: The Anglican Quest for Holiness* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).
9 Krishna Mohan Banerjea, Nilakantha Nehemiah Goreh SSJE, Krishnan Pillai, Appasamy Pillai, Pandita Ramabai Sarasvati, Sundar Singh, Aiyadurai Jesudasen Appasamy, Lakdasa Jacob de Mel, Emani Sambayya, Lakshman Wickremesinghe.

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-00866-2 - A History of Global Anglicanism
Kevin Ward
Excerpt
More information

Bishop Stephen Neill (1900–84) was a theologian and historian who exemplified the expanding horizons of Anglicanism, with his experience as a missionary (1924–45) and bishop (1939–45) in South India and his work with the World Council of Churches in Geneva and as Professor of Mission in Hamburg (1962–7). After retirement he was appointed as Professor of Religious Studies in the University of Nairobi (1969–73) in Kenya. In 1964, he wrote what is still the standard textbook on the history of Christian missions, published as the final volume of the *Pelican History of the Church*. His rather earlier historical work for Penguin, *Anglicanism* of 1958, was predominantly about the Church of England.[10] The work turns to events outside Britain only on p. 278, in a text of some 400 pages, with a chapter entitled 'Expansion in the English-Speaking World'.

Lamin Sanneh has noted that both Kenneth Latourette and Stephen Neill, in their great works on mission, witnessed to the fact that this was the age when Christianity was freeing itself from the dominance of Europe:

> Yet it remains an astonishing fact that, given their gifts of intellect and sympathy, both Neill and Latourette should proceed to tell the story of Christianity as essentially a phase of Europe's worldwide ascendancy after they had noted the cultural shifts that in their view were constitutive of the religion itself.[11]

The thrust of Sanneh's critique is directed not so much against these writers as against the post-colonial generation of Christian thinkers:

> [I]t is a curious thing that western academic theologians (alas!) have scarcely shown any sustained interest in the subject, having decided to turn their backs on world Christianity as the offspring of mission's outdated theology of territorial expansionism.[12]

Sanneh's strictures serve to put in context the difficulties with which theological and historical articulations of global Anglicanism have laboured since the 1960s. Only in 1993 was there a history which seriously attempted to view Anglicanism systematically in a global context. This was the work of the American Episcopalian, William Sachs: *The Transformation of Anglicanism: From State Church to Global Communion*.[13] Like Neill, Sachs adopts a chronological framework, but now about half of the

[10] Stephen C. Neill, *Anglicanism* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1958).
[11] Lamin Sanneh, 'World Christianity and the New Historiography: History and Global Interconnections', in Wilbert R. Shenk (ed.), *Enlarging the Story: Perspectives on Writing World Christian History* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2002), pp. 94–114.
[12] Ibid.
[13] William L. Sachs, *The Transformation of Anglicanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-00866-2 - A History of Global Anglicanism
Kevin Ward
Excerpt
More information

text is concerned with the global perspective, beginning with Chapter 5, 'The Church and Empire'. The trajectory of the story is that of 'expansion' (to utilise Neill's term) – from colonial to national, from English to multi-cultural, from state church to a family of independent churches. Sachs also wants to address theological questions about the nature of Anglicanism: '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.'[14] He hopes thereby that the book will be a contribution to the question of 'Anglican identity' which has become problematic precisely because of its global expansion:

> 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?[15]

Paul Avis has commended Sachs as providing a fascinating history of global Anglicanism, but is unconvinced by its theological conclusions in the final chapter, which concerns the Anglican response to modernity, the search for 'the authentic Church' and 'the loss of coherence'. Avis' *Anglicanism and the Christian Church* is a theological analysis of 'classical' Anglicanism, as defined by Sykes and Booty.[16]

Bill Jacob's *The Making of the Anglican Church Worldwide* (1997) eschews theology and aims to present a more straightforward historical account.[17] After an initial chapter on the Reformation in the British Isles, the subsequent chapter is entitled 'The Church of England Overseas 1670–1780'. Every chapter thereafter addresses the global character of Anglicanism. As Jacob acknowledges, it is primarily a history of the institutional expression of the communion. The story ends in 1960 when these structures were still heavily English in ethos, and when the episcopates of almost all provinces were still very predominantly English, or white, or both. The institutional perspective does not easily lend itself to extensive discussions of local culture and agency.

THE ORIGINS AND STRUCTURE OF THIS WORK

This present work aims to take into account the strictures of Sanneh about writing history in a world context. The particular project emerged

[14] Ibid., p. 3. [15] Ibid.
[16] Paul Avis, *Anglicanism and the Christian Church* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 2002), pp. 326–8 (1st edn 1989).
[17] W. M. Jacob, *The Making of the Anglican Church Worldwide* (London: SPCK, 1997), p. vii.

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-00866-2 - A History of Global Anglicanism
Kevin Ward
Excerpt
More information

from my collaboration in an earlier project pioneered by the Centre for Anglican Communion Studies (CEFACS) in Birmingham. CEFACS was the creation of the two Anglican mission colleges of the Selly Oak Federation of mission colleges, the United College of the Ascension (USPG) and Crowther Hall (CMS). The Principal of Ascension, Andrew Wingate, inspired the creation of a collection of short essays entitled *Anglicanism: A Global Communion*, with over seventy contributions from a wide range of scholars and church workers from all parts of the worldwide Anglican communion. The book reflected the rich variety of what was going on in the communion. Its publication coincided with the 1998 Lambeth Conference, in which it was widely anticipated that the churches of 'the South' would make a full and distinctive contribution in a new way.

The kaleidoscopic nature of *Anglicanism: A Global Communion* seemed to highlight the need for a wide-ranging historical account of the communion which would serve to highlight the role of Christians from the South in establishing and developing the worldwide Anglican communion. I had recently been appointed as Lecturer in African Religious Studies at the University of Leeds, a post created on the retirement of Professor Adrian Hastings, the great historian of African Christianity. My own background was also as a historian of Christianity in Africa. I had first gone to Kenya as a schoolteacher in 1969 and did doctoral studies on Kenyan Protestantism. I had then taught in the Bishop Tucker Theological College at Mukono, Uganda, from 1976 to 1990. I was ordained in 1978 by Archbishop Silvanus Wani, who had succeeded Janani Luwum as leader of the Church of Uganda, after Luwum's murder at the hands of the Amin regime.

Taking the strictures of Lamin Sanneh to heart, I have attempted, in this book, to construct an account of Anglicanism which is primarily concerned with the 'commitment, engagement and action' of Anglicans from Asia and Oceania, Africa, the Caribbean and Latin America, rather than focusing on the Church of England or on people of British origin in other parts of the world. It aims to take seriously the experience of local people and societies in their decisions to accept or reject the Anglican forms of Christianity which were on offer. The focus is thus not on the British missionaries who 'planted' their form of Christianity, but on the local response and appropriation, the creation and recreation of the Christian message within a particular context. The relative lack of concern with missionary societies and missionaries does not thereby undervalue mission. Indeed, it intends to prioritise the essential missionary

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

Cambridge
Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-00866-2 - A History of Global Anglicanism
Kevin Ward
Excerpt
More information

nature of Christianity, by highlighting the work of local Christians, both in creating their Christian world and in being missionaries to their neighbours. Thus the narrative gives prominence to the crucial role played by Chinese Anglicans in establishing the church in the Asian Pacific beyond China, to the activities of African evangelists far from their home area and to the pioneering role of African Caribbean Anglicans in establishing the church in Latin America, as well as to the presence of a Japanese Anglicanism in Brazil.

The prioritising of local agency does not mean that I am blind to the unequal power relationships between the representatives of the British (or North American) missionary movement and the colonial 'subjects'. For good or ill, metropolitan influences shaped and channelled the development of local Christianities.[18] Africans and Indians, Chinese and Pacific Islanders, were rarely free simply to espouse (or reject) a Christianity disconnected from its British origins. But this should not be allowed to over-determine the conversion process, unduly to narrow the creative appropriation, to shut down the possibility that, even in the replication of English liturgy or practice, something new and distinctive has emerged. If at times Anglicanism seems peculiarly ill adapted to the local culture, a fish out of water, it has also, often, become so thoroughly incorporated in the local environment that its superficial resemblance to the Church of England may, on further investigation, be highly misleading.

It was clear to me that the chronological approach adopted by previous histories of Anglicanism would have to be abandoned. Such an approach almost inevitably prioritises England in terms of space and time. The work is planned, rather, on a regional basis. But, since the passage of time is essential to historical appreciation, each regional section has its own chronological framework. This principle of organisation prevents Britain from dominating the story. It does allow more space than would otherwise be given to areas of comparative weakness for Anglicanism: for example the Middle East and Latin America. These were particularly exciting sections to write precisely because they normally tend to be neglected in considerations of Anglicanism as a whole. A precedent for this approach is found in Adrian Hastings' *A World History of Christianity*, an edited collection. Hastings notes the drawbacks of the

[18] This theme is discussed in Andrew Porter, *Religion versus Empire? British Protestant Missionaries and Overseas Expansion, 1700–1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), pp. 4–6.

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org