

Beyond Imagination: “Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence in the Body of Christ” (1963) and the Reinvention of Canadian Anglicanism

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This essay explores “Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence in the Body of Christ” (MRI), an influential document issued in 1963 at the close of the Anglican Congress in Toronto. A foundational statement on mission and communion, MRI inspired both the structures and ethos of contemporary Anglicanism. However, the production of this imagined global community unwittingly contributed to the decline of Anglicanism in Canada. Drawing from Charles Taylor and Benedict Anderson, this essay will trace the reinvention of Anglicanism in Canada from the religious wing of the British Empire to a modern vision of a worldwide communion that nonetheless depended on the very structures and power relations it sought to replace. As such, the decline of Anglicanism in Canada was not the product of outside forces like secularism as much as the result of a theology that failed to engage the issues facing everyday Canadians.

Introduction: MRI and the 1963 Anglican Congress

Issued at the 1963 Anglican Congress, a gathering of over sixteen thousand Anglicans from seventeen churches worldwide held in Toronto from August 13 to 23, “Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence in the Body of Christ” (MRI) articulated a vision for the Anglican Communion that explored three statements: (1) The church’s mission is a “response to the living God who in his love creates, reveals, judges, redeems, fulfills”; (2) the “unity in Christ expressed in our full communion is the most profound bond among us, in all our

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political and racial and cultural diversity"; and (3) this "unity and interdependence must find a completely new level of expression and corporate obedience."¹ To understand the implications of these statements signaled nothing short of the "rebirth of the Anglican Communion" and the inauguration of "entirely new relationships" as well as the "death of many old things."²

Specifically, MRI called for increased financial support for mission, the establishment of diocesan networks that empowered local leadership, the development of resources for recruitment and training of lay and clergy leaders, the construction of churches in "new areas of Christian responsibility," and the creation of structures for regular "inter-Anglican" consultation. Underlying these programmatic initiatives was the commitment on the part of "each church" to "study the form of its own obedience to mission and the needs it has to share in the single life and witness of our church everywhere."

The commitments MRI made rested on moral authority alone. The Primate of Canada, Archbishop Howard Clark, wrote in his foreword to the proceedings that the Congress provided a forum for "prophecy," "wisdom," "insight," and "concern" rather than a platform for statements about "doctrines," organization, or polity.³ Consequently, the purpose of MRI was to construct a new vision for Anglicans living and working together in the world. Earlier mission strategies had been focused on establishing self-sufficient national churches that followed the reach of the British Empire and were predicated on racial, ethnic, cultural, and economic hierarchies. In contrast, the mission strategy established by MRI pointed to more fundamental relations that might transcend these asymmetries.⁴

Since the Anglican Congress, MRI has been considered a pivotal document that established a new paradigm not only for mission, but for Anglicanism itself.⁵ In addition to generating significant financial

¹ Eugene R. Fairweather, ed., "Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence in the Body of Christ," *Anglican Congress 1963: Report of Proceedings* (Toronto: Anglican Book Centre, 1963), 118.

² Fairweather, "MRI," in *Anglican Congress 1963*, 122.

³ Howard Hewlett Clark, "Foreword," in *Anglican Congress 1963*, xiii.

⁴ Here I draw from Ian T. Douglas, "Anglicans Gathering for God's Mission: A Missiological Ecclesiology for the Anglican Communion," *Journal of Anglican Studies* 2, no. 2 (2004): 9–40, in particular 33–36.

⁵ See, for example, Alan J. Hayes, *Anglicans in Canada: Controversies and Identity in Historical Perspective* (Chicago, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 37–38; Ian T. Douglas, *Fling Out the Banner! The National Church Ideal and the Foreign*

support (\$15 million US), the collaborative spirit of MRI inspired the development of principles promoted by the Partners in Mission Program created in 1973.⁶ Even more significantly, MRI's vision was cited, discussed, and enhanced by subsequent meetings of the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC), which was founded in 1968 to carry on MRI's commitment to inter-Anglican structures for communication.⁷ More recently, MRI has been cited in three reports commissioned by either the ACC or the Archbishop of Canterbury on the structures and unity of the Anglican Communion: *The Virginia Report* issued in 1997, *The Windsor Report* issued in 2004, and the Anglican Covenant, which was commissioned in 2006 to develop a set of principles for "cooperation and interdependence" and is undergoing final revisions.⁸ That these reports take up the divisive issues of women's ordination, homosexuality, and authority is indicative of the continuing influence of MRI.

But there has been little reflection on MRI and the Anglican Congress from the perspective of the member churches in the Anglican Communion. Particularly for the Anglican Church of Canada, MRI helped generate a new "social imaginary" for the church as it tried to come to grips with an increasingly secular and pluralistic society. MRI seemed to follow the emerging logic of Canadian multiculturalism, and it was initially persuasive to many Canadian Anglicans because it offered them a vision of themselves that they

Mission of the Episcopal Church (New York: Church Hymnal Corporation, 1996), 247–257; William L. Sachs, *The Transformation of Anglicanism: From State Church to Global Communion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 334–336; R. David Cox, "A Vision to Fulfill: 'Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence' in the Anglican Communion" (S.T.M. Thesis, Yale Divinity School, 1987).

⁶ "Towards Dynamic Mission: Renewing the Church for Mission," Mission Issues and Strategy Advisory Group II, 1993, Anglican Consultative Council, <http://www.anglicancommunion.org/ministry/mission/resources/guidelines/partnership10.cfm>; accessed Oct. 12, 2009.

⁷ See the following resolutions of the Anglican Consultative Council: AAC-2 (Dublin, Ireland, 1973), ACC-4 (London, Ontario, Canada, 1979), ACC-5 (Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England, 1981), ACC-7 (Singapore, 1987), <http://www.anglicancommunion.org/communion/acc/about.cfm>; accessed Oct. 13, 2009.

⁸ See *The Virginia Report: The Report of the Inter-Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission*, 2.24, 6.23, Appendix II, <http://www.lambethconference.org/1998/documents/report-1.pdf>; *The Lambeth Commission on Communion: The Windsor Report 2004*, A.8, <http://www.anglicancommunion.org/windsor2004/downloads/windsor2004full.pdf>; *The Anglican Communion Covenant: The Third (Ridley Cambridge) Draft*, 3.2.2, http://www.anglicancommunion.org/commission/covenant/docs/ridley_cambridge_draft_090402.pdf. All accessed Oct. 13, 2009.

already implicitly believed. At the same time, this social imaginary created a church that would become increasingly irrelevant to the issues Canadians faced in the 1960s and beyond. To see how this is so, it will be necessary first to examine the process by which social imaginaries were constructed in Canadian Anglicanism and then to trace their contours at the Anglican Congress and in MRI.

Social Imaginaries

Following Charles Taylor, a “social imaginary” refers to “the ways people imagine their social existence, how they fit together with others, how things go on between them and their fellows, the expectations that are normally met, and the deeper normative notions and images that underlie these expectations.”⁹ Social imaginaries involve more than theories or background beliefs, and include the images, narratives, and practices that communities use to organize and render coherent their place in the world. Finally, social imaginaries evolve—new theories, norms, and practices emerge that shape the social imaginary itself, often in ways that move beyond what was originally understood or intended.¹⁰

Taylor identifies two types of social imaginaries: premodern and modern. Premodern social imaginaries have an “ontic” component: the moral order is maintained by a hierarchical conception of society that corresponds to a cosmic hierarchy, and human flourishing is determined by how closely social roles correspond to this larger chain of being. Modern social imaginaries, on the other hand, do not have a transcendent referent, and they operate with an instrumental view of social relations, an individualized view of human flourishing, a procedural rather than teleological view of ethics, and mutual benefit as the primary logic by which decisions regarding social structure are made. Finally, modern social imaginaries develop their own images of the world as it is mapped, counted, or preserved in museums.¹¹

Taylor draws from Benedict Anderson’s account of “imagined communities” to develop his account of social imaginaries, and there are three points in Anderson’s account of nationalism that are important to note for our purposes. The first is that nationalism evolved

⁹ Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2007), 171.

¹⁰ Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 172–176.

¹¹ Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 159–171, 207–211.

when premodern social imaginaries came into contact with other communities on a large scale through exploration and discovery. This contact, particularly in the form of the European exploration of the non-European world, not only widened the cultural and geographic horizon but also territorialized the boundaries of European kingdoms that had been primarily defined in terms that were centripetal rather than geographic. Further, this contact led to the construction of the “other,” that is, those who represented a race, culture, and set of values that differed from a given national identity. The second was the establishment of official languages, which developed in nationalist terms the languages-of-power possessed in large premodern entities like the Roman or Ottoman empires. The third is the sense of membership that allowed persons from different contexts to see themselves as related parts to a whole. In other words, to be a “Canadian” connotes common membership with millions of others whose “Canadian-ness,” as it were, is enacted in ways that are simultaneous and anonymous to a given bearer of this national identity.¹²

These three points are important to recognize because of the way Anderson sees the historical development of nationalism. Nationalism did not arise as the democratic assertion by the lower classes in Europe, but by “creole-states” in the colonized “new world.” As such, nationalism, in the first instance, is the result of the revolt by colonial bourgeoisie against the metropole that utilized the language of the Enlightenment to legitimize the assertion of a distinct national identity.¹³ However, shortly after creole nationalism there arose an “official nationalism,” by which metropolitans exerted control over colonials that accommodated these revolutionary forces to preserve existing dynastic empires. Particularly in the British Empire, the process of “Anglicization” involved the cultivation of an elite educated in England or through one of the ancillary curriculums developed for use in the colonies. This education not only privileged the English language, but it also instilled in students a sense of their identity as subjects of the monarch, which destabilized any emerging sense of national identity they might develop while also alienating them from their original culture and ethnicity.¹⁴

¹² Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, revised edition (New York: Verso, 2006), 9–36.

¹³ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 47–65.

¹⁴ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 83–111.

The Official Nationalism of Canadian Anglicanism

These formations of social imaginaries as premodern or modern, as colonial or imperial, as creole or official, and as monocultural or multicultural are important for appreciating the complexities of Canadian Anglicanism. In its historical development, Anglicanism in Canada was an outgrowth of the official nationalism of the British Empire, and Anglicans assumed responsibility for preserving this particular social imaginary even after British rule receded. As Kevin Ward argues, following the Treaty of Paris (1763) and the War of Independence (1783), the Church of England was used as a “weapon” to strengthen ties between the colonies and the home country in an attempt to avoid the fate that had befallen the thirteen colonies to the south.¹⁵ Consequently, the church’s mandate was not to adapt to local circumstances, but to cultivate loyalty to Great Britain through promoting its distinctive vision, ethos, and practices. Although the civil powers of bishops were circumscribed, there was a “limited Anglican establishment” that provided for their selection by the Crown and support from the government.¹⁶ John Strachen, the first Bishop of Toronto, argued that the church was essential for developing a civilized country: “A Christian nation without a religious establishment is a contradiction.”¹⁷ This official nationalism was also evident among Mohawk loyalists, who settled in Brantford, Ontario, in the late eighteenth century. Bringing with them the silver Communion plate given to them from Queen Anne, they worshipped in an Anglican chapel built by the Crown as a symbol of the place of the Mohawk nation within a vast, benevolent empire.

With the disestablishment of state-supported clergy (1854) and the passing of the British North America Act (1867), the Anglican Church was reconstituted as an autonomous church within a secular state. However, the official name of the Anglican Church of Canada remained “The Church of England in the Dominion of Canada” until

¹⁵ Kevin Ward, *A History of Global Anglicanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 68.

¹⁶ For more on colonial Anglicanism in Canada, see M. E. Reisner, “Who Shall Go Over the Sea for Us?: First Anglican Ventures into Present-Day Canada (1578–1867)” and “According to the Measure of the Rule”: Laying the Foundations of the Church in Eastern Canada (1816–1867),” in *Seeds Scattered and Sown: Studies in the History of Canadian Anglicanism*, ed. N. Knowles (Toronto: Anglican Book Centre, 2008), 5–78.

¹⁷ Quoted in Ward, *A History of Global Anglicanism*, 70.

1955, the persistence of which is indicative of how this official nationalism transcended debates over churchmanship, polity, and the rivalry between missionary organizations operating in Canada in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.¹⁸ In 1912, Eda Green wrote the following in a book published by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG):

The Dominion is the brightest jewel in our Empire crown. Why has it been given to us? Not surely by blind chance, not merely as an outlet for our superfluous populations, not only as an investment to bring us wealth; but, like all God's gifts, as trust which lays on us a duty to give to the nation we are creating possession of the ideas on which our national life has been founded. . . . The national life of that new nation . . . is based on what we believe to have been the foundation of our greatness, and we must press in before the foundations are laid on shifting sand.¹⁹

Here, Green portrayed the cultural and religious values of the Anglican Church not only as the Christian ideal, but as essential to the development of a proper national identity. Further, Green's view of Canada is entirely from the perspective of the metropole. Green not only referred to Canada as the empire's "brightest jewel," but she began her book by imaginatively mapping Canada's territory against the measure of the British Empire's global reach: "Canada: equal in area to one-third of the British Empire; the largest united country in the British Empire; twice the size of India; greater in breadth than its distance from England; with a seacoast equaling half the earth's circumference; with an unequalled romance of history; with illimitable possibilities for the future."²⁰ Missing in this initial description of Canadian geography is any mention of its inhabitants, either in terms of immigrants or indigenous peoples. When these are mentioned in the second and third chapters of her book, the vocational imperative to claim this territory is already established.

Immigration, however, was not far from the minds of other Anglicans. The Superintendent of Chinese Missions in British Columbia

¹⁸ The official French name from 1977 until 1989 was "l'Église Episcopale du Canada." The current French name is "l'Église Anglicane du Canada."

¹⁹ Eda Green, *Our Opportunity in Canada* (Westminster, UK: Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, 1912), 114.

²⁰ Green, *Our Opportunity in Canada*, 9.

for the SPG, N. Lascelles Ward, wrote in 1925 that the immigration of thirty-eight thousand Chinese, twenty thousand Japanese, and two thousand “Hindus” presented an “oriental problem” for Canada. These new immigrants threatened to create a “new Eurasian people” through intermarriage, to push wages lower for working class whites, to erode the quality of primary education, to complicate international commerce, to monopolize agriculture, to destabilize the nation, to weaken the empire, to “lower the moral tone of the community,” and to extinguish Christianity as a world religion.²¹

That Ward saw non-European immigrants as “foreigners” while seeing immigrant Europeans as authentic Canadians says a great deal about how the Anglican Church constructed the “other” in a way that is consistent with official nationalism.²² As for indigenous peoples, after the War of 1812 they were “no longer essential to the realization of the goals that non-natives were pursuing in North America.”²³ Earlier missionary efforts were devoted to establishing local congregations and developing leadership in First Nations communities. However, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, church involvement increasingly took the form of government-funded education at residential schools. Residential schools like the Mohawk Institute (1834–1970), visited by the Prince of Wales when he toured British North America in 1860, provided students with training as laborers and domestic servants. Religious instruction was conducted so as to displace the cultural and ethnic identity of the students—killing the “Indian” in order to save the “child.” In the twentieth century, missionary activity began to be redefined as no longer concerning First Nations peoples, but as travel to “exotic locations such as India, China, and Japan.”²⁴ This did not mean that First Nations Anglicans had equal standing, but that they now played a minor role in the story many Anglicans told. In a history published in 1963, Archbishop Philip Carrington of Quebec sporadically mentioned First Nations peoples while discussing the

²¹ N. Lascelles Ward, *Oriental Missions in British Columbia* (Westminster, UK: Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, 1925), 1–18.

²² It also overlooks the fact that the largest total number of immigrants to Canada remains those from the United Kingdom, and that there were specific laws in place limiting and discouraging immigration from Asia through the *Chinese Immigration Act* (1885).

²³ J. R. Miller, *Shingwauk’s Vision: A History of Native Residential Schools* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 62.

²⁴ Miller, *Shingwauk’s Vision*, 137.

formation and expansion of the Anglican Church of Canada. “A whole chapter might be written on our Indian and Eskimo work,” he allowed in his conclusion, the culmination of which would be the collaborative work done with “extraordinary vigor and ability” by “the Department of Indian Affairs” and “the Diocesan Bishops” regarding the residential school system.²⁵

Finally, the Anglican Church of Canada privileged English as the language-of-power. Particularly in a bilingual state, the Anglican Church’s use of English ensured that the language of the empire would continue to have a religious community committed to its transmission. Even as Anglicans developed a more catholic social imaginary in the second half of the twentieth century, this emphasis on English came to be seen as characteristic of Anglicanism itself. In “Anglicanism: Retrospect and Prospect,” a series of lectures delivered in 1957, Carrington wrote that “the Anglican Church does promote and discuss the Catholic tradition in an English-speaking form. That may be our contribution to Canadian church life under the providence of God.”²⁶

Imagining the Anglican Mosaic

It has become customary to draw a bright line between the official nationalism supported by the Anglican Church prior to 1963 and the social vision developed afterwards with the help of the Anglican Congress and MRI.²⁷ One reason for this sharp demarcation is that this was how Anglicans described this transition at the time. Right before the 1963 Congress, the Director of the Church Missionary Society, Canon Max Warren, addressed a special convocation of Huron College, during which honorary degrees were conferred on the primates and those serving on the Consultative Body of the Lambeth Conference. Warren explored the theme of the upcoming Anglican Congress: “The Church’s Mission to the World.” He maintained that the “Gospel abides unchanged” and that the “mission of the church”

²⁵ Philip Carrington, *The Anglican Church in Canada: A History* (Toronto: Collins, 1963), 292–293.

²⁶ Philip Carrington, *Anglicanism: Retrospect and Prospect* (London, Ontario: Church House, 1957), 14.

²⁷ See, for example, Ward, *A History of Global Anglicanism*, 80, and Alan L. Hayes, *Anglicans in Canada: Controversies and Identity in Historical Perspective* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 37–39.

continued to be to “disciple the nations.” But the shape of this discipleship must change. Previous generations could afford to look at Africa, South Asia, and Southeast Asia through Western eyes. Now “our Christian task is the much more difficult one of seeking the grace of imagination to see through their eyes,” and “the Christian task of our Asian and African brothers is, no less, to try to imagine what the world looks like to North Americans and Europeans.” This new empathic vision was essential, for “in that mutuality of understanding lies the only sure prospect of world peace,” and in a “comparable mutuality lies the secret of Christian partnership” and mission.²⁸

The reason for this shift, Warren explained, was the “ending of European domination,” and the beginning of a new era in which Asians and Africans were claiming their right to think and act for themselves. Warren described a meeting of community decision-makers in central Tanganyika in 1949, in which he was surprised to discover that he was one of only two Europeans at a meeting of sixty “politically-conscious men” about race-relations in South Africa. The topic of the meeting, and its setting in a community center rather than a university, persuaded him in retrospect that he was “discovering” at that moment the expression of a new “self-hood on the part of the Africans.”²⁹

Operative in Warren’s remarks are the values of mutuality and interdependence that would be discussed in the upcoming Congress. However, far from breaking with the past, Warren’s new vision of mission operated with the same presuppositions behind official nationalism: the territorialization of the world, the “discovery” and construction of the “other,” the assumption of Western privilege, and confidence in an enlarged Western perspective. Warren proposed an inversion of the normative gaze that had characterized prior relations between Europeans and indigenous peoples, but the assumptions that legitimized this gaze in the first place remained intact.³⁰

What *was* new in this emergent social imaginary was that it assumed contested social space. The old social imaginary of empire had premodern characteristics, in particular its “ontic” claim that peace was achieved when social structures corresponded to a larger cosmic hierarchy. However, as the result of decolonization, the emergent

²⁸ M. A. C. Warren, “The Special Year Convocation Address at Huron College, London, Ontario on Wednesday, August 7th, 1963,” Huron University Archives, 2.

²⁹ Warren, “Convocation Address at Huron College,” 3.

³⁰ Warren, “Convocation Address at Huron College,” 6.

social imaginary Warren articulated was now predicated on contestation, on what he described as “irreconcilable” conflicts between “philosophies of religion,” between rival views of the relation of the “state to religion,” and between diverse accounts of “what constitutes the good life.” The “significant sequel to the end of imperialism,” Warren argued, “is *not* the achievement of independence *but* the general increase of insecurity.”³¹ Warren’s emphasis on “mutuality” as the way to bridge these divisions and achieve “peace” suggests that mutual benefit would begin to characterize this new social imaginary. As a result, although couched in theological language that emphasized mutual encounter, solidarity, responsibility, and interdependence, Warren’s new vision for mission framed the social problems that the church faced in such a way that the emergent social imaginary he constructed would display characteristics associated with modern social imaginaries.

Another development in Warren’s emergent social imaginary was that social relations would no longer be enforced by political or military power. This did not mean that control was no longer exercised, but that it would now take the form of processes that, in the course of recognizing ethnic and cultural differences, limited the reach of these newly liberated people. This governance is largely implicit, but it surfaced when Warren assessed the relative political, economic, and emotional maturity of Africans, as evidenced in the “dramatic” performance of political identity by African delegates to the “Assembly of the United Nations.”³² These performances on an international stage demonstrated for him the need to educate Africans and other former colonials civically so that they could function adequately on their own behalf, and it was the church’s responsibility, empowered by its own empathic listening, to aid this formation process.

Canadians listening to Warren’s address would have resonated with the new direction he articulated. In that same year, Lester B. Pearson established the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, which led to an expanded policy of multiculturalism under Pierre Elliott Trudeau.³³ However, the roots of Canadian

³¹ Warren, “Convocation Address at Huron College,” 3.

³² Indeed, there may have been a connection between Warren’s “discovery” of African consciousness in 1949 and the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948).

³³ The Commission’s final report was issued in separate volumes from 1967–1970, <http://epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/100/200/301/pco-bcp/commissions-ef/dunton1967-1970-ef/dunton1967-70-eng.htm>; accessed Oct. 27, 2009.

multiculturalism lay in an alternative vision for developing social cohesion that would sustain the strength and unity of the nation: the construction of the “mosaic” metaphor was an alternative to the American “melting-pot,” as well as to the “flood” metaphor (evident in Ward’s remarks noted above), which described immigration into Canada as a sudden influx of otherness that would wipe out the cultural dams built by earlier European settlers.

In 1922, Victoria Hayward remarked in a travelogue entitled *Romantic Canada* how the diverse religious architecture she encountered on the Canadian prairies composed a “mosaic of vast dimensions,” which ensured that “unique and beautiful racial traditions . . . survived in Canada and flourished” through “wise tolerance and appreciative catholicity.”³⁴ In 1926, the YWCA published a book by Kate Foster entitled *Our Canadian Mosaic* that translated the mosaic metaphor into a statistically-based answer to this infusion of otherness. Foster advised that immigration be limited, but also that a deliberate policy of nation-building be pursued that would accommodate those already in Canada through carefully dispersed ethnic enclaves: placing the variation of ethnicities “side by side is an extremely good way for members of our Canadian household to range ourselves.” Rather than pressing for “assimilation,” which would involve “the fusion of races” and confusion of cultures, the mosaic would ensure that diverse immigrant communities would work “side by side for the common advancement, each race contributing something of value and so slowly evolving a new people enriched by the diversity of its origin.” Of paramount importance was the “cement” holding the tiles together, which would be the assurance of mutual benefit but also the “good will and friendliness born of natural respect and confidence between all people within our borders.”³⁵

As Richard Day notes, Foster’s acknowledgment that immigration could be managed through a “technology of governance” that harmonized differences established an ambiguous legacy of “official multiculturalism” that created a problem of diversity to be solved by increasingly bureaucratic solutions.³⁶ Later reports privileged the

³⁴ Quoted in Richard Day, “Constructing the Official Canadian: A Genealogy of the Mosaic Metaphor in State Policy Discourse,” *Topia: Canadian Journal of Cultural Studies* 2 (1998): 42–66, 49–51. It may be noted in passing that Hayward was American.

³⁵ Quoted in Day, “Constructing the Official Canadian,” 53–54.

³⁶ Day, “Constructing the Official Canadian,” 55–61.

mosaic metaphor and followed Foster in categorizing these immigrant communities by nationality, rate of immigration, historical places of settlement, cultural traditions and dress, and contributions to Canadian life. The cement holding the tiles together expanded to include schools, municipal organizations, and voluntary associations organized according to ethnicity but designed to further the “Canadianization of the newcomers.”³⁷ Finally, aside from imprecise contrasts between integration versus assimilation, Canadian multicultural policy followed Foster in remaining vague about what “Canadianization” entailed.³⁸

Viewed within this context, Warren’s new vision would not have struck Canadians as a startling turn into realms unknown, but a shift in strategy. Rather than viewing the emerging social imaginary as the inversion of what came before it, their understanding of the “Canadian mosaic” promised a way to recognize difference without giving up control. This connection between the upcoming Anglican Congress and the developing vision of a Canadian multicultural mosaic became explicit with the pre-Congress publication in 1962 of a book entitled *Anglican Mosaic*, which not only borrowed the mosaic metaphor but followed publications on Canadian multiculturalism in offering a historical, ethnic, and statistical breakdown of the different churches in the Anglican Communion.

The “Rebirth” of the Imperium Christi

In his introduction to an edition of “Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence in the Body of Christ,” Bishop Stephen Bayne, Executive Officer of the Anglican Communion, recalled that MRI initially caused “confusion” when it was presented on the fifth day of the Congress. According to Bayne, the participants expected “an appeal for funds.” Instead, they heard a “manifesto, a summons, a challenge, a proposal” inviting them “to be born again,” which was “a far less negotiable proposition.”³⁹

³⁷ John Murray Gibbon, *Canadian Mosaic: The Making of a Northern Nation* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1938), 419. In his conclusion, entitled “Cement for the Canadian Mosaic,” he included immigrant fraternities and associations, churches, civic groups and service clubs like the Rotary, municipal associations like the YWCA, sports teams, festivals, and other voluntary associations like the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides (pp. 413–425).

³⁸ Day, “Constructing the Official Canadian,” 63–64.

³⁹ Stephen F. Bayne, Jr., “Introduction,” *Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence in the Body of Christ*, ed. S. Bayne (London: SPCK, 1963), x, xiii–xiv.

If the delegates found MRI surprising it was not because the tone of the Congress had stayed away from discussing deep change. Many delegates advocated for better theological education, more lay involvement, improved planning, and coordinated action. Nor was MRI surprising because it took on controversial issues. Participants debated the church's mission in a pluralistic and secular world. Max Warren spoke of the "self-revealing activity of God" in the social criticism of Karl Marx, the psychological theories of Sigmund Freud, and the revisionist theology of Bishop John Robinson.⁴⁰ Edward Crowther, a delegate from South Africa, confronted "some bishops and clergy" in the southern United States for not taking a more active role in "the civil rights struggle."⁴¹ And after the presentation of MRI, Bishop Richard Roseveare of Ghana spoke of MRI as a repudiation of "neocolonialism" and "imperialism" in favor of a new proclamation of the "*Imperium Christi*."⁴²

Given this posture of openness, what was the source of the "confusion" Bayne reported? Ultimately, MRI was confusing because it implied that if the Anglican Communion was to survive, the member churches had to form a new collective identity. Bayne began developing the structural implications of this emerging identity at the Congress three days after MRI was introduced.

Bayne noted that the Anglican Communion had traditionally been defined as an "association" of "eighteen autocephalous regional and national churches in communion with the See of Canterbury and with one another." But he argued that it was necessary to develop a sense of "communion" that could maintain unity amidst growing diversity. Defining this unity was challenging, and he proceeded by way of negation: clearly, the Anglican Communion was not a "unitary world denomination" with a "central executive and administrative structure," which would make the task of organization "relatively simple." Further, the essential nature of Anglicanism was "national and regional, not denominational," or "supranational," which meant it would be unwise to define a "confessional standard" as a "basis for unity." Finally, even the "historic episcopate" was an institution that permitted many interpretations, none of which was definitive. What

⁴⁰ M. A. C. Warren, "The Church's Mission to the World," in *Anglican Congress 1963*, 19–29.

⁴¹ C. E. Crowther, "What Was Said Later," in *Anglican Congress 1963*, 81.

⁴² Richard R. Roseveare, "Commentary," in *Anglican Congress 1963*, 126–127.

defined the Anglican Communion, for Bayne, was “mutual loyalty to one another and the Gospel.”⁴³

This meant that organizational structures needed to follow certain “principles” or conditions of autonomy, unity, ecumenism, and discipleship. These, Bayne argued, were directly connected to the values of mutuality and interdependence articulated in MRI, and together they provided new ways for the church to see itself working in the world that pointed beyond Anglicanism itself. The Anglican Communion did not refer to “an association of like-minded people” or a “denominational power structure” but a “brotherhood of the Bread and Body.”⁴⁴

Like Warren’s convocation address, Bayne argued that “immense forces of cultural confessionalism, of national and racial prestige, have played their part in the development of our Communion,” and he viewed the organizational structure he proposed as the photo negative of what came before it. In effect, he suggested arranging the different tiles of the mosaic of Anglicanism in such a way that no one church occupied the center. Coordinating this pattern would be Bayne himself as Executive Officer and “Regional Officers” who would emphasize this new “decentralization and the strengthening of regional and local responsibility” for the member churches. Said Bayne, “We are not interested in branch offices around the world,” but “a household within which many churches, representing many cultures and peoples, can take their self-reliant and buoyant place in full brotherhood, each giving and teaching, each receiving and learning.”⁴⁵ This vision was not unique to MRI or Bayne. Similar visions of the universal church developed during the ecumenical movement in the first half of the twentieth century.⁴⁶ Indeed, Bayne’s signal theological innovation was to use concepts that had been previously deployed in the ecumenical movement to describe the structure of a particular communion of churches.

As with Warren’s address, much of the Anglican Congress operated from a position of privilege legitimized by the old social

⁴³ Stephen F. Bayne, “The Challenge of the Frontiers: Organizing for Action,” in *Anglican Congress 1963*, 183–185.

⁴⁴ Bayne, “Organizing for Action,” 184.

⁴⁵ Bayne, “Organizing for Action,” 186.

⁴⁶ For more on the ecumenical movement in the twentieth century, see *A History of the Ecumenical Movement 1517–1968*, fourth edition, ed. R. Rouse and S. C. Neill (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1993).

imaginary. Although the Congress organizers took up the issues of pluralism and secularism, these were mediated primarily by white clergy who occupied the higher orders in the church and who served as religious and cultural interpreters in a way that limited authentic displays of difference. As a result, those who had the most immediate experience of the issues the church faced were not given much space to speak. Canon Kenneth Craig, for example, led the discussion of Islam, in which he described the construction of a mosque in Bethlehem across from the Church of the Nativity.⁴⁷ In response, the Anglican Bishop in Iran, Hassan Barnaba Dehqani-Tafti, spoke about the difficulty of sharing one's faith in the Muslim world: the "message of Christ could only be brought to Muslims by missionaries who were courageous enough to live among them" and "ready to show Christian love and understanding." Bishop Dehqani-Tafti's response was noted in the minutes, but his rebuttal of Craig's territorialization of the engagement between Christianity and Islam went unacknowledged.⁴⁸

At another point the Congress encountered an unassimilated display of difference concerning sexuality, which arose shortly after the presentation of MRI. Bishop S. O. Odutola of the Diocese of Ibadan in West Africa asked how he could explain to his people the difference between the "honest polygamy" traditionally practiced by Africans and the "progressive polygamy" practiced by the West through divorce. "European missionaries" had "insisted on a complete break with polygamy on the part of their African converts, even at the cost of disrupting families and breaking down complex patterns of culture." But now "the churches of Europe and America had failed to maintain the Christian principle of monogamy in their own countries."⁴⁹ Bishop's Odutola's comment was dismissed with "frivolity" before a white delegate from Africa, Archbishop L. J. Beecher, defended his remarks, after which an ad hoc panel mostly composed of Westerners was invited to make "off-the-cuff" contributions by the chair appointed for that day, the Bishop of London. That Bishop Odutola was not invited to participate on the panel, that the chair appointing this panel was bishop of the diocese that administered mission

⁴⁷ A. Kenneth Craig, "Islam," in *Anglican Congress 1963*, 30–32.

⁴⁸ Only a digest of Bishop Dehqani-Tafti's remarks were included in the report, although according to Bishop Luxton's personal notes from the Congress he spoke for a "significant amount of time." See Luxton Papers, Diocese of Huron Archives.

⁴⁹ *Anglican Congress 1963*, 252.

work during the colonial era, and that the panel's remarks were not meant to understand Bishop Odutola's perspective but to justify Western attitudes indicate the limits of MRI's reach and Bayne's rhetoric at the Anglican Congress itself.

These interruptions of difference did not long distract the delegates, who went on to conclude the Congress the next day at a service of worship in which Archbishop Joost de Blank of Cape Town offered a sermon on the four-square city described in Revelation:

The picture we are given is of that walled city lying foursquare—a perfect cube—and at the heart of the city of the Triune God, our Creator and Redeemer, to whom we bring all honor and glory. Four walls enclose the city, and in each of the four walls are three gates open to every point in the compass—an image which emphasizes our oneness in Christ, bishops, priests and laity together in an unbreakable unity of loyal devotion. . . . The picture is of course one of universality of the Church. This we knew already in theory, but many of us never experienced it so really until we came to Toronto and shared in it for ourselves. And now, with far more sincerity, we shall pray for “the whole state of Christ’s Church militant here in earth,” in every corner of the globe.⁵⁰

De Blank's vision of unity signaled the creation of an image of the world newly discovered, as it were, through MRI and the Anglican Congress. Like Bayne's new organizational plan for the Anglican Communion, de Blank's vision was an exercise in apophatic theology, the sharing of a vision of mystical unity that was defined in reference to what the Anglican Communion was not rather than to what it was.

As noted in Warren's address, the emergent social imaginary articulated by MRI and demonstrated at the Anglican Congress displayed elements associated with modern social imaginaries. Specifically, it assumed the prior existence of social contestation over what constituted the good life or individual flourishing that could not be resolved by referring to a higher, transcendent order. Consequently, MRI signaled not only the inversion of the normative gaze, but the development of appeals to mutual benefit that were conveyed in theological language concerning the importance of mutual responsibility and interdependence. With Bayne's expansion on the themes

⁵⁰ Joost de Blank, “Sermon at the Closing Service,” in *Anglican Congress 1963*, 267.

animating MRI, the transition to a modern social imaginary was nearly complete. Bayne developed an instrumental view of social relations that was consistent with such imaginaries, holding that the structures of the church would always be in service to the mission of the church. In the interest of respecting autonomy and cultural differences, his vision of Anglicanism developed an individualized view of human flourishing and an ethic centered on processes and procedures rather than guided by ends.

With these adjustments in place, Bayne therefore created a vision of the Anglican Communion that was a modern social imaginary clothed in a premodern theological rhetoric—an *Imperium Christi* in which the center of the church existed everywhere and, as a result, nowhere. Like the evolving Canadian policy of multiculturalism, the Anglican Communion would employ a technology of governance that both recognized ethnic, cultural, national, and regional differences and at the same time carefully contained them, thus preventing them from threatening the position of dominance still maintained by white, Western Anglicans. Like the process of “Canadianization,” which instilled in citizens a sense of membership in a country that became increasingly difficult to define over the course of the 1960s, MRI re-created the Anglican Communion into an equally elusive entity. The difficulty of defining the latter was in-built, so as to remain always slightly beyond the reach of any given manifestation. In the process, MRI transformed the Anglican Communion into a deliberately vague desire for unity amidst diversity that would never be satisfied but would be endlessly reproduced through organizational networks that tried to cultivate and protect relations of mutual responsibility and interdependence.

MRI and the “Unfinished Business” of Canadian Anglicanism

Delegates left the 1963 Anglican Congress with a sense of surprise and triumph. In the words of one American delegate, “I came to Toronto expecting to attend a great series of meetings: I am going away, rather to my surprise, burning with a sense of urgent mission.”⁵¹ Canadian Anglicans were rather pleased with this outcome. Eugene Fairweather, who edited the conference proceedings and was a

⁵¹ Robert Stopford, *None of Us Liveth to Himself* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1964), 9.

professor at Trinity College, Toronto, wrote that mention of the word “Toronto” will now “evoke memories of stirring challenges sounded and accepted, of new duties faced and acknowledged, of hard questions put and strange paths explored.”⁵²

Shortly after the Congress, significant publications were produced to generate a wider discussion of the new direction the Anglican Communion was moving, and, as noted in the introduction to this essay, MRI profoundly influenced the organization of the Anglican Communion in the 1960s. However, MRI was ultimately a failure. It failed not because its immediate proposals for funding went unheeded. In the closing days of the Congress, Canadian Anglicans launched a capital campaign that raised \$1 million for world mission by 1968. Nor did it fail because it did not help Anglicans in Canada develop a more lively sense of their place in the wider Anglican Communion. On the national level, Canadian Anglicans began to develop a social vision that resonated with the core values of mutual responsibility and interdependence: where they had previously understood themselves as conservators protecting the cultural transmission of traditional values, now the church’s mission was increasingly understood to be at the side of the marginalized and the dispossessed. On the international level, Archbishop Ted Scott’s leadership as Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada (1971–1986), his service as moderator of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches (1975–1983), and his work on the Commonwealth of Nations’ Eminent Persons Group that recommended sanctions against the apartheid government in South Africa represent high points for Canadian Anglican leadership worldwide in terms of the values promoted by MRI.⁵³

However, as an emerging social imaginary designed to displace the official nationalism which had come before it, MRI was a failure. The framers thought they could recreate the Anglican Communion anew through an act of imagination, and their success was remarkable as such attempts go. But they were unaware of the extent to which the new community they imagined depended on what the old social imaginary had afforded them. Leaders like Canon Warren and Bishop Bayne tried to speak to the possibilities that were emerging in the

⁵² Eugene R. Fairweather, “Call to Reformation,” in *Anglican Congress 1963*, 1.

⁵³ See Hugh McCullum, *Radical Compassion: The Life and Times of Archbishop Edward Scott, Tenth Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada (1971–1986)* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2004).

1960s. They imagined a church that would invert the normative gaze and structural relations that had characterized Anglicanism in the past. But they did not appreciate how limited their imaginations were and how reliant their church was on the power relations this older social imaginary maintained. As a result, the renewed Anglican Communion they imagined could never fully accommodate a truly disruptive expression of difference that would threaten to fracture the mosaic they were building.

In the short run, the limits were most keenly felt in the new mission initiatives MRI mandated. Because of the value of autonomy inherent in the concept of mutual responsibility, in Canada this meant that funding for new mission projects came by way of official channels, and these requests took the form of grant applications submitted on official forms. This gave the new relationships an arms-length feeling, as different dioceses pledged to cover portions of initiatives on an approved list provided by the General Synod office.⁵⁴ When the financial commitments taken on at the Anglican Congress were fulfilled in 1968, they were not renewed.⁵⁵

Ironically, in the same decade in which the Anglican Church's missional vision looked beyond Canadian borders with new interest and commitment, its own position within Canadian life and culture declined. Bishop George Luxton of Huron blamed "radical theology," which led to a deterioration in the confidence Anglicans placed in "the older faith and institutions," and the rise of an "affluent society" that had "little need for parish-hall life." He called for more evangelically grounded preaching of the essentials of the faith combined with sensible liturgical renewal that could "recover a large measure of the liturgical unity which has always been a strength of our Communion."⁵⁶

These responses were inadequate, however, because of the extent of the problem Canadian Anglicans were facing in the 1960s. The decade was a time not only of rising doubt and affluence, but of radical transformation and cultural acceleration that disrupted the "collective identity" Canadians had as a nation even while this identity was being formed. As Bryan Palmer notes, throughout the 1960s the

⁵⁴ These lists are available in the Anglican Congress files at the Huron University Archives.

⁵⁵ G. N. Luxton, *The Unfinished Agenda of Anglicanism* (London, Ontario: Church House, 1971), 12–13.

⁵⁶ Luxton, *Unfinished Agenda*, 15–16, 19–20.

“mythologies and symbolic representations of Canadian national identity” drawn from its imperial past consolidated, only to be destabilized by the discovery that Canadians were not living in the “peaceable kingdom” they thought they were.⁵⁷ Immigration, Quebecois nationalism, aboriginal activism, student agitation, women’s liberation, American imperialism, and the sexual revolution all weakened the cement of the Canadian mosaic, until all that was left was the hope that the tiles would hold together by force of habit alone. Consequently, Canadians live “in the infinitely creative and politically destabilizing wreckage of a period in Canada’s past that brought down with decisive finality what needed dismantling, but that could not, having accomplished this, build the kind of alternative that was required.”⁵⁸

As the fate of the collective identity of the nation went in the sixties, so did the emergent social imaginary of the Anglican Church of Canada. Attempts to promote a new vision of itself as part of a worldwide communion internally through liturgical innovation and more creative vehicles for Christian education reminded worshippers of a past they needed to move beyond instead of inspiring hope for a future they could embrace.

Further, Canadian Anglicans were beginning to realize that the old social imaginary that had guided them was not merely out of date, but had legitimated a gradual process of cultural genocide for First Nations people. In 1968, at the invitation of the Program Committee of the Anglican Church of Canada, Charles Hendry produced a report entitled *Beyond Traplines*. Hendry found that missionaries to “native peoples” played an ambiguous role in the process of colonization. On the one hand, they “have smashed native culture and social organization” through policies and programs of assimilation, which have created a legacy of social disease and generational trauma in indigenous communities. On the other, “they have picked up the pieces of an indigenous way of life which had been smashed by other Europeans—traders, soldiers, administrators—and have helped the people put the pieces together in a new shape.”⁵⁹ In order for Anglicans to ensure that they played a constructive role, they had to recognize the

⁵⁷ Bryan D. Palmer, *Canada’s 1960s: The Ironies of Identity in a Rebellious Era* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 420.

⁵⁸ Palmer, *Canada’s 1960s*, 429.

⁵⁹ Charles E. Hendry, *Beyond Traplines: Towards an Assessment of the Work of the Anglican Church of Canada with Canadian Native Peoples* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1969), 21.

ways in which even policies with the best of intentions had contributed to the destruction of indigenous cultures and agency. However, even though Hendry produced recommendations that were similar to the principles articulated in MRI, they went largely unheeded until Anglicans were forced to confront their role in the residential school system in the late 1990s.

That Canadian Anglicans did not see their own relations with First Nations peoples as a clear implication of MRI is indicative of how the latter contributed to the decline of Canadian Anglicanism in the 1960s. For in addition to being reliant on the privileged position of the past, the emergent social imaginary articulated in MRI allowed Anglicans to think of themselves as a predominantly white tile in a global Anglican mosaic composed of tiles of many colors. This interaction with ethnic and cultural difference on an international scale released the pressure to deal with difference on a local and regional scale in many dioceses. Many Canadian Anglicans have felt free to think of themselves as largely the “church of people from the British Isles,” as Kevin Ward puts it.⁶⁰

Finally, MRI failed in Canada because, in the end, the emergent social imaginary it articulated was a modern social imaginary, albeit one couched in the theological language of encounter and mission. Consequently, MRI was unable to create a social vision robust enough to deliver a distinctly Christian message in a rapidly secularizing culture. Canadian Anglicans were criticized in the 1960s for being out of touch with the wider culture and, in the words of Pierre Berton, failing to excite the “imaginings” or “consciences” of the people of that era.⁶¹ However, this failure of imagination was not due to cultural isolation but to cultural assimilation: having nothing particularly new or revolutionary to bring to the table, over the past four decades Canadian Anglicans have been cultural and religious followers rather than trendsetters.

Beyond Imagination: Remembering Canadian Anglicanism

That MRI failed as a change initiative should not reflect poorly on its framers or on Canadian Anglicanism. As a communication at a

⁶⁰ Ward, *A History of Global Anglicanism*, 77.

⁶¹ Pierre Berton, *The Comfortable Pew: A Critical Look at Christianity and the Religious Establishment in the New Age* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1965), 30.

Congress that had no binding authority, what is most remarkable is the significant impact it had. What the experience of MRI teaches, however, is that authentic and long-lasting change rarely takes place through statements issued from executives, no matter how powerful their offices, ideas, or mandates may be. More importantly, the experience of MRI also teaches the extent to which our imagining of new possibilities is inescapably shaped by what has come before it. The framers imagined a church that could transcend its past by developing a vision for the future in which the church that had long benefited from its close association with an empire would change into a truly global church that could generate a distinctive, and at the same time potentially universal, vision of Christian unity. In retrospect, the reality that MRI would fall short in achieving this transition was evident at the start, in the emergence of questions over pluralism and sexuality, the latter of which has increasingly vexed the Anglican Communion.

As Dietrich Bonhoeffer argued in *Life Together* (1939), respecting the dangers and limits of our imagination is an expression of piety, for it creates space for encountering difference that has a revelatory dimension. However, perhaps the best way forward for Canadian Anglicanism is not only to discipline our imaginations, but to develop better facility in remembering our own history redemptively and with a spirit of repentance. Given that our own story has been bound up with the story of Canada's founding, becoming a community of memory, repentance, and hope would contribute not only to our own healing, but to the healing of others as well.

