

**Zeitschrift:** Internationale kirchliche Zeitschrift : neue Folge der Revue internationale de théologie

**Band:** 97 (2007)

**Heft:** 1

**Artikel:** The Bonn Agreement and the catholicization of Anglicanism : Anglicans and Old Catholics in the Lang papers and the Douglas papers 1920-1939

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**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-405025>

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# The Bonn Agreement and the Catholicization of Anglicanism: Anglicans and Old Catholics in the Lang Papers and the Douglas Papers 1920–1939\*

Charlotte Methuen

## Introduction

In 2006, Anglicans and Old Catholics celebrated the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Bonn Agreement of 1931, which established communion between those two Churches. At first sight, it may seem a somewhat surprising fact that the one of the first formal relationships of communion entered into on the part of the Anglican Churches since the Reformation should be with the Old Catholic Churches of the Utrecht Union.<sup>1</sup> Drawing on the papers of Cosmo Gordon Lang, Archbishop of Canterbury from 1928 to 1942, and of John A. Douglas, a leading figure in Anglican-Orthodox and Anglican-Old Catholic dialogue, this article explores the motives which underlay Anglican interest in establishing relations with the Old Catholic Churches from the Anglican – and particularly the Anglo-Catholic – point of view, together with subsequent relations with and perceptions of the Old Catholic Churches.<sup>2</sup> It shows how relations with the Old Catholic Church were, at least for some in the Church of England, a means of supporting Anglican claims to be rooted in the Catholic tradition.

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\* This article is based on a paper given at the Anglican-Old Catholic Conference in Leeds in 2005 [for this see *Beiheft zu IKZ* 96 (2006)]. A much earlier version of that paper was given in Heidelberg in 2001 as part of a lecture series to mark the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Bonn Agreement.

<sup>1</sup> In 1920, the Lambeth Conference confirmed a relationship of mutual invitations to communion and mutual participation in episcopal consecrations with the Church of Sweden [Lambeth Conference 1920, Resolutions 24 and 25]. The Proceedings and Resolutions of successive Lambeth Conferences have been published, but the Resolutions can also be found at <http://www.lambethconference.org/resolutions/index.cfm> and it is this version that is quoted here.

<sup>2</sup> For evangelical Anglican attitudes towards the Old Catholics see in this issue, Andrew Atherstone, 'Anglican Evangelicals, Old Catholics and the Bonn Agreement,' pp. 23–47. Urs von Arx has examined the occasionally 'tri-partite' nature of the discussions between Anglicans, Old Catholics and the Orthodox since the 1870s; see the expansion of his paper 'The Historical Background to the Bonn Agreement,' presented at Leeds (forthcoming).

## The Anglican background

Initial discussions between Anglicans and Old Catholics took place alongside the process of defining relationships within the Anglican Communion. The first Lambeth Conference in 1867 was concerned primarily with establishing 'Union among the Churches of the Anglican Communion,' focusing on organisation, jurisdiction, mission, and permitted diversities of worship and doctrine.<sup>3</sup> This programme was developed at successive Lambeth Conferences: ecumenical relationships were considered in the context of a process of internal ecumenism which sought to establish the shape and structure of inter-Anglican relationships. 'Union Among the Churches of the Anglican Communion' – that is, the definition of *inter-Anglican* communion in terms of the mutual invitation to Eucharist then known as intercommunion – was an explicit theme of the Lambeth Conference of 1878 and formed the basis of the definition of the structures of Communion. When the 1888 Lambeth Conference passed the resolution which has come to be known as the Lambeth Quadrilateral, declared to be 'a basis by which approach may be by God's blessing made towards home reunion', it was as much a statement of Anglican self-understanding as a Church founded on the Old and New Testaments, the Nicene and Apostolic Creeds, the dominical sacraments, and the historic episcopate.<sup>4</sup> The resolutions of the early Lambeth Conferences show the Anglican Communion's endeavours to define its identity and its structures in ways that were often similar to the negotiations which led to the Union of Utrecht of 1889. A complication on the Anglican side was the increasing influence of Anglo-Catholicism within Anglicanism, with its concern that the Anglican Communion should be seen as a Catholic, rather than (or as well as) a Protestant, Church.<sup>5</sup> When in 1896 Pope Leo XIII issued the Bull *Apos-*

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<sup>3</sup> The 1867 Lambeth Conference resolved that Provinces must 'maintain without alteration the standards of faith and doctrine as now in use in the Church' and that 'no change or addition be made inconsistent with the spirit and principles of the Book of Common Prayer'. See the Resolutions of the Lambeth Conference 1867, especially 8 and 11. The 'Colenso affair' in South Africa was an important catalyst to these discussions; see Owen Chadwick, *The Victorian Church* (London: Black, 1996/1970), vol. 1, pp. 550–551; vol. 2, pp. 90–97.

<sup>4</sup> Lambeth Conference 1888, Resolution 11.

<sup>5</sup> On the Tractarian movement during the nineteenth century, see e.g. Chadwick, *The Victorian Church*, esp. vol. 1 ch. 4, and for the growing influence of Anglo-Catholicism during the twentieth century, see Adrian Hastings, *A History of English Christianity 1920–1985* (London: Collins, 1986), pp. 75–84, 195–201.

*tolicae Curae*, which declared that ‘ordinations carried out according to the Anglican rite have been, and are, absolutely null and utterly void,’<sup>6</sup> the concern to assert the validity of Anglican orders became urgent. It was to be a strong motive both for the process that led to the Bonn Agreement and in the reception of that Agreement.

### **The context of the Bonn Agreement**

The more specific context of the Bonn Agreement is the interwar period, for many Christians marked by the conviction that they must overcome their differences lest a further, still more catastrophic war should result. Under the leadership of Randall Davidson, Archbishop of Canterbury, and at the particular initiative of Cosmo Gordon Lang, then Archbishop of York, the 1920 Lambeth Conference issued an ‘Appeal to All Christian People’, which called ‘all the separated groups of Christians to agree in forgetting the things which are behind and reaching out towards the goal of a reunited Catholic Church.’<sup>7</sup> Founded doctrinally upon scripture and the creeds, administering the dominical sacraments, such a unified Church must possess ‘a ministry acknowledged by every part of the Church as possessing not only the inward call of the Spirit, but also the commission of Christ and the authority of the whole body.’ The Bishops urged that the historic episcopate was ‘the best instrument for maintaining the unity and continuity of the Church.’ A mutual agreement of two Churches to move together might mean that Anglicans might ‘accept a form of commission or recognition which would commend our ministry to their congregations’, whilst ministers of other churches could accept ‘a commission through episcopal ordination.’ ‘In so acting no one of us could possibly be taken to repudiate his past ministry. God forbid that any man should repudiate a past experience rich in spiritual blessings for himself and others.’ The aim of ‘Reunion’, as it was known, was also defined: ‘We do not ask that any one Communion should consent to be absorbed into another. We do ask

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<sup>6</sup> *Apostolicae Curae*, § 36 [<http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Leo13/113curae.htm>, last visited 24.01.07].

<sup>7</sup> Lambeth Conference 1920, Resolution 9. The Appeal originated in the Committee for Relations with the Non-Episcopal Churches, but became increasingly cautious about relationships with those Churches in successive redactions. See Charlotte Methuen, ‘Lambeth’s “Appeal to All Christian People” and its ecclesiological development,’ forthcoming.



that all should unite in a new and great endeavour to recover and to manifest to the world the unity of the Body of Christ for which he prayed.'

Initiatives in response to the Appeal were launched across the Anglican Communion.<sup>8</sup> In England the decade that followed saw a series of meetings between the Church of England and the English Free Churches, which recognised the Free Church ministries as 'real ministries of Christ's Word and Sacraments in the Universal Church', but which eventually foundered on the question of episcopal authorisation of those ministries.<sup>9</sup> The Malines Conversations with the French Roman Catholics began.<sup>10</sup> Anglican-Orthodox discussions resulted in the Declaration by the Patriarch of Constantinople in 1922 that Anglican ordinations 'possess the same validity as those of the Roman, Old Catholic and Armenian Churches possess.'<sup>11</sup> In 1925, the Dutch Old Catholic Church recognised Anglican Orders and the International Bishops' Conference followed suit.<sup>12</sup>

The desire for the formal recognition of Anglican orders reflected the conviction that Anglicanism's rightful place was alongside other historical Episcopal Churches. This perception was shared by Lang, who in 1928 had been translated from York to Canterbury. Despite his wide ecumenical interests – he had chaired the Committee which had drafted the Appeal – Lang's priorities for ecumenical relations were Catholic.<sup>13</sup> His comments to George Bell, Bishop of Chichester, regarding an invitation to the four-hundredth anniversary of the *Confessio Augustana* in 1930, were revealing:

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<sup>8</sup> For the reports of these conversations, see G.K.A. Bell, *Documents of Christian Unity: Second Series* (London: OUP, 1930), pp. 68–102.

<sup>9</sup> Bell, report to Lambeth Conference 1930, *Lambeth Conference 1930 Memoranda*, L.C. 1930, Agenda, III, 'Reunion. A Report on Replies to the Appeal to all Christian People, issued by the Lambeth Conference 1920,' pp. 4–6.

<sup>10</sup> The status of the Malines conversations was disputed, and the Pope eventually forbade them. See Hastings, *A History of English Christianity*, pp. 208–212.

<sup>11</sup> Bell, report to Lambeth Conference 1930, *Lambeth Conference 1930 Memoranda*, L.C. 1930, Agenda, III, 'Reunion. A Report on Replies to the Appeal to all Christian People, issued by the Lambeth Conference 1920', p. 2.

<sup>12</sup> See the letter from the Archbishop of Utrecht to the Archbishop of Canterbury, 2 June 1925, printed in IKZ 15 (1925), p. 65.

<sup>13</sup> Hastings notes that 'at York and again at Canterbury [Lang] was the first archbishop to wear a mitre since the Reformation' [Hastings, *A History of English Christianity*, p. 198]. The diary of Lang's chaplain, Alan Don, is very revealing of Lang's interest in Catholic liturgy. See, for instance, entries for 26 June and 5 July 1932: Diary May 1931 – December 1932, Lambeth Palace Library (hereafter LPL) MS 2861, fol. 158; 161.

‘I have come to the conclusion that I must be very careful. Evidently from the terms of the invitation the German Lutherans regard their Confession as having some wide importance outside their own Communion. They describe it as being ‘oecumenical’ and regard it as a rallying point for Evangelical Churches. This is giving it an importance which I cannot share and it would be unfortunate if just before the Lambeth Conference I were in any way to seem to identify the Church of England with Evangelical Churches at home or on the Continent.’<sup>14</sup>

Such ecumenical priorities manifested themselves also in the privileged place given to the Orthodox, and to some extent the Old Catholics, at the 1930 Lambeth Conference. Reflecting on the Conference, Arthur Cayley Headlam, the Bishop of Gloucester, commented:

‘I could not but think that it must have been a little galling to [the Free Church delegates] to see the Orthodox put in such a prominent place and not to have the same sort of treatment themselves. I should have done the same with everyone – the Old Catholics, the Scotch Presbyterians, the Moravians – and I should have invited the Lutheran Church. I am sure they would have responded eagerly, and we might have got a very considerable distance with them.’<sup>15</sup>

Headlam felt that ‘the delegation of the Free Church people was really a fiasco. The Bishops took the opportunity to make the most unfortunate speeches I have ever heard’,<sup>16</sup> whereas the Conference had fruitful discussions with both the Orthodox and the Old Catholic delegations, focusing in the latter case on the Declaration of Utrecht, and the recognition of Anglican orders and sacraments.<sup>17</sup> The Archbishop of Utrecht reported ‘that without going into details he could assure his hearers that in its negotiations at Lambeth his delegation had been able to take a tremendous step in the direction of Christian unity.’<sup>18</sup> The Conference affirmed ‘that there

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<sup>14</sup> Lang to Bell, 5.3.1930, Bell Papers, vol. 63, fol. 128.

<sup>15</sup> Headlam to Douglas, 9.9.1930, Douglas Papers, vol. 3, fol. 148–149.

<sup>16</sup> Headlam to Douglas, 9.9.1930, Douglas Papers, vol. 3, fol. 148–149.

<sup>17</sup> Douglas Papers, vol. 3, fol. 2229. The Orthodox also had an important meeting with the Committee, and a verbatim record of this meeting exists: LPL, Douglas Papers, vol. 3, fol. 150–216. Douglas had hoped to produce a more extensive memorandum of discussions with the Old Catholic delegation, but their early departure prevented him from doing so: cf. Douglas to Moss, 24.7.1930, LPL Douglas Papers, vol. 3, fol. 250.

<sup>18</sup> The Times, 18 July 1930, pasted into Douglas Papers, vol. 3, fol. 239; compare also report in The Church Times, 25 July 1930, pasted into Douglas Papers, vol. 3, fol. 251.

is nothing in the Declaration of Utrecht inconsistent with the teaching of the Church of England.’ It took steps as well towards ‘full intercommunion’ with the Orthodox,<sup>19</sup> as Douglas wrote enthusiastically to the Archbishop of Utrecht:

‘[The Orthodox] are very eager to establish full solidarity between the Old Catholics, Orthodox and Anglican Churches and hope that Orthodox and Anglican delegations will be invited by you to attend the Old Catholic Congress in Vienna next year to further that end. I am myself confident that if you invite them and us, we may see a new and successful Bonn Conference. The time is ripe and the ground is prepared in England.’<sup>20</sup>

Douglas’s confidence was somewhat disingenuous. ‘I am astounded at what we have accepted; I have no doubt there will be a good deal of controversy afterwards,’ commented Headlam.

‘I think that, if we could get into close union with the Orthodox, we and they together might adopt the policy with regard to non-Episcopal Churches which would do away with all the difficulties about re-ordination. I don’t think either of us would be strong enough to do it by ourselves.’<sup>21</sup>

At the same time, different understandings of church unity and reunion blocked progress:

‘the real fact is that [the non-conformists] don’t want anything like real reunion at all. They want us to recognise their Orders and Sacraments, and to have inter-communion with them and interchange of pulpits, and that they should go on being Nonconformists. That is the difficulty of the situation.’<sup>22</sup>

It was not only the ecumenical partners who were dismayed at the ecumenical priorities of the 1930 Lambeth Conference. The publication of the Conference Minutes<sup>23</sup> provoked a furious reaction from a group of theologians and clergy in the Church of England, initiating a prolonged and

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<sup>19</sup> Lambeth Conference 1930, Resolution 36.

<sup>20</sup> Douglas to Kenninck, 28 August 1930, pencil draft of letter, Douglas Papers, vol. 3, fol. 252–257, quotation fol. 255–256.

<sup>21</sup> Headlam to Douglas, 16.8.1930, Douglas Papers, vol. 3, fol. 143r–v.

<sup>22</sup> Headlam to Douglas, 6.9.1930, Douglas Papers, vol. 3, fol. 146–147.

<sup>23</sup> This included a summary report. A more comprehensive account was sent in October 1930 by Mervyn Haigh, the Archbishop of Canterbury’s chaplain, to Archbishop Kenninck of Utrecht with a request that it not be published [Haigh to Kenninck, 2.10.30, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 11].

public conflict which lasted well into 1931.<sup>24</sup> The concerns expressed about the growing relationship to the Orthodox and to the Old Catholics not only articulate doctrinal questions, but seem to point to a deeper concern about the setting of the ecumenical and theological agenda within the Anglican Communion.

### **The making of the Bonn Agreement**

Despite the controversy, selection of an Anglican Commission to meet the Old Catholics proceeded. Headlam proposed that delegates needed a facility in German and if possible also Dutch, and must include representatives of both evangelical and high church views.<sup>25</sup> Headlam himself would chair the delegation. The other members of the 'Doctrinal Commission' were the Bishop of Fulham, Basil Staunton Batty; the Dean of Chichester, Arthur Stuart Duncan Jones; Norman Powell Williams, Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity at the University of Oxford; George Francis Graham Brown, Principal of Wycliffe Hall, and Claude Beaufort Moss, Vice-Principal of St Boniface College, Warminster.<sup>26</sup> Charles Lewis Gage-Brown, curate at All Saints Margaret Street was invited – indeed, coerced – to

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<sup>24</sup> See Atherstone, 'Anglican Evangelicals, Old Catholics and the Bonn Agreement,' and compare also M. F. G. Parmentier, 'Evangelical Anglicans and Old Catholics in 1931,' in: Coen van Kasteel/Peter J. Maan/Martien F.G. Parmentier (eds), *Kracht in zwakheid van een kleine wereldkerk. De Oud-Katholieke Unie van Utrecht* (Amersfoort: Stichting Centraal Oud-Katholiek Boekhuis, 1982), pp. 125–144.

Of the 36 signatories to the protest published in the *Guardian* ['The Old Catholics and the Orthodox Churches: A Criticism of the Lambeth Report,' in: *The Guardian*, 1 May 1931 (no. 4456)], eleven are cited as Modernists by Alan M.G. Stephenson, *The Rise and Decline of English Modernism* (London: SPCK, 1984): J. S. B. Bezzant, F. C. Burkitt, A. J. Carlyle, C. M. Chavasse, G. G. Coulton, J. M. Creed, H. W. Hinde, H. D. A. Major, C. E. Raven, T. Guy Rogers, V. F. Storr. The signatories also included the future hymn writer, C. Sydney Carter, and B. W. Isaac, then Secretary of the Christian Pastoral Aid Society. Many were prominent figures: fourteen were professors of theology, College Principals, or lecturers associated with one of the theological colleges; seven were Archdeacons and three Canons. They were unlikely to be impressed by Headlam's insistence that they had simply misunderstood what they had read [Headlam, 'Anglican, Orthodox, and Old Catholic Churches: The Bishop of Gloucester and the Lambeth Report,' in: *The Guardian*, 22 May 1931 (no. 4459)].

<sup>25</sup> Headlam to Lang, 4.10.30, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 12–13. Note that an evangelical presence was planned from the beginning, before the protest in May 1931.

<sup>26</sup> For Douglas, see Eric W. Kemp, *N.P. Williams: A Memoir* (London: SPCK, 1954); for Moss and his long involvement with Old Catholics, see Leslie W. Barnard,

serve as Secretary.<sup>27</sup> The Old Catholic delegation included Johannes Hermannus Berends, Bishop of Deventer, as president; Adolf Kury, Bishop of Berne; Georg Moog, Bishop of Bonn; Professor Ernst Gaugler (Berne) and Professor Andreas Rinkel (Amersfoort).<sup>28</sup> Later, Douglas and Philip Usher were added to the English delegation, Douglas because, he argued, 'the Orthodox and O[ld] C[atholic] negotiations are of the same web and woof.'<sup>29</sup>

As preparations for the meeting in Bonn progressed, Headlam reported to Lang that Graham Brown 'is extremely effective and useful. He has put together all [the evangelicals'] objections and has now prepared a memorandum suggesting the lines on which they would be satisfied.'<sup>30</sup> Douglas sent Alan Campbell Don, Lang's chaplain, a list of questions prepared by Berends for discussion at Bonn which exhibited the Old Catholics' anxiety about the hostile reactions engendered by the Lambeth Conference Report and requested clarification of the authority of the Lambeth Conference, the significance of the 'protestant current' within Anglicanism, the definition of Anglican doctrine (and particularly the role of the 39 Articles), and the implications of Anglican relationships to other churches, such as the Church of Sweden, in the event of an agreement being reached.<sup>31</sup>

The Anglican delegation met in Bonn on the evening of 1 July 1931 to prepare for the next day's discussions. It was a difficult discussion, as Douglas reported:

'Graham Brown had come with a formidable document setting out the Evangelical position and the evangelical objections to the Declaration of Utrecht. ... He made it clear that provided this was handed to the O[ld] C[atholic]s much if not all of A[nglican] E[vangelical] Group's opposition to our Intercommunion with them would cease. It was a stiff document and there was

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*C. B. Moss (1888–1964): Defender of the Faith* (London: Mowbray, 1967), especially pp. 77–99.

<sup>27</sup> Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 17–18. Gage-Brown declined on the grounds of ill-health and over work, but pressure was brought to bear on him by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and he eventually agreed to serve. Lang to Gage-Brown, 2.12.30, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 27.

<sup>28</sup> In the event, neither Gaugler nor Usher was present in Bonn.

<sup>29</sup> Douglas to Don, 26.6.1931, Douglas Papers, vol. 75, fol. 169.

<sup>30</sup> Headlam to Lang, 26.6.1931, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 34.

<sup>31</sup> Deventer, 'Introduction in behalf of the discussions between the Anglican and oldcatholic [*sic*] Committee for Intercommunion,' Douglas Papers, vol. 75, fol. 170–171.



general dissent and at the time it looked as if G[raham] B[rown] would withdraw.’<sup>32</sup>

The document ‘[set] out all the A[nglican] E[vangelical] G[roup] M[ovement]’s objections – on Transubstantiation, Tradition, Propitiatory Sacrifice, etc. – and [stated] the Evangelical view of the Church in General and the Church of England in particular, in the most challenging form.’<sup>33</sup> It ‘said everything against [the Old Catholics] that was possible,’<sup>34</sup> thought Headlam. Nonetheless, and thanks to the fact that (or so Douglas affirmed) ‘the Bishop of Gloucester handled matters very ably,’ and ‘was really *superb* as a Chairman,’<sup>35</sup> the Anglican delegation agreed that the *Memorandum* should be presented to the Old Catholics. Headlam ‘took the bull by the horns and handed the O[ld] C[atholic]s G[raham] B[rown]’s document. So that the Evang[elical]s can be really sure that their position, stated in maximal terms, is known to the O[ld] C[atholic]s.’<sup>36</sup> ‘I think it *burns* them as they don’t even want to read it,’ reported Headlam in a postscript to Lang.

Douglas believed that the Old Catholics had come to the conference with a clear outcome in mind:

‘Clearly they were eager to go on and hesitated only because they had got it into their heads that any agreement might have to be ratified by Parliament and that the evangelical opposition might wreck the business – the torpedoing of which would be a bad rebuff for them, pressed as they are by Rome and the Calvinists in Holland. Once they were satisfied on that point they had nothing further to ask.’<sup>37</sup>

These initial concerns – stated in the Bishop of Deventer’s discussion paper – having been answered, ‘the rest of the morning was devoted to the Evangelical objections.’<sup>38</sup> The Old Catholics declared that:

- (1) They held the paramouncy of Scripture and stood by our article 6.
- (2) They relegated the Apocrypha to a secondary place. (3) They repudiated

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<sup>32</sup> Douglas to Don, 2.7.1931, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 38v. This would seem to be the paper referred to by Atherton, ‘Anglican Evangelicals, Old Catholics and the Bonn Agreement,’ at note 64.

<sup>33</sup> Douglas to Don, 4.7.1931, Douglas Papers, vol. 75, fol. 172v.

<sup>34</sup> Headlam to Lang, 3.7.1931, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 43v.

<sup>35</sup> Douglas to Don, 2.7.1931, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 39v–40r; 39v.

<sup>36</sup> Douglas to Don, 2.7.1931, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 39v–40r.

<sup>37</sup> Douglas to Don, 2.7.1931, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 39r.

<sup>38</sup> Douglas to Don, 2.7.1931, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 39r.

transubstantiation. (4) They did not hold the Eucharist to be a *sacrificium propitiatum*. [...]. On the other hand, [Graham Brown] satisfied them that the evangelicals hold that a Charism is conveyed in ordination and assured them that Evangelicals hold the English Church to be in continuity with the Pre-Reformation Church.’<sup>39</sup>

‘Of course G[raham] B[rown] is silent and will not commit himself. But it will be strange if he does not assure his folks that he and they might be satisfied,’<sup>40</sup> reported Douglas before the agreement was signed. Although Graham Brown was not altogether happy about the use of the word ‘sacraments’ in the Agreement, he felt that all his objections had been met, and signed it, telling Douglas that he was hopeful that would be accepted by Evangelicals. ‘The Old Catholics were very pleased.’<sup>41</sup> Headlam thought very highly of Graham Brown:

‘He has taken far more trouble about the whole matter than anyone else. [...] But the evangelical case was really put. Graham Brown has been very nice about it all. I think some of them (the Evangelicals) have been very disagreeable to him.’<sup>42</sup>

The letters of Douglas and Headlam demonstrate the rapidity with which agreement was reached. Headlam wrote of ‘a three hours morning session and a two hours afternoon session.’<sup>43</sup> Douglas’s letter of 2 July was written during the early afternoon, that is, *between* the morning and afternoon sessions, before agreement had been reached (presumably while Graham Brown and Claude Beaufort Moss were working on the Agreement).<sup>44</sup> Even at this stage, Douglas had felt able to report success: ‘I am bound to say that I had not expected that things would have taken the admirably happy course which they took, and that it is hard to find words in which to express the dept owed to the B[isho]p of Gloucester whose *gentleness & tact* in the chair carried things through. I think that so far as the O[ld] C[atholic]s are concerned, we have turned a corner.’<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Douglas to Don, 2.7.1931, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 39v.

<sup>40</sup> Douglas to Don, 2.7.1931, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 39r.

<sup>41</sup> Douglas to Don, 4.7.1931, Douglas Papers, vol. 75, fol. 172v.

<sup>42</sup> Headlam to Lang, 3.7.1931, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 43v.

<sup>43</sup> Headlam to Lang, 3.7.1931, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 43r.

<sup>44</sup> The following day, Douglas wrote to Don: ‘As I told you on the phone this morning, an agreement of a practical character was drafted in terse language at the final conference at Bonn (after my letter was written to you) and was duly signed by every member on both sides’; Douglas to Don, 4.7.1931, Douglas Papers, vol. 75, fol. 172r.

<sup>45</sup> Douglas to Don, 2.7.1931, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 40r–40v.



Douglas hoped that the Agreement would help relations with the Orthodox,<sup>46</sup> but he had other matters in mind as well. In the afternoon, he reported ‘we discussed practical measures re. inter-communion. I find the O[ld] C[atholic]s increasingly inclined to look forward to inter-consecration of bishops. Rome would be very angry.’<sup>47</sup> For Douglas – and also for Williams – Anglican-Old Catholic interconsecration offered the prospect of the recognition of Anglican Orders by Rome.

Headlam reported that the conference had ‘produced the enclosed agreement which seems to be quite satisfactory. It definitely establishes Intercommunion and guards completely the independence of the two Churches. It ought I think to satisfy the evangelicals.’<sup>48</sup> In his diary, Don noted: ‘Mon: [6 July 1931] [...] Lunched at the Athenaeum with Canon J. A. Douglas, just back from Bonn, where the Anglican Commission under the leadership of the Bishop of Gloucester arrived at an understanding with the Old Catholics under the Bishop of Deventer. Reunion seems now to be almost assured.’<sup>49</sup>

### **The nature of the Bonn Agreement**

Was this an agreement of ‘Reunion’ or ‘merely intercommunion’? The structures of the Anglican Communion had been posited on the declaration that the Provinces of the Communion were in intercommunion with one another. There may have been an expectation for some that intercommunion would spawn a similar structural relationship between the Anglican Communion and the Union of Utrecht. Others, including Graham Brown, believed that the relationship of intercommunion was a lesser relationship than reunion, not least because the Bonn Agreement explicitly stated that full doctrinal agreement was not necessary for the relationship it established. An anonymous critic wrote of the Bonn Agreement:

‘In effect the ‘Reunion’ which will result would seem to be rather of the nature of a federation than a real union. It is expressly stated in the scheme of the Bonn Conference that complete doctrinal agreement is not involved. Each body will have complete control of its own affairs. Practically it will reduce

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<sup>46</sup> Douglas to Don, 2.7.1931, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 40v. Compare also Douglas to Don, 4.7.1931, Douglas Papers, vol. 75, fol. 173: ‘As Secretary of his Grace’s Eastern Church Advisory Committee, it may be desirable that I should write a memo on the favourable repercussions which this happening will have upon the Orthodox.’

<sup>47</sup> Douglas to Don, 2.7.1931, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 41r.

<sup>48</sup> Headlam to Lang, 3.7.1931, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 43r.

<sup>49</sup> Don, Diary May 1931 – December 1932, LPL MS 2861, fol. 18–19.

itself to intercommunion. Accordingly, this Reunion can hardly be regarded as a prototype of the Reunion with Nonconformist bodies which the successive Lambeth Conferences have had in view; for the Bishops profess to regard as insufficient all schemes of reunion with Nonconformists which (a) are merely federations, and (b) do not involve doctrinal agreement.’<sup>50</sup>

Representatives of the Protestant Episcopal Church in America were inclined to concur in this judgement.

At the end of July, Lang wrote to James De Wolf Perry, Presiding Bishop of the PECUSA, to tell him of the agreement that had been reached.<sup>51</sup> William C. Emhardt, Secretary for Foreign Ecclesiastical Relations, responded that in the United States, ‘the presence of large numbers of Polish Catholics who do not seem to be entirely orthodox and the close association of the Mariaviten with the pseudo-Catholic Churches of America present a problem that must be faced.’<sup>52</sup> A meeting with Kenninck, however, allayed his concerns: ‘The Archbishop had not considered the danger we would suffer from accepting all so-called ‘Old Catholics’ upon the publication of an agreement,’ but was prepared to take steps.<sup>53</sup> There were, Emhardt warned ‘those within both communions who would press for more intimate relations than mere intercommunion.’ or who wished for a ‘closer association’ than that implied in the Bonn Agreement.<sup>54</sup> The implication is that for Emhardt, as for Graham Brown, Bonn did not bring about ‘full reunion’. While Lambeth 1920 had explicitly envisaged a ‘reunion’ which did not mean the absorption of one Communion into another, for some ‘reunion’ was increasingly understood to mean structural union, and not ‘mere intercommunion’.

The expectation that intercommunion would lead to reunion continued to prevail in some circles. Thus the Church Times reported of the passing

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<sup>50</sup> Anonymous memo (with a pencil annotation ‘by Cross of Pusey House?’), Douglas Papers, vol. 75, fol. 187.

<sup>51</sup> Lang to De Wolf Perry, 25.7.1931, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 92.

<sup>52</sup> Emhardt to Lang, 4.8.1931, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 99. The Mariaviten were originally Polish Catholics, and belonged briefly to the Union of Utrecht; however, their increasingly peculiar theology and practices led to their expulsion. See Jerzy Peterkiewicz, *The Third Adam* (London: OUP, 1975).

<sup>53</sup> Emhardt to Lang, 30.8.1931, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 116. Emhardt enclosed a copy of his letter to Archbishop Kenninck summarising their discussion, which offers a detailed account of the situation with the Polish National Catholic Church in the USA.

<sup>54</sup> Wm. C. Emhardt to Kenninck, 31.8.1931, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 117–118.

of the Bonn Agreement by the Old Catholic Bishops in September 1931: 'On 7 September the Old Catholic Bishops gave assent to the conditions of reunion. [...] These resolutions still need the assent of the various branches of the Anglican Communion. But it is probable that before the next International Old Catholic Congress meets, reunion between the two bodies will be an accomplished fact.'<sup>55</sup>

### **The consecration of George Francis Graham Brown as Bishop of Jerusalem**

The Bonn Agreement aligned the Anglican Communion clearly with Catholic Christendom, and Anglican orders must thus be deemed valid. This at least was the conclusion of the *Church Times*:

'Now that Reunion with the Old Catholics is likely to be achieved before long, it may be worth considering what its practical effect will be. Dogmatically its importance is very great. It makes it clear that the Anglican Church is in essential agreement in doctrine and practice with other parts of Catholic Christendom. It will emphasise that it is with the Catholic, as opposed to the Protestant bodies, that our real affinities lie. On the other side, any doubts such as those raised by Leo XIII in *Apostolicae Curae* against Anglican Orders will be finally quelled. For, though we Anglicans have ourselves never had any misgivings about the validity of our Orders, the questionings which Roman theologians have had (or claim to have had) about them will be set at rest by Old Catholic bishops taking part, as they doubtless will, in our ordinations and consecrations.'<sup>56</sup>

This hope was buttressed by the wording of the first paragraph of the Agreement as approved by the Old Catholic Bishops in Vienna, which stated explicitly that intercommunion had been agreed 'on the basis of the recognition of the validity of Anglican Ordinations.'<sup>57</sup> Duncan Jones, the Archbishop of Canterbury's representative at Vienna,<sup>58</sup> was told 'with special emphasis that [the Bishops] had inserted into the resolutions a definite statement basing the right of mutual participation in the sacra-

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<sup>55</sup> The *Church Times* 18.9.1931, pasted into Douglas Papers, vol. 75, fol. 182. The correspondent may have been Douglas, who had written earlier articles about the Old Catholics for the *Church Times*.

<sup>56</sup> The *Church Times* 18.9.1931, pasted into Douglas Papers, vol. 75, fol. 183.

<sup>57</sup> 'Report on the Vienna Congress,' in: IKZ 52 (1931), 301.

<sup>58</sup> For the discussion about who to send, see Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 108; fol. 112.

ments on a recognition of the validity of Anglican orders.<sup>59</sup> For Douglas it was of particular note that the Old Catholic Bishops had agreed intercommunion with Churches of the Anglican Communion *'as a consequence of the recognition of the validity of Anglican ordinations.'*<sup>60</sup> His primary concern was now to ensure that Rome's recognition of the validity of Old Catholic ordinations should be extended to Anglicans. Herbert Newall Bate, Dean of York, reported to Lang that 'the [Old Catholic] Bishops, I am sure, would be glad if something could be done in the way of allowing one of their number to assist in an episcopal consecration over here (or vice versa).'<sup>61</sup> Interconsecration now became a priority for a group of Anglo-Catholics including Douglas and Williams.

In October, Douglas reported to Don that he had written to Kenninck, 'saying that it might be helpful if we could tell the Orthodox (1) whether all formalities for Intercommunion were now complete on the Old Catholic side and (2) whether Intercommunion includes Interconsecration.'<sup>62</sup>

Kenninck replied that the Agreement had yet to be ratified by the Synods, but was unlikely to be repudiated.<sup>63</sup> In response to the second point, he reiterated Old Catholic caution about evangelical and rationalist tendencies within Anglicanism:

'Il faut convenir qu'on doit attendre comment dans la pratique les relations entre les deux églises se réaliseront. Par exemple, nous sommes disposés à prendre part à la consécration d'un de vos évêques, mais il est exclu qu'un évêque ancien-catholique pourrait assister à la consécration d'un calviniste ou d'un rationaliste.'<sup>64</sup>

That there might be no misunderstanding, Douglas summarized in English:

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<sup>59</sup> Duncan-Jones to Lang, 21.9.1931, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 132r–132v.

<sup>60</sup> Douglas to Lang, 8.10.1931, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 139. Underlining by Douglas, reproduced as italics.

<sup>61</sup> Bate to Lang, 13.9.1931, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 128r. In addition Bate commented that the Old Catholic attitude to marriage seemed less strict than that of the Romans, and 'needs investigation'; he was concerned too about some (unspecified) political questions [Ibid., fol. 128v].

<sup>62</sup> J. A. Douglas to Don, 8.10.1931, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 151.

<sup>63</sup> Copy of Kenninck to J. A. Douglas, 7.10.1931, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 152; cf. Douglas's English translation: Douglas to Don, 8.10.1931, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 151.

<sup>64</sup> Copy of Kenninck to J. A. Douglas, 7.10.1931, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 152.

‘His answer in regard to interconsecration means, I take it, that they would be ready to take part in the consecration of a central Anglican such as the Bishop of Coventry, but that they would not be ready to do so in the case of a marked evangelical or modernist.’<sup>65</sup>

Writing to Don to urge a speedy response to Kenninck’s willingness to take part in an Anglican consecration (for ‘atmospheres have a way of changing and these are troublous times’), Douglas commented, ‘I take it that he meant no more than that in view of the intense propaganda of Rome against the Old Catholics, he wished to obviate the risk of having to defend himself for having joined in conferring Episcopal Orders on a Militant or pronounced Evangelical or Modernist.’<sup>66</sup> Kenninck’s attitude was soon to be tested, for in 1932 Lang invited him to nominate an Old Catholic Bishop to take part in the consecration of Graham Brown as Bishop of Jerusalem.

Graham Brown himself was keen that an Old Catholic should take part in his consecration.<sup>67</sup> On the basis of their previous correspondence, Douglas, however, was unsure that the Archbishop of Utrecht would feel himself able to, for ‘the *sacerdotium* which [Kenninck] would believe himself to be conjoining in conferring is not that which G[raham] B[rown] will probably believe himself to be receiving.’ He was concerned too that proper courtesy be extended: ‘I take it for granted that there would be no risk of Archbishop Kenninck, if he came, finding himself listening to strong Evangelical *encomia* on his acceding to Protestantism.’<sup>68</sup> Williams and Douglas were keen that an Old Catholic Bishop should be present at the ordination as a Co-Consecrator following the Old Catholic practice of laying both hands on the candidate’s head, and repeating audibly, in Latin, *Accipe Spiritum Sanctum*. This, they were convinced, must counter Roman fears about the deficiency of the Anglican ordination rite,<sup>69</sup> and Williams wrote to Lang, Bell and others to ask whether Haarlem might act

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<sup>65</sup> Douglas to Don, 8.10.1931, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 151.

<sup>66</sup> Douglas to Don 4.3.1932, Douglas Papers, vol. 75, fol. 188–189.

<sup>67</sup> For the discussions around the participation of the Old Catholic Bishop, see also Brian Taylor, *Accipe Spiritum Sanctum: Historical Essays on the Agreements of Bonn and Meissen* (Guildford: St Thomas’s Trust, 1995), pp. 13–29.

<sup>68</sup> Douglas to E. M. Bickerton, Secretary of the Jerusalem and the East Mission, 16.5.1932, Douglas Papers, vol. 75, fol. 198–200.

<sup>69</sup> ‘The Consecrations of 1932’ in Brian Taylor, *Accipe Spiritum Sanctum: Historical Essays on the Agreements of Bonn and Meissen* (Guildford: St. Thomas’s Trust, 1995), pp. 13–29.



in this way. Lang, however, objected that this procedure would contravene the Rubric of the Anglican ordinal, that it might damage the prestige of the Anglican Communion by suggesting that English Bishops ‘felt misgiving with regard to the validity of their own Orders’, and that it might be interpreted ‘as an attempt to score a controversial point against Rome.’ Williams countered each of these objections – in particular he referred to the Appeal which had expressed Anglican willingness to do what was necessary for recognition of orders – and the matter rested there.<sup>70</sup>

Or at least, the matter appeared to rest there. Accepting the invitation, the Bishop of Haarlem, Henricus van Vlijmen, expressed his sense of the significance of his presence: ‘it is a great honour for me for the first time in the history of the Christian Church after the Reformation to take part in the consecration of an Anglican bishop.’<sup>71</sup> Others saw his attendance similarly. Don noted:

‘Wed : June 22 [1932]. [...] Douglas told me that a prominent dignitary of the Roman Church, Myers by name, who is shortly to be consecrated coadjutor to Cardinal Bourne asked him to lunch a day or two ago and hinted that the presence of an Old Catholic Bishop at our consecrations might ultimately lead Rome to modify her attitude towards Anglican orders. This is interesting, as coming from a Roman of liberal tendencies. But C. G. [Lang], backed by the Bp: of Gloucester, declines to utilize the Bp: of Haarlem in the way suggested by N. P. Williams – he will simply lay on hands like other assisting Bishops and will not say any of the words audibly.

Thurs: June 23. [...] After dinner C. G. [Lang], Gloucester and Haarlem sat in a row on the sofa and discussed tomorrow’s procedure, with many gesticulations and guttural noises – C. G. is a poor linguist and Gloucester’s German accent is lamentable – but Haarlem at length understood.’<sup>72</sup>

Van Vlijmen had clearly been told by Lang and Headlam that he was only to assist at the consecration. However, Lang appointed Douglas (of whose hopes in this matter he must have been aware) to be chaplain to the Bishop of Haarlem at the ordination. Afterwards, Douglas reported to Williams:

‘You will be interested to know that the Bishop of Haarlem: (a) laid both hands on both consecrands at St Paul’s yesterday, and (b) recited the Old Catholic formula of consecration, *Accipe Spiritum Sanctum*, audibly to myself and the

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<sup>70</sup> See Kemp, *N. P. Williams*, pp. 54–56.

<sup>71</sup> Van Vlijmen to Lang, 25 May 1932, Lang Papers, vol. 44, cited in Taylor, *Accipe Spiritum Sanctum*, p. 17.

<sup>72</sup> Don, Diary May 1931 – December 1932, LPL MS 2861, fol. 156–157.

Anglican bishops assisting in the Consecration and synchronously with the recitation of the Anglican formula by the Archbishop of Canterbury. I was privileged to act as chaplain to him and stood immediately behind him during the Laying on of Hands. [...] Though there are obvious reasons why at the moment we should not proclaim the fact, it is the case that the Bishop of Haarlem came, and was authorised to come, in order to act as a principal consecrator in an interconsecration which, if one or other of the two bishops consecrated yesterday take part in future consecrations of Anglican Bishops as principal co-consecrators, should in due time compel the most hostile R[oman] C[atholic]s at least to admit the possible validity of Anglican Orders.<sup>73</sup>

At Douglas's request, van Vlijmen signed a statement to this effect which Douglas sent to Don.<sup>74</sup> Don's detailed account of the consecration concluded that '[Haarlem] was a consecrator in intention – there can be no question about that.' He noted too that at Anglican behest, 'he wore his choir habit – a purple cassock with a lace surplice under a purple tippet.'<sup>75</sup>

Williams enquired whether Archbishop Lang had been aware of Haarlem's intention.<sup>76</sup> However, he was soon assisting Douglas to draw up two copies of a revised protocol in Latin written on parchment, one to be deposited in Utrecht and the other in the Registry of the Province of Canterbury, a procedure that was repeated at subsequent consecrations attended by Old Catholic Bishops before the outbreak of war.<sup>77</sup> In 1944 Douglas wrote a "Memorandum on the Conjunction of the Dutch Old Catholic and Anglican Episcopal Successions", in order to 'put on record not only the validity of those consecrations from the Old Catholic point of view, but their unchallengeability by the most hostile and modern Roman Catholic precision.'<sup>78</sup> For Douglas, the Bonn Agreement had been a means to two ends: closer relationships with the Orthodox and the recognition of Anglican Orders by the Roman Catholic Church.

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<sup>73</sup> Douglas to Williams, 25.6.1932, Douglas Papers, vol. 75, fol. 221–222.

<sup>74</sup> Don pasted it into his diary: Don, Diary May 1931 – December 1932, LPL MS 2861, fol. 157v.

<sup>75</sup> Don, Diary May 1931 – December 1932, LPL MS 2861, fol. 157–158. In 1939, van Vlijmen's willingness to wear choir dress in 1932 was used to persuade Headlam to don a mitre for the first time at the 1200<sup>th</sup> anniversary Willibrord celebration in Utrecht; see Ronald Jasper, *Arthur Cayley Headlam: The Life and Letters of a Bishop* (London: Faith Press, 1960), p. 220.

<sup>76</sup> Williams to Douglas, 27.6.1932, Douglas Papers, vol. 75, fol. 224

<sup>77</sup> *The Times*, 21.9.1937; press cutting in Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 260.

<sup>78</sup> Douglas Papers, vol. 88, fol. 20–24.



## **Ongoing relationships with the Old Catholic Churches**

Throughout the 1930s, official contact with the Old Catholics tended to be associated with the International Old Catholic Congresses, although from 1934 there was increasing concern about the German Old Catholic Church. Lang was invited to attend the 1934 Old Catholic Congress in Constance (although the invitation, which consisted of a handwritten note on the mimeographed conference announcement, was, he felt ‘surely rather an inadequate one’.<sup>79</sup> Nugent Hicks, until 1933 Bishop of Gibraltar, but newly appointed Bishop of Lincoln, attended as Archbishop’s official nominee.

Nugent Hicks was somewhat bemused by the Old Catholics.<sup>80</sup> He was surprised by ‘the almost total inability to speak or understand [English] among the Old Catholic bishops and clergy.’<sup>81</sup> Overall, his impressions of the Old Catholic parish in Constance were negative: no times of service were posted; there was only one service each week; the church was closed during the day. All in all, it was, he felt, ‘a disastrous contrast with the live Roman Catholicism next door.’ The Sunday service was

‘quite reverent of its kind, but there was none of the atmosphere which, without any knowledge of the language, is to be found in even the smallest and most ordinary Orthodox service. There were no communicants, and obviously none expected. I gather they communicate as a rule 5 or 6 times a year. [...] There were no O[ld] C[atholic] Prayer Books to be had in the town. The priest himself had none to lend or sell, though there were a few in the sacristy. [...] I am afraid that the impression I formed from this experience of normal, everyday O[ld] C[atholic] life was that of a backwater.’<sup>82</sup>

About the Congress itself he was more positive:

‘There were Celebrations on the Friday, Saturday and Sunday. On Friday a large number communicated, including all the Anglicans. I was asked to come robed and sat with the O[ld] C[atholic] Bishops – all of us communicating together at the altar steps. All Anglicans received in both kinds. [...] On the Sunday there were no communicants but a really large congregation.’<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 201. The invitation is found at fol.183.

<sup>80</sup> Nugent Hicks to Lang, 22.10.1934, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 221–227.

<sup>81</sup> Nugent Hicks to Lang, 22.10.1934, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 221.

<sup>82</sup> Nugent Hicks to Lang, 22.10.1934, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 221–222.

<sup>83</sup> Nugent Hicks to Lang, 22.10.1934, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 223.

Despite some chaos in organisation and an over-loaded programme, the Bishop affirmed, 'it is clear that in some parts of the O[ld] C[atholic] Church there are ideas, and minds are moving towards grasping the opportunities that lie before it.'<sup>84</sup> However, here too he had reservations:

'The outstanding point – at least three of the speeches and papers – on Friday evening and Saturday and Sunday mornings – seemed to be that the present religious situation in Germany meant a real opening for the O[ld] C[atholic] Church. This was illustrated by the posters about the public gathering, which were headed 'A Church both National and Catholic' and a short but cordial speech of welcome on Saturday morning by the local representative at Constance of the Hitler *regime*.

It seemed to me that they see clearly that their Church principles may provide a conception of Catholicism lying between the Roman Church and the Evangelical Churches in Germany. On this the speakers to whom I have referred seemed to base hopes of great developments in the near future. I felt that they were sincere and they – alone of all the Congress – showed real fire and enthusiasm. I think the German Old Catholics should be watched in this respect: watched with sympathy and perhaps if the right moment came with readiness to help on our side; but watched also with caution, for I felt that they might be tempted to make opportunities for the O[ld] C[atholic] Church out of the troubled situation between the Government and the Romans on one side and the Evangelicals on the other in a position in which, to our thinking, Rome and the Evangelicals might be in the *right* and the Government morally in the *wrong*. To see a great ideal and to grasp the moment for realising it would be one thing; to fish in troubled waters and make capital selfishly out of the persecution of their rivals quite another.'<sup>85</sup>

Summing up his experiences, Nugent Hicks saw two primary problems: leadership, and (more fundamental) a lack in spiritual life.

'The real danger seems to be a want [...] of anything like spiritual fire. I gather that they have dropped in practice some of the things that make for the spiritual and devotional life, including confession. I am told that daily services are almost unknown. The Eucharist is as a rule only celebrated on Sundays and great festivals. [...] They have a seminary in Holland but in Switzerland there

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<sup>84</sup> Nugent Hicks to Lang, 22.10.1934, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 222.

<sup>85</sup> Nugent Hicks to Lang, 22.10.1934, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 224–225. Essen's 'German National Church' was the subject of a report by the Willibrord Society after a visit by Mgr Berends in January 1935: Douglas Papers, vol. 75, fol. 19. For the Old Catholic in Germany at this time, see Matthias Ring, *Katholisch und deutsch. Die alt-katholische Kirche Deutschlands und der Nationalsozialismus*, Diss. (forthcoming Bonn 2007).

is nothing in the way of training for priesthood but the O[ld] C[atholic] Theological Faculty at Berne. I could not hear anything of their having retreats.’<sup>86</sup>

Shared retreats, parish visits and exchanges, and in particular, the interchange of students, might help:

In time not a few of their clergy will have seen for themselves what the devotional training that our best colleges give can be. If we can send students to them, I have no doubt that their teaching would be useful: and our men might at least come back with a useful knowledge of German, or even of Dutch.’<sup>87</sup>

The political stance of the Old Catholic Church was of interest also to Douglas who had witnessed an ‘Old Catholic boom’ in Austria:

‘I think we should attach importance to the fact that the [Roman] Catholic Church has been for some years a definitely political party – monarchist and reactionary. Anyone with democratic leanings would be as unhappy in a [Roman] Catholic Church as a Tory in a Baptist Chapel. [...] The Old Catholic Church, being entirely non-political, affords a refuge to those between the devil and the deep-sea [*sic*] and naturally receives many applications for reception which are ‘dubious’ [...]. One thing struck me particularly about the applications I inspected – in every case the date of ‘leaving the R[oman] C[atholic] Church’ synchronised with the establishment of the Christian Socialist regime of Dr. Dolfuss.’<sup>88</sup>

Such reports provoked increasing concern in England. ‘I cannot see what future [the Old Catholics] are likely to have,’ wrote Lang to Nugent Hicks. ‘I am glad that you have written a word of warning about the possibility of some of the German Old Catholics [...] fishing in troubled waters in Germany at the present time. This prospect gives me a good deal of anxiety.’ The situation in Germany, Lang felt, was complicated enough already,<sup>89</sup> and when in April 1935 he was invited to send a Bishop to the consecration of Erwin Kreuzer as ‘Bishop of the Old Catholic Church in the German Reich,’<sup>90</sup> he had no hesitation in declining.<sup>91</sup> After the consecration Kreuzer’s chaplain, NN de Voil, wrote to Don that ‘the new German Bishop is very anxious to assure Anglicans that German Old Catholics have maintained their religious freedom in these troubled days without being in any-

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<sup>86</sup> Nugent Hicks to Lang, 22.10.1934, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 225–226.

<sup>87</sup> Nugent Hicks to Lang, 22.10.1934, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 226.

<sup>88</sup> Douglas to the Bishop of Fulham, 8.9.1934, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 217.

<sup>89</sup> Lang to Nugent Hicks, 29.10.1934, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 229.

<sup>90</sup> Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 239.

<sup>91</sup> Lang, 18.4.1935, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 240.

way compromised.’<sup>92</sup> ‘If [the German Old Catholics] are really able to retain their religious freedom they will be more fortunate than many of their brother Christians,’ replied Don on Lang’s behalf.<sup>93</sup> They clearly did not believe a word of it, and their unease can only have increased when Lang was sent a further invitation, this time in the name of the ‘Katholisch-Nationalkirchliche Bewegung,’ informing them of a forthcoming conference: ‘Tagung gegen den politischen Katholizismus für den rein religiösen Katholizismus. Abendmahlsfeier gespendet durch Bischof Erwin Kreuzer, Bonn, Katholischer Bischof der Alt-Katholiken des Deutschen Reiches.’<sup>94</sup>

Lang’s concerns about developments in Germany did not prevent the pursuit of relationships with other Old Catholic Churches. In 1937 Headlam and the Bishop of Fulham attended the consecration of the new Archbishop of Utrecht, Andreas Rinkel. Headlam sent Lang a comprehensive account of the liturgy – including a detailed description of the new Archbishop’s use of his mitre – and an account of the situation of the Old Catholics in the Netherlands.<sup>95</sup> Rinkel expressed his appreciation for the presence of the Bishops of Gloucester and Fulham, emphasising that this was a result of intercommunion.<sup>96</sup> Similarly, in September 1937 *The Times* reported the presence of Old Catholic Bishops at an Anglican consecration in St Paul’s Cathedral as a result of intercommunion.<sup>97</sup> In 1938 the Bishop of Southwark attended the International Old Catholic Congress in Zürich. In November 1939 Headlam, Douglas and others travelled to Utrecht to mark the 1200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of St Willibrord’s mission.<sup>98</sup>

Lang’s Old Catholic file essentially ends at this point. Correspondence relating to the Mathew affair<sup>99</sup> continued into 1940; Douglas continued to

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<sup>92</sup> De Voil to Don, 24.5.1935, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 242r.

<sup>93</sup> Don to de Voil, 30.5.1935, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 243.

<sup>94</sup> ‘Conference against political Catholicism for purely religious Catholicism.’

<sup>95</sup> Headlam to Lang, 21.6.1937, Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 249–254.

<sup>96</sup> An extract of the speech was sent to Lang: Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 258.

<sup>97</sup> *The Times*, 21.9.1937; press cutting in Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 260.

<sup>98</sup> An account including numerous photographs can be found in the Douglas Papers, vol. 75, fol. 269–272.

<sup>99</sup> Arnold Harris Mathew was consecrated in 1908 by Archbishop Gerardus Gul of Utrecht to bring the Old Catholic Church to England, a development which was deplored by the Lambeth Conference in 1908 and subsequently. See Christoph Schuler, *The Mathew Affair: The Failure to Establish an Old Catholic Church in England in the Context of Anglican Old Catholic Relations Between 1902 and 1925* (Amersfoort: Stichting Centraal Oud-Katholiek Boekhuis 1997).

monitor (or obsess about) the situation regarding interconsecration. The file closes with a paper by Moss: 'Memorandum on Intercommunion with the Old Catholics,' which reported concrete steps taken as a result of the Bonn Agreement, and offered an assessment of the significance of the Bonn Agreement for Anglicans:

'There is no precedent in our history for the events (joint consecration, shared communion, exchange of priests) recorded in this memorandum. We have informal intercommunion with other Churches, Orthodox and Lutheran, but we have full intercommunion only with the Old Catholics. It is the first real breach in the isolation of the Anglican Communion since the Reformation. The agreement of Bonn may perhaps form a model for further measures of reunion in the future.'<sup>100</sup>

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### *Deutsche Zusammenfassung*

Anhand des Nachlasses von Cosmo Gordon Lang, Erzbischof von Canterbury, und des Geistlichen John Albert Douglas, der sich sehr für anglikanisch-orthodoxe Beziehungen eingesetzt hat, untersucht dieser Artikel die Interessen, die Anglo-Katholiken mit der Interkommunion zwischen der anglikanischen Kirche und den altkatholischen Kirchen verbanden. Die Bonner Vereinbarung wurde als möglicher Weg zur Anerkennung der anglikanischen Weihen durch die römisch-katholische Kirche angesehen, weshalb die Frage der Teilnahme altkatholischer Bischöfe an anglikanischen Bischofsweihen eine grosse Rolle spielte. Aus anglikanischer Sicht besaßen die altkatholischen Kirchen zudem eine gewisse Vorbildfunktion im Hinblick auf katholische Liturgie und Spiritualität. Auch wenn solche Hoffnungen sich nicht in vollem Masse erfüllten, wurde die Bonner Vereinbarung doch als wesentlicher, wegweisender Schritt für die Ökumene betrachtet.

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<sup>100</sup> Moss, 'Memorandum on Intercommunion with the Old Catholics,' Lang Papers, vol. 49, fol. 314.