

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY LITURGICAL REVIVAL: EVOLUTION AND DEVOLUTION OF WORSHIP IN THE KIRK

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‘The Disruption of the Church of Scotland’, wrote Professor Stewart J. Brown, ‘was the most important event in the history of nineteenth-century Scotland’¹ Given the shock waves that the Disruption caused not only within the National Church, but also in Scottish civic life, it would be difficult to dissent from this judgment. However, though not as dramatically divisive as the event of 1843, perhaps of equal importance for Presbyterian Church life in the nineteenth century was what A. C. Cheyne has described as ‘the Liturgical Revolution’.² As the *Report of the Committee on the Proper Conduct of Public Worship and the Sacraments* 1890 put it, ‘if worshippers of the past generation were to enter some of our churches, they would find little to remind them of the traditional forms with which they and their fathers were familiar’.³ The founders of the Church Service Society and the subsequent work of that Society played a significant role in this change or revolution. The larger tale has been told often enough- by Cheyne himself, by James Bulloch, John Lamb, and Douglas Murray, as well as in articles in the Church Service Society Annuals, and in notable doctoral theses. It may well be asked whether anything new can be added on the occasion of the sesquicentennial celebrations? What is offered in this paper is not so much new material as a different lens in terms of how this revolution or revival might be told and evaluated.

In 1865 when the Church Service Society was founded, the word evolution was a topical word, and would become quite controversial in some church circles. Charles Darwin was not the first to have considered the subject, but it was he who made it popular in his *On the Origin of Species*, 1859. Although the understanding of evolution of the universe and life on Earth has changed considerably since Darwin’s day, it is still the most favoured scientific explanation of life. In 2015, the word devolution is still in the minds of many this side of the Border, and has a decidedly political connotation. I have chosen to explore the changes in worship in the nineteenth century Presbyterian Scottish

Churches through the terms of devolution and evolution, though without some strict and precise definition of these words. Devolution can mean transfer or delegation of power to a lower level, but it can mean descent, or degeneration to a lower level, as well as in some contexts being almost synonymous with evolution. Evolution is a process of change, from a lower to a more complex state, or a gradual social, political and economic advance, and especially the development of a biological group, or phylogeny. It is perhaps no accident that, as Fritz West has shown, the development of the so-called comparative liturgy method of Anton Baumstark took its inspiration from the comparative anatomy of Georges Cuvier and other nineteenth century paleontologists and biologists, and it was Baumstark who seems to have coined the term ‘organic development’ of liturgy, which current conservative Roman Catholic liturgists have re-appropriated and (in my view) misused.⁴ It would seem to me that the terms devolution and evolution are useful for looking at what Cheyne called a liturgical revolution, and are also à propos a church that allows considerable freedom to its ministers in formulating public worship, though I acknowledge that some will view my understanding and use of these terms as too simplistic and inaccurate.

In the *Life and Letters of John Cairns*, Alexander Macewen described the Sabbath Morning service at Berwick c,1850.

“As the town clock struck eleven, the beadle bustled up the steep pulpit stair with Bible and Psalm Book tucked under his arm, adjusted these with care on velvet cushions and then stood waiting at the foot of the stair. There was a hush - as seemly preparation for worship as any voluntary - amidst which the creaking of the minister’s boots was heard, and all eyes were fixed on his solemn and stately approach, as he slowly mounted the stair and at once hid his face in his black-gloved hand. When he arose to give out the opening psalm, he showed a majestic presence: The psalm ended, there came the ‘long prayer’, so called to distinguish it from the ‘short prayer’ which followed the sermon...it contained no argument, moving steadily and quietly along familiar lines of adoration, thanksgiving, confession, humiliation and supplication. Scriptural it was, not through quotation but by embodiment of Scripture truth;Then came the reading of Scripture and another psalm as prelude to the sermon, which would last perhaps fifty minutes”.⁵

Macewen omits to mention the psalm that followed the short prayer as a

conclusion to the service. Similar patterns to this order of worship, which in the nineteenth century was regarded as traditional in Presbyterian Scotland, are attested to and supplemented by other contemporary or near-contemporary nineteenth century writers, such as Anne Mary MacLeod's *Memories of the Manse*, where is added the importance of the Precentor, and that the congregation sat to sing, and stood for prayer.⁶

The Record of the Free Church of Scotland provides an interesting account of an annual Highland Communion at Snizort, Skye in 1863, which again was regarded as preserving the older traditional Scottish communion service:

“Thursday, the 16th July, was the day specially set apart for prayer and humiliation before God. Four ministers arrived at the manse to discharge the duties of the day;....Long before the usual hour of worship the people had assembled to ask a blessing on the word and ordinances. The public services of this day were held in the church, and were conducted in Gaelic and English. The Rev. Roderick M’Leod, who spoke in Gaelic, commenced in the usual way, by giving out the first seven verses of the fifty-first psalm, offering up prayer, and reading with a short comment on the fourteenth chapter of Jeremiah. The English services were then conducted by the Rev. Mr. Gualter, in the usual form of praise, prayer, and in the preaching of the word. Immediately following the English the Rev. Mr. Kippen ascended the pulpit and conducted a similar form of service in Gaelic. Thus ended the public services, which lasted altogether about four hours and a half. ..While the congregation at Snizort was engaged in these public devotions, two other congregations, in opposite districts of the parish, were also assembled for the same purpose. ... The special service of Friday forms a distinguishing feature of a Highland communion, and is therefore entirely conducted in Gaelic. This service is called “a fellowship meeting”, and is convened with the view of assisting intending communicants in the great duties of self-examination and preparation for the Lord’s table. ... The minister, Mr. Roderick M’Leod, presided, and opened the meeting with praise, prayer, and a short exposition;....He then called in turn upon six or eight elders, men of approved Christian character, to speak on the question;... On Saturday, Sabbath, and Monday, the numbers increased to such an extent that, as the church could not contain them, the Gaelic congregation had to be separated from the English, the former worshipping in the fields, the latter in the church.These preliminary services were

mainly intended to prepare the hearts of the people for the day of high communion;.. The tent in which the minister stood was pitched at the foot of a sloping hill, gradually rising in an undulating form till it terminated in a heathery knoll. On a smooth sward, in front of the tent, the table, covered with clean white linen, was prepared. The whole face of the little hill was clothed with people.....The Rev. Roderick Macleod preached to this large and interesting congregation from the appropriate words in Ps. xl. 6-8....At the conclusion of the service the English congregation left the church and joined the Gaelic congregation in the fields. Just as they approached, the invitation to come forward to the first Gaelic communion-table was being issued. ..The second table was served in English; and after this three other tables were administered in Gaelic. The whole services, which lasted about seven hours and a half, were brought to a close by an earnest and impressive address by the Rev. Dr. Mackay. ...On Monday the attendance both in Gaelic and English was quite as large as on the preceding Sabbath.⁷

Dr. Norman Macleod gave a very similar description of a Church of Scotland communion celebration of the mid-century in the Highlands.⁸

What was the origin of these services which were typical at the beginning and for much of the nineteenth century? What was their evolutionary pedigree or line of descent? In *The Worship, Rites, and Ceremonies of the Church of Scotland*, 1863, G. W. Sprott did his best to ground both in the *Westminster Directory*.⁹ The Sabbath Service of the Word was certainly in continuity with much of that recommended by the *Directory*, but as George Burnet and Leigh Eric Schmidt have shown, the Communion Seasons, or Holy Fairs, originated prior to the *Directory*, and devolved from the revival associated with Robert Bruce and that of Shotts 1630, and later as developed by the Covenanters.¹⁰ The compilers of the communion service in the *Directory*, other than perhaps Samuel Rutherford and George Gillespie, had in mind on the one hand the communion as contained in the *Book of Common Order*, and on the other, via Thomas Goodwin and Philip Nye, the form celebrated monthly by the Independents, best outlined by John Cotton.¹¹ The Communion Season services that became the norm in Scotland were very different from both of these, and, at least in terms of the New Testament, recall more the Feeding of the 5000 than the Supper with the Twelve at Passover in the Upper Room. The early traditional nineteenth century Sabbath Services of the Word and the Communion Seasons might thus be characterized as the result of both devolution from the seventeenth century

mutation, with some extinctions, and modifications on the way, for example the Lord's Prayer and Creed had largely fallen into disuse.

One of the complaints made by some nineteenth century critics was the poor quality of the traditional worship, and poor extemporary prayer, as well as the omission from Sabbath worship of Bible readings, Lord's Prayer and Creed. Robert Lee in his magisterial prose explained of the large number of ministers who prayed extempore that they plunge 'into the great wilderness of thought and language – like Abraham who went forth not knowing whither he went, but who was safe under the promised guidance from above, which these men shew, by their dreary wanderings, that they do not enjoy'.¹² The need for ministerial guidance brought forth the first fruits of the nineteenth century liturgical revival - the appearance of printed guides of good practice for the traditional forms - if you like, what their authors regarded as the fittest of this species. The first of these was *The Scotch Minister's Assistant*, 1802 but which was reissued in 1822 under the title *The Presbyterian Minister's Assistant*, the author being Harry Robertson of Kiltarn. It contained orders of service and prayers for marriage, baptism, for fencing the table, table addresses and post-communion exhortations, prayers at communion and blessing the elements, as well as prayers before and after the sermon, and prayers for particular pastoral occasions. Other important exemplars included Andrew Carstairs, minister of Anstruther West, *The Scottish Communion Service: with the Public Services for the Fast Day, Saturday and Monday before and after Communion*, Edinburgh 1829; William Liston of Redgorton *The Service of the House of God, according to the Practice of the Church of Scotland*, Glasgow 1843; Alexander Brunton of New Greyfriars, Edinburgh, *Forms for Public Worship in the Church of Scotland*, Edinburgh 1848; and James Anderson, *The Minister's Directory*, Edinburgh 1856. Thanks to the rediscovery by James C. Stewart, to these may now be added William Logie, *Sermons and Services of the Church*, Edinburgh 1857. Logie was minister of St. Magnus, Kirkwall, Orkney, and died in 1856 and his sermons and services with a memorial were published by his son.

What is interesting is that some of these, including Logie's, did not provide for the regular Sabbath worship, but only the less frequently celebrated liturgical occasions such as baptism, marriage and the communion days. The thought may have been that it was in the less oft-repeated occasions that ministers needed most guidance. Second is that although there is far from complete uniformity, these do mostly follow a generic pattern, giving some idea of the

diversity within an accepted traditional form. In this they are all excellent examples of liturgical devolution.

Differences in length and style may be illustrated by Liston's First Sabbath Morning Prayer and Brunton's first prayer for the Second Sabbath "Forenoon" service. Liston's prayer is of eight paragraphs over four pages, and begins:

'O Lord, thou art the most high God- the only Holy One- the Almighty Sovereign of heaven and earth. Thou, O Lord, art from everlasting. All the gods of the nations are but idols; but the Lord has made the heavens, and all their hosts.

And as, by thy great power, thou hast created all things and brought them out of nothing into being, so, by thine infinite wisdom, hast thou preserved them in existence; and they all continue this day according to thine appointment. The day is thine; the night also is thine. For thou hast made the light and the sun.'¹³

Brunton provided a psalm from *The Scottish Psalter*, Psalm 118: 19-27. The prayer is ten paragraphs and comparable in length to Liston's. It began:

'In this, "the day which thou hast made for Thyself. Teach Thou us, O God, to rejoice and be glad." Teach Thou us to bear in mind the purposes for which the Sabbath is hallowed.

On this day, O Thou, the Almighty Creator, the work of thy hand was accomplished. Thy universe arose in order and in beauty at thy bidding. The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of god shouted for joy. Even in thy pure sight the world which thy word had made was good.'¹⁴

Comparing the provisions for communion with those published at the end of the eighteenth century by John Logan, Kenneth Hughes commented that more noticeable than their differences is the common ground they shared with respect to the details of service.¹⁵ Carstairs, for example, provided material for the Fast Day morning and evening, a Saturday service, the main Sabbath forenoon service with communion, post-communion Sabbath evening service and Monday service. The Sabbath forenoon service provided Psalm 95:1-6, a long prayer, a sample sermon, the Lord's Prayer, Paraphrase 26:1-3, an address from the pulpit commonly called 'The fencing of the Table', which

included the Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes, Paraphrase 35:1-4, the consecration prayer, five table services addressed to the communicants and each ending with a paraphrase, a concluding address, prayer, psalm 72:17-19 and a blessing. William Logie provided for Morning Prayer, Action Sermon, Fencing of the Tables, Consecration Prayer, and four Table Addresses, a concluding exhortation and prayer, an evening sermon and an address to new communicants. Comparison here is limited to their consecratory petitions. Carstairs invokes a presence, but is more concerned with our part in renewing the covenant:

‘Be with us, O Lord, we humbly entreat thee, in the celebration of this ordinance. O thou who dwellest on high! Bend thy heavens and come down; - graciously accept this tribute of our gratitude to him who died that we might live. May the great Master of the feast be present; may he be made known to us in the breaking of bread. May we sit down under his shadow with great delight, and find his fruit sweet unto our taste.

Over these symbols of his death, we solemnly devote ourselves to his service – we solemnly renounce the pleasures of sin,’ etc.¹⁶

Logie does ask for communion and not just presence:

‘We rejoice that we are this day invited to contemplate in the glass of an ordinance, all the wonders of His love, and partake of the symbols of his body broken, and His blood shed for our redemption.

In obedience, blessed Jesus, to Thy command, we come to show forth Thy death, and muse on all Thy marvelous, thy matchless, Thy mysterious love to us - love which many waters could not quench, nor the floods drown. God of our salvation, bow the heavens and come down. Come, Thou risen and exalted Saviour – stand in the midst of us, and make Thyself known unto us in the breaking of bread.

Sanctify those symbols of bread and wine for the sacred use to which they are to be applied. May the bread which we break be unto us the communion of the body of Christ; and the cup of blessing which we bless, the communion of His blood.’¹⁷

Comparing the services in these collections, one can see some common DNA

as well as significant variations - a good example of organic development. But these forms, however traditional, would come to be regarded by some as liturgical dinosaurs.

In an article in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* in 1889, A. K. H. Boyd wrote an *apologia* for the newly published Scottish Hymnal. Boyd explained that the hymnal committee would have kept the old way of worship had it been possible. But he explained that a new generation had arisen that had never known the pathos of an Ayrshire Tent Preaching, and therefore the old order had to go. 'In truth', wrote Boyd, 'the old order had gone before we thought of making our Hymnal'.¹⁸ That same evolutionary shift that had happened in worship was also sounded in the title of the United Presbyterian author, Andrew Duncan, in his *The Scottish Sanctuary, As It Was and As It Is, or Recent Changes in the Public Worship of the Presbyterian Churches*, Edinburgh 1882. Indeed, in the very year of the publication of Logie's services, 1857, something new was happening at Old Greyfriar's, Edinburgh.

The initial signs of liturgical change are usually associated with Robert Lee who in the newly renovated Greyfriars invited his congregation to stand to sing and to kneel for prayer, and who began reading prayers from a printed book of which he was the author. Later, coloured windows were installed and a harmonium was used to accompany the singing. Ordered by Presbytery to discontinue these innovations in worship, Lee appealed to the General Assembly who ultimately only censured him for reading prayers from a printed book, though it urged him 'to conform to the common usage of the Church in regard to the manner of conducting public worship'.¹⁹ Lee complied for a while but trouble resumed after he read prayers at a wedding service, but his stroke, horse fall and ultimate demise prevented any definitive conclusion. The fact that a fourth edition of his prayer book *Prayers for Public Worship*, under the title *Order of Public Worship*, was reprinted in 1873, points to a demand and interest wider than Greyfriars Edinburgh.

Lee was accused of innovation, of making changes in worship. He exposed the weakness of the accusation in his 1864 publication, *The Reform of the Church of Scotland*. "We cannot make yesterday to-day", he wrote, "however we may cherish its memory or value its lessons", and added:

'Change is the order of the universe, the normal condition of all things mundane and human. Man may modify, he cannot prevent or arrest

it; he may use it to his own benefit, but he can no more abrogate this than any other of the laws of nature. The chariot of Divine Providence still moves on its glorious course, but it crushes those who stand in its way'.²⁰

And perhaps with full awareness of the growing Darwinian debate, he wrote:

'If the world continually go forward, and the Church stand still or go backward, what can happen but an eternal separation between science and religion; they who study God's works, and they who preach his Word regarding each other not as allies and friends, but rivals and enemies, and the multitude gradually imbibing the notion that He who inspired the Bible is not the same God who governs all things and made the world.'²¹

Lee's point was that as the world changes, or evolves, so also does Church life and with it, worship. Lee appealed to the Westminster *Directory*, particularly its silence on certain matters, to justify his practice. His opponents appealed to the *Directory* too, but to its context rather than its text. Both sides felt able to dispense with it when it did not suit their argument.

It was during the Lee controversy that G. W. Sprott, then in Ceylon, published his 1863 essay on the worship of the Church of Scotland. He too discussed the *Directory*, but did not regard this as the sole ancestor of Scottish worship. He suggested a wider gene pool, if you will, of *The Book of Common Order*, other Reformed rites, the Catholic Apostolic Church's rite or Irvingite as he termed it, and the Greek liturgies. In order to make sure there were informed changes, Sprott recommended that the clergy of the Church of Scotland should acquaint themselves with the Reformed and early liturgies, and 'prepare prayers of a simpler and purer type than those long addresses to the Deity which are not unfrequent – prayers purged of their well-known scraps of bad taste and nonsensical misquotations of Scripture which second-rate men rhyme over.'²² In addition, so Sprott suggested, 'there should be a self-constituted Society of the liturgical scholars in the Church, who would, after due time and full consideration of the whole subject, draw up a book of prayers for public worship and of forms for the administration of the sacraments and other special services, as a guide to the clergy'.²³

Sprott's suggestion inspired Dr. Cameron Lees and George Campbell of

Eastwood, who contacted R. H Story, and in the words of Campbell, ‘We three conspirators then met in Glasgow and agreed to sound the views of various like-minded ministers, and to invite them to attend a meeting for the purpose. This was held in Glasgow in 1865, as your Minutes show, at which the project was launched’.²⁴ The first page of the Minute Book 1865-1899, reads:

‘Mr. Wilson was called to the chair, and opened the meeting with prayer. Mr. Campbell was appointed Clerk to the meeting.

The Chairman having stated the object of the meeting to be the formation of a Society for the study of the ancient and reformed liturgies, and the preparation of prayers and other services adapted for the worship of the Church of Scotland;’²⁵

This was the founding of the Church Service Society, and its aim and purpose would be restated in Article V:

‘That the object of the Society shall be the study of the liturgies – ancient and modern- of the Christian Church, with a view to the preparation and publication of forms of Prayer for Public Worship, and services for the Administration of the Sacraments, the Celebration of Marriage, the Burial of the Dead, etc.’²⁶

Campbell acknowledged that Robert Lee had also been a crucial inspiration, and Lee did become a member of the Society, but seems to have been annoyed by the fact that the Society did not simply promote his liturgy. The reasons for that were ably expressed by A.K.H. Boyd after Lee’s death:

‘He had little ear for the melody of liturgical prayer. ... The genuine liturgical flow was quite lacking in most of Dr Lee’s prayers, which were to a considerable degree original. They were likewise, very naturally, flavoured with Dr Lee’s theology; which was more advanced than was in those days common.’²⁷

Article V of the Constitution allowed the Society to widen the liturgical gene pool by publishing liturgies of the past and present, and with the various editions of the *Euchologion*, to provide a new species of liturgy.²⁸ The Preface of the first edition of 1867 explained that it was not the intention of a private group of clergymen to introduce a liturgy into the Church and that, since the Kirk is a National branch of the Church Catholic, each clergyman has

the liberty to use whatever in the recorded devotions of that Church he finds most suitable to his congregation's needs.²⁹ The work for the various services was distributed amongst Sprott, J.H.Tait, Story, Cunningham, Dodds, W.Tait, Principal Campbell, Dr. McCulloch, Dr. Watson, Dr. Boyd, Cameron Lees and George Campbell.

The first edition did provide information about the wider gene pool. Thus the first baptismal rite is inspired by the Book of Common Order. Outlines of the Eucharist from Justin Martyr, Apostolic Constitutions, J. M. Neal's Eastern Orthodox rite, The Roman mass, some continental Reformed rites, the Church of England rite, as well as the Irvingites' and Mercersburg were given. A lectionary was offered and, in the last pages of the book, material for the Sabbath service from which selections could be made. The background information disappeared in the second edition of 1869, and the material for constructing Sunday morning and evening services together with actual forms for these was placed at the beginning. A well-known complaint against the sixth edition 1890 was that, in the words of Robertson, 'it shows the full extent of the Anglicanising spirit which was at work in the Society'.³⁰ The usual order of Scottish Morning and Evening worship was altered to the format found in Morning and Evening Prayer of the Church of England. The many editions testify both to the refining element at work in the Society, and also to the popularity of the *Euchologion*. Over 10,000 copies were sold, and it is estimated that by the turn of the century a third of the clergy were members of the Society.³¹ Robertson is correct when he says:

'...some, at least, within the Society, saw themselves to be preparing the way for something in the nature of a new BOOK OF COMMON ORDER, but providing the Church with material which could be used experimentally. To some extent this is what happened. The order for the Holy Communion from EUCHOLOGION was used at the General Assembly from 1890 to 1926, and PRAYERS FOR DIVINE SERVICE owes a debt to the same book.'³²

The forms of the *Euchologion* became the basis for devolution in the parishes, testified by the *Report of the Committee on Proper Conduct of Public Worship and Sacraments to the General Assembly* in 1890, and also the progenitor of the *Recommendations for the Proper Conduct of Public Worship and the Celebration of the Sacraments*, 1894.

The Church Service Society wanted to promote more frequent celebration of the

Communion, and so, regardless of the reality of Church of Scotland worship, this may be regarded as the centre piece. Probably the greatest inspiration for the Communion rite was the liturgy of the Catholic Apostolic Church, and that of the American German Reformed Church, its provisional liturgy itself being heavily inspired by the Catholic Apostolic Liturgy. In the second edition of the *Euchologion* 1869, for example, the Eucharistic liturgy was entitled 'The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper', and provided an optional exhortation after the prayer that followed the sermon at the Morning service, and a confession. After a hymn came the Grace, and then the words of institution, and an 'Address' inspired by the Westminster *Directory*, including the words 'Setting apart these elements by the Word and prayer to be sacramentally the body and blood of Christ'. The Creed followed and a prayer of approach, and the prayer of the veil from the Catholic Apostolic Church. The Eucharistic Prayer (but without introductory *Sursum corda*) followed, large sections of which were from the Catholic Apostolic rite. The words of institution had already been recited, and they were repeated at the distribution, and so did not feature in the Eucharistic prayer. The epiklesis has affinities with the 'provisional' liturgy which was well known to the compilers of the *Euchologion*. Words of administration were provided, and provision for successive tables, though this would become less common as receiving in the pews became the norm. In the sixth edition, 1890, the prayer of humble access of the Church of England was included, together with the *Agnus Dei*, before the Eucharistic Prayer. This latter was now introduced with 'lift up your hearts' with congregational response. The final words of the epiklesis were changed to 'with all His benefits, to our spiritual nourishment and growth in grace', suggesting that sacraments did give grace. In the final edition this paragraph would be further expanded.

Devolution is an appropriate term to describe how the *Euchologion* was adapted and used in the parishes- either oral adaptation or inspiration, as well as reading some of the prayers as set. Another example of devolution is represented by one of the founder members of the CSS, Dr. Cameron Lees. During his ministry in St. Giles' Cathedral, Edinburgh (1877-1909) he popularized innovations, and in 1884 published *A Book of Common Order for Sunday and Weekday Services*, which went through a number of editions. It drew heavily on the *Euchologion*, but also other sources, and no doubt represented some of his own composition. It was used for over forty years in St. Giles', and apparently in other churches too.³³

The Church Service Society tried to keep together both its broad church

and high church members. However, a number of the high church party, while remaining members, formed their own Society, the Scottish Church Society, in 1892. Membership also overlapped with the Aberdeen and Glasgow Ecclesiological Societies. The SCS, associated particularly with William Milligan, Thomas Leishman, John Macleod and James Cooper, was concerned to promote the Catholicity of the Church of Scotland, as part of the one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, which though concerned with ecclesiology, had liturgical implications. Milligan was a professor of divinity at Aberdeen, and his theological writings became the inspiration and foundation of the movement. The *Euchologion* strengthened the hand of those who sought to promote a more Catholic teaching on the Eucharist in the Kirk. The latter two ecclesiological Societies, founded in 1886 and 1893 respectively, and which amalgamated in 1903 as the Scottish Ecclesiological Society, sought to bring what was regarded as best practice in architecture and furnishings to the Church of Scotland, and though some have seen this as influence from the English Ecclesiological Society, the Ecclesiological interests of Thomas Muir seem to have pre-dated the English movement.³⁴ James Cooper was a leading light in this too. Robertson has remarked, 'Cooper's love of colour, his interest in form, his conservative spirit, his interest in the medieval Church, stamped their mark upon the society.'³⁵ In some ways the interests of CSS, SCS and SES are given concrete expression in the work of John Macleod and James Cooper. Macleod became minister of Duns in 1862. A complaint was made against his innovations which included the observance of Christmas, Easter, Ascension and Whitsun, the un-Presbyterian symbols IHS on a cover on the communion table, a cross on the font cover, a printed communion service, and unauthorized hymns. Macleod left Duns for Govan before the matter was finally adjudicated but, as Douglas Murray noted, he had little difficulty in establishing the same observances at Govan, and successfully defended them when they were challenged before the Presbytery of Glasgow.³⁶ Between abandoning the old church in Govan and the building of the new one, he had introduced instrumental music, the substitution of evening for afternoon service, the regular chanting of the psalter, the use of canticles and more frequent celebration of communion. Macleod declared, 'In these days of changes and improvements in worship it is well to remember that all improvements are more or less spurious and defective unless the Service of the Holy Table is set in order, and receives its proper place.'³⁷ When the new church opened, the Dedication Service and the services of the first few Sundays were printed and placed in the hands of the people.³⁸

The new church was the work of architect Rowand Anderson, who had studied with Gilbert Scott in England. Kirkpatrick remarked:

‘The dimensions, style and treatment of the structure – its conformity to the Scottish type of early English Gothic, its spacious nave, the lofty pitch of its roof, its large clerestory windows, its narrow side aisles, its single transept, its noble chancel, its separate baptistery, its daily service chapel, its devotionally calculated proportions, its general severity and its impressiveness of aspect- all have some definite correspondence to, and were ruled strictly by, the special requirements of the Church to be erected. That Church was to be the Mother-Church of an important Parish.’³⁹

For the new building Macleod managed to enlist the services of Charles E. Kempe, and twelve of the stained glass windows were his work. The building and its furnishings represented an incarnation of the liturgical ideals of CSS, and SCS.

James Cooper was a minister in Broughty Ferry (1873-81) and Aberdeen (1881-98) and in many ways represented all the worst fears of those who regarded the work of CSS as a restoration of Popery or a sell out to Anglicanism. Cooper read the Tractarians and liked them, seemed to have had little sympathy with the Reformation – ‘the Reformation age has always rather repelled than attracted me’.⁴⁰ He was convinced that a liturgical revival was essential, and wrote:

‘Whatever else may be the duty of a Scottish Minister, he must aim at reviving the spirit of worship; this..., I may say without boasting, I have laboured through my whole ministry to do.’⁴¹

At Broughty Ferry he busied himself buying linen and sacramental plate from English suppliers. The plate was of medieval design. He was instrumental in adding a chancel to the church, and presented the congregation with a brass lectern. He introduced observances of the Christian year. He composed a baptismal service for the church, pressed for quarterly communion and had the choir learn the *Te Deum* and the *Dies Irae*. He embodied what would come to be called Scoto-Catholicism. At Aberdeen he used printed services. In April 1882 a petition signed by a minority of the Kirk Session was forwarded to the Presbytery of Aberdeen, complaining of high church innovations. He was eventually censured, mainly regarding his manner of propounding his doctrine and of introducing his practices rather than his doctrine and practices per se.

His assistant, T. N. Adamson, a member of CSS, would later feature in the Barnhill case, which set some limits to high church practices.

The liturgical revival was not limited to the National Church. The United Presbyterian Devotional Service Association was founded in 1882, to assist in elevating the standard of public devotions.⁴² The object of the Association included fostering interest in the history and literature of public worship, and three of its initial papers were published in 1882 under the title *Devotional Services of the Church*. The August 1884 *The United Presbyterian Magazine* reported that at the first annual meeting in May a paper entitled 'The Requirements for the Conduct of Public Devotions' had been given by Professor Calderwood. The Association was later to compile *Presbyterian Forms of Worship*, 1891, with further editions in 1892 and 1894. In the Free Church of Scotland the Public Worship Association was formed in 1891 and, under the convenorship of D.D. Bannerman, produced *A New Directory of Public Worship* in 1898. It is interesting that in 1864, the same year as the Church of Scotland report, the Free Church of Scotland published the report of a committee appointed 'To Consider Generally the Legislation of the Church on the Subject of Innovations in Worship.' In this context, it was the voice of James Begg who constantly spoke out against all innovations, seemingly believing that Presbyterian worship had been frozen for all time in the seventeenth century.⁴³

Praise in song is a crucial part of worship, and developments and changes in what was sung and how were already taking place before and apart from the Church Service Society and the associations of the other two major Presbyterian bodies. A crucial change was the adoption of hymns in addition to metrical psalms. Prior to union, the Relief Church had published a collection of 231 sacred songs and hymns in 1798, and after the formation of the United Presbyterian Church, a hymn book was published in 1851. The Church of Scotland published what most have judged as a rather poor collection of hymns in 1861 and, as noted earlier, A. K. H. Boyd was responsible for an improved book, which was finally adopted in 1870. It was expanded from 200 hymns to 442 in 1888. It was expanded even further with co-operation of the United Presbyterians and Free Church of Scotland to become the *Church Hymnary*, 1898. Though taken for granted now, hymns were regarded as another innovation in worship. The struggle in the Free Church is typified by the Overture made to the Free Church Presbytery of Hamilton by Mr. Buchan in 1853, which argued for the use of hymns. It was answered in an anonymous pamphlet, thought to be by John Jaffray, entitled *Remarks on the Innovations*

in the *Public Worship of God, Proposed by the Free Presbytery of Hamilton*, 1854. This author argued that the psalms and unauthorized paraphrases were quite sufficient; as for hymnbooks, which may be valued by some as pretty toys in peaceful and prating times, they will be found nothing but an incumbrance and a weariness in the day of battle and of suffering.⁴⁴ The author also suggested that to allow hymns would lead to chanting, intoning and the introduction of instrumental music. Looking back across the nineteenth century, Sir Archibald Geike regarded the use of instrumental music as the most remarkable change that had occurred in Scottish services. He wrote:

‘Had any one in the earlier half of last century been audacious enough to predict that in a couple of generations the ‘kist o’ whistles’, which had long been banished as a sign and symbol of black popery, would be reintroduced and welcomed before the end of the century, he would have been laughed to scorn, or branded as himself a limb of the prelatie Satan.’⁴⁵

Not even James Begg’s 271 page diatribe against the use of organs could stop the instrument’s advance, which was given a boost by the visit of Moody and Sankey in 1873.⁴⁶ In the survey of Church services in Dundee reported in the *Piper o’ Dundee* newspaper between 1888 and 1890, nearly all had an organ. To suggest that all Scottish churches embraced new forms of worship would be wrong- indeed, in some places it would seem that the liturgical revolution never happened. But most were affected in some way or other by these new species.

It should be noted that these changes were not simply changes in Presbyterianism. A similar change happened in the Church of England and, if the major catalyst was Tractarianism, it was by no means the only one. The clerk lining out Sternhold and Hopkins metrical psalms, perhaps accompanied by a parish band, would be swept away by the introduction of hymns and organs. High Church ceremonial had its evangelical counterpart, which wanting more freedom from the *Book of Common Prayer*, and more independently composed prayers. In English Congregationalism, liturgies began to be produced, hymns flourished, organs were introduced and churches were built in the Gothic style. So what was going on?

In theories of evolution, there is almost as much disagreement in the scientific community about minute details as there is on liturgy amongst liturgical

scholars. But generally, evolution is regarded as being an internal response in present forms of life, to adapt to external events. Thus Sean Carroll, in *Endless Forms Most Beautiful*, 2005, pioneered evolutionary developmental biology theory, and noting that all life has much DNA in common, argued that the Hox genes are like a tool box, and which at times of drastic change act as switches that can be triggered to make changes allowing a species to change and evolve.⁴⁷ Though he and the more recent book by Peter Ward and Joe Kirschvink, *A New History of Life*, state that homo Neanderthal did not contribute to the homo Sapiens gene pool, studies in the journals *Science* 2014 and *Nature* 2014 and 2015 gave detailed evidence for the fact that non-Africans are the product of interbreeding of homo Neanderthal with homo Sapiens, giving Europeans between 2% and 4% Neanderthal genomes.- a hybrid.⁴⁸

I want to suggest that what we witness in the nineteenth century liturgical revivals in Scotland and on the other side of the border, and in other places too, represents an ecclesiastical Hox gene or tool kit, switching on to adapt and evolve to changing conditions. The new species such as the *Euchologion*, also interbred with the older forms so that hybrids devolved or evolved in the parishes. The older forms did not just die out. They co-existed alongside the newer forms, and some authors 'interbred' them to create hybrid forms. Examples of these latter are *Prayers for Public Worship* by Dr. John Service of Hyndland Church, Glasgow 1885, and *Common Prayer and Praise* by David Watson of St. Oswald's Woodside, Glasgow 1902.

What of the external changes that triggered this liturgical evolution? In evolutionary theory, though there is evidence of asteroid impact, the mass extinctions and major evolutionary changes seem to have been dictated mainly by climate change, high levels of hydrogen sulfide, either too much or too little oxygen, and change in sea levels. All of these seem to be associated with oscillatory shifts in Earth's rotation axis, or polar wander. The analogous equivalent for the Church, as always, is a major shift in the culture. H. G. Schenk characterized the essence of nineteenth century Europe thus:

'Utopian dreams for the future side by side with nostalgia for the past; a marked nihilistic mood accompanied by a fervent yearning for a faith; serious attempts to bring about a Christian revival followed, in an admittedly marginal case, by the abandonment of faith on the part of the former apologist; the tug-of-war between the old religion and new ideologies- these are some of the unresolved contradictions that lie at the

core of the movement. No shorter formula can be devised to define the essence of Romanticism.’⁴⁹

Those who lived in the period that we now call Romanticism knew it was a period of drastic and swift change. It included industrialization, urbanization, increased education, as well as the rise of higher criticism in biblical studies, and the challenges brought by scientific enquiry. Victorian Britain was a period of swift social change. The Royal Commission which reported in 1906 on the liturgical turmoil in the Church of England said, ‘the law of public worship in the Church of England is too narrow for the religious life of the present generation’.⁵⁰ It noted that modern thought and feeling are characterized by a care for ceremonial and a sense of dignity in worship which were not similarly felt when the law on worship took its shape. Wasn’t Dr. Robert Lee of Greyfriars saying that very same thing some forty years before, when he wrote in 1864 that ‘the National Church no longer satisfies the religious tastes and other demands of the population’?⁵¹

We live at a time of swift change in culture too, with different needs from the nineteenth or even the twentieth centuries but in which the churches once again apparently no longer satisfy the religious tastes and other demands of the population. The Barna Group’s recent report regarding 14-33 year olds in the USA observed that church was not important to them, but on those occasions when they worship, they prefer worship spaces that are quiet and decorated in a classic style. They do not generally look for a church facility that caters to the whims of pop culture; they want a community that calls them to deeper meaning- a place where worship and the community creates an environment that engages and inspires⁵². Finding the forms of worship that will do that is of course the great challenge. Quiet moments and contemplative reflection, and a mixture of the mystery of transcendence together with immanent reality seems to be the quest. In this the Church Service Society- as indeed all those who are concerned with worship- need to be the liturgical Hox genes or liturgical genetic switches to help adapt and evolve new forms. It is of course already happening, but it may actually mean some liturgical genetic engineering to ensure that mutations result in worship that both glorifies God and feeds the contemporary human soul. In nature not all mutations are good, and in church, too, some liturgical mutations under the guise of creative modernization result in Frankenstein’s liturgical monster. Our ultimate task-and goal- is for all worshippers, minister and people, to be in the presence of the triune God, and enjoy the divine forever. That is what the founders of the Church Service

Society did in and for their day, and they would expect their successors 150 years later to do no different. May God give us grace and the prophetic wisdom to do so.

(Endnotes)

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- 2 A. C. Cheyne, *The Transforming of the Kirk. Victorian Scotland's Religious Revolution*, The Saint Andrew Press, Edinburgh 1983, the title of chapter 4.
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- 5 Alexander R. Macewen, *Life and Letters of John Cairns DD LLD*, Hodder and Stoughton, London 1895, pp.321-322.
- 6 Anne Breadalbane (Anne Mary MacLeod) *Memories of the Manse*, Nims, Troy, NY 1885, p.47.
- 7 *The Record of the Free Church of Scotland* October 1st 1863, pp.350-353.
- 8 Dr. Norman Macleod, in his *Reminiscences of a Highland Parish*, Third Edition Strahan and co, London, 1871, written in mid-century, recorded a typical communion service at that time. According to Macleod, because of the unreliability of the weather, communion in the Highlands was once a year in the summer. He wrote: "The previous Friday had been, as usual, set apart for a day of fasting and prayer. Then the officiating clergy preached specially upon the Communion, and on the character required in those who intended to partake of it; and young persons, after instruction and examination, were for the first time formally admitted (as at confirmation in the Episcopal Church) into full membership.....The service in the church to-day was in English, and a wooden pulpit, or 'tent', as it is called, (I remember when it was made of boat sails,) was, according to custom, erected near the old arch in the churchyard, where service was conducted in Gaelic. ...The Communion service of the Church of Scotland is a very simple one, and may be briefly described. It is celebrated in the church, of course, after the service and prayers are ended. In most cases a long, narrow table, like a bench, covered with white cloth, occupies the whole length of the church, and the communicants are seated on each side of it. ...The presiding minister, after reading an account of the institution from the Gospels and Epistles, and giving a few words of suitable instruction, offers up what is called the consecration prayer, thus setting apart the bread and wine before him as symbols of the body and blood of Jesus. After this he takes the bread, and, breaking it, gives it to the communicants near him, saying "This is my body broken for you, eat ye all of it". He afterwards hands to them the cup, saying, "This cup is the new testament in my blood, shed for the remission of the sins of many, drink ye all of it; for as oft as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show forth the Lord's death until He come again.' The bread and wine are then passed from the communicants to each other, assisted by the elders who are in attendance. In solemn silence the Lord is remembered, and by every true communicant is received as the living bread, the life of their souls, even as they receive into their bodies the bread and wine. During the silence of communion every head is bowed down, and many an eye and heart are filled, as the thoughts of Jesus at such a time mingle

with those departed ones, with whom they enjoy, in and through Him, the communion of saints. Then follows an exhortation by the minister of faith and love and renewed obedience; and then the 103d Psalm is generally sung, and while singing it the worshippers retire from the table, which is soon filled with other communicants; and this is repeated several times, until the whole service is ended with prayer and praise.

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- 32 Robertson, Thesis, p.225.
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