



The Eucharistic Theology of Edward Bouverie Pusey (Anglican-Episcopal Theology and History)

Brian Douglas

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This book concerns the eucharistic theology of the nineteenth century Anglican priest, theologian, scholar and leader of the Oxford Movement, Edward Bouverie Pusey (1800-1882). The book focuses on the sources, context and doctrine of Pusey's eucharistic theology within the context of his life, his involvement in the Oxford Movement and beyond. It argues that Pusey's eucharistic theology was an integral part of his scholarly life and a developed expression of moderate realist sacramental theology, which in its depth and creativity anticipated and harmonised with modern theological reflection on the Eucharist.

The book begins in Chapter 1 with an overview of Pusey's life, his academic work and involvement in the early years of the Oxford Movement, particularly focussing on his involvement with the theology of Germany and the way this represented a turning point in Pusey's theological convictions but which also established a mediating position within his theological development and epistemological commitments. The view that Pusey spent his life regretting his involvement with the liberal theology of Germany is questioned and Pusey's adoption of a more mediating style of thinking and way of knowing is assessed in relation to his eucharistic theology.

Chapter 2 examines the Anglican eucharistic tradition, analysing the philosophical assumptions of Anglican eucharistic theology, principally moderate realism and moderate nominalism, and how the interaction of these assumptions determine the multiform nature of Anglican eucharistic theology. Pusey is placed firmly within the dimension of moderate realism, linking sacramental signs in a real way to what they effectively signify and as the means by which sacramental grace is conveyed.

In Chapters 3 and 4 the vast array of Pusey's written documents on the Eucharist, both published and unpublished, are examined in depth. The sermon of 1843, *The Holy Eucharist: A Comfort to the Penitent* is crucial in the development of Pusey's thinking and life and subsequent exposition and reflection on the Eucharist. This sermon acts as a pivot between Pusey's earlier eucharistic theology and what followed in later life. Chapter 3 therefore examines Pusey's writings on the Eucharist up to the sermon of 1843, while Chapter 4 looks closely at Pusey's writings on the Eucharist after the sermon of 1843. The underlying and consistent themes throughout this analysis of Pusey's work on the Eucharist are his consistent use of moderate realist philosophical assumptions, his indebtedness to biblical, patristic and Anglican sources and his creative application of theological and philosophical reflection in the development of eucharistic doctrine within the context of the Oxford Movement.

Chapter 5 assesses Pusey as a theologian, focusing on his eucharistic theology as an essential link in the chain of Anglican eucharistic theology and arguing that such a developed statement of eucharistic theology gives Pusey's work worth and currency in the modern era. His commitment to a sacramentality of moderate realism is his major epistemological commitment along with the belief that knowledge of God is not limited to what can be known by human reason. Pusey is seen to embrace a wide-ranging view of ways of knowing which include not only human reason but more mystical and supernatural knowledge. Pusey's epistemological commitments are seen to fit well with modern sacramental thinking even though his commitment to a particular hermeneutic of 'Catholic truth', somewhat narrowly defined by a historical

fundamentalism, limits the critical nature of his work to a degree, although it is argued, not fatally.

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