Article

Ideology in Doxology: A Comparative History of Anglican Liturgy in South Africa, 1795–1992

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Abstract

This study examines and compares the liturgical histories of two Anglican churches in South Africa from the colonial period to the early 1990s. It elucidates the historical causes for differing understandings of Anglican liturgy practices of the Church of the Province of Southern Africa (CPSA) and the Church of England in South Africa (CESA). It examines the history of the division between the two denominations and their attempt to localise Anglican liturgy while seeking to maintain a link to their understanding of the historical Anglican theological heritage. The comparison contributes to the history of Anglicanism by beginning to fill the historical gap of the liturgy of Evangelical Anglicans in South Africa.

Keywords: history; liturgy; Anglicanism; Tractarian; evangelical; worship

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Introduction

This study aims to examine the history of Anglican worship in South Africa from the arrival of colonial chaplains in 1795 to the date of the last published authorised liturgy of one of the Anglican churches in the country. It will compare the liturgical history of the Church of the Province of Southern Africa (CPSA), now referred to as the Anglican Church of Southern Africa, with that of the Church of England in South Africa (CESA), now known as the Reformed Evangelical Anglican Church of Southern Africa. It will examine the theological, political, and social reasons behind their approach to Anglican worship, with a special emphasis on the role of ritualism in liturgy. The liturgical history of the CPSA is well researched, but that of CESA is not. Because CESA's liturgy was purportedly antithetical to that of the CPSA, a comparative approach is the most useful tool for the historical analysis of CESA's history. It will employ a historical-critical approach, examining both secondary and archival sources.

The Nature of Anglican Worship

According to Colin Buchanan (2006, 1), Anglican "liturgy is itself preservative;" it ensures that the worshiper, in the present and the future, worships in ways that are familiar to other worshippers in the past. That continuity is also embodied in a cyclical or predicable liturgical calendar. Secondly, he states that liturgical wording has a "hieratic character" and is ceremonial. Its exalted language, the movements of the service leader and worshiper, and the decoration of the worship space are intentionally designed to connect the worshiper to God. Thirdly, the congregation responds to the hieratic and ceremonial nature of Anglican liturgy in an emotionally restrained manner, providing a form of predictability in the worship experience and the security that individuals are not being called to do the unexpected.

This study concedes that the aforementioned characteristics are not peculiar to Anglican liturgy and are present in other liturgical traditions. However, I also want to add the extent to which Anglican worship is preservative, hierarchical, and ceremonial, and the expected response of worshipers is contested within the different expressions of Anglicanism. All of these aspects have evolved and may differ depending on the circumstances. The differences are also the result of differing theological understanding of the nature of Anglican liturgical practices as expressed in the Anglican prayer books. This contestation has been historically manifest in the liturgical practices of Southern African Anglicans.

Anglican Ideological Divisions

The beginning of the 19th century marked the onset of a period of liturgical tolerance in England. Many factors contributed to this tolerance. The most pertinent for this study is the 1800 Act of Union, which created the United Kingdom by uniting Great Britain (England and Scotland) and Ireland. The aforementioned legislation also united the

national churches under the United Church of England and Ireland (Smith 2017, 68). Secondly, the 1829 Catholic Emancipation Act was promulgated, increasing religious pluralism and tolerance for Roman Catholicism (Strong 2017, 1–2). The need for liberalisation was caused by the necessity of accommodating Catholic (Irish) parliamentarians in the new Parliament of the Kingdom of Great Britain. It also led to the rise of Broad Churchmanship, which advocated for a more inclusive and doctrinally accommodating Church, as well as the opening of universities, such as Oxford and Cambridge, to non-Anglicans (Strong 2017, 6). Even though Protestant ideology was still dominant, holding Roman Catholic and Liberal views became more acceptable.

It is against this background that in 1833, the Oxford Movement started at Oxford. It expressed its views in pamphlets titled "Tracts for the Times" (hence a subset of this group would later be referred to as "Tractarians"). Those tracts were conceived and primarily authored by John Henry Newman (b.1801–1890) between 1833 and 1841 (Brown 2017, 1). This group was known as the Oxford Movement because it originated at Oriel College, University of Oxford (Brown 2017, 1). The seeds of the Oxford Movement have been traced as far back as 1825, when Hugh James Rose (b. 1795–1838), a priest and theologian, delivered several lectures titled "The State of the Protestant Religion in Germany," where he decried Germanic rationalism's influence on the Church (Geck 2012, 52). He emphasised the need to safeguard the Church and its unique spiritual function against what he considered the intrusive innovations of the state (In Geck 2012, 53). It was believed that the state was suffocating the Church through legislation by preventing and punishing religious dissent (Pereiro 2017, 189–190). In an apparent rejection of the tradition of Magisterial Reformation, he wrote against "reformation achieved through civil order and the civil magistrate." (Turnbull 2010, 34) Tractarians were also dissatisfied with the Evangelical approach, the so-called "'religion of the day'—with its emphases on individual piety, the conversion experience, justification by faith and personal Bible study and its sense that the Ordinances of the Church were relatively unimportant when compared to the religion of the heart" (Brown 2017, 1). They thus sought to place the Church, its ceremonies (especially the Eucharist and baptism) and its laws at the centre of religious life.

The rise of the Oxford Movement also coincided with the emergence of the discipline of history at the undergraduate level in British universities (Harrison 2004, 17ff). Diarmaid MacCulloch (1991, 3–4) has argued convincingly that the Tractarians creatively employed the discipline of (Church) history to argue for the legitimacy of their theological approach. They argued that they were recovering the "Church catholic," which had long been enriched by centuries of Church traditions (Brown 2017, 1). Newman accused Protestants of rejecting the revealed truth as it was passed down through the ages and accepting the educated opinions of theologians in its place. He was also critical of the rise of higher criticism from German scholars such as Friedrich Schleiermacher (Geck 2012, 52). Ironically, Newman's critique of the literary approach was inspired by his visit to Germany between 1825 and 1827. He was influenced by lectures he audited in Germany, given by church historian Augustus Nead, titled

"Introduction to the Fathers" (Geck 2012, 52; Franklin 1992, 439, 447). To some, the Church fathers became a viable alternative to the Evangelical approach that elevated the Reformers over the early church (MacCulloch 1991, 4). Tractarians called the Anglican Church back to the devotion, worship, and aesthetics of the medieval and early Church (Patristic Fathers). The scholastic study of (church) history helped them "recover" that past.

Tractarianism advocated for more elaborate ceremonial and liturgical attire, as well as the marking of saints' days (Brown 2017, 2). Others emulated medieval religious practices in the form of private confession, clerical celibacy, monasticism, and the nunnery (Brown 2017, 2). Tractarianism varied in depth and application. Extreme Tractarians criticised Protestantism as a departure from the doctrines of the historical church and advocated for looking to Rome as the one true Church (Brown 2017, 2). One of the Oxford Movement leaders, Edward Bouverie Pusey (b. 1800–1882), *circa* 1839, had started to reject the term "Protestant" in association with the church. He wrote disparagingly about the Protestant doctrine of justification but appreciated the German scholarship on the patristic Fathers (Geck 2012, 62; MacCulloch 1991, 1–2). Pusey faced disciplinary action for preaching and advocating for the real presence of Christ's body and blood in the Eucharist (Herringer 2012, 92–92). Most Tractarians sought to distinguish Roman Catholic distortions of the Middle Ages from the traditions and theology of the early Church. Many Tractarians remained in the Anglican Church and continued to transform the Church through what they called "Church principles." (Brown 2017, 2). They remained because they held that Rome was not adequately patristic (Franklin 1992, 445).

Tractarianism did not spell the end of Evangelicalism in the Church of England, but rather added another layer of diversity and pluralism to the *praxis* of Anglican theology (Brown 2017, 3). In 1930, the centenary of the Oxford Movement was celebrated by the entire Anglican Communion, understood as complementary to the Evangelical and Liberal Broad understandings of the Anglican faith (Atherstone 2013, 101).

However, some Evangelicals perceived the emergence of Tractarianism as a counter-reformation. They argued that the Church's emphasis on Catholic continuity came at the expense of its Reformed heritage (Turnbull 2010, 10–11). Archbishop Campbell Tait (b.1811–1882) of Canterbury in 1877 described the movement as a "conspiracy within our body against the doctrine, the discipline and the practice of our Reformed church" (Ive 1992, 15). Dyson Hague (b. 1857–1935), a Canadian Evangelical bishop, bemoaned the celebration of Tractarianism at its centenary by the Anglican Communion as a "movement to restore the sacerdotalism, ritualism, and Romanism which all Evangelicals, from the days of Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer down, have so conscientiously resisted" (In Atherstone 2013, 105).

Despite aforementioned resistance, Tractarianism reshaped the Anglican Church; by the turn of the 19th century, a significant number of churches in England and Wales were

centring the nourishing work of the Eucharist as a primary act of worship on Sunday mornings; clergy were wearing Eucharist clerical wear (vestments), the Lord's Supper was celebrated weekly, clergy were referred to as "Father," the Communion Table was referred to as an altar; the use of incense, candles, and the adoration of communion elements increased (Franklin 1992, 436, 442; Turnbull 2010, 35). Tractarian lobby groups, such as the Cambridge Camden Society, successfully advocated for the restoration of the Medieval Gothic style in the new churches built in England (Chapman 2006, 3–4; Pereiro 2017, 202).

Like the Puritans and Pilgrim dissenters who left England for the New World to practice their religion freely, Tractarian clergy also responded to resistance to their ecclesiastical changes at home by travelling abroad as missionaries to the colonised people of the British Empire. In Southern Africa, they would clash with the early arrivals—the Evangelicals. Tractarians perceived the settler colonies as opportunities to plant the "Catholic Church" (Cox 1888, 339), while the Evangelicals understood the expansion of the British Empire to be "a sign of the triumph of Protestantism over Catholicism" (Bethke 2020a, 8) and a triumph of liberty over oppression (Wolffe 2008, 43).

The Legacies of Division in Southern African Anglicanism (1795–1910)

The Anglican Church arrived in South Africa in 1795 to serve the needs of British colonial officials and soldiers. Anglican religious services for civilians commenced in 1806. The first Anglican church, St George, was opened at Simonstown in 1814 (Hinchliff 1963, 7; Ive 1992, 11). Anglican funerals had been performed in Cape Town from as early as 1750 for important officials who had died en route to and from India (Hinchliff 1963, 4). Nine chaplains performed other religious ceremonies on their way to and from India (de Gruchy 1979, 16). For a brief period, from 1827–1828, the spiritual functions fell on John James, the Bishop of Calcutta, whose see was defined broadly to include all places between India and the Straits of Magellan in South America. Ian Darby is correct when he notes that the colonial Anglican churches developed a very independent attitude at this early stage due to the distant episcopal oversight (Darby 1982, 25). Moreover, this created a robust democratic spirit with significant lay involvement in ecclesial matters, which was foreign to the established Church in England (Bethke 2020, 2–3).

Hinchliff notes that the expansion of the colonial Anglican Church only began in earnest after the arrival of the 1820 settlers who had fled Europe due to the economic depression caused by the Napoleonic wars (Hinchliff 1963, 19). Before this, the Church ministered exclusively to the spiritual needs of the military and government officials. Anglicanism was perceived to be "the religion of the Government." (Worsnip 1999, 3). In 1820, approximately 3,500 settlers arrived from England. They settled in the Cape, Natal, and other areas on the Eastern frontier. In 1847, Anglican congregations totalled 14: six in Cape Town, one at George, and seven in the Eastern frontier (Beckman 2011, 30).

Margaret Donaldson (Donaldson 1994, 79) attributes the growth of the Anglican Church in the Cape colony to the leadership and the ecclesial organisational structure set up by the colonial Church's first Bishop, Robert Gray (b. 1809–1872), in 1848.[1]

Gray's enthusiastic leadership and theology, resulting in the expansion of the colonial Church, is contested in South African Church history (Southey 1998, 18–19). However, his labours in recruiting missionaries, his raising of funds for clergy for settler churches, mission stations, and schools for settlers and Indigenous peoples are broadly praised as key for Anglican expansion in the region (Hinchliff 1963, 41–44). His crowning contribution was creating a governing structure for the South African Anglican Church. In 1853, the Cape Anglican Church was reorganised into three sections: Cape Town, Natal, and Grahamstown. Together, they formed a new Anglican Province in southern Africa, with the Bishop of Cape Town (Gray) as its leader (Robinson 1959, 1). By his death in 1872, the number of Church of the Province of South Africa congregations had increased from 14 to 130. Two more dioceses were added to the Province—St. Helena and the Orange Free State (Beckman 2011, 79; Southey 1989, 21).

Alan Beckman has argued that before 1847, all[2] the ministers in the Colony, bar one, were Evangelicals (Beckman 2011, 30). By this, he means they practised a lesser degree of ritualism than the Tractarians who came after Gray's arrival. However, Beckman fails to entertain that the liturgical practices of the colonial chaplains may have been influenced more by maritime liturgy than by Evangelical theological sensibilities. According to Ian Darby, the Anglican Prayer Book, compiled specifically for maritime use, was much more compact and did not strictly adhere to the rubrics (Darby 1987, 45–46). Although Darby qualifies his assessment by stating that "worship at sea during the first half of the nineteenth century was yet to be influenced by either the Evangelical or the Tractarian movements of the church of England," he does not comments about the extent to which maritime liturgy influenced the practice of liturgy in the first generation of Anglican churches planted in the Cape colony by Evangelical chaplains (see Darby 1987, 46). This study suggests that this maritime worship, with its simplified form of liturgy, was adopted and preferred by Evangelicals, who placed less emphasis on ritualism than Tractarians. This can also be implied from the fact that the first Evangelical ministers in the Cape had been chaplains in the British army.

An examination of Evangelical Anglican sources has revealed that the primary concern for Evangelicals in Southern Africa was the formation of an Anglican denomination in

1 He was consecrated as bishop in 1847 and arrived in the Cape in 1848.

2 Beckman concedes that this point is difficult to prove, but ventures to detail the biography of 14 ministers, which he asserts , with one exception, that they were not Tractarians. His number is closer to Hewitt's list of 16 ministers in 1848. Further complexity is added by a recent study on the recruitment of colonial clergy by Joseph Hardwick, which notes that between the late 1810s and the 1830s, at least 27 were sent to the Cape, which is significantly higher than Beckman's 14. See Hardwick, *Anglican*, 33; Hewitt, *Sketches*, 94

Southern Africa, which eventually took place in 1870 (Mbebe, 2025, 45–77).[3] When the Church of the Province of South Africa was formed, it referenced the Book of Common Prayer 1662 (hereafter, "BCP") in its Constitution as its founding liturgy but allowed for liturgical revision as long as the revisions were not contrary to the BCP (Bethke 2017, 60; Mbaya 2021, 360; Botha 2006, 6). A condition that had been advised by the 1867 Lambeth Conference (Mbaya 2021, 374–375), Evangelicals believed that this formation would enable Tractarians to practise ritualism unrestrained in the region and that it did not explicitly forbid liturgical innovation (Mbebe 2025, 58–60). However, in the mid-19th century, Evangelicals found it challenging to prove that ministers who arrived after them were practising forms of Anglicanism which the BCP disallowed. Consider this reply from Bishop Gray to an evangelical minister, Robert Lamb, who accused Gray of failing to discipline Tractarians in the Cape.

> In their defence, unjustly and indecently assailed as they have been by you, I will say that, as a body, they are sober, and honest, faithful, sound, and zealous men, with no more leaning to Rome than to Geneva, but receiving and teaching the truths of Christ's Gospel, as they find those truths embodied in the articles and formularies of the Church, interpreting them according to their plain, natural, grammatical sense. I will add, that it is perfectly marvellous to me, how any brother clergyman, let his partisanship be what it might, and his apprehension of the truths, and attachment to the principles of his church ever so defective, should have ventured to assail with most unjust imputations, men who had given themselves for Christ's sake to the one work of extending His Truth and Kingdom in this land, as these your brethren have done (Robertson 1855, 13–14).

The concerns about liturgical fidelity were not just towards Tractarians. Bishop Gray was also concerned about *ex tempore* (spontaneous) prayers at Evangelical church services, such as those held by the Religious Tract Society and Trinity Church on Herrington Street in Cape Town, because these too were not prescribed in the BCP. He also disapproved of the Catholicising tendencies of extreme Tractarians such as James Green (Hinchliff 1963, 191; Bethke 2020, 33). When John William Colenso, the Bishop of Natal, was accused of liturgical experimentalism in 1855 and 1856, Gray advised that he should "fall back to *lex scripta*"—follow the letter of the BCP. (Lewis and Edwards 1934, 165). According to Bill Burnett, in addition to adding to existing liturgy, Colenso also omitted certain portions of it in his translation of the Zulu version of the BCP (Burnett 1950, 71; cf Mbaya 2021, 360).

Additionally, Evangelicals were concerned about the increasing influence of Tractarianism on a predominantly protestant populace of migrant Southern Africans. The trend of clergy who came after Gray's arrival was, according to Norton Taylor, "brim-full of Puseyism and that the colonial press was crowded with correspondence from indignant parishioners unused to ornamental vestments and opposed to ceremonies

3 The Church of the Province of South Africa was formed in 1870. It would later change its name to the Church of the Province of Southern Africa and is now called the Anglican Church of Southern Africa.

that appeared to be anti-Protestant," with some members even wary of attending Eucharist services as a result (Taylor 1998, 76). A review of the Church of England in South Africa's archives at Wits Historical Papers supports this argument.[4]

Tractarians were also becoming increasingly involved in missions. The Anglican monastic orders were becoming the chief drivers of Indigenous proselytisation in the region. The monastic orders of the Society of St. John the Evangelist, colloquially known as the Cowley Fathers, and the Community of the Resurrection were only granted missionary responsibilities by Bishop William Jones in 1883 (Kearns 1913, 21–22). The Community of the Resurrection had also taken over mission work in the Diocese of Pretoria in 1903 (Wood 1908, 287). By 1904, the Cowley Fathers were the chief Anglican evangelists to Indigenous people, for "all the purely Native Mission work in and near Cape Town was left in their hands" (Wood 1908, 287). In the same period, the Cowley Fathers took over mission work in the Diocese of St. John's Kaffraria (Wood 1908, 287). Robert Kearns, an Evangelical, was concerned that the choice of missionaries to the native people had the impact of forcing "special controversies and disabilities that resulted from the Reformation" on them (Kearns 1913, 21).

As the Church expanded northward, disagreements between Evangelicals and Tractarians arose concerning liturgy. The Diocese of Pretoria was established in 1878. In 1890, the Pretoria Diocese requested a guide to ceremonial and ritualistic practices. Based on those recommendations, the bishop specified the manner of the celebration of the Lord's Supper (Darby 1982, 28). Evangelicals considered the recommendation to be inconsistent with Protestant Anglicanism (Darby 1982, 29). As a result, in 1900, they began establishing their own congregations in Johannesburg and later in Pretoria (Darby 1982, 30).

Schism in Worship (1911–1992)

From the beginning of the 20th century, the Tractarians and Evangelicals developed divergent expressions of Anglicanism in Southern Africa. When the Church of the Province of South Africa started to engage in liturgical revisions from 1910 onwards (Bethke 2017, 61–63,) the Evangelicals began to refer to the experimental liturgies in its publications as further proof of the CPSA's departure from orthodox Anglicanism and argued that the Evangelicals, by continuing to use the BCP, had a stronger link to the Mother Church than their CPSA counterparts (Christ Church Magazine 1913, 8–9; cf Mbaya 2021, 366). While the CPSA held it necessary to revise Anglican liturgy in order to localise it, the Evangelicals sought to preserve the BCP. As Henry Mbaya has observed about the reluctance to revise the English liturgy within the CPSA in the early 20th century, "the historic link with England symbolized a sense of security and permanence" (Mbaya 2021, 381). The Evangelicals strategically positioned themselves

4 For further reading, see Mbebe 2025, 45–80.

as a haven for those who were uncomfortable with the liturgical reforms within the CPSA. For instance, a daft "Constitution and Regulations of the Church of England in the Transvaal Province," issued by a group Evangelical Anglicans who sought to establish an voluntary association in the region, invited fellowship to "all Congregations which desire to maintain and carry on *in perpetuity*, by the Grace of God, the services in their respective Churches under and according to the Laws of the Church of England as by Law established" (CET 1916, 1–2, emphasis in the original). This invitation was successful and attractive to liturgical conservatives, enabling Evangelicals to gain sympathy from like-minded parishioners in South Africa, Australia, and England.

In an Evangelical court case against the CPSA in 1936, contesting the authority of CPSA bishops to appoint ministers in Evangelical-leaning congregations, the Evangelicals cited seven liturgical practices of the CPSA as indicative of its departure from orthodox Anglicanism: first, the ringing of the sacring bell, the use of the perpetual light to denote the reserve sacrament, the use of incense, the use of wafer bread, the employment of Acolytes and Servers, the carrying of lighted candles in processions and lastly, the use of the Alb, Chasuble, Dalmatic Maniple, and Tunicle. Archbishop Francis Phelps conceded that these were used, in some but not all, CPSA churches and that "none of them is required to be used by anybody," however, this was insufficient to Evangelicals. They held that these practices should not be tolerated but should be outlawed (*Mills v Registrar*, 1936, 24–25).

After several failed attempts to bring Evangelicals under the fold of the CPSA, in 1938, the Evangelicals formed their own denomination, which they called the Church of England in South Africa, hereafter, CESA (Mbebe 2023, 31). The founding Constitution of the CESA stated that the BCP would be the only permitted form of worship for its churches (CESA 1939, 6). Additionally, the Constitution included the following provision, which I argue was directed at the CPSA and its perceived distortion of Anglican worship,

> The Church of England in South Africa, as a Reformed and Protestant Church, doth hereby reaffirm its constant witness against all those innovations in doctrine and worship, whereby the Primitive Faith hath from time to time defaced or overlaid, and which at the Reformation the Church of England did disown and reject (CESA 1939, 6).

However, this aversion to liturgical innovation was restricted only to services conducted in English. Even in those churches, it was not strictly enforced, nor was the BCP used in perpetuity. The Zulu congregations used a Colenso translation of the BCP, titled *Incwadi Yokukuleka Njenga-so Isimiso Sebanhla Las'England* (1856). This translation added new prayers, in an attempt to contextualise the Prayer Book, changed and omitted portions of the BCP (Burnett 1950, 71; cf Mbaya 2021, 360). Secondly, a branch of CESA, known as The African Church, employed an abridged and modified version of the BCP, incorporating innovations typically associated with Tractarians, such as the carrying of lighted candles in processions and genuflections (the making of the sign of the cross with one's hands). Similarly, a 1967 Zulu Prayer Book prescribed that a

standing priest would proclaim the forgiveness of sins to kneeling congregants (CESA 1967, 4). A practice which was viewed with suspicion in the white congregations due to its perceived implication that the minister, not Christ, mediated the forgiveness of sins (handwritten comments to CESA, 1974, 3–4). Black churches were allowed to exercise a measure of liturgical independence, despite white leadership, in the hope that, in time, they would grow to emulate the practices of the white arm of CESA.

From the 1950s to the 1980s, CESA was isolated from global Anglicanism, apart from its relationship with the Sydney Anglicans in Australia, but moved closer to international evangelical movements, such as Youth for Christ, Billy Graham Ministries, and other like-minded religious affiliations (see Bradley 2001, 135, 142–144). As a result, CESA became less emphatic on distinctly Evangelical liturgical practices (Earngey 2011, 9). The language of the BCP had also become an impediment to reaching young people.

In 1974, CESA published *Contemporary English Services Adapted from the Book of Common Prayer* (1978) to be used together with the BCP. CESA regarded the revision as measured reform of its liturgy. On its preface, it cited the following from the 1662 BCP: "It hath been the wisdom of the Church of England, ever since the first compiling of her Publick Liturgy, to keep the mean between the two extremes of too much stiffness in refusing, and of much easiness in admitting any variation from it." (1978, cover). This was not a major revision; it was short and only contained two orders of the services: the morning and evening prayers. Its main purposes were to remove archaic phrases and to simplify the liturgy. It shortened the prayers; it contained four collects, one responsorial prayer and approximately 70% of it contained printed scripture readings. The CPSA had a similar experimental liturgy called *Liturgy 75* (Nuttal 2006, 3).

To address the weakening liturgical practices within CESA, the then Presiding Bishop Dudley Foord, who had been a priest in Australia, commissioned a liturgical revision committee in 1984. When he arrived in CESA, he assessed that "popular evangelicalism was more dominant than an Anglican ethos" (in Earngey 2011, 9).

This resulted in *Worship '85* (1985). CESA argued that this revision was not a replacement for the BCP. It was emphasised that the *Worship '85* comprised experimental services only, "no doctrine or practice may be construed or based upon them apart from those authorised by the 39 Articles of Religion and the book of Common Prayer, 1662" (CESA 1986, ii). *Worship '85* did more than just update the archaic English language (*contra* Earngey 2011, 10). It simplified and reduced the Prayer Book into an easily digestible format that was palatable to an audience which was increasingly using less liturgy in its services.

Dudley Foord's leadership and CESA's archives demonstrate that *Worship '85* was also influenced by the 1978 Australian Prayer Book. Contrary to Mark Earngey's assertion that *Worship '85* "gave the full content" to the BCP, the revision is selective and

interpretative (Earngey 2011, 10). It retained only that which Evangelicals regarded as essential. It did not give guidance, nor did it explicitly outlaw ritualistic practices.

CESA's *Worship '85* laid the foundation for a significant revision of its liturgy in the 1992 Prayer Book. Synod also commissioned the 1992 Prayer to serve as an "alternative to the Book of Common Prayer 1662," not as a replacement (CESA 1992, i). Unlike the CPSA's *Anglican Prayer Book* (1989), which was necessitated by linguistic concerns rather than theological reform (see Mbaya 2021, 383–384; Nuttall 2006, 1). To this effect, the CPSA tried to be accommodating of various theological convictions (Nuttall 2006, 6). CESA's *Prayer Book*, like its predecessors, took advantage of the reform to fashion a strictly Evangelical liturgy. It is concise and has strict rubrics with no allowance for ambiguity or different understandings of Anglicanism. For instance, its Eucharist service notes,

> The order of the Church of England expects participants in the Lord's supper to kneel in reverent gratitude for all that Christ did for them. But, kneeling does not imply any adoration of the bread and wine, nor is their adoration intended or permitted. On the contrary, it is stated explicitly, firstly, that the body and blood of Christ are in heaven not on earth, and, secondly, that the Lord's Supper, both the bread and the wine, stay the same as they are. To adore them is idolatry (CESA 1992,55–57).

However, like CPSA's *Anglican Prayer Book*, CESA's *Prayer Book* was also "superficial and unable to engage apartheid issues" or issues of reconciliation and reconstruction of South Africa in the early 1990s (see Mbaya 2021, 385). In fact, CESA's liturgy attempts to be timeless and acontextual, apart from its assumption that the apartheid government was Christian in ethos and its elected officials were elected to uphold the laws of God (CESA 1992, 22). Similar to the APB of the CPSA in its lack of engagement with the South African political context, CESA's *Prayer Book* succeeds in reinforcing Evangelical Anglican identity and meets the need for distinction from the CPSA. However, it fails as a theological tool to imbue the church with the spirit of reconciliation and constructive engagement with a socio-political context. CESA's *Prayer Book* is not concerned with localisation in the South African context. It does not even cover all the religious ceremonies that are typically undertaken by South African Christians, such as unveilings, but is concerned with reinforcing evangelical salvific themes. As a result of this narrow outlook, its use has diminished within the denomination (see Newby 2006, 9–13; cf Mbebe 2025, 266).

Concluding Remarks

This brief historical overview of the development of Anglican liturgy in South Africa has demonstrated that the past, even in the history of Christianity, is contested. One's interpretation of the past has a significant impact on present understandings of theology and practice. This study has elucidated the causes and impact of debates about Anglican liturgy in England in the early 19th century. Those imported debates were complicated by the impact of the expanding Anglican Church in Southern Africa. These debates had

an impact on the localisation of Anglican liturgy in South Africa and resulted in distinct liturgical traditions. One was more accepting of divergent views, and the other was more narrow in its focus. The major contribution of this study is to encourage a better understanding of the rich history of Anglicanism in South Africa and to fill the historical gap on the history of Evangelical Anglicans in the region.

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