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MARK J. CARTLEDGE

# A New *Via Media*: Charismatics and the Church of England in the Twenty-First Century

**Many Charismatic Anglicans sense tensions between their experience of the Spirit and church order – not least in the area of worship. Mark Cartledge argues that the two need to be held together in creative tension. He examines in detail the relationships between charisma and office; between spontaneity and liturgical order in worship; and between story and doctrine.**

## Introduction<sup>1</sup>

To be a Pentecostal or Charismatic and a committed member of the Church of England is a peculiar thing indeed. Anglicanism arose from the melting pot of the English Reformation with concerns as much political as theological. Pentecostalism has its roots in the Wesleyan Holiness tradition as well as Afro-American Slave religion.<sup>2</sup> Anglicanism is certainly an inheritor of the Enlightenment as well as the Patristic credal Faith; while Pentecostalism emphasizes the orality of faith through testimony and song rather than articles of faith and canon law. However, since the early 1960s, when the Episcopal priest Dennis Bennet experienced his baptism in the Spirit in Van Nuys California, pentecostal spirituality has found a place within Anglicanism.<sup>3</sup> The focal date in the Church of England was the establishment in 1964 of the Fountain Trust, launched to promote charismatic renewal within the churches.<sup>4</sup> Seventeen years later the Church of England officially took notice of the charismatic movement with its report, *The Charismatic Movement in the Church of England*.<sup>5</sup> This was followed in 1986 by Josephine Bax's General Synod report

1 I am grateful to my colleagues and friends at St John's College for discussions on this subject. In particular I am grateful to Alan Bartlett and Mark Bonnington for reading drafts of this paper, and to Charles Read for conversations.

2 Walter J. Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide*, Hendrickson, Peabody MA 1997, p 2.

3 Peter Hocken, *Streams of Renewal: The Origins and Early Development of the Charismatic Movement in Great Britain*, Paternoster, Carlisle 1986, 1997, pp 108-110, 179-189.

4 Hocken, *Streams of Renewal*, pp 73-78, 115-122.

5 General Synod of the Church of England, CIO, London 1981.

of renewal through the charismatic and Cursillo movements.<sup>6</sup> Although the Anglican Consultative Council produced a report in 1987 edited by Colin Craston, entitled *Open to the Spirit: Anglicans and the Experience of Renewal*,<sup>7</sup> it was not until 1991 that the Doctrine Commission of the Church of England produced a statement on the subject of pneumatology for the General Synod, entitled *We Believe in the Holy Spirit*.<sup>8</sup> Finally, the so-called 'Toronto Blessing' precipitated a report by Anne Richards on behalf of the Board of Mission of the General Synod in 1997.<sup>9</sup> So at last pneumatology is on the agenda of the Church of England!

In the past, Anglicans have argued that the greatest virtue of Anglicanism is its comprehensiveness. It does not favour Protestantism over Catholicism but treads a middle way, a *via media*.<sup>10</sup> It is Reformed Catholicism, a rare combination demonstrated in the Reformed articles of faith, the Thirty-Nine Articles, and the retention of the Catholic order of Bishops, Priests and Deacons. More recently, Alister McGrath has suggested that Anglicanism can obtain a new form of *via media*, that is between fundamentalism on the one hand and liberalism on the other hand.<sup>11</sup> He argues that such a *via media* is the path that a renewed Anglicanism must take. Here, of course, Pentecostals will hear the echo of Harvey Cox, who proposed that in the context of postmodernity Pentecostalism itself demonstrates the tension between fundamentalism and experientialism.<sup>12</sup>

I would like to suggest that Charismatics within the Church of England may wish to pursue another form of *via media* neglected by some Charismatics and most definitely by the Church Establishment. This *via media* is between the *charisma* of the Holy Spirit and spiritual gifts on the one hand and the institutionalized nature of the Church of England on the other. Whereas some Charismatics have jettisoned some aspects of the institutional life of the Church of England, others within the Church of England have marginalized *charisma* and have so routinized the Christian life that spontaneity and participation have been domesticated. At the centre of this tension between *charisma* and institutionalization are questions of authority and power.<sup>13</sup> The history of the Church shows how badly the institutionalized Church has dealt with *charisma* that has been deemed 'out of control'. Yet, I argue,

6 Josephine Bax, *The Good Wine: Spiritual Renewal in the Church of England*, CHP, London 1986.

7 CHP, London 1987.

8 CHP, London 1991.

9 Anne Richards, *The Toronto Experience: An Exploration of the Issues*, Board of Mission Occasional Paper No.7, CHP, London 1997.

10 Stephen W. Sykes, *The Integrity of Anglicanism*, Mowbray, Oxford 1978 p 16, states that: 'The term has no precise signification... the *Via Media* ... is a way of referring to the unique outcome of the Anglican reformation and its distinctive, but not unambiguous relationship to Roman Catholicism on the one hand and Protestantism on the other'. There is a difference between seeking a middle path

and holding the polarities in tension. The *via media* suggested in this paper aims to hold such tensions rather than provide a middle path.

11 Alister McGrath, *The Renewal of Anglicanism*, SPCK, London 1993, pp 99-133.

12 Harvey Cox, *Fire From Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-First Century*, Cassell, London 1996, pp 299-321; cf. Mark J. Cartledge, 'The Future of Glossolalia: Fundamentalist or Experientialist?', *Religion* 28.3 (1998) pp 233-244, in which I observe the problematic nature of both terms.

13 This is most obviously described by Martyn Percy, *Power and the Church: Ecclesiology in an Age of Transition*, Cassell, London 1998.

it is the institution which needs the *charisma* and *vice versa*.<sup>14</sup> I shall clarify the nature of this *via media* by means of three dilemmas or tensions (although more could be mentioned) before suggesting a charismatic-trinitarian *via media* as a way of articulating a theology of *charisma* for Charismatics within the institution of the Church of England. These are tensions which, I believe, Charismatics in the Church of England are required to hold if they are to be true to both their commitment to the Pentecostal and Charismatic traditions as well as the Anglican tradition. If these tensions are not held successfully, the dangers are obvious. Either one will be forced to cut loose and lose one's Anglican identity, or one will become routinized and lose charismatic identity. There are sufficient examples of both to alert us to the dangers. So what are these dilemmas?

### Charisma versus office

The main theme of this paper is the conflict between the charismatic as evidenced in the gifting of individuals within the Church and the institutionalized structures as we have inherited them. This conflict has often been expressed in terms of the clash between *charisma* and office, or between charismatic authority and institutionalized authority. Sociologists of religion, following Max Weber,<sup>15</sup> have maintained that all religious groups follow a distinct pattern of emergence around a charismatic figure, endowed with extraordinary power otherwise known as *charisma*, who starts the group. This phase of the group's life is characterized by enthusiasm. Since this charismatic phase cannot be sustained there follows a gradual routinization of *charisma*.<sup>16</sup> Eventually we have a bureaucratic hierarchy where power is located in 'office' rather than in the spontaneity of the charismatic individual.<sup>17</sup> The theory is well documented as it begins to explain the life of different religious groups.<sup>18</sup> It is also argued that the NT itself presents a similar

14 Throughout this paper, I shall note the five dilemmas of institutionalization as defined by Thomas F. O'Dea in *The Sociology of Religion*, Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs NJ 1966, and in *Sociology and the Study of Religion: Theory, Research, Interpretation*, Basic Books, New York 1970, pp 240-255.

15 Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, Collier-Macmillan, London 1964, pp 358f, defines *charisma* as 'a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities'; cf. Weber's *The Sociology of Religion*, Methuen & Co, London 1966, pp 2f, 60f.

16 See Weber, *Theory*, pp 364, 170, who argues that this is the case upon the death of a charismatic leader, when followers routinize *charisma* in order to meet the need for security. Martyn Percy, 'The City on a Beach: Future Prospects for the Charismatic Movement at the End of the Twentieth

Century', in *Charismatic Christianity: Sociological Perspectives* (eds Stephen Hunt, Malcolm Hamilton and Tony Walter) Macmillan, London 1997, pp 213f, suggests that the charismatic renewal in the Church of England has been routinized over time. It has failed to transform the structures and displace the liberal hierarchies, so that by the time it has come of age and is ready to dialogue it has lost its cutting edge.

17 The charismatic movement in the Church of England does not fit this pattern exactly, since it marks 'a renewal of' and 'the work of the Spirit' rather than a distinct charismatic phase around a particular personality at the outset of a group. Nevertheless, insights from such a theoretical model can be useful when used critically.

18 See, for example, Margaret M. Poloma, 'The "Toronto Blessing": Charisma, Institutionalization, and Revival', *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 36.2 (1997) pp 257-271.

picture.<sup>19</sup> On this view, the earlier Pauline epistles suggest that the church was fundamentally charismatic with every member of the church expected to participate fully in its charismatic life. By the time we arrive at the so-called Catholic epistles we have a settled ministry and office holders.<sup>20</sup> *Charisma* has been routinized and traditionally Catholic order has been taken as normative from this particular picture. It has subsequently 'read' it back into other sections of the NT, especially the Acts of the Apostles.<sup>21</sup> Hans Küng comments:

The entire NT carefully avoids using secular terms of office to describe functions of the community (*arche, time, telos*) because all of them express a relationship of rulers and ruled. Instead, and by direct contrast, the NT speaks of 'service' (*diakonia*). Still, more inclusive, for Paul, is precisely the concept of charism (cf. Rom. 12.6-8), which... describes with theological precision all the services and functions in the Church. The charism cannot be subsumed under the heading of ecclesiastical office, but all Church offices can be subsumed under the charism.<sup>22</sup>

Of course, the problem with using a Weberian conception of *charisma* is that so often the conception is also 'read' back into the NT, thus confusing two distinct meanings of the term. So it is useful to re-acquaint oneself with the Pauline conception in order to provide a corrective. Max Turner's work on the lexical semantics of *charisma* is probably the most up to date scholarship on the subject. He argues that for Paul *charisma* means no more than '(gracious) gift'.<sup>23</sup> It does not have any specific sense of referring to 'spiritual gifts'. Turner argues that in terms of Paul's language we are forced to recognize that some charismatic functions were also offices (e.g. teacher, 1 Cor. 12.29; Eph. 4.11) and this means that such functions had a certain sense of permanency, were recognized by the Church, authorized in some way, legitimated and remunerated.<sup>24</sup> Therefore he argues that the antithesis between the earlier Pauline and Pastorals on the subject of ministry is overdrawn.<sup>25</sup> Indeed, it can be argued that for Paul such antithesis between

19 However, it is interesting to see how much space Hans Küng devotes to the section on 'The Church as the Creation of the Spirit', despite his interest in aspects of institutionalization: *The Church*, Search Press, London 1968, pp 150-190.

20 The antithesis between *charisma* and office is presented by Ernst Käsemann, *Essays on New Testament Themes*, SCM, London 1964, pp 63-94.

21 Küng notes how often Roman Catholic textbooks on ecclesiology are based upon the Pastoral epistles and Acts rather than the Pauline epistles, see: *The Church*, p 179.

22 Küng, *The Church*, p 187.

23 Max Turner, *The Holy Spirit and Spiritual Gifts: Then and Now*, Paternoster, Carlisle 1996, pp 262-265, argues that the meaning

of *charisma* is based on the verb *charizomai* (to give graciously) rather than the noun *charis* (grace). In terms of what we would consider as the spiritual gifts of 1 Cor. 12.1-10, Paul uses other words to qualify *charisma*, namely: *energumata* (workings of the Spirit), *pneumatika* (things of the Spirit), *diakonia* (acts of service) and *phanerosis* (manifestations of the Spirit). For a more technical discussion see Max Turner, 'Modern Linguistics and the New Testament', in *Hearing the New Testament* (ed. Joel B. Green), Eerdmans, Grand Rapids 1995, pp 146-174; contra James D.G. Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, SCM, London 1975, pp 199-256.

24 Turner, *The Holy Spirit*, p 282.

25 Turner, *The Holy Spirit*, p 283.

*charisma* and office does not exist in a sharp sense.<sup>26</sup> However, this does not mean that it is not an issue for the contemporary Church which has overly stressed institutional structures at the expense of the giftedness of its members. But it does mean that a Weberian reading of the dilemma between *charisma* and institutionalization, while a useful sociological theory for reflection on the contemporary Church, cannot be imported back into the NT!

The most recent Pentecostal scholarship also raises questions regarding established NT interpretation. It rejects the older traditional evangelical position that doctrine can be derived only from teaching material in the Bible and not from narrative. Recent scholarship insists that Luke was not only a careful historian but also a sensitive theologian.<sup>27</sup> The narrative of Luke-Acts is a theologically imbued literary work, which can be used to derive normative doctrines. In the area of ministry Roger Stronstad has argued that Acts gives us a normative doctrine of the *prophethood of all believers*.<sup>28</sup> Since Pentecost all Christians baptized in the Holy Spirit have been able to exercise a prophetic ministry. Followers of the eschatological prophet, Jesus Christ, have become themselves an eschatological community of prophets. They are empowered for witness and other activities, and they enable the community of prophets to be extended by their ministry.<sup>29</sup> Stronstad argues that had the Reformers stressed this insight instead of working with the given language of Medieval Catholicism, then the prophethood of believers would have been used instead of the language of the priesthood of all believers.<sup>30</sup> Stronstad believes that the prophethood of all believers has more biblical support than the language of priesthood and therefore should be more normative for the church today; it is Luke's 'all-embracing, pervasive category for the people of God'.<sup>31</sup>

At this point I would like to engage with probably one of the most significant Anglican statements, the Doctrine Commission report of 1991. It states that:

Among the great merits of the charismatic movement is the way in which it takes seriously the capacity of the Holy Spirit to transform lives in the here and now. The charismatic movement itself is surely in part a protest against over-rigid ecclesiastical structures, which embody a claim that the Spirit can

26 See: Ronald Y. K. Fung, 'Charismatic Versus Organized Ministry? An Examination of an Alleged Antithesis', *Evangelical Quarterly* 52 (1980) pp 195-214; also Ronald Y. K. Fung, 'Function or Office? A Survey of the New Testament Evidence', *Evangelical Review of Theology* 8 (1984) pp 16-39.

27 See: Kenneth J. Archer, 'Pentecostal Hermeneutics: Retrospect and Prospect', *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 8 (1996) pp 63-81, and earlier articles by Roger Stronstad: 'Trends in Pentecostal Hermeneutics', *Paraclete* 22.3 (1988) pp 1-12; 'The Hermeneutics of Lucan Historiography', *Paraclete* 22.4 (1988) pp 5-17; and 'The Holy Spirit in Luke-Acts: A

Synthesis of Luke's Pneumatology', *Paraclete* 23.1 (1989) pp 18-26.

28 Roger Stronstad, 'The Prophethood of all Believers: A Study of Luke's Charismatic Theology', in *Pentecostalism in Context: Essays in Honour of William W. Menzies* (ed. Wonsuk Ma and Robert P. Menzies) Sheffield Academic Press JPTS 11, 1997 pp 60-77; Roger Stronstad, *The Prophethood of All Believers: A Study in Luke's Charismatic Theology*, Sheffield Academic Press JPTS 16, 1999.

29 Stronstad, *Prophethood* (1999), ch 7.

30 Stronstad, 'Prophethood' (1997), p 61.

31 Stronstad, *Prophethood* (1999), p 114.

be 'dispensed', yet not in such a way as fundamentally to transform either the individual or the community. Nevertheless, if the call to holiness on the part of the Church is taken seriously by Charismatics, they sometimes show much less awareness of what it means to affirm unity and catholicity.<sup>32</sup>

The report suggest that there is a temptation to see unity in terms of uniformity. A social doctrine of the Trinity, which emphasizes unity in diversity, is a way of holding differences together in community. Differences of personality, they claim, affect spiritual diet significantly. Therefore we must see the Holy Spirit as operating in different ways.

The Doctrine Commission, recognized, however, that there is a conflict between the power of the Spirit and the power of the world (including the institution of the Church).<sup>33</sup> The substance of authority is power with its 'qualitative nature' being dominance. The Church as an institution in the world demonstrates these properties, while life in power of the Spirit is characterized by self-giving not dominance. But how does this power shape such a worldly institution as the Church? The report recognizes the ambivalence of power and structures. Organization, structure and authoritative decision-making bodies are essential for any organizational institution. The report argues that it would do no harm to recognize these worldly power and dominance structures are those to which the Church is called and for which we must be responsible. Since such structures are under the Spirit's judgment, it is possible to work at them, presumably in order to rectify them (but this is implicit).<sup>34</sup> Of course, the problem with this reading of institutional power is that it still gives the greatest weight to the institution, but then an instrument of the institution could do no less.<sup>35</sup> The position of Hans Küng has been inverted once again!

### **Spontaneity and freedom in worship versus liturgical order**

One aspect of the Church of England's tradition which is a given and which may not be removed is the fact that it is a liturgical church. It has a set liturgy which is authorized by the institution (General Synod and Parliament) and which both regulates the worshipping life of the Church and regulates doctrine. It belongs to the *esse* of the tradition, even if that concept is relativized by twentieth century liturgical revision. So any charismatic engagement with the issue of worship must consider the question of liturgy. Yet many Charismatics consider that liturgy is of the letter and that the letter kills, whereas the Spirit gives life. The influence of John Wimber upon the Church of England meant that not only were Vineyard choruses in vogue but authorized liturgy was abandoned. Instead, the Vineyard liturgy of songs and choruses followed by a sermon and then a time of ministry has become the norm in many Anglican churches, thus making them indistinguishable from the Vineyard denomination, except perhaps for the building.

32 Doctrine Commission, *We Believe*, p 86.

33 *We Believe*, pp 107-111.

34 *We Believe*, p 110.

35 This suggests the dilemma of mixed motivation and administrative order (O'Dea, *Sociology of Religion*, pp 92f). Since it is

the clergy who interpret the Church's teachings, these are understood and applied in ways which express and maintain the interests of the church establishment. The individuals involved have vested interests in the structure as it is.

So how can Charismatics maintain the Anglican tradition and instill spontaneity and freedom?

Jeremy Fletcher and Christopher Cocksworth identify a number of issues which can assist us in this matter. They argue that within a Trinitarian understanding the Spirit is the bond of communion between the Father and the Son. The Spirit is also a 'friend of love' and the 'Spirit of fellowship'. 'In the Spirit the Son and the Father have fellowship with each other and speak words of love to each other. In the Spirit we have fellowship with the Son and the Father and we speak words of love to the Son and through the Son to the Father. In the Spirit we have fellowship with each other and speak words of love to each other'.<sup>36</sup> They argue that this language of love involves time-honoured words and actions as well as spontaneous words and actions. Just as the Spirit gave the people of God texts of worship (e.g. the Song of Moses) and prayers (some of the Psalms), these became liturgically used texts within the context of worship. These texts were also used within the early Church's worship and injected with new Christological significance.<sup>37</sup> Therefore, the polarity between fixed and free worship may not be an accurate reflection of the process of worship in the early Church. Indeed, Fletcher and Cocksworth argue that this present period in the Church of England is a period of upheaval: not only is there evidence of the Spirit's work in Charismatic renewal, but there is also a renewal of the liturgy.<sup>38</sup> Once again liturgical text and spontaneity in worship are converging.

However, it is necessary to recognize that all liturgy is socially conditioned and that there are different movements in spirituality which will inevitably challenge a given set of social norms located behind liturgy. That is, they will come into conflict with not only liturgical order but social order as well. Josephine Bax records that:

A diocesan bishop said to me, 'It is so wonderful that we can talk to each other about how we relate to Jesus.' Others, each brought up to believe that one must never show even the most spiritual of emotions, or share the deeper side of one's nature, find this hard to take. Brought up to despise emotion, they tend to dismiss it as superficial or lightweight. They are used to repressing this side of themselves, which in recent English culture was suppressed but which re-emerged in a highly disguised and ritualized form... But it is done at a cost. It makes any kind of real community impossible; the suppression of participation and feeling has a deadening effect; the rigid containment can take away challenge and cutting edge, leaving the personality locked in.<sup>39</sup>

The Doctrine Commission report also noted the tension between charismatic 'joy' and institutionalized sobriety.<sup>40</sup> The report recognizes that Charismatics have insisted upon every member ministry, self-acceptance, transparency and openness,

36 Jeremy Fletcher and Christopher Cocksworth, *The Spirit and Liturgy*, Grove Books Ltd, Worship Series 146, Cambridge 1998, p 6.

37 Fletcher and Cocksworth, *Spirit and Liturgy*, p 8.

38 Fletcher and Cocksworth, *Spirit and Liturgy*, p 11.

39 Bax, *The Good Wine*, pp 168f. O'Dea's discussion of the dilemma of power, when the institution accommodates itself to society and its values, is relevant here (*Sociology of Religion*, pp 96).

40 *We Believe*, pp 53-55.

God's power and optimistic hope of God's hand at work in the world. However, it also argues that that certain problems have arisen. Charismatic Christianity appeals to the extravert and can be insensitive to non-extraverts; it can encourage 'hot-line to God' guidance, a pietistic tendency to withdraw from the world and a frail ecclesiology. 'The doctrine and the institutional life of the Church are frequently downgraded in the movement and regarded as hindrances to the gospel'.<sup>41</sup> Order as well as spontaneity must be seen as work of the same Spirit.

Common Worship will provide flexibility with structure and enable a variety of liturgical forms with the opportunity for spontaneity. It is interesting to note that Eucharistic Prayer F has incorporated as a congregational response the words: **Amen. Come, Holy Spirit**, which occurs twice. Eucharistic Prayer H also allows for the possibility that Charismatic congregations might launch into singing in tongues after the sanctus.<sup>42</sup> This is because the prayer concludes, uniquely, with the Sanctus:

With your whole Church throughout the world  
we offer you this sacrifice of praise  
and lift our voice to join the eternal song of heaven:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
God of power and might,  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.**<sup>43</sup>

At this point, after this sanctus, the liturgy moves to the Lord's prayer. In the other eucharistic prayers the sanctus appears at a much earlier stage of the prayer. It now remains for charismatic musicians to compose suitable settings to such a prayer that will enable the liturgy and the music to combine to enable singing in the Spirit through the gift of tongues. In any event, the sooner Charismatics internalize the new liturgy the better since only from knowledge can one begin to improvise.

## Story versus dogma

In his important book, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, Steven Land argues that Pentecostals are more interested in story and testimony rather than theological disputation.<sup>44</sup> Therefore Pentecostals naturally appeal to narrative for the focus of their theological discourse. They prefer to see the Christian life in terms of *via salutis* rather than *ordo salutis*;<sup>45</sup> that is, they prefer the way of life as a journey to be embarked upon and lived rather than a set of doctrines to be adhered to.<sup>46</sup> Therefore they tend to think of salvation as a progression, as a kind of *theosis*,<sup>47</sup> rather than in terms of

41 *We Believe*, p 55.

42 Although see O'Dea's discussion of the symbolic dilemma: *Sociology of Religion*, pp 92f. Tongues used regularly in this way would themselves become routinized and thus lose their affective dimension.

43 *Common Worship: The Order for the Celebration of Holy Communion (Sample)*, CHP, London 2000, p 57.

44 Sheffield Academic Press, JPTS 1, 1993.

45 Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, p 75.

46 See O'Dea's discussion of the dilemma of delimitation, *Sociology of Religion*, pp 94f. A storied approach to the faith is openly textured and can lead to plurality which can in effect oppose the original message. Therefore in the process of definition against heresy/error dogma emerges.

justification and sanctification of the Reformed tradition. Anglicanism, however, was forged in the Reformation period and the Thirty-Nine Articles clearly demonstrate a Reformed understand of the Christian life in terms of *ordo salutis*. Indeed, many regard Richard Hooker as the true father of 'Anglicanism', given the influence of his *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, in which he is understood to place a great stress upon the concept of law, with the use of reason alongside Scripture and tradition.<sup>48</sup> So how can charismatic Anglicans maintain the balance of story and dogma?

This is where recent scholarship on the nature of Scripture can be of assistance. Both Pentecostalism and Anglicanism, it could be argued, give priority to Scripture in matters of faith and doctrine.<sup>49</sup> N.T. Wright, among others has recently argued that Scripture is essentially storied in character. That is, it essentially tells the story of God's salvation history. It is here that we engage with the issue of authority. On this matter N.T. Wright states:

Then, we have to ask, if we are to get to the authority of scripture – How does God exercise that authority? Again and again, in the biblical story itself we see that he does so *through human agents anointed and equipped by the Holy Spirit...* So, we get the prophets. We get obedient *writers* in the OT, not only the prophets but those who wrote the psalms and so on. As the climax of the story we get Jesus himself as the great prophet, but how much more than a prophet....

And how much more must we say of Jesus. Jesus the great prophet; Jesus who rules from the cross in judgment and love; Jesus who says: all authority is given to *me*, so *you* go and get on with the job... Jesus' people are to be the anointed ones through whom God still works authoritatively. And then, in order that the church may be the church – may be the people of God for the world – God, by that same Holy Spirit, equips men in the first generation to write the new covenant documentation. This is to be the new covenant

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According to O'Dea, such a set of dogma can subsequently become burdensome to the untrained. For a contemporary challenge to contemporary evangelical theology see N. T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, SPCK, London 1996; and the assessment in these terms by Alister E. McGrath, 'Reality, Symbol and History: Theological Reflections on N. T. Wright's Portrayal of Jesus', in *Jesus & the Restoration of Israel: A Critical Assessment of N.T. Wright's Jesus and the Victory of God* (ed. Carey C. Newman), Paternoster, Carlisle 1999, pp 159-179.

47 Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, p 128: 'Salvation is a partaking of and participation in the divine life'.

48 Richard Hooker, *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, Dent, London, 2 Vols, 1965; cf. Nigel Atkinson, *Richard Hooker and the Authority of Scripture, Tradition and Reason: Reformed Theologian of the Church of England?* Paternoster, Carlisle 1997. O'Dea, *Sociology of Religion*, p 94, observes that the dilemma of administrative order intensified the appropriation of Roman law by the Church within a rational-legal bureaucratic model.

49 John Christopher Thomas, 'Reading the Bible from within Our Traditions: A Pentecostal Hermeneutic as Test Case', in *Between Two Horizons: Spanning New Testament & Systematic Theology* (eds Joel B. Green and Max Turner), Eerdmans, Grand Rapids 2000, pp 108-122; Colin Buchanan, *Is the Church of England Biblical? An Anglican Ecclesiology*, Darton, Longman & Todd, London 1998, pp 29-37.

documentation which gives the foundation charter and the characteristic direction and identity to the people of God, who are to be the people of God for the world.<sup>50</sup>

These writings, Wright argues, are largely *narrative*, and God exercises his authority by means of people telling and retelling *their* story. But their story is shaped by *the* story: the biblical story. This is because Wright proposes that Christians consider looking at the Bible in the way they might approach a Shakespearian play with a lost ending.<sup>51</sup> If such a play existed and one wanted to perform it, then one would have to employ actors who immersed themselves in the first four acts of the play, and the language and culture of the time. These actors could then act out the fifth act for themselves. The first four acts would function as the 'authority' for the task, and each actor entering into a characterization would need to speak and act with both *innovation* and *consistency*. The five acts would be: (1) creation, (2) the fall, (3) Israel, (4) Jesus, and (5) the NT as the first scene of the fifth act, giving some hints as to how the play should end (Romans 8; 1 Corinthians 15; and Revelation). The Church would therefore need to live under the authority of this story by offering something between an improvisation and performance of the final act. Such an offering needs to be both consistent and yet innovative.<sup>52</sup>

This model fits in well with recent Pentecostal understanding of the nature of Scripture. It also coheres with the Declaration of Assent, which gives distinct priority to Scripture above creeds, liturgy, formularies and polity.<sup>53</sup> Just as Scripture contains non-narrative elements within its overall narrative structure, so the Charismatic Anglican can integrate Christian dogma within the story of God's gracious dealings with his creation.

### Conclusion: a charismatic-trinitarian *Via Media*

I have so far approached the dilemma of *charisma* and institutionalization by positing the charismatic or *charisma* side of the dilemma first, e.g. *charisma* versus office, spontaneity versus order, story versus dogma, even if my overall strategy is to advocate a *via media*. Now I would like to look at the question from the other side of the dilemma. I would like to take an institutionalized and central dogma such as the doctrine of the Trinity and read it in terms of *charisma*. In other words, it would be a Charismatic reading of the Trinity in terms of the dilemma set before us. In a sense, it is another way of approaching the concept of *via media*.

50 N.T. Wright, 'How Can the Bible be Authoritative?', *Vox Evangelica* 21 (1991) pp 16f.

51 Wright, 'How Can the Bible be Authoritative?', pp 18f; also described in N.T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, SPCK, London 1992, pp 139-143.

52 See Mark J. Cartledge, 'Empirical Theology: Towards an Evangelical-Charismatic Hermeneutic', *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 9 (1996) pp 115-126.

53 I am grateful to my colleague, Alan Bartlett, for reminding me of the verbs used in the Declaration of Assent, which affirm this position.

54 Jürgen Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, SCM, London 1981, 1993, pp 161-178.

The Church of England states that it fundamentally understands itself to be part of the one true Church worshipping the one true God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It is not surprising that in recent ecclesiology the main theological doctrine which is used as a conceptual key is the doctrine of the Trinity. In its recent articulation, following Jürgen Moltmann,<sup>54</sup> the Cappadocian formulation has become much more accepted within the Protestant theological world.<sup>55</sup> This social doctrine emphasizes the community of the Godhead as the basis of unity, usually expressed through the term *perichoresis*, meaning inter-relatedness, communion and mutuality. That inter-dependency is the basis for unity and not some Augustinian 'substance' which is both difficult to define and impossible to utilize in ecclesiological construction.<sup>56</sup> Therefore the doctrine of the Trinity can be defined as Persons in Community: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It is in relation to this doctrine that I aim to propose a theology of *charisma* in relation to the institution of the Church of England: a charismatic-trinitarian *via media*.

First, recent trinitarian theology suggests a *charisma* of community. There is a necessary connection between the individual Person and the order of the Godhead. There is a taxonomy in the Godhead. This is usually described in terms of the procession, although there is some complication because of the controversy surrounding the *filioque* clause of the Nicene-Constantinople creed. This taxonomy is one of *function* rather than *essence*, since the equality of the Persons of the Godhead would be otherwise compromised. While the doctrine of *perichoresis* means that *all three persons* are associated with Trinitarian actions *ad extra* (external) one particular person of the Godhead is normally associated with particular functions.<sup>57</sup> For example, the Father is associated with creation, the Son with redemption and the Spirit with sanctification. In terms of our dilemmas, analogously the Church needs both a taxonomy and individual giftedness within the believing community. Therefore there is room for individuality and particularity within the overall unity of the universal Church. The Eastern understanding starts with the Persons, albeit recognizing the origin of the Godhead as being with the Father, while the Western understanding starts with the one 'substance' from which we distinguish three Persons. It is inevitable that Charismatics will wish to incline towards an Eastern position on this matter because of the natural association of persons who define their identity within community, that is for Charismatics the community of gifted individuals exercising gifts and ministries to the edification of the Body of Christ. Whatever order is necessary, whether demanded by a doctrine of the Trinity or creation, for Charismatics it will be secondary to the charismatic nature of the Church (see Küng above), even when it is acknowledged and respected.

Second, recent trinitarian theology suggests a *charisma* of worship. The worship of the Church is primarily for the glory of God. A strong doctrine of the Trinity

55 John Thompson, *Modern Trinitarian Perspectives*, Oxford University Press, 1994, pp 81-83.

56 See, e.g., Miroslav Volf, *After Our Likeness: The Church as the Image of the Trinity*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1998.

57 This is the doctrine of appropriation, see: Thompson, *Modern Trinitarian Perspectives*, p 128; Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, p 197. This understanding in no way suggests a kind of modalism.

means that worship is directed to the Father through the mediation of the Son, Jesus Christ, by means of the Holy Spirit, who inspires the people of God. Charismatics will wish to emphasize the nature of worship as a gift rather than as a task.<sup>58</sup> Worship is therefore not primarily about what we do, which gives worship a pelagian sense, but rather about what God does in us by means of his Spirit and is a *charisma*. As Torrance says: '...Christian worship shares in a human-Godward movement that belongs to God and which takes place *within* the divine life. It is precisely into and with *this* that we are brought by the Spirit to participate as a gift of grace'.<sup>59</sup> Indeed, for Torrance, it is possible to speak of the Father as the author of worship, the Son as the worshipper, and the Spirit as the agent of worship, where worship may be identified as the presence of the Spirit. Insofar as institutional constraints may suggest a pelagian approach to worship (what we do) Charismatics will wish to emphasize the *charisma* of worship while affirming and using the liturgy of the Church of England.

Third, recent trinitarian theology suggests a *charisma* of trinitarian language itself. Worship that is directed by means of liturgy has in the past been overly cerebral and for many people inaccessible. Since language changes so the language which we use *coram Deo* must change as well. This is evident in the language of Common Worship compared to the Alternative Service Book, which shows the change in the use of non-gender-specific language over the course of twenty years. However, this is where the story versus dogma dilemma is at its sharpest. The contemporary feminist re-articulation of the Christian story which includes an attack on patriarchal and androcentric language, while acceptable and important at the horizontal level, causes major problems at the vertical level.<sup>60</sup> The language of biblical revelation is the only language we have to articulate a Christian understanding of the Godhead. To slip into a kind of *functionalism* at this point would be to deny an epistemology based upon Scripture and to substitute an epistemology based upon feminist ideology. Whatever the ontological reality of the Godhead, the Church can only construct a theology which is consistent with the historic Church's teaching on the matter which uses biblical categories.<sup>61</sup> Where Oneness Pentecostals have slipped into Sabellianism by denying the eternal distinction of the Persons of the Trinity and stressing their historic functions,<sup>62</sup> Charismatics in the Church of England follow this at their peril. This is where the

58 Alan J. Torrance, *Persons in Communion: Trinitarian Description and Human Participation*, T & T Clark, Edinburgh 1996, p 311, picking up the distinction made by Jeremy Begbie.

59 Torrance, *Persons in Communion*, p 314.

60 One of the most helpful essays on this subject is Andrew Walker, 'Knowing God Personally: Reflections on the Feminist Concept of Patriarchy', in *Different Gospels: Christian Orthodoxy and Modern Theologies*, SPCK, London 1993, pp 173-193.

61 A point made by Christopher Cocksworth, *Holy, Holy, Holy: Worshipping the Trinitarian God*, Darton, Longman & Todd, London

1997, pp 18-21. Indeed, he suggests that we see the language of Trinitarian orthodoxy as a gift through which God communicates to us rather than it being a problem (pp 18f). In this case we might just as well call it a *charisma*.

62 See the recent discussion in Pentecostal scholarship: Ralph Del Colle, 'Oneness and Trinity: A Preliminary Proposal for Dialogue with Oneness Pentecostalism', *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 10 (1997) pp 85-110; David A. Reed, 'Oneness Pentecostalism: Problems and Possibilities for Pentecostal Theology', *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 11 (1997) pp 73-93.

Charismatic lack of theological acumen must not, however, allow them to compromise the language of the Trinity in worship, neither by sentimental hymnody nor by compromising Trinitarian language through *ad hoc* changes to the liturgy. Story and dogma must be held together just as prayer and doctrine must be held together: *lex orandi lex credendi*.

Fourth and finally, recent trinitarian theology suggests a *charisma* of salvation. The doctrine of the Trinity has been recently understood by Pentecostals, following the work of Moltmann, in terms of an *eschatological* doctrine. Steven Land, in particular, has expressed important views on the matter:

To live in the presence of the God of redemption is to live as a participant in the divine drama; to be created in God's image is to be made for love and for fellowship with God and each other. God is a communion who creates us for communion and moves us toward ultimate full participation in the divine life...

Because God is trinitarian eschatological presence in history, and because humans are made for love and fellowship with God and each other, what God has done for us in Christ he accomplishes in us through Christ in the Spirit. Salvation is a passion for the God who is at work in all things moving history toward the consummation.<sup>63</sup>

The trinitarian presence of God that brings a foretaste of the Kingdom of God enables us to experience something of that divine communion. This is often demonstrated in the worship encountered in Charismatic congregations. That *charisma*, however, must not be harnessed to self-indulgence and postmodern narcissism.<sup>64</sup> Rather, it is given to be shared with the 'other' who is outside the institutional structures of the Church as well as those within them. The holy God calls a holy people to be instruments of reconciliation by means of the Holy Spirit. Charismatics therefore must not allow their *charismata* to be squandered but directed and used in the most appropriate of tasks: their Spirit-inspired worship of the triune God and that same God's mission in the world.<sup>65</sup> Insofar as institutional structures enable and facilitate such purpose, then Charismatics must be prepared to hold onto them. Indeed, it is for such a task that we hold the tensions of the *via media*.

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63 Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, pp 197, 201.

64 David Lyon, *Jesus in Disneyland: Religion in Postmodern Times*, Polity, Oxford 2000, p 82.

65 Cocksworth, *Holy, Holy, Holy*, pp 201-217.