

Eric Mascall and the responsibility of the theologian in England, 1962-1977

Dr Peter Webster

(<https://peterwebster.me> / @britevanet)

[This article was published in the *International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church* in 2021. This version is as revised after peer review, but before copy-editing. The version of record is available at <https://doi.org/10.1080/1474225X.2022.2014243>]

Abstract

Eric Mascall was one of the most prominent and prolific theologians in the Church of England in the post-war period. This article examines a series of polemical works, in which Mascall attempted to assess, and largely reject, several trends in liberal theology in the 1960s and 1970s. Mascall detected a systemic crisis in the whole relationship of theology, theologians and the Church, that reached down to the foundations of human knowledge and radiated out to the parishes, via the universities and theological colleges in which their ministers were formed. The articles examines his view of the relationship of human nature, grace and the eucharistic Church, and its consequences for the theologian. Mascall's polemics are read, as a group, for what they reveal of his understanding of the responsibility of the theologian, and how far his liberal interlocutors had, he believed, lost sight of the true shape of their vocation.

Twentieth century Anglicans in England were rarely prominent in the kind of dogmatic or systematic theology in which German or Scottish scholars have excelled.¹ One exception was E.L. Mascall (1905-93). The sequence of substantial books that Mascall produced in the 1940s and 1950s was the product of what Rowan Williams called an 'integrative passion' that was uncommon in Anglican writing.² His project was one of recovery and restatement, of placing the whole structure of catholic doctrine on a renewed, Thomist footing.³ By the late 1970s, however, a

1 Williams, 'Theology in the twentieth century', 236-7.

2 Williams, 'Theology in the twentieth century', 243

3 I intend to deal elsewhere with the development of Mascall's Thomism: see 'Eric Mascall and the making of an Anglican Thomist, 1937-46', in preparation. His first major book was *He Who Is. A study in traditional theism*,

'broadly Christocentric (but not Chalcedonian), morally serious, doctrinally agnostic theism' (to use Williams' phrase) seemed to have triumphed comprehensively in professional English theology, in which environment Mascall cut an increasingly isolated figure.⁴ The controversies provoked by such volumes as *Soundings* (1962), John A.T. Robinson's *Honest to God* (1963), and, later, *The Myth of God Incarnate* (1977) are only the most well-known chapters in a broader story.⁵ As a result, Mascall's attention switched from his systematic work of the 1940s and 1950s to an examination of the kind of liberalism that these volumes popularised. In a sequence of polemical books in the 1960s and 1970s, Mascall set himself to examine and then flatly reject a great deal of this work. It is with these books that this article is concerned.

It does not, however, deal with the substance of the particular questions of Christology or Biblical interpretation involved, either with the liberal position or Mascall's counter to it. It explores instead Mascall's understanding of the very idea and purpose of theology itself, and the responsibilities of those who pursued it. The errors into which some scholars had fallen, as Mascall believed, were at a basic level of method and of attitude, part of a misconception of the relationship of the theologian to the Christian tradition, and to the Church. But the issue was not merely with isolated individuals. Rather, Mascall thought there to be a pervasive and systemic crisis in the whole relationship of theology, theologians and the Church, that reached down to the foundations of human knowledge and radiated out to the parishes, via the universities and theological colleges in which their ministers were formed.

published in 1943.

4 Williams, 'Theology in the twentieth century', 246.

5 The study by Keith W. Clements uses these periodic controversies as its organising structure: *Lovers of discord: twentieth century theological controversies in England*. Of these particular examples, *Honest to God* has attracted most attention. The events and their immediate context are examined from close up in Edwards (ed.), *The Honest to God Debate*, 7–44, which should be read alongside the account in James, *A Life of Bishop John A.T. Robinson*, 110–34. See also Chapman, 'Theology in the public arena: the case of "South Bank religion"', *passim*.

The tri-polar relationship between the institutional Church, its theologians, and their readers has shifted continually throughout the history of the churches, framing and shaping the development of doctrine and practice. However, this relationship – the theology (or perhaps the ecclesiology) of theology, as it were - has not often been examined directly, and hardly at all for the period since 1945. Historians of English theology have at their disposal studies of the *content* of theology, and of its inflections among liberals, evangelicals and Anglo-Catholics.⁶ Amidst all this, however, the institutional and social settings in which theology was written, spoken, read and heard have been underplayed. Historians of the universities have dealt with the ‘secularisation’ of those institutions as a whole, but rather less with the study of theology or divinity in particular; there is as yet no equivalent for the post-war period of Daniel Inman’s study of Oxford theology before 1945.⁷ Only a few of the Anglican theological colleges have their historians.⁸ Work has scarcely begun on the history of religious publishing and of the experience of readers – a history of reception and effect.⁹ The latter part of this article seeks, then, to begin to fill this gap, as it examines Mascall’s perceptions of the state of the discipline of theology as practised in universities and theological colleges. It begins, however, with the shape of Mascall’s career, and the uncommon interstitial position from which he was able to view the scene. It then explores his understanding of the relationship of human nature, grace and the eucharistic Church, and its consequences for the theologian. Mascall’s polemics against the theology of the Sixties and Seventies are then read, as a group, for what they reveal of his understanding of the responsibility of the theologian, and how far his liberal interlocutors had, he believed, lost sight of the true shape of their vocation.

6 General surveys include: Nicholson (ed.), *A century of theological and religious studies in Britain*. On the global case of Anglican theology, see Chapman, ‘The evolution of Anglican theology, 1910-2000’. On evangelicalism see (for instance) Atherstone and Maiden (eds), *Evangelicalism and the Church of England in the Twentieth Century*. On modernism, see Stephenson, *The rise and decline of English modernism*.

7 Bebbington, ‘The secularization of British universities since the mid-nineteenth century’; Inman, *The making of modern English theology. God and the academy at Oxford, 1833-1945*.

8 One exception is the Queen’s Foundation in Birmingham, subject of Chandler, *Anglicanism, Methodism and ecumenism*.

9 On the collection of essays as a publishing format in theology, see Peter Webster, *The edited collection. Pasts, present and futures*, 14-19. For an unusual example of a history of a particular journal, see Nichols, *Alban and Sergius*.

Almost all of Eric Mascall's career was spent in institutions of theological teaching and research.¹⁰ After ordination followed by a short period of ministry in London parishes, he was sub-warden of Lincoln Theological College from 1937 until his removal to Christ Church, Oxford in 1945. Mascall was to move only once more, from Oxford to King's College London in 1962, to take up the new chair in historical theology, from which he retired in 1973. Yet his position was more interstitial than that progression might suggest, both institutionally and intellectually. Mascall spoke of his vocation as one of a priest being worked out in an academic setting, rather than that of a scholar for whom being in holy orders was professionally convenient, and in each professional setting he retained some measure of contact with the pastoral and worshipping life of the Church.¹¹ In Lincoln he was a regular celebrant of mass at the city centre church of All Saints; as Clerical Student of Christ Church his pastoral responsibilities were for the undergraduate body; in London he lived in the clergy house of the church of St Mary, Bourne Street, and acted as assistant priest.¹² The dedication of his 1980 book *Whatever happened to the human mind?* was to the 'priests and people of Saint Mary's in Pimlico who for many years have provided this grateful author with an altar and a home'.¹³ And these two lives, the academic and the pastoral, were in Mascall's mind clearly conjoined. That conjunction was made explicit shortly after his retirement when in 1974 Mascall was appointed as honorary canon theologian and unofficial theological adviser to the diocese of Truro by his long-time friend Graham Leonard, recently made bishop.¹⁴ But the connection had been sustained throughout his career by his membership from 1939 of the quasi-monastic Oratory of the Good Shepherd, described in his memoir as 'the chief

10 Mascall documented his career in *Saraband: The memoirs of E.L. Mascall*.

11 *Saraband*, 379

12 *Saraband*, 134, 250-2.

13 Mascall, *Whatever happened to the human mind?*, v.

14 *Saraband*, 299-300; Peart-Binns, *Graham Leonard. Bishop of London* (London, Darton, Longman and Todd, 1988), 125.

controlling influence in my subsequent life.’¹⁵ The fourth of the Seven Notes of the Oratory referred to ‘the labour of the mind’. Members were to ‘endeavour to worship God with their minds as well as with heart and soul’ and ‘seek according to his ability to bring new thought and knowledge under the discipline of Christ, and to interpret them to a better understanding of the loving purposes of God.’¹⁶ The whole of Mascall’s career was a working out of this particular obligation.

Even allowing for the natural exuberance of publishers, it was not unjust for one of them to describe Mascall in 1977 as ‘among the foremost theological writers of our time.’¹⁷ Alongside more than three dozen books, published over more than forty years, Mascall also produced more than a hundred scholarly articles and an even greater number of book reviews. Yet his reputation amongst historians has suffered for the want of a single new idea, a particular doctrine radically restated, a methodological innovation, a theological system. As H. P. Owen, a former colleague at King’s, noted, he produced no *summa*, no single book that encapsulated his whole work.¹⁸ As Brian Horne suggested, it is perhaps his philosophical work which has greatest claim to be read still.¹⁹ But, in theology at least, the verdict of Brian Hebblethwaite - in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* - that Mascall’s work was ‘hardly original’ is largely a fair one. One doubts, however, that Mascall would have been exercised by such an assessment, once describing his project as one of ‘*haute vulgarisation*’: an attempt to restate the core of classic Christian doctrine as it met with contemporary ideas in a manner that could be grasped by the whole body of Christians.²⁰

Mascall’s work was also that of a critic, refiner, and clarifier, which influences an academic discipline in ways that are less clearly visible to the historian. His work had always tended to proceed by means of extended critique and elaboration of the work

15 *Saraband*, 138.

16 The Oratory of the Good Shepherd: The Seven Notes, <https://www.ogs.net/notes/>, retrieved 2 September 2021.

17 Mascall, *Theology and the Gospel of Christ. An essay in reorientation*, back cover.

18 H. P. Owen, ‘Eric Lionel Mascall’, 410.

19 Brian Horne, ‘The paradisaical dance: Eric Mascall among the theologians’, 413.

20 Mascall, *Saraband*, 269.

of others.²¹ From the early 1960s onwards his attention shifted from large constructive works to shorter, more polemical books aimed at a wider readership. Between 1963 and 1977 he published a sequence of three books, each of them forensic examinations of trends in contemporary theology which Mascall saw as highly dangerous. *Up and Down in Adria* (1963) was a response to *Soundings: essays concerning Christian understanding*, published the previous year.²² *The Secularisation of Christianity* (1965) was a response to both *Honest to God* and *The Secular Meaning of the Gospel* by Paul van Buren.²³ *Theology and the Gospel of Christ* (1977) was a more general critique, but contained a lengthy dissection of *The remaking of Christian doctrine* by Maurice Wiles, as well as an appendix, added almost as the manuscript went to press, dealing with *The Myth of God Incarnate*, which had just been published.²⁴

A full exposition of the metaphysical basis of Mascall's ecclesiology of knowledge is beyond the scope of this article, but some reference to it is necessary. Mascall's whole theological and philosophical scheme was the product of his rejection, in the early 1940s, both of liberalism as he understood it, and of continental Protestantism as exemplified by Karl Barth, and the embrace instead of Thomas Aquinas as offering a metaphysic that could support the whole sphere of theological enquiry.²⁵ For Aquinas, the human being was dependent on the continual action of God for his or her existence; God had not withdrawn from creation and left an autonomous being to its own devices.²⁶ All finite beings (in Mascall's words) 'exist simply and entirely

21 See, for example, Mascall's engagement with F.R. Tennant in *He Who Is*, and with Bernard Lonergan in *Nature and supernature*, 9-28.

22 Mascall, *Up and down in Adria. Some considerations of the volume entitled Soundings*; Vidler (ed.), *Soundings. Essays concerning Christian understanding*.

23 Mascall, *The secularisation of Christianity. An analysis and a critique*; Robinson, *Honest to God*.

24 Wiles, *The remaking of Christian doctrine*; John Hick (ed.), *The myth of God incarnate*. These three books by Mascall were supplemented in 1980 by *Whatever happened to the human mind?*

25 See 'Eric Mascall and the making of an Anglican Thomist, 1937-46', in preparation.

26 For an exposition of this, see Mascall, *Existence and Analogy. A sequel to 'He Who Is'*, ch.6, 'God and the creature', which was later elaborated in *The importance of being human*.

because they are being incessantly created, conserved and energised by God, because they are radically and totally dependent upon the creative activity of Being who is entirely perfect and self-existent.’ And this relationship entailed a ‘fundamental openness of man’s being to God’s activity’.²⁷ Contrary to Barth in particular, the effects of the Fall, he argued, had not erected an insuperable barrier between Creator and created; grace was not merely something that had to be imputed to man by God because in his fallen nature he was incapable of actually receiving it; nature was not closed off in its ruined state. Grace perfects nature, rather than destroying it, and as such the degree of human apprehension of the truth was a function of the action of grace. The supernaturalisation that grace brought about was a process of ‘expansion, development, perfection, the realisation of hitherto unsuspected potentialities, a new infusion of the creative activity of God’.²⁸ It could continue indefinitely, at God’s initiative, the rational mind not leading but cooperating, in a gradual ascent towards the beatific vision of God. And it was only, or at least supremely, within the Church, the Body of Christ, that this process could take place.

Mascall gave two expositions of the relationship between the theologian and the Church; one in 1946, in *Christ, the Christian and the Church*, and the second thirty years later in *Theology and the Gospel of Christ*. In essence, the two are the same.²⁹ Mascall held natural theology to be autonomous of revelation and susceptible to unaided human reason, at least in principle, if not quite in practice.³⁰ Not so with theology proper - the study of the Trinity, Christology, salvation, the nature of the Church – which was fundamentally an activity enabled and given meaning by the Church. The instrument that the theologian used was not his rational faculty alone. Rather, he was to use ‘his whole self in its sacramental union with Christ in his Mystical Body; in this, his rational powers, strengthened and illuminated by grace, will, of course, play an organic and prominent part.’ He was to be ‘used by the divine

²⁷ *The importance of being human*, 56, 61.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p.62.

²⁹ See also the first chapter of his intervening study *Theology and the Future* (1968) which anticipates some of the themes in *Theology and the Gospel of Christ*.

³⁰ ‘Eric Mascall and the making of an Anglican Thomist, 1937-46’, in preparation.

Head of the Mystical Body as an organ through which ... some tiny fraction of the truth which is in Christ may be expressed more clearly.’³¹

It is likely that nearly all Christian theologians of Mascall’s time would have assented to some version of this in general. However, his detailed exposition of this doctrine of the theologian raised it to a rather more exacting standard. For Mascall, it followed that as the theologian had ‘to express not just his own thoughts but those that the divine Head is thinking in his Mystical Body, of which the theologian is a member, the primary need of the theologian is that he should be living *in the Revelation itself*; that is to say, that he should be living *in Christ*’. And Mascall’s understanding of the Church, worked out in the same book, *Christ, the Christian and the Church*, was as ‘Christ’s Body, the organism in which Christ, who is himself the Revelation, is manifested now upon earth’.³² The theologian was supremely *homo liturgicus* and *homo Eucharisticus*; outside of the Church he or she could hardly function. They were to be ‘under not only an academic but also a spiritual ascesis, as indeed all the Church’s greatest theologians have been.’³³ And there was too a relationship with those theologians of the past, deeper than the reading of books: ‘through his membership of the Body [the theologian] is in living communion with them.’³⁴

Mascall went further still in connecting the health of a theologian’s work with their personal worshipping life. It was not simply the case that a part of the Church might suffer collectively in its theology if its sacramental life was lacking to some degree; the issue could be much more directly personalised. The adequacy of a theologian’s work would ‘depend intimately upon the maintenance and nourishment of his sacramental and moral union with Christ.’ It was not even enough simply to maintain a conscientious participation in the sacraments. Certain positive characteristics of intention were required, specifically ‘humility, faith and adherence to Christ’. And there was also danger, not simply of inadequacy but of actual harm. The theologian’s

31 Mascall, *Christ, the Christian and the Church. A study of the Incarnation and its consequences*, 238-9.

32 Ibid., 239.

33 *Theology and the Gospel of Christ*, 60.

34 *Theology and the Future*, 19.

work was bound to ‘suffer disastrously if he falls into mortal sin, and even venial sins will impair it. The really great theologian must be a saint as well’. The consequences were dire for the theologian who had fallen from grace and humility, since in doing so he would inevitably cause others to stumble. As Mascall put it, in the far from comfortable words of Christ in Matthew 18, ‘it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.’³⁵

Mascall stressed that his concern was not to assess the intention of individual scholars: ‘it would be improper for me to do so: a man may err and be in good faith.’³⁶ But though no names are named, there is nonetheless a sense inherent in Mascall’s polemic that those who arrived at the kinds of conclusions he deplored could never have done so had their own personal relation with the Church and thus with Christ been in the correct alignment. However, those theologians he criticised could hardly have recognised any such culpability. Alec Vidler, for instance, the midwife (to use his own term) of both *Soundings* and the similarly controversial *Objections to Christian Belief* (1963), asserted, in a 1946 essay, that the ‘Christian intellectual’, in whichever field, should be rooted in private prayer and the worshipping life of the local church.³⁷ Those that felt the sharp edge of Mascall’s pen would perhaps have replied that their local worshipping life was good enough. The kind of theology that Mascall rejected hardly lacked earnestness, even if (for some critics) earnestness was all that it had retained.³⁸ Such scholars would perhaps have maintained that they simply followed where God, operating on their intellect, by grace, had guided them. If the result seemed to step outside what the tradition could encompass, it was due to Mascall’s incomplete understanding of that tradition, rather than moral failure in those he was reading.

35 *Christ, the Christian and the Church*, 239-40.

36 *Theology and the Gospel of Christ*, 2.

37 Vidler, ‘The obedience of a Christian intellectual’, in his *Essays on Liberty*, 177-86. It was first published in *The Christian News-letter*, 30 October 1946. Vidler’s account of *Soundings* and *Objections* is in his *Scenes from a Clerical Life*, 176-83.

38 On the attractiveness of the self-image of seriousness, depth, even heroism, that *Honest to God* seemed to offer, see Williams, ‘*Honest to God* and the 1960s’, *passim*.

It is in light of this vivid sense of danger in Mascall that we must read his polemics of the 1960s and 1970s. Although a gentle and irenic character in person, Mascall was combative in print, and some of his targets must have felt wounded by Mascall's slashing pen. Vidler, a fellow member of the Oratory of the Good Shepherd, seemed unperturbed, writing to thank Mascall for *Up and Down in Adria*, which he thought 'a model of how theological discussions should be conducted'.³⁹ Robinson, however, regretted that Mascall, instead of demolishing *Honest to God* in public and at great length, had not made contact in order to discuss the book in private.⁴⁰ We should take the directness, even brutality, of Mascall's writing as an indication of the cosmic seriousness with which he took his vocation as a theologian. Yet he was conscious of the impression that this might give, recalling in his memoir some discomfort in the mid-Sixties of appearing to be wholly negative, 'merely a demolition-agent'.⁴¹ (Mascall's papers contain dozens of reviews of these books, from some of which that discomfort was perhaps derived.⁴²) Works of the same period such as *The Christian Universe* (1966) and *Theology and the Future* (1968) were intended as an exercise in construction. But his professed intention was always constructive even in the more combative works. It was necessary 'reculer pour mieux sauter', or (to use another of Mascall's metaphors) to clear the ground in order to build better.⁴³ Even in the case of *Honest to God*, the subject of a torrent of comment in the months after its publication, it was still clear to Mascall that Robinson 'was saying something which, if it was true, was very important, and that therefore it was very important to find out what he was saying and whether it was true or not.'⁴⁴

Even if Mascall was prepared to look for what positive insight might be recovered from Robinson's obscurity, his disposition was not positive towards the movement with which he associated the enterprise. Robinson and van Buren were only the most

39 Vidler to Mascall, 18 May 1963, at Pusey House Library, Mascall Papers, Box 8, 'Up and Down in Adria' file.

40 Mascall to Robinson, 7 May 1965, at LPL MS 4729, f.92.

41 *Saraband*, 295.

42 See, for instance, the unsigned review of *The Secularisation of Christianity* in the *Times Literary Supplement*, 15 July 1965, p.600.

43 Mascall, *The recovery of unity. A theological approach*, chs. 3 and 4; *Secularisation of Christianity*, xiii.

44 *The secularisation of Christianity*, viii. Mascall reviewed the book a week after its publication: the review was reprinted in Edwards (ed), *The Honest to God debate*, 92-5.

well-known expressions of a ‘radical and destructive attitude to traditional Christianity’ in academic circles. These revolutionaries had a ‘psychological advantage’, able to point to the Inquisition and Galileo or Wilberforce and Huxley ‘to show without further argument that the radicals are always clear-headed and right and the conservatives always stupid and wrong’.⁴⁵ By the late 1970s Mascall had connected this attitude within the academy with a more general polarisation of language: a forcing of all voices in the churches into opposing camps of ‘left-wing, courageous, liberal, radical, progressive, and democratic’ ranged against the ‘right-wing, cautious, conservative, traditional, reactionary and authoritarian’. For Mascall, this was to import categories from the post-Vatican II Roman church into an Anglican situation which did not justify it. It was also the language of secular politics, which flattened out the particularity of individual positions, and tended ‘to encourage conflict and bitterness where there should be dialogue and sympathy’.⁴⁶

The problem went deeper than the mode in which Mascall’s young radicals expressed themselves. As his inaugural lecture of 1962 as Professor of Historical Theology at King’s College showed, Mascall was well aware that, even if the deposit of the faith did not change in its fundamentals, there was always a task of restating it in terms that contemporary minds could grasp; those restatements would always be partial, fallible, subject to revision.⁴⁷ However, the *Soundings* group had, he thought, lost confidence in the tradition which they had inherited as members of the Church, and had reckoned the secular world’s understanding of reality as a better foundation on which to rebuild from scratch. That tradition ‘may at the present time have largely lost touch with the world that surrounds it, or, perhaps we might prefer to say, the world has largely lost touch with it.’ But that tradition, Mascall was convinced, ‘holds all the resources that we need for this as for any other age’. The task of the theologian was not ‘beginning all over again’ - the title of the essay by Howard Root - but ‘to live within [the tradition]’, to play his part in ‘developing its latent

⁴⁵ *Secularisation of Christianity*, viii, ix.

⁴⁶ *Theology and the Gospel of Christ*, 25-26.

⁴⁷ The lecture was published as *Theology and History*: see 18. It was delivered in October 1962, at which time Mascall was already aware of *Soundings: Saraband*, 294.

possibilities' and as evangelist and apologist to 'do all that he can to integrate the life and thought of the contemporary world into it.'⁴⁸

Particular imperatives applied to theology written for and marketed directly to a general readership, such as *Honest to God*, published as a paperback priced at only five shillings, and selling hundreds of thousands of copies in the first year alone.⁴⁹ It would not do to claim, as some of Robinson's defenders had, that 'because the deep mysteries of religion are, of their very nature, profound and obscure, we may legitimately indulge in obscurity in our discussion of them.' The utmost care and precision in expression was vital in popular writing 'since the readers, being less skilled in the subject, are less able to correct for themselves any mistakes into which the writer may have fallen.' Such writing was 'one of the most difficult of all forms of communication', but at the same time 'of all subjects, theology is that in which it is most important not to be slipshod.'⁵⁰ By the time of *Theology and the Gospel of Christ*, Mascall thought he saw great damage being done not only by occasional carelessness, but by a general loss of a sense of responsibility among theologians to their non-specialist readers; the freedom of the intellect could not be unconstrained, but in a Christian context carried with it certain duties.⁵¹

It was also the case, in Mascall's view, that the institutional church seemed either to be unaware of the problem, or (worse) to be actively colluding with it. The case of John Robinson, not only priest but bishop, was particularly alarming, although Mascall did not make the point about Robinson in particular. The unique shock of *Honest to God* was as much at who had written it as at what the book contained.⁵² While the theologian had a task of translation of the substance of revelation into contemporary forms of knowing, the bishop was tasked 'to ensure that new formulations do not distort the primordial deliverances of the gospel and the essential

48 *Up and Down in Adria*, 12; Howard E. Root, 'Beginning all over again', in Vidler (ed.), *Soundings*, 3-19.

49 James, *A life of Bishop John A.T. Robinson*, 125.

50 *Secularisation of Christianity*, 106-7.

51 *Theology and the Gospel of Christ*, 44-5.

52 On Michael Ramsey's handling of the situation, see Webster, *Archbishop Ramsey. The shape of the Church*, 108-12

content of the tradition.’⁵³ Mascall’s understanding of ecclesiology gave the worldwide episcopate the highest possible significance.⁵⁴ That Robinson, no less a part of the universal apostolate than saints Augustine or Athanasius, could produce such a book must have seemed a fundamental contradiction of his office. The problem could be institutional as well as individual. In 1976 Mascall wrote to Donald Coggan, by then archbishop of Canterbury, concerning Maurice Wiles’ book *The remaking of Christian doctrine*. Wiles’ position, a form of deism, might have been refuted in the normal academic way, Mascall thought, but for his position as chairman of the Church of England’s Doctrine Commission, which was due to produce the report *Christian Believing* later that year.⁵⁵ This, Mascall was hearing from his contacts, was causing concern in ecumenical circles, as it was being taken as an indication of the Church’s official position, or at least of its inclination; Mascall thought that the Church was ‘gravely compromised’ thereby.⁵⁶

It was natural for those who felt a vocation to theological work to gravitate to the universities. It was there where others could be found with whom to work; the basic necessity of a well-stocked library was, with few exceptions, to be found only in a university context. As well as being chair of the Doctrine Commission, Maurice Wiles occupied one of the most prestigious chairs in the profession, in the University of Oxford; his fellow contributors to *The Myth of God Incarnate* were all staff of the universities, save for Leslie Houlden, principal of Ripon College, Cuddesdon; most of the contributors to *Soundings* were connected with the University of Cambridge. A report presented to the Church of England in 1968 noted a draining of the most able scholars away from the theological colleges to meet increasing demand for staff in university departments as they expanded.⁵⁷ It was, however, not inevitable that lecture

53 *Theology and the Gospel of Christ*, 36.

54 *The recovery of unity*, 214-19.

55 *Christian believing. The nature of the Christian faith and its expression in Holy Scripture in Holy Scripture and Creeds*, ix.

56 Mascall to Donald Coggan, 21 January 1976, at Lambeth Palace Library, Coggan Papers vol. 46, ff.324-5; see also Coggan’s reply at f.327.

57 *Theological colleges for tomorrow*, 38

hall and pulpit should become disconnected under such circumstances, but for Mascall the disconnection had in fact become ‘notorious, if not indeed scandalous’.⁵⁸ Mascall was not alone in believing so; in 1973, Charles Smyth, church historian and former canon of Westminster, referred to a common perception of ‘a sheltered academic *coterie* or debating society’, preoccupied with matters far from the mind of the embattled parish priest.⁵⁹ Mascall saw in this withdrawal a particular problem for the theologian who was also ordained. Readers of *Soundings* would, he thought, ‘feel shocked and scandalized when they see how little guidance a group of avowed Christians, all but one of whom are Anglican priests who either have or have recently had pastoral responsibilities, have to offer to their contemporaries in the doctrinal and moral chaos of the present day.’⁶⁰ By 1977 this observation had solidified into a sense that at least some scholar-priests had lost sight of the correct shape of their vocation. At ordination, these men had been charged to give themselves ‘wholly unto this office’ and to ‘draw all [their] cares and studies this way’. Too many ordained theologians had lost sight of the connection between their studies and the pastoral life of the Church: a loss of the right ‘proportion, direction and emphasis’.⁶¹

For Mascall, there were institutional factors in play that were both cause and consequence of the kind of disintegration that he thought he saw happening. A number of important shifts in the position of theology in the universities were already evident in the 1940s. There had been good reasons for the older universities, no longer committed to one denomination since the abolition of religious tests for admission, to avoid addressing the intrinsic correctness of particular doctrines of the Eucharist or the Church.⁶² These had been issues over which people had persecuted each other in the past; to treat the Bible solely as an historical text minimised the risk

58 *Theology and the Gospel of Christ*, 16.

59 As quoted at *ibid*, 16.

60 *Up and down in Adria*, 11.

61 *Theology and the Gospel of Christ*, 24.

62 On the transformation of Oxford theology between the world wars from an institution under Anglican control into an ‘ecumenical faculty of the humanities’, see Inman, *Making of Modern English theology*, 223-279.

of ‘theological embarrassments’.⁶³ Already in 1933, according to the Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity at Oxford, N. P. Williams, much of university theology was ‘not so much the “science of God” as the “science of men’s thoughts about God.”’ The study of the books of the Bible as texts; the history of dogma, liturgy and the institutional workings of the church; the study of subjective religious experience: though all of these were highly important, they were not, for Mascall, ‘in the strict sense theology, but rather sciences bearing upon it.’⁶⁴

All this Mascall was not alone in noticing in the 1940s; by 1977, the situation had grown desperate.⁶⁵ The balance between theology proper and its ancillaries had worsened, as he saw reflected in the syllabus of the University of London, from which Mascall had retired in 1973. The profile of research theses being undertaken seemed to be similarly lopsided. Outside the older universities, the faculties that did exist, and the new ones that had appeared such as at Lancaster and Sussex, had become more likely to be places in which theology had to share its space with ‘religious studies’.⁶⁶ Though Mascall did not mention it, he most likely noticed the stir when the first chair of religious studies at Lancaster had been made available to candidates ‘of any faith or none’.⁶⁷ Why had theologians acquiesced in all this? Some, it seemed to Mascall, had seen it as a necessary response to economic pressures and the changing attitude of the state. If it had been inevitable, others had hoped it might have the side-effect of strengthening theology’s claim to neutrality and thus intellectual respectability; it had for long been an aim of liberal theology that it be regarded as a human science, solely dependent on reason as were the other disciplines. Most corrosive, as Mascall saw it, was the enthusiasm with which others welcomed the change. John Hick, professor of theology at Birmingham and editor of *The Myth of God Incarnate*, had looked forward to a future in which the current

63 *Theology and the Gospel of Christ*, 22.

64 *Christ, the Christian and the Church*, 229, citing N. P. Williams, ‘The theology of the Catholic revival’ in Williams and Charles Harris (eds), *Northern Catholicism*, 131.

65 *The crisis in the university* (London : SCM Press, 1949), a summation by Sir Walter Moberly of work done by writers in association with the Christian Frontier Council, noted the same bifurcation within the discipline, and asserted a similar primacy of theology as Mascall would have defined it (see 281-3.)

66 *Theology and the Gospel of Christ*, 19-21.

67 David Bebbington, ‘The secularization of British universities since the mid-nineteenth century’, 269.

differences between faiths would seem like nothing but variations in emphasis within a 'single world religion'. Given all this, the absorption of theology into religious studies was, for Mascall, no answer at all: 'salvation will not be achieved by suicide.'⁶⁸ It was not simply that the balance between theology and its ancillaries was uneven: the former was now 'in imminent danger of becoming virtually extinct.'⁶⁹

It was these institutional pressures, then, that in Mascall's view had led to a systemic crisis in the relationship between the Church and theology as it was practiced in the universities. Mascall was far from alone in noting the issue. David Jenkins, later bishop of Durham but writing in 1964 while fellow and chaplain of Queen's College Oxford, thought that the practice of the theology faculty was 'not constructive enough for believers and not open and relevant enough for unbelievers'.⁷⁰ But where Jenkins saw potential for growth in the chilly openness of the universities, Mascall drew the opposite conclusion. Mascall certainly believed that theology was key to understanding all other knowledge. But the task in hand was not to reverse the tide of secularisation in the universities and reinstall the discipline as the queen of sciences, or even to propose (as some did) that universities ought to retain a generally Christian ethos.⁷¹ That flood was now too high to be resisted. Rather, it was for the sake of those left in the ark of the Church that theology should return to its main task, and it seemed clear that such a recovery would not occur within the universities. The study that clergy in training underwent in the universities, far from equipping them, tended to 'paralyse their prayer and deviscerate their preaching'.⁷² And when those clergy reached their parishes, they could expect little in the way of help from the professional theologian in dealing with the issues they faced. When confronted with books such as *Honest to God*, and the questioning it provoked, the response from at least some in the parishes was one of helplessness. One parish priest wrote to thank Mascall for *The secularisation of Christianity*, a great source of help after Robinson

68 *Theology and the Gospel of Christ*, 19, 21.

69 *Ibid.*, 16.

70 David Jenkins, 'Oxford – the Anglican tradition' in John Coulson (ed.), *Theology and the university*, 159.

71 On this, see the contrast between D. L. Munby's 1963 book *The idea of a secular society*, 84-5, and T.S. Eliot's *The idea of a Christian society*, 37.

72 *Theology and the Gospel of Christ*, 18.

had ‘made the task of the parish priest ten times harder than it was before – and that was bad enough.’⁷³ Fundamentally the Church in its pastoral ministry was concerned with precisely the central questions of theology, properly understood. Once academic theology had decided to confine itself to the question of ‘why men thought as they did about God [rather than] whether what they thought about him is true or false’, it ceased to be of any use.⁷⁴

Mascall was in this, as in almost all his writing, careful to qualify his critique, and it is not my concern here to assess whether it was justified, a task that would require a much longer article. But his sense of crisis was acute, and it was not confined to the universities. In 1933 N.P. Williams had held out the hope that, even if the queen of sciences was dethroned in the universities, she might yet find a home in ‘seminaries and other specifically ecclesiastical institutions’.⁷⁵ Mascall’s time at Lincoln Theological College might have been a source of optimism in this regard. His colleagues had included the Biblical scholar C.F. Evans and the moral theologian Bryan Bentley, and his predecessor as sub-warden had been Michael Ramsey.⁷⁶ However, the scholarly strength of the colleges’ staff varied widely, as did their specific relationships with the universities. That relationship came under specific examination in two reports. The first, in 1944, was produced by a commission under the then bishop of Durham, A. T. P. Williams; the ‘de Bunsen report’ appeared in 1968 at a time of rapidly falling numbers of ordinands and thus costly excess capacity in the colleges. The later report, while noting the shifting nature of theology in the universities, nonetheless concluded (as did the earlier report) that at least some of the colleges that survived any reorganisation would need to forge closer relationships with the universities.⁷⁷ A 1964 symposium with the title ‘Theology and the university’, under Roman Catholic patronage but including Anglican voices, similarly

73 Kenneth Lee (vicar of Horsforth near Leeds) to Mascall, 28 May 1965, at Mascall Papers, Box 11, *The Secularisation of Christianity* file.

74 *Theology and the Gospel of Christ*, 23-4.

75 As quoted at *Theology and the Gospel of Christ*, 18.

76 *Saraband*, 123, 126. Brian Horne thought the Lincoln staff at the time an ‘illustrious company’: Horne, ‘Paradise dance’, 43.

77 *Theological colleges for tomorrow*, 35-40. On the partial implementation of the recommendations, see Welsby, *A history of the Church of England 1945-1980*, 143-46.

concluded that if theology was to ‘take the pressure of the times and live’, it required a university setting.⁷⁸ In this Mascall saw no solution to the problem. Far from thriving in such a situation, he doubted whether the colleges ‘will continue to exist at all, unless our ecclesiastical leaders and the Church as a whole become more conscious than they appear to be at present of the inadequacy of academic theology as now understood to produce either a properly equipped pastoral clergy or a theologically educated body of Christian lay intellectuals’.⁷⁹ Although Mascall did not develop the thought, the need was for the colleges to become less, rather than more, dependent on universities, and for the ecclesial activity of theology to find its base within an ecclesiastical institution.

By the late 1970s, then, Eric Mascall was convinced that theology then being produced in England was misdirected in terms of its subject matter, inattentive to the tradition on which it should have been based, and irresponsible in its expression. Was the crisis as existential as Mascall suggested? One sympathetic reviewer of *Theology and the Gospel of Christ* thought some of the language ‘over-dramatic’, even if the case was perhaps sound.⁸⁰ To gauge the state of the discipline as a whole is beyond the scope of an article of this length. In any case, much fundamental research on the institutional history of universities and colleges, and on the reception of theology by its readers – a precondition to any answer to the question - remains to be done. But the *perception* of crisis is sometimes significant in its own right, and can have its own agency.⁸¹ It was not only Mascall, or Anglo-Catholics, who were disturbed. Mascall saw the 1976 report of the Doctrine Commission as evidence of profound disorientation among the most senior academic theologians, and his opinion was shared by the conservative evangelical members of the Commission, Michael

78 John Coulson, ‘Introduction’, in Coulson (ed.), *Theology and the university*, 1.

79 *Theology and the Gospel of Christ*, 19.

80 Raymond Moloney in *Studies. An Irish quarterly review*, 67(267), 257-60.

81 On this see, for instance, Sam Brewitt-Taylor, ‘The Invention of a “Secular Society”’, *passim*.

Green and James Packer.⁸² Green later edited a collection of essays designed to rebut *The Myth of God Incarnate*, seeing it, as Mascall did, as the culmination of a long process of dismantling the whole body of Christian belief, such that nothing of it remained.⁸³ But even Howard Root – one of the *Soundings* authors that Mascall had taken to task, and no conservative – had by the time of his Bampton Lectures in 1972 become concerned by ‘a number of theologians who covet both the word theologian and the adjective Christian, but who have gone freelance in terms of tradition [and] method’. But ‘theology ... is not a purely individualistic, personal affair... It has always (or nearly always) arisen from ... the work and life of the whole Christian community.’⁸⁴

It may be, however, that Mascall was in fact writing at the high-water mark of the liberalism he deplored, at least within the Church of England; such was the view of such contrasting scholars as the Roman Catholic Adrian Hastings, and James Packer’s biographer, Alister McGrath, both of them participant-observers at the time and historians since.⁸⁵ A university scene in the 1970s that produced both Rowan Williams and N. T. Wright could not have been quite so hostile to the tradition as it might have seemed.⁸⁶ A figure such as Don Cupitt, who seemed to be in the vanguard in the early 1980s in retrospect appears a rather isolated figure, who reached the furthest edge of possible Christian reflection, from which most others drew back.⁸⁷

We ought, then, to read the note of gloom in Mascall’s polemic as that of an elderly man who had seen much of what he had hoped for as a young man drift out of reach.

82 The commission had been chaired by Maurice Wiles, and included among its members both G.W.H. Lampe and Dennis Nineham, one of Wiles’ fellow contributors to *The Myth of God Incarnate*. On the evangelical reaction to *Christian Believing*, see McGrath, *To know and serve God. A biography of James I. Packer*, 212-13.

83 See Green’s preface to Green (ed.), *The truth of God incarnate*, 9-16. Mascall and Green had written together some years before, in a volume edited by Mascall and Packer: ‘Eucharistic sacrifice: some interim agreement’ in Buchanan, Mascall, Packer and Leonard, *Growing into union: proposals for forming a united Church in England*, 186-92.

84 Howard E. Root (ed. Brewer), *Theological radicalism and tradition*, 84.

85 Hastings, *A history of English Christianity 1920-1990*, 651-3; McGrath, *To know and serve God*, 212-13. See also Williams, ‘*Honest to God*’, p.114-5.

86 Chapman, ‘Evolution of Anglican theology’, p.47.

87 See Cupitt’s book adaptation of his BBC television series, *The sea of faith. Christianity in change*.

The confident Anglo-Catholic theology of the 1940s of which Mascall was part, along with figures such as Michael Ramsey, Austin Farrer and Gregory Dix, had not succeeded in capturing the commanding heights of the discipline as it had seemed that it might.⁸⁸ The ecumenical movement seemed to him to have been affected by the same disregard for theological rigour as the universities, and unwarranted willingness to compromise with the Protestant churches had made the real prize - ecumenical advance with Rome - seem far away.⁸⁹ In 1985 Mascall tried and failed to find a publisher for another book, the title of which was *The overarching question: divine revelation or human invention?*⁹⁰ Certainly the kind of theology that he valued, although far from extinct in the years since 1980, has not recovered its role of framing and orientating the studies that Mascall regarded as ancillary. The transition of theological faculties into those of theology and religion is largely complete.⁹¹ The history of the theological colleges has continued to be one of shrinkage and amalgamation, not least in the case of Mascall's own college at Lincoln, closed in 1995.

Be that as it may, Mascall's response to the theology of the Sixties merits our attention still. There was no shortage of other critics of the particular works that Mascall tried to assess, and the enduring theological worth or otherwise of *Soundings* or *Honest to God* is now perhaps moot. But what emerges from Mascall's several writings is an unusually detailed and coherent exposition of a catholic understanding of the relationship of the Body of Christ and the theologian, built in logical stages from a developed theological anthropology, the relationship with which was rarely so clearly expressed. Though historians have tended to attend to the self-styled radical voices of the period more closely than to those of their conservative opponents, in Mascall's work one can see a radically conservative conception of the purpose of

88 Williams, 'Honest to God', p.110.

89 On Mascall's opposition to Anglican-Methodist reunion, see Webster, 'Theology, providence and Anglican-Methodist reunion: the case of Michael Ramsey and E.L. Mascall', *passim*.

90 The complete manuscript, and correspondence with a prospective publisher, is at Mascall Papers, Box 4B.

91 Inman, *Making of modern English theology*, 282-4.

theology, and the conditions it required to flourish, which was forced into the open by particular circumstances.

Acknowledgements

My thanks are due to attentive audiences at Pusey House in Oxford in 2017 and at the 2020 Liddon Lecture, to whom versions of this article have been read, for their stimulating questioning, and to the Society of the Faith for the invitation to deliver the Liddon Lecture. I also acknowledge the assistance of the editors and peer reviewers, and also of Andrew Chandler and Matthew Grimley, who read a draft.

Bibliography

Manuscripts

London, Lambeth Palace Library: Additional Manuscripts

London, Lambeth Palace Library: Coggan Papers

Oxford, Pusey House: Eric Mascall Papers

Published works

Atherstone, Andrew, and John Maiden, eds. *Evangelicalism and the Church of England in the Twentieth Century*. Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2014.

Bebbington, David 'The secularization of British universities since the mid-nineteenth century' in *The secularization of the academy*, ed. George M. Marsden and Bradley J. Longfield, 259-77. New York: OUP, 1992.

Brewitt-Taylor, Sam. 'The Invention of a "Secular Society"? Christianity and the Sudden Appearance of Secularization Discourses in the British National Media, 1961-4'. *Twentieth Century British History* 24 (2013): 327-350

Buchanan, C., E.L. Mascall, J.I. Packer, Graham Leonard, *Growing into union: proposals for forming a united Church in England*. London : SPCK, 1970.

Chandler, Andrew *Anglicanism, Methodism and Ecumenism: A history of the Queen's and Handsworth Colleges*. London: Bloomsbury, 2020.

Chapman, Mark D. 'Theology in the public arena: the case of "South Bank religion"', in *Redefining Christian Britain*, ed. Jane Garnett et al, 92-105. London: SCM, 2007.

Chapman, Mark D. 'The evolution of Anglican theology, 1910-2000' in *The Oxford history of Anglicanism: volume IV: Global Western Anglicanism, c.1910-present*, ed. Jeremy Morris, 25-49. Oxford: OUP, 2017.

Church of England, Doctrine Commission, *Christian believing. The nature of the Christian faith and its expression in Holy Scripture in Holy Scripture and Creeds* (London; SPCK, 1976)

[Church of England] *Theological colleges for tomorrow* (London, Church Information Office, 1968)

Clements, Keith W. *Lovers of discord: twentieth century theological controversies in England* (London, SPCK, 1988)

Coulson, John, ed., *Theology and the university. An ecumenical investigation* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1964)

Cupitt, Don. *The sea of faith: Christianity in change* (London, BBC, 1984)

Edwards, David L., ed., *The Honest to God Debate*. London: SCM,1963.

Eliot, T.S. *The idea of a Christian society*. London: Faber and Faber, 1939.

Garnett, Jane, Matthew Grimley, Alana Harris, William Whyte, Sarah Williams, eds. *Redefining Christian Britain: Post-1945 perspectives* London: SCM Press, 2007.

Green, Michael, ed., *The truth of God incarnate*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1977.

Hastings, Adrian. *A history of English Christianity 1920-1990*. London : SCM, 1991.

Hick, John, ed. *The myth of God incarnate*. London: SCM, 1977.

Horne, Brian. 'The paradisaal dance: Eric Mascall among the theologians'. *The Tufton Review*. 1 (1997): 39-58

Inman, Daniel. *The making of modern English theology. God and the academy at Oxford, 1833-1945*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2014.

James, Eric. *A life of Bishop John A.T. Robinson: scholar, pastor, prophet*. London: Collins, 1987.

Jenkins, David 'Oxford – the Anglican tradition' in *Theology and the university. An ecumenical investigation*, ed. John Coulson, 146-62. London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1964.

Marsden, George M., and Bradley J. Longfield, eds. *The secularization of the academy*. New York: OUP, 1992.

Mascall, E.L. *Christ, the Christian and the Church: A study of the Incarnation and its consequences*. London: Longmans, Green, 1946.

Mascall, E.L. *Existence and Analogy. A sequel to 'He Who Is'* . London: Longmans, Green, 1949.

Mascall, E.L., *He Who Is. A study in traditional theism*. London : Longmans, Green, 1943.

Mascall, E.L. *The importance of being human*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1958.

Mascall, E.L. *Nature and supernature*. London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1976.

Mascall, E.L. *Saraband. The memoirs of E.L. Mascall*. Leominster: Gracewing, 1992.

Mascall, E.L. *The recovery of unity: A theological approach*. London: Longmans, Green, 1958.

Mascall, E.L. *The secularisation of Christianity: An analysis and a critique*. London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1965.

Mascall, E.L. *Theology and History*. London: Faith Press, 1962.

Mascall, E.L. *Theology and the Future*. London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1968.

Mascall, E.L. *Theology and the Gospel of Christ: An essay in reorientation*. London: SPCK 1977.

Mascall, E.L. *Up and down in Adria: Some considerations of the volume entitled Soundings*. London: Faith Press, 1963.

Mascall, E.L. *Whatever happened to the human mind?* London: SPCK, 1980

Mascall, E.L. and Michael Green, 'Eucharistic sacrifice : some interim agreement' in *Growing into union : proposals for forming a united Church in England*, eds. C. Buchanan, E.L. Mascall, J.I. Packer, Graham Leonard, 186-92. London: SPCK, 1970.

McGrath, Alister. *To know and serve God. A biography of James I. Packer*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1997.

Moberly, Walter, *The crisis in the university*. London : SCM Press, 1949.

Moloney, Raymond. [review of *Theology and the Gospel of Christ*]. *Studies. An Irish quarterly review*. 67 (1978): 257-60.

Morris, Jeremy, ed. *The Oxford history of Anglicanism: volume IV: Global Western Anglicanism, c.1910-present*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.

Munby, D.L. *The idea of a secular society*. London: Oxford University Press, 1963.

Nichols, Aidan. *Alban and Sergius: The story of a journal*. Leominster: Gracewing, 2018.

Nicholson, Ernest, ed. *A century of theological and religious studies in Britain*. Oxford: Oxford University Press for the British Academy, 2003.

Oratory of the Good Shepherd. *The Seven Notes*, <https://www.ogs.net/notes/>, (accessed September 2, 2021)

Owen, H. P. 'Eric Lionel Mascall, 1905-1993'. *Proceedings of the British Academy* 84 (1994): 409-18

Peart-Binns, John S. *Graham Leonard. Bishop of London*. London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1988.

Robinson, John A.T. *Honest to God*. London: SCM, 1963.

Root, Howard E., *Theological radicalism and tradition: 'The Limits of Radicalism' with appendices*. Ed. Christopher R. Brewer. Abingdon: Routledge, 2018.

Stephenson, Alan M. G. *The rise and decline of English modernism*. London: SPCK, 1984.

Vidler, Alec. *Essays on Liberality*. London: SCM, 1957.

Vidler, Alec. *Scenes from a Clerical Life: An autobiography*. London: Collins, 1977.

Vidler, Alec, ed. *Soundings: Essays concerning Christian understanding*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962.

Vidler, Alec. 'The obedience of a Christian intellectual', in *Essays on Liberality*, ed. Alec Vidler, 177-86. London: SCM, 1957.

Webster, Peter. *Archbishop Ramsey: The shape of the Church*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2015.

Webster, Peter. *The edited collection: Pasts, present and futures* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020)

Webster, Peter. 'Theology, providence and Anglican-Methodist reunion: the case of Michael Ramsey and E.L. Mascall' in *Anglican-Methodist Ecumenism: The Search for Church Unity, 1920-2020*, eds. Martin Wellings and Jane Platt, 101-17. Abingdon: Routledge, 2021.

Wellings, Martin, and Jane Platt, eds. *Anglican-Methodist Ecumenism: The Search for Church Unity, 1920-2020*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2021.

Welsby, Paul A. *A history of the Church of England 1945-1980*. Oxford: OUP, 1984.

Wiles, Maurice. *The remaking of Christian doctrine* (London: SCM, 1974)

Williams, N. P. and Charles Harris, eds. *Northern Catholicism: centenary studies in the Oxford and parallel movements*. London : SPCK, 1933.

N. P. Williams, 'The theology of the Catholic revival', in *Northern Catholicism: centenary studies in the Oxford and parallel movements*, eds. N. P. Williams and Charles Harris, 130-234. London : SPCK, 1933.

Williams, Rowan. *Anglican identities*. London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2004.

Williams, Rowan. 'Honest to God and the 1960s' in *Anglican identities*, ed. Rowan Williams, 103-20. London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2004.

Williams, Rowan. 'Theology in the twentieth century' in *A century of theological and religious studies in Britain*, ed. Ernest Nicholson, 237-52. Oxford: OUP for the British Academy, 2003.