



## The Philosophical Legacy of John Henry Newman: A Neglected Chapter in Newman Research

D. J. Pratt Morris-Chapman<sup>1</sup>

---

### Abstract

John Henry Newman is widely acknowledged to be an important theologian. However Newman commentators suggest that his work has received little recognition by philosophers. The general consensus has been that until the latter part of the twentieth century Newman has been an isolated philosophical figure. This essay offers an historical re-evaluation of Newman's philosophical reception in order to explore whether or not his significance has been underestimated. The historical method is used in the analysis and assessment of this question. The study therefore probes the general philosophical reaction to Newman's work in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. In doing so the essay offers an historical investigation and re-evaluation of the claims of Newman having a negligible philosophical legacy.

### Keywords

John Henry Newman, Reception, Legacy, Nineteenth-Century British Philosophy, Twentieth-Century Philosophy

### INTRODUCTION

As a significant Christian thinker, John Henry Newman has never lacked commentators. However though he has now been beatified, Newman scholars believe that his 'canonization' as a philosopher of religion remains far off. For example Richardson argues that his

<sup>1</sup>Daniel J. Pratt Morris-Chapman is an ordained Methodist Minister and a visiting research fellow of the Oxford Centre for Methodism and Church History, Oxford Brookes University.

‘recognition as a philosopher is long overdue.’<sup>2</sup> Cyril Barrett contends that until comparatively recently it has been deemed eccentric to regard Newman as a philosopher.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, Thomas Carr maintains that he is ‘rarely acknowledged as a genuine philosopher.’<sup>4</sup> Ian Ker considers that Newman ‘has been too long ignored by philosophers’<sup>5</sup> and both Antony Kenny and Basil Mitchell contend that his contribution has been overlooked by philosophers for over a hundred years.<sup>6</sup> In summary, although commentators frequently make parallels between Newman and professional philosophers, the general view within the Newman literature is that his writings have only recently become of interest to professional philosophers.<sup>7</sup>

Fergus Kerr’s article “‘In an Isolated and, Philosophically, Uninfluential Way’” offers the most recent assessment of Newman’s philosophical legacy. Here Kerr argues that Newman has been ‘ignored’ by philosophers.<sup>8</sup> Kerr points out that Newman receives no entry in *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*, *The Blackwell Companion to Philosophy*, or *A Companion to the Philosophy of Religion*.<sup>9</sup> While his omission is curious, Newman’s absence from these textbooks does not justify the contention that he has been ignored by philosophers. Nevertheless, in order to determine whether or not this consensus within Newman scholarship is warranted, Newman’s philosophical reception will need to be examined. Moreover, if the question of Newman’s philosophical legacy is to be effectively resolved it is necessary to bear in mind that commentators like Kerr consider that Newman has been isolated from both nineteenth and twentieth-century philosophical discourse.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, before embarking on an investigation into

<sup>2</sup> Laurence Richardson, *Newman’s Approach to Knowledge* (Leominster, Gracewing, 2007), xxi.

<sup>3</sup> Cyril Barrett, ‘Newman and Wittgenstein on the Rationality of Belief,’ in *Newman and Conversion*, ed. I Ker (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1997), 89-99.

<sup>4</sup> Thomas K Carr, *Newman and Gadamer: Toward a Hermeneutics of Religious Knowledge* (Atlanta, GA.: Scholars Press, 1996), 12.

<sup>5</sup> Ian Ker, *The Achievement of Newman* (London: Continuum, 1991), 72.

<sup>6</sup> Basil Mitchell, ‘Newman as a Philosopher,’ in *Newman after a Hundred Years*, ed. I Ker & A G Hill (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 223-246 at 241.

<sup>7</sup> Fergus Kerr, “‘In an Isolated and, Philosophically, Uninfluential Way’ Newman and Oxford Philosophy,” in *Newman and the Word*, eds. T Merrigan & I T Ker (Louvain: Peeters Press, 2000), 155-179.

<sup>8</sup> Kerr, ‘Newman and Oxford Philosophy,’ 158.

<sup>9</sup> Phillip L Quinn & Charles Taliaferro, eds. *A Companion to the Philosophy of Religion* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1997); Nicholas Bunnin, E. P. Tsui-James, eds. *The Blackwell Companion to Philosophy* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1996); Ted Honderich, ed. *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995). Since Kerr’s protest Newman has received a small entry in the *Concise Routledge Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*. Ian Ker, ‘John Henry Newman,’ in *Concise Routledge Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, ed. E Craig (London: Routledge, 2000), 627.

<sup>10</sup> Kerr, ‘Newman and Oxford Philosophy,’ 155-179.

Newman's twentieth-century philosophical reception, it is important to begin with an analysis of Newman's philosophical reception in the nineteenth century.

## NEWMAN AND PHILOSOPHY IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

### The State of Nineteenth Century Philosophy in England

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, philosophy was a subject in decline in England.<sup>11</sup> Kerr's thesis, that in his time Newman was an isolated philosophical figure, needs to be set within this context. A key source used in support of Kerr's argument is Anthony Quinton's essay 'Oxford Philosophy.'<sup>12</sup> In this article Quinton describes Newman as being an 'isolated' and 'uninfluential' figure. Kerr's incorporation of this description into the title of his essay - "In an Isolated and, Philosophically, Uninfluential Way" Newman and Oxford Philosophy' - indicates that Quinton's analysis is important for Kerr. Moreover, Kerr's decision to highlight these terms, 'isolated' and 'uninfluential', implies that he views Quinton's description as being some kind of official philosophical verdict on Newman. While Kerr latches onto Quinton's description in order to support his thesis, that there has been a general failure on the part of philosophers to recognise Newman's contribution, his analysis does not give significant attention to the general condition of philosophy as a subject in nineteenth century England. Quinton's other contribution to *The Oxford Companion*, an article entitled 'English Philosophy,' emphasises that professional English philosophy remained dormant from the middle ages until the late nineteenth century.<sup>13</sup> When viewed from within this context it is possible that Quinton's reference to Newman's 'isolation' may relate more to the general state of nineteenth-century philosophy than to his person.<sup>14</sup> From this perspective, Kerr's narrative of Newman's 'philosophical isolation' may not actually correspond with the facts.

The German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel throws light on the condition of philosophy in England at the beginning of the nineteenth century. In his work on *Logic* (1817) he expresses

<sup>11</sup> Anthony Quinton, 'English Philosophy,' in *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*, ed. T Honderich (Oxford: University Press, 1995), 232-236, at 234; William Sorley, *A History of British Philosophy to 1900* (Cambridge: University Press, 1965), 239ff.

<sup>12</sup> Anthony Quinton, 'Oxford Philosophy,' in *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy* (Oxford: University Press, 1995), 640.

<sup>13</sup> Quinton, 'English Philosophy,' 234.

<sup>14</sup> Though Kerr acknowledges that Oxford was 'philosophically infertile' for much of the nineteenth century he fails to appreciate the depth of this crisis. Kerr, 'Newman and Oxford Philosophy,' 160.

considerable shock at discovering the ‘following notice in an English Newspaper: “The Art of Preserving the Hair, on Philosophical Principles.” Hegel felt that the use of the term “philosophy” in English had an exaggerated empirical focus which was quite different from its application on the continent.<sup>15</sup> In 1832 the Scottish philosopher William Hamilton also mourned the ‘state of philosophical learning in this country.’<sup>16</sup> The ‘torpid state of the national mind’ was even lamented by utilitarian thinkers. For example John Stuart Mill states that:

England once stood at the head of European philosophy. Where stands she now . . . Out of the narrow bounds of mathematical and physical science, not a vestige of a reading and thinking public engaged in the investigation of truth as truth, in the prosecution of thought for the sake of thought. Among few except sectarian religionists- and what they are we all know- is there any interest in the great problem of man’s nature and life.<sup>17</sup>

While this extract from Mill’s essay indicates the subject’s level of decline it also raises an important point. Mill indicates that the only people interested in philosophy are ‘sectarian religionists.’ Regardless of Mill’s theological opinions, it is demonstrable that a number of nineteenth-century religious thinkers wrote about important philosophical issues.

The practice of philosophy in nineteenth-century Britain was not confined to professionals.<sup>18</sup> Quinton, who also describes the philosophical situation as being ‘torpid,’ acknowledges that philosophy was still ‘pursued by independent men of letters’ and ‘philosophically active clergymen.’<sup>19</sup> Other relevant sources reinforce this point. For example, John Seth’s, *English Philosophers* (1912),<sup>20</sup> William Sorley’s *A History of English Philosophy* (1920),<sup>21</sup> John Muirhead’s

<sup>15</sup> Hegel writes: ‘Newton continues to be celebrated as the greatest of philosophers: and the name goes down as far as the price lists of instrument makers. All instruments such as the thermometer and barometer . . . are styled philosophical instruments. Surely thought, and not a mere combination of wood, iron [and] ought to be called the instrument of philosophy!’ Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *The Logic of Hegel*, trans. W Wallace (Oxford: Clarendon, [1817] 1904), 13.

<sup>16</sup> William Hamilton, ‘Johnson’s Translation of Tennemann’s History of Philosophy,’ in *The Edinburgh Review* 56 (1832), 160-177, at 160.

<sup>17</sup> John Stuart Mill, ‘Professor Sedgwick’s Discourse—State of Philosophy in England’, in *London Review* 1 (1835), 94-135, at 95.

<sup>18</sup> W J Mander, introduction to *The Oxford Handbook of British Philosophy in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. W J Mander (Oxford: University Press, 2014), 19.

<sup>19</sup> Quinton, ‘English Philosophy,’ 234.

<sup>20</sup> James Seth, *English Philosophers and Schools of Philosophy* (London: J M Dent, 1912), 331.

<sup>21</sup> William Ritchie Sorley, *A History of English Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1920), 265-266.

*The Platonic Tradition in Anglo-Saxon Philosophy* (1931),<sup>22</sup> Meyrick Carré's *Phases of Thought in England* (1949)<sup>23</sup> each discuss the philosophical ideas of non-professional philosophers – including John Henry Newman. Mander stresses that 'the range of sources in which philosophy found outlet' was far greater than it is today. Hence, while contemporary philosophy might be concentrated in specialized monographs or journals, nineteenth-century British philosophy was quite different; literary reviews and other works, intended for a much wider audience, contained original contributions to this subject.<sup>24</sup>

In summary it seems that if the relevant literature is not restricted to the contracted scope of professional philosophy during this period then the present enquiry may also widen its examination so as not to be limited in this way. Therefore, an authentic examination of Newman's philosophical reception should attend to the judgment of nineteenth-century thinkers who, though they were not exactly professional philosophers, have made a valid contribution to this subject.

## Newman and Nineteenth-century Philosophy

As noted earlier, a number of Newman commentators believe that Newman was an 'isolated figure in philosophy' during his lifetime. This implies that his works were detached, inaccessible and therefore received little philosophical attention.<sup>25</sup> This picture of Newman is not reflected in the relevant literature. There is evidence to suggest that a number of nineteenth-century professional philosophers engaged with Newman. For example, Thomas Fowler, Harriet Martineau, James M'Cosh, Grant Allen and Thomas Davidson read Newman.<sup>26</sup> Furthermore William Graham numbers Newman alongside the religious philosophers F D Maurice, James Martineau and the Hegelian philosopher James Hutchison Stirling.<sup>27</sup> James A Picton includes him alongside Kepler, Newton, Descartes, Spinoza and

<sup>22</sup> John H Muirhead, *The Platonic Tradition in Anglo-Saxon Philosophy* (London: George, Allen, 1931), 221.

<sup>23</sup> Meyrick H Carré, *Phases of Thought in England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1949), 339.

<sup>24</sup> Mander, introduction, 19.

<sup>25</sup> Kerr, 'Newman and Oxford Philosophy,' 179.

<sup>26</sup> Thomas Fowler, *Corpus Christi College: University of Oxford* (London: F E Robinson, 1898), 199; Harriet Martineau, *A History of the Thirty Years' Peace, A.D. 1816-1846*, 4 Vols. (G Bell & Sons, 1878) IV, 270; James M'Cosh, *Method of the Divine Government* (New York: Robert Carter, 1860), 510; Grant Allen, *The Incidental Bishop* (London: C A Pearson, 1902), 204; Thomas Davidson, *A History of Education* (New York: Scribner, 1900), 228.

<sup>27</sup> William Graham, *Idealism: An Essay, Metaphysical and Critical* (London: Longmans Green, 1872), ix-x.

Leibniz.<sup>28</sup> The political philosopher and barrister James Fitzjames Stephen identifies Newman as ‘the man of genius’<sup>29</sup> and finally Henry Sidgwick, Professor of Moral Philosophy at the University of Cambridge (1869-1900), calls Newman ‘a fine intellect.’<sup>30</sup>

Newman’s works are also treated philosophically by a number of nineteenth-century intellectuals. Newman’s *Tracts for the Times* (1833-1841), which argued that the doctrines and practices of Anglicanism should be grounded in the tradition of the early church (*Tracts*), were criticised by the philosopher and nonconformist minister Henry Rogers,<sup>31</sup> the logician Richard Whately<sup>32</sup> and his colleague Baden Powell.<sup>33</sup> The focus of these writers’ criticism is that Newman’s *Tracts* justified theological beliefs using the authority of the early church instead of proportioning beliefs to reasoned evidence. Despite their criticisms, they refer to Newman’s writings as being ‘philosophical’ and go to considerable lengths to show the folly of his position.

Newman’s contribution to the Oxford Movement was also discussed in an article on ‘Philosophy at Oxford’ in the very first issue of *Mind: a Quarterly Review of Psychology and Philosophy*.<sup>34</sup> That the inaugural issue of this periodical contains an article criticising Newman’s ‘Oxford Philosophy,’ indicates that while Newman may have been unpopular, his writing was viewed as an adversarial

<sup>28</sup> Picton describes Newman as a ‘seer in the true sense of the word and [a] saint.’ James Allanson Picton, *Pantheism: Its Story and Significance* (London: A. Constable, 1905), 16.

<sup>29</sup> James Fitzjames Stephen, *Essays by a Barrister* (London: Smith, Elder, 1862), 239.

<sup>30</sup> Henry Sidgwick, *Miscellaneous Essays and Addresses* (London: Macmillan, [1897] 1904), 358-359.

<sup>31</sup> The notion that Newman’s contemporaries deemed his writings philosophical is also underlined by the fact that Rogers spends over fifty pages forming a ‘systematic exposition’ of Tractarian doctrines in order for ‘[his] readers’ to ‘decide whether or not it is their duty to accept them.’ For further discussion see: Henry Rogers, ‘Puseyism, or the Oxford Tractarian School,’ in *Edinburgh Review, or Critical Journal* 77 (1843), 501-562. After three years as an assistant pastor in Poole (1829-1832) Henry Rogers works include: Henry Rogers, *Reason and Faith: Their Claims and Conflicts* (London: Longman Brown and others, 1850); Henry Rogers, *The Eclipse of Faith, or, A Visit to a Religious Sceptic* (London: Longman Brown and others, 1853).

<sup>32</sup> Richard Whately, *Essays on Some of the Dangers to Christian Faith: Which May Arise from the Teaching and Conduct of its Professors* (London: B Fellowes, 1847), 109-110.

<sup>33</sup> Baden Powell, *Tradition Unveiled or an Exposition of the Pretensions and Tendency of Authoritative Teaching in the Church* (London: John W Parker, 1839), 67-68. Powell was a proponent of positivism in philosophy. For further discussion see: Pietro Corsi, *Science and Religion: Baden Powell and the Anglican Debate, 1800-1860* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988). Powell was a contributor to the very controversial *Essays and Reviews* (1860) and was the father of the famous Robert Baden-Powell; founder of the scouting movement.

<sup>34</sup> Mark Pattison, ‘Philosophy at Oxford,’ in *Mind: a Quarterly Review of Psychology and Philosophy* 1 (1876), 82-97, at 85.

piece which needed to be addressed. Moreover, it should be stressed that Newman's writing is considered relevant enough for it to be discussed in the first edition of *Mind*; a journal which went on to publish several ground-breaking philosophical essays including: Bertrand Russell's article 'On Denoting' and Alan Turing's essay 'Computing Machinery and Intelligence.'<sup>35</sup>

Newman's *Sermons Chiefly on the Theory of Religious Belief* (1843),<sup>36</sup> were discussed by the Unitarian philosopher James Martineau.<sup>37</sup> In his *Essays Philosophical and Theological* Martineau explains that instead of believing doctrines on the basis of the evidence in their favour<sup>38</sup> with 'Dr. Newman the order is reversed.'<sup>39</sup> Newman 'begin[s] with faith, and develop[s] it by inquiry; reverently taking the divine instincts, and drawing out then hidden oracles into the symmetry of a holy philosophy.'<sup>40</sup> Martineau declares that: 'on every account we object to this statement of the ultimate grounds of religion.'<sup>41</sup> While Newman is criticised by Martineau for his position, it is easy to lose sight of the fact that this philosopher also credits Newman with the understanding necessary to deliberately communicate a sophisticated philosophical position.<sup>42</sup> Martineau recognises that the 'radical scepticism,' which he detects in Newman's writings, is not merely implied 'second-hand' but 'receives direct and repeated statement as a philosophical principle.'<sup>43</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Bertrand Russell, 'On Denoting,' in *Mind* 14 (1905) 479 - 493; Alan Turing, 'Computing Machinery and Intelligence,' in *Mind* 59 (1950), 433-460.

<sup>36</sup> John Henry Newman, *Sermons Chiefly on the Theory of Religious Belief Preached Before the University of Oxford* (London: J G F and J Rivington, 1843). With the exception of the first and last sermon, most of these were preached during his incumbency at St Mary's Oxford (1828-1842).

<sup>37</sup> James Martineau was a Unitarian Philosopher. He was Professor of Mental and Moral Philosophy at Manchester New College. 'The College, now Manchester College, Oxford, was one of those nonconformist institutions founded to cater for men barred from the universities because of their inability to subscribe to the Articles.' John Henry Newman, *The Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*, ed. C S Dessain *et al.*, 32 Vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961-2010), vii, 400.

<sup>38</sup> James Martineau, *Essays Philosophical and Theological* (London: Trubner, 1865), 352.

<sup>39</sup> Martineau believes that in order to attain the 'purest religious insight [one must] quit superficial and derivative beliefs, and seek the primitive roots where the finite draws life from the Infinite. The direct contact of the human spirit with the Divine.' Martineau, *Essays Philosophical*, 346.

<sup>40</sup> Martineau, *Essays Philosophical*, 352, 354-355.

<sup>41</sup> Martineau, *Essays Philosophical*, 350.

<sup>42</sup> These sermons were also viewed as a philosophical work by other writers. For example, *The Eclectic Magazine of Foreign Literature* described these sermons as the 'embodiment of Newman's philosophy.' Unknown Author, 'Some Aspects of Newman's Influence,' in *Eclectic Magazine of Foreign Literature, Science and Art* (1890), 707.

<sup>43</sup> Martineau, *Essays Philosophical*, 346-7.



Newman's *Essay on Miracles* (1843), in which he argues that belief in miracles is reasonable (*Mir.*), was strongly condemned by Thomas Huxley (1825-1895); the biologist whom Quinton describes as an 'occasional philosopher.'<sup>44</sup> Huxley's discussions concerning the rationality of religious belief are very critical of Newman's contention that it is necessary to believe before we have proved.<sup>45</sup> The work on *Miracles* was also sharply criticized by the *Westminster Review* for question-begging because the point that Newman should have proved, that supernatural interventions exist, was assumed from the beginning of *Miracles* - for he takes for granted that God interfered in human history by bringing the Church into existence.<sup>46</sup> Whether or not this assessment is correct, being attacked in the *Westminster Review* shows that Newman's work provoked attention from a journal that was set up as the official organ for the 'philosophical radicals,' the 'Benthamites,' who were adherents of utilitarian philosophy.<sup>47</sup> The fact that Newman's work is discussed in this periodical indicates that it was deemed significant enough to be contested.

Newman composed his *Essay on Development* (1845) immediately before his conversion to Catholicism in order to try and explain how Roman Catholic doctrine could both represent and yet appear different from the teaching of the early church.<sup>48</sup> The *Westminster Review* describes the *Essay* as a 'philosophical' work.<sup>49</sup> In addition to this, Matthew Piers Watt Boulton cites the *Essay* in his philosophical work on the *Examination of the Principles of Kant and Hamilton*.<sup>50</sup> The philosopher John Henry Bridges compares Newman's *Essay* with the French positivist philosopher August Comte's law of development,<sup>51</sup> and the Scottish philosopher Alexander Bain cites the *Essay* to

<sup>44</sup> Quinton, 'English Philosophy,' 235. For further discussion see: Sorley, *British Philosophy*, 275ff.

<sup>45</sup> 'There is something really impressive in the magnificent contempt with which, at times, Dr. Newman sweeps aside alike those who offer and those who demand such evidence.' Thomas H Huxley, 'Agnosticism and Christianity,' in *The Eclectic Magazine of Foreign Literature, Science and Art*, 113 (1889), 63-81, at 65, 71.

<sup>46</sup> Newman 'seems to admit that the credibility of miracles rests wholly on our previous belief in the Divine omnipotence...What the author alleges is then manifestly no answer to the objection, but only reproduces it in other words.' Baden Powell, 'Tendency of Puseyism,' in *Westminster Review* (1846), 304-343, at 339.

<sup>47</sup> John Troyer, ed. *The Classical Utilitarians: Bentham and Mill* (Indianapolis, IN.: Hackett Publishing, 2003), ix.

<sup>48</sup> John Henry Newman, *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* (London: J Toovey, 1845).

<sup>49</sup> Powell, 'Tendency of Puseyism,' 334-335.

<sup>50</sup> M P W Boulton, *Inquisitio philosophica: an examination of the principles of Kant and Hamilton* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1866), 36.

<sup>51</sup> J H Bridges, *Discourses on Positive Religion* (London: Reeves & Turner, [1882] 1891), 21-24; 76.



support his contention that theological doctrines can be revised.<sup>52</sup> The *Vocabulary of the Philosophical Sciences* uses the *Essay's* definition of rationalism in religion.<sup>53</sup> In addition, the clergyman and philosopher W A Butler - professor of moral philosophy at Dublin - describes Newman as a 'philosophical historian.'<sup>54</sup> Nevertheless, Butler argues that Newman's essay involves 'a plain surrender of the claims of Romanism to satisfactory evidence' because it begins by assuming the validity of the Catholic doctrines. Butler considers that by starting with this foregone conclusion, Newman's theory is 'utterly destitute of evidence.' He concludes, therefore, that Newman's decision to join the Catholic church was governed by his feelings and imagination.<sup>55</sup>

Newman's *Lectures on the Present Position of Catholics* (1851) were designed to challenge anti-Catholic prejudice. It is interesting that this work is cited by the logician William Stanley Jevons in his work on *Logic*:

(i) *Argumentum ad hominem* or appeal to the individual; when we do not defend our position in itself, but merely show that our opponent is not the man to attack it. This is a perfectly legitimate argument on many occasions . . . When Dr. Newman answered the calumnies of the apostate Achilli against the Church by enumerating a few of his crimes, he was doing a service to truth as well as to religion. . . . But if we seek to divert the minds of our hearers from the force of a solid argument by an irrelevant attack on the character of the man using it, we incur the charge of offending at once against Logic and against common fairness.<sup>56</sup>

Here Jevons commends Newman for his creative use of the *Argumentum ad hominem* in order to undermine the anti-Catholic statements of Achilli (Giacinto); a former Dominican friar.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>52</sup> Alexander Bain, *Practical Essays* (New York: D. Appleton, 1884), 277-279.

<sup>53</sup> "'Rationalism, in religion", More restrictedly, the acceptance of the teaching of revelation only in so far as reason can explain its doctrine. See J H Newman *Developm. of Christ. Doctrine*, ch. i., sect. iii.' William Flemming, ed. *A Vocabulary of the Philosophical Sciences* (New York: Sheldon, 1878.), 832.

<sup>54</sup> William A Butler, *Letters on Romanism: In Reply to Mr Newman's Essay on Development*, 2nd edn, eds. T Woodward and C Hardwick (Cambridge: Macmillan, [1850] 1858), 16-18.

<sup>55</sup> Butler, *Letters on Romanism*, 16-18, 34-36. Similar accusations are made towards the *Essay on Development* by the *New Quarterly Review*: 'had not the inquiry been founded on a foregone conclusion . . . something like demonstration would have been attempted . . . something would have been brought forward to prove.' Unknown Author, 'Mr Newman's Theory of Development,' *New Quarterly Review; or, Home, Foreign and Colonial Journal*, 7:2 (1846) 301-339, at 301-302. Although the focus of this periodical is not philosophy it is interesting that the *Essay on Development*, like many of Newman's works, is accused of 'begging the question' by Newman's contemporaries.

<sup>56</sup> William Stanley Jevons, *Logic* (London: Macmillan, 1889), 449-451.

<sup>57</sup> Jevons, *Logic*, 449-451. Interestingly, Newman is accused of the logical fallacy *Argumentum ad hominem* by the essayist Walter Bagehot (1826-1877). For further

On becoming the rector of the Catholic University in Ireland, Newman delivered a set of lectures which were published as *Discourses on the Scope and Nature of University Education*.<sup>58</sup> Sidgwick observes how Newman's work differs from conventional understandings of university education. Despite this he views Newman as a 'man of genius.'<sup>59</sup> The feminist and moral philosopher, Edith Simcox, reflects favourably on these *Discourses*<sup>60</sup> as does the biologist George John Romanes. Romanes, who examined the intellectual basis of faith in his *Candid Examination of Theism*,<sup>61</sup> affirms Newman's contention that an excessive focus on one particular subject can inadvertently lead one to apply its principles to subjects on which it has no bearing.<sup>62</sup>

Newman's *Apologia* (1864) provides a history of his religious opinions in order to show he attained them both sincerely and reasonably.<sup>63</sup> The reaction to the *Apologia* indicates that his contemporaries viewed it as a logical and in some cases philosophical piece of work. For example, while the *Westminster Review* (1864) disapproved of Newman's *Apologia* for preferring papal authority to the evidence of reason as a foundation for his faith, it nevertheless acknowledged the logical coherence of Newman's position.<sup>64</sup> In his book *Recent British Philosophy* (1866) David Masson, the historian and philosophical commentator, argues that the *Apologia* presents the opportunity for an interesting philosophical study by showing that Newman's religious opinions are a coherent development of his

discussion see: Walter Bagehot, *Literary studies*, ed. R H Hutton, 3 Vols. (London: Longmans, Green, [1854]1905), II, 267-269.

<sup>58</sup> John Henry Newman, *Discourses on the Scope and Nature of University Education* (Dublin: J Duffy, 1852).

<sup>59</sup> Sidgwick, *Miscellaneous Essays*, 358-359. Sidgwick wrote a number of important philosophical works including: *Philosophy its Scope and Relations* (London: Macmillan, 1902); *Lectures on the Philosophy of Kant* (London: Macmillan, 1905); *Lectures on the Ethics of T H Green, Mr Herbert Spencer, and J. Martineau; The Methods of Ethics* (London: Macmillan, 1874).

<sup>60</sup> Edith Simcox, *Natural Law: An Essay in Ethics* (London: Trubner, 1878), 279.

<sup>61</sup> George John Romanes, *A Candid Examination of Theism* (Boston, MA.: Houghton, Osgood, 1878), 29ff.

<sup>62</sup> George John Romanes, *Christian Prayer And General Laws* (London: Macmillan, 1874), 126. Newman states that 'Specimens of this peculiarity occur every day. You can hardly persuade some men to talk about any thing but their own pursuit; they refer the whole world to their own centre, and measure all matters by their own rule, like the fisherman in the drama, whose eulogy on his deceased lord was, that "he was so fond of fish."' Newman, *Discourses on the Scope and Nature of University Education*, 359-360.

<sup>63</sup> John Henry Newman, *Apologia Pro Vita Sua: Being a Reply to a Pamphlet Entitled "What, Then, Does Dr. Newman Mean?"* (London: Longman, Green, Longman Roberts, and Green, 1864).

<sup>64</sup> George William Cox, 'Dr Newman's Apologia,' in *Westminster Review* 26 (1864), 357-377.

adherence to ‘Berkeleyan’ metaphysical principles.<sup>65</sup> Alexander Campbell Fraser, ‘the leading Berkeley scholar of the nineteenth century’ and editor of the *North British Review* (1850-1857), read the *Apologia* closely.<sup>66</sup> In his intellectual autobiography *Biographia Philosophica* he describes Newman as one of his heroes.<sup>67</sup> Fraser also discusses Newman’s writing in relation to John Locke<sup>68</sup> and compares him with the eighteenth-century Scottish philosopher Thomas Reid. He writes:

Reid’s appeal to divinely inspired data in what he called the “common sense” of mankind: now seen in the wider light of theistic philosophy, and not merely as inductive philosophy of mind in man. The theistic postulate on which human experience rests could be compared with Reid’s dogmatic assumption of uncriticised ‘necessities to believe.’ His weapon for war against Hume, not unlike the *securus judicat orbis terrarum* (the deliberate judgment, in which the whole Church at length rests and acquiesces, is an infallible prescription and a final sentence against such portions of it as protest and secede. *Apol* 211), which in another interest was the watchword of Newman.<sup>69</sup>

Here Newman’s discussion, in the *Apologia*, of how the collective judgement of the Catholic church is infallible is compared with Reid’s conception of common sense.

Newman’s *Grammar of Assent* (1870), which provides a detailed account of why it may be deemed rational to believe propositions that fall short of demonstration, provoked considerable philosophical comment in the periodical press. This is indicated in an article published in the *Christian Observer*:

<sup>65</sup> ‘In Dr. Newman’s case, we have a splendid instance over again of the power of a purely metaphysical notion once formed and dwelt in, to dominate a man’s whole life, and determine the nature of his practical activity. Dr. Newman had apparently at no time of his life concerned himself with philosophy, except in and through Theology; but he tells us, in his *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*, how he recollects that from his very ‘boyhood he carried with him a certain constitutional frame or condition of mind, resembling, if I do not misinterpret his description of it, the Berkeleyan Idealism.’ David Masson, *Recent British Philosophy: A Review with Criticisms* (London: Macmillan, [1866] 1867), 197-199.

<sup>66</sup> Charles McCracken, ‘Berkeley’s Realism,’ in *New Interpretations of Berkeley’s Thought*, ed. S H Daniel (New York: Humanity Books, 2008), 24-33; Alexander Campbell Fraser, *Biographia Philosophica: A Retrospect* (Edinburgh: W Blackwood, 1905), 264.

<sup>67</sup> ‘The atmosphere of Oxford in 1842 was densely charged with Newmanism, and the “Tracts” had formerly brought me for a time under this influence. Reverence led me to touch the hem of his academic robe. He was then living at Littlemore, and three years later he went over to Rome. I always regret that I missed an opportunity long years after of visiting him at Birmingham.’ Fraser was very conscious of Newman’s absence from the metaphysical society. Fraser, *Biographia Philosophica*, 78, 97-98, 243.

<sup>68</sup> Alexander Campbell Fraser, *Locke* (Edinburgh: W Blackwood, 1890), 139-140.

<sup>69</sup> Fraser, *Biographia Philosophica*, 231.

... on hearing that Dr. Newman had written a work upon 'Assent,' we could not help fearing that it would be composed of ingenious arguments to prove the advisability of believing many things which were ill-supported and absurd; and after we had once succeeded in believing them, of never admitting a doubt about them in future.... [On the contrary] The work is thoroughly philosophical in every way.<sup>70</sup>

While surprised by the rigour of the *Grammar*, this article clearly identifies the work as one that is 'thoroughly philosophical in every way.' The *Grammar* was described as a 'philosophical' work by nineteenth-century periodicals in general.

The *Fortnightly Review*, *Contemporary Review*, *Edinburgh Review*, *London Quarterly Review* and the *Journal of the Transactions of the Victoria Institute or Philosophical Society of Great Britain* all describe the *Grammar* as a philosophical work. Nevertheless, these reviewers can be heavily critical of Newman's refusal to proportion assent to inference.<sup>71</sup> For example in the *Fortnightly Review* the author and philosophical commentator Leslie Stephen<sup>72</sup> describes Newman and John Stuart Mill as 'the two greatest masters of philosophical English in recent times.'<sup>73</sup> Nevertheless, while Stephen acknowledges Newman's contribution in this periodical, he is scathingly critical of the *Grammar*, a point well illustrated in his private correspondence:

I finished old Newman's book [*Grammar*] coming down and as the book is too metaphysical to give you pleasure I will tell you what it comes to, it is an elaborate apology for the morality of persuading yourself that a thing is absolutely certain when you really know that it is not certain at all – e.g. for working yourself up to believe that I (L.S) am a gentleman when you have a strong reason for thinking that I am in the habit of picking pockets, telling lies and getting beastly drunk. This is supported by a lot of metaphysics [which] prove that Newman

<sup>70</sup> Unknown Author, 'Dr Newman's Grammar of Assent,' in *The Christian Observer* (1870), 727-739, at 727.

<sup>71</sup> John Tulloch, 'Dr Newman's Grammar of Assent,' *Edinburgh Review, or Critical Journal*, (1870), 382-414, at 382; J Rigg, 'Newman's Grammar of Assent,' *London Quarterly Review*, (1871), 363-389, at 363; Leslie Stephen, 'Dr. Newman's Theory of Belief,' *Fortnightly Review*, (1877) 680-810; A M Fairbairn, 'Catholicism and Religious Thought,' *The Contemporary Review* (1884/5?), 652-674, at 667-669; C A Row, 'Dr. Newman's Essay in Aid of a Grammar of Assent,' *Journal of the Transactions of the Victoria Institute or Philosophical Society of Great Britain* (1872), 45-91, at 60.

<sup>72</sup> Leslie Stephen's most famous works concerning philosophical ideas include: *The History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Harcourt, [1876] 1963); *An Agnostic's Apology* (London: Smith, Elder, [1893] 1903) *The English Utilitarians* (London: Duckworth, 1900).

<sup>73</sup> Stephen, 'Dr. Newman's Theory of Belief,' 680.

is grossly ignorant of modern reading. Why shouldn't I say that such a creature is a liar and that I despise him? I do most heartily.<sup>74</sup>

Though this extract is heavily critical it is important to appreciate the fact that Stephen's contention that the *Grammar* is 'too metaphysical' reveals as much about the presuppositions of this utilitarian commentator as it does about Newman.

As this survey of the nineteenth century reception of Newman's publications comes to a close it is clear that the same motif persists. Throughout the nineteenth-century Newman's writings were viewed as 'philosophical' and were discussed and often critiqued by both philosophers and academics who wrote upon philosophical issues. Newman was not ignored by the philosophers of his day. While a number of writers were heavily critical of him, the idea that Newman was an ignored philosophical figure is not justified by the literature. Nevertheless, it is also clear that Newman's repeated attempts to justify Christian faith are frequently met with hostility because he does not proportion his beliefs in accordance with conventional forms of evidence. Having indicated that the empirical focus of nineteenth-century philosophy prevented Newman's contemporaries from appreciating the value of his proposals it is important, before proceeding to an analysis of his relationship to twentieth-century philosophy, to briefly examine the reasoning behind this negative reception.

## The Ethics of Belief

Throughout the nineteenth century writers from a variety of disciplines emphasised the importance of proportioning one's beliefs, religious or otherwise, in accordance with the available evidence. However, the most famous advocate of this evidentialist principle was the philosopher William K Clifford. In an article entitled 'The Ethics of Belief' Clifford states that 'it is wrong always, everywhere, and for anyone, to believe anything upon insufficient evidence.'<sup>75</sup> During the course of the century many writers used this criterion to challenge religious authority. For example the philosopher Charles Barnes Upton criticised 'established religions' for their failure to conform to the standards of evidence appropriate to scientific understanding.<sup>76</sup> Utilitarian writers such as Bentham and Mill argued that religious doctrines were undermined by their failure to stand up to this

<sup>74</sup> Letter sent to Anne Isabella Thackeray in April 1870. See: John Bicknell, ed. *Selected Letters of Leslie Stephen, Volume One 1864-1882* (London: Macmillan, 1996), 81.

<sup>75</sup> W K Clifford, 'The Ethics of Belief,' in *Lectures and Essays*, 2 Vols (London: Macmillan, 1879), II, 186.

<sup>76</sup> Charles Barnes Upton, *Lectures on the Bases of Religious Belief* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1894), 128-129.

principle.<sup>77</sup> Even biologists, such as Huxley and Romanes, argued that this ethic of belief demonstrated the subjectivity of religious beliefs.<sup>78</sup>

These instances show that the evidentialist ethic of belief, typified in Clifford's work, was widespread in Newman's lifetime. This survey of Newman's nineteenth-century philosophical reception indicates that his works were repeatedly criticised for what commentators interpreted as his failure to abide by this rule. However, the precise manner in which he fell foul of this criterion is illustrated in the following extract from the philosopher John Beattie Crozier's *Civilization and Progress*:

The degree of belief or assent we give to any proposition is strictly proportioned to the probabilities in its favour, and the evidence by which it is supported. Cardinal Newman contends, on the contrary, that there are no degrees to a man's, assent, and that it may be often yielded when the reasons adduced for the belief would be far from carrying conviction. Accordingly, in his *Grammar of Assent*, his first object is to get rid of Science as an instrument of the highest truth; and this being done to replace it by an instrument of his own, which shall command men's full conviction and assent . . . The above is a rough outline of Cardinal Newman's doctrine of 'assent,' . . . by which he would replace and supersede Science as an organon or instrument of the highest truth. When thus plainly stated, its weakness and absurdity seem, to me at least, so palpable, that I should have passed it by unheeded, but for the great ability and eminence of the author, and the influence he exercises on all hands over men outside the Roman Catholic Communion - men . . . very glad of his assistance in beating off the atheist and infidel.<sup>79</sup>

Here Crozier criticises Newman for his refusal to proportion assent to a proposition to the evidence in its support. This, and the other criticisms surveyed above, illustrates the way in which the empirical focus of nineteenth-century philosophy affected Newman's philosophical reception. Newman's philosophical 'isolation' was largely

<sup>77</sup> John Stuart Mill, *Three Essays on Religion: Nature, The Utility of Religion and Theism* (London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1874), 138-139. For further discussion see: Phillip Schofield, *Bentham* (London: Continuum, 2009), 120.

<sup>78</sup> Huxley, 'Agnosticism and Christianity,' 64; George John Romanes, *Darwin and after Darwin: An exposition of the Darwinian theory and a discussion of post-Darwinian questions* (Chicago, IL.: Open Court, 1892), 6. Romanes writes: 'Therefore, the difference between science and speculation is . . . in the subsequent process of verifying hypotheses. For while speculation, in its purest form, is satisfied to test her explanations only by the degree in which they accord with our subjective ideas of probability - or with the "Illative Sense" of Cardinal Newman, - science is not satisfied to rest in any explanation as final until it shall have been fully verified by an appeal to objective proof. This distinction is now so well and so generally appreciated that I need not dwell upon it.'

<sup>79</sup> John Beattie Crozier, *Civilization and Progress* (London: Longmans Green, [1885] 1888), 53, 70, 75.



due to his divergence from the prevailing evidentialist current. Despite this, the above survey demonstrates that, although his work was often criticised, he was by no means absent from nineteenth-century philosophical discourse. As Crozier himself states: ‘the great ability and eminence of the author’ meant that he could not be ignored. Having provided an analysis of Newman’s philosophical reception in his own century, it is necessary to examine his relation to early twentieth-century philosophy.

## NEWMAN AND TWENTIETH-CENTURY PHILOSOPHY

### Newman and the Dawn of Pragmatism

The dawn of the twentieth century brought with it an attack on Clifford’s evidentialist ethic of belief by the pragmatist<sup>80</sup> philosopher William James based at Harvard University. In his ‘Will to Believe’ (1896) James argues that because human reasoning cannot be separated from passion our beliefs cannot be neatly proportioned in accordance with the available evidence.<sup>81</sup> He writes:

When the Cliffords tell us how sinful it is to be Christians on such ‘insufficient evidence’ insufficiency is really the last thing they have on their mind. For them the evidence is absolutely sufficient, only it makes the other way. They believe so completely in an anti-Christian order of the universe that there is no living option: Christianity is a dead hypothesis from the start. . . . I myself find it impossible to go with Clifford. We must remember that these feelings of our duty about truth and error are in any case only expressions of our passional life. . . he who says, “Better go without belief forever than believe a lie!” merely shows his own preponderant private horror of becoming a dupe. . . I have also a horror of being duped; but I can believe that worse things than being duped may happen to a man in this world.<sup>82</sup>

Here James concludes that the ethic of belief propounded by figures like Clifford is inconsistent because it is not directly related

<sup>80</sup> In short pragmatists argue that the veracity of a philosophy, or a religion, is determined by its practical efficacy. For further discussion see: Nicholas Rescher, ‘Pragmatism,’ in *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*, ed. T Honderich (Oxford: University Press, 1995), 710-711.

<sup>81</sup> James attempted to defend the right to believe in religious propositions. He did this by illustrating that: ‘Our passional nature not only lawfully may, but must, decide an option between propositions, whenever it is a genuine option that cannot by its nature be decided on intellectual grounds; for to say under such circumstances, “Do not decide, but leave the question open,” is itself a passional decision, just like deciding yes or no, and is attended with the same risk of losing truth.’ William James, ‘The Will to Believe,’ in *The Will to Believe and Other Essays* (London: Longmans, Green, [1891] 1910), 1-31, at 11.

<sup>82</sup> James, ‘The Will to Believe,’ 14,18.



to the available evidence but is actually founded upon the natural inclinations of its author. What is of importance here is that James is highly appreciative of Newman's criticism of evidentialism.<sup>83</sup> In his *Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902) James numbers Newman alongside the philosophers Zeno, Epicurus, Kant and Schopenhauer.<sup>84</sup> Moreover, he cites Newman's *Discourses on the Scope and Nature of University Education* as an antecedent for his own position:

[Newman's] test of the pretensions of philosophy to found religion on universal reason simplifies my procedure today. I need not discredit philosophy by laborious criticism of its arguments.<sup>85</sup>

Here James indicates that Newman's writing illustrates the fallacy of the evidentialist principles typified in Clifford's ethic of belief which base religious belief upon supposed universal conceptions of reason. James' considers that Newman's achievements in this domain mean that he himself need not work hard to discredit this belief. This suggests that Newman's contribution to James' pragmatism is significant. James' appreciation is also reflected by the fact that many of his pupils at Harvard, though not all pragmatists, refer to Newman, as will be indicated in subsequent sections.

Beyond Harvard Newman was also recognised as an important thinker by pragmatists. James' colleague, the Oxford-based philosopher F C S Schiller, claims that Newman's challenge to the notion that reason can remain detached from one's emotional temper paved the way for his and James' pragmatism.<sup>86</sup> John Dewey, a pragmatist based in Chicago, also uses Newman. For example in his Gifford lectures (1928-1929), later published as *The Quest for Certainty*, Dewey cites Newman in order to illustrate the difference between ancient Greek and Christian conceptions of morality.<sup>87</sup> Here he also quotes Newman's explanation of the problem of evil:

There are many versions of this doctrine. The simplest, though not the one which has most commended itself to most philosophers, is the idea of the "fall of man," a fall which, in the words of Cardinal Newman, has implicated all creation in an aboriginal catastrophe.<sup>88</sup>

<sup>83</sup> William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study In Human Nature Being The Gifford Lectures On Natural Religion Delivered At Edinburgh In 1901-1902* (London: Longmans, Green [1902] 1908), 435ff.

<sup>84</sup> James writes: 'Think of Zeno and of Epicurus...think of Kant and Schopenhauer, of Herbert Spencer and John Henry Newman.' William James, 'The Moral Philosopher, and the Moral Life,' in *The Will to Believe and Other Essays* (London: Longmans, Green, [1891]1910), 184- 215, at 204.

<sup>85</sup> James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, 436-437.

<sup>86</sup> F C S Schiller, *Studies in Humanism* (London: Macmillan and Co, 1907), 351-353.

<sup>87</sup> John Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty: A Study of the Relation of Knowledge and Action* (New York: Minton Balch, 1929), 51, 300.

<sup>88</sup> Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty*, 51, 300.

Later Dewey uses Newman's position in order to illustrate its distinction from that of philosophical *Naturalism*.<sup>89</sup> These references indicate that on a number of occasions Dewey uses Newman in order to reveal philosophical points. At the very least this indicates that Dewey did not ignore Newman but appreciated his writings. Moreover, like James, Dewey appears to be genuinely impressed with 'Cardinal Newman's' *Discourses on the Scope and Nature of University Education* which he describes as 'one of the few educational books of the world which are neither priggish nor impractical.'<sup>90</sup> The educationalist Malcolm Skilbeck goes further when he suggests that Newman's model of university education may have shaped Dewey's thinking. He states that while 'theology had been to Newman the "Queen of the Sciences", so scientific studies were given pride of place in Dewey's curriculum.'<sup>91</sup> From this it would appear that Newman's work was appreciated by some of the most important pragmatists writing at the beginning of the twentieth century.

This single aspect of Newman's philosophical reception makes it difficult to see why Newman commentators think that his philosophical contribution has been ignored. Moreover, throughout the twentieth century, up until the present day, Newman's writings have continued to be discussed in connection with pragmatism: Inge (1909),<sup>92</sup> Keary (1910),<sup>93</sup> Kauffman (1922),<sup>94</sup> Passmore (1957),<sup>95</sup> Rorty (1982),<sup>96</sup> Oppenheim (1987),<sup>97</sup> Wainwright (1995),<sup>98</sup> and Murray (2004).<sup>99</sup> Newman commentators have also examined his similarities with

<sup>89</sup> John Dewey, *Naturalism and the Human Spirit* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1940), 14.

<sup>90</sup> John Dewey, 'A College Course: What Should I Expect from it?' in *Castalian* (1890), 26-29, at 28-29. Dewey also cites Newman in his *Lectures in the Philosophy of Education* (New York: Random House, [1899] 1966), 123.

<sup>91</sup> Malcolm Skilbeck, *John Dewey* (London: Macmillan, 1970), 24. For further discussion see: H Handschy, 'Educational Theories of Cardinal Newman and John Dewey,' *Education* (1928), 129-37.

<sup>92</sup> William Ralph Inge, *Faith and its Psychology* (London: Duckworth, [1909] 1919), 234-235.

<sup>93</sup> Charles Francis Keary, *The Pursuit of Reason* (Cambridge: University Press, 1910), 55-56, 83.

<sup>94</sup> Reginald Wright Kauffman, 'The Religion of John Burroughs,' *The Personalist* (1922), 149-156, at 151.

<sup>95</sup> John Passmore, *A Hundred Years of Philosophy* (London: Duckworth, 1957), 100-101.

<sup>96</sup> Richard Rorty, 'Keeping Philosophy Pure,' in *Consequences of the Pragmatism* (Minneapolis, MN.: University Press, [1982] 2003), 19-36, at 21.

<sup>97</sup> Frank M Oppenheim, *Royce's Mature Philosophy of Religion* (Notre Dame, IN.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1987), 376.

<sup>98</sup> William J Wainwright, *Reason and the Heart: A Prolegomenon to a Critique of Passional Reason* (Ithaca, NY.: Cornell University Press, 1995), 152.

<sup>99</sup> Paul Murray, *Reason, Truth, and Theology in Pragmatist Perspective* (Leuven: Peeters Press, 2004), 142

this philosophical movement, including: Gundersen,<sup>100</sup> Hollis,<sup>101</sup> Ferreira,<sup>102</sup> Cosgrove,<sup>103</sup> and Sands.<sup>104</sup> However, although many of these studies discuss Newman's parallels with James' pragmatism they do not mention Dewey's reception of him. In addition these writers have failed to explore the significance of James' reception of Newman for the development of Harvard philosophy. The recognition of Newman by prominent philosophical figures like Dewey and James has wider implications. For example, Dewey's pupil William Barrett, Professor of Philosophy in New York (1950-1979), cites Newman on a number of occasions.<sup>105</sup> Moreover, a wide range of philosophers who studied under James at Harvard refer to Newman.

## Newman, Harvard Philosophy and Beyond

### *The influence of Francis Bowen*

A number of philosophers educated at Harvard in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries engaged with Newman's work. Their appreciation is possibly due to the high estimation given to him by James and also by his tutor Francis Bowen. Bowen writes:

Newman, in his "Grammar of Assent," has admirably illustrated the truth, that Assent and conduct, which is merely practical Assent to the Reasons for such conduct, are not necessarily determined by inferences.<sup>106</sup>

In his article on 'Harvard Philosophy,' in *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*, Quinton describes Bowen as the 'first capable Harvard philosopher.' According to Quinton the philosophers 'C. S. Peirce, William James, and their early associate Chauncey Wright were

<sup>100</sup> Borghild Gundersen, *Cardinal Newman and Apologetics* (Oslo: I Kommissjon Hos Jacob Dybwad, 1952), 131.

<sup>101</sup> Christopher Hollis, *Newman and The Modern World* (London: Hollis and Carter, 1967), 181.

<sup>102</sup> Jamie M Ferreira, 'Newman and William James On Religious Experience: The Theory and the Concrete,' in *Heythrop Journal* 29 (1988), 44-57, at 45.

<sup>103</sup> Brian Cosgrove, "'We Cannot do Without a View" - John Henry Newman, William James and the Case Against Scepticism,' in *Irish Theological Quarterly* 61 (1995), 32-43.

<sup>104</sup> Paul Francis Sands, *The Justification of Religious Faith in Søren Kierkegaard, John Henry Newman, and William James* (Piscataway, NJ.: Gorgias Press, 2004), 1.

<sup>105</sup> Though it is not clear that Barrett upheld pragmatist views. William C Barrett, *Time of Need: Forms of Imagination in the Twentieth-century* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), 295; William C Barrett, *The Truants: Adventures Among the Intellectuals* (New York: Doubleday, 1983), 180; William C Barrett, *Death of the Soul: From Descartes to the Computer* (New York: Anchor Press, 1987), 18.

<sup>106</sup> Francis Bowen, *Modern Philosophy: from Descartes to Schopenhauer and Hartmann* (New York: Scribner, Armstrong, and Company, 1877), 169, 220.

all Bowen's pupils.<sup>107</sup> Whether or not Bowen is responsible for James' appreciation of Newman, it remains clear that soon after its publication the *Grammar of Assent* was required reading for students studying in the philosophy department at Harvard.<sup>108</sup> Furthermore, it is documented that several of James' pupils discuss Newman's writing. Hence, even if Quinton and Kerr were correct about Newman's 'isolation' within the British context, it is apparent that some prominent Harvard philosophers recognized the importance of Newman's contribution and that a number of their pupils were introduced to his writing.

### *Newman and New Realism*

Several of James' students became part of the New Realism philosophical movement emanating from Harvard. Essentially these philosophers argued that 'direct perception furnished true knowledge.'<sup>109</sup> Of importance here is those philosophers who engaged with Newman's work. James' pupil Ralph Barton Perry, who became a leading figure in the New Realism movement at Harvard, commends Newman's distinction between science and religion:

It is true that the believer's assurance is not consciously rational ... Cardinal Newman fairly expressed the difference between the method of religion and the method of science when he said that "ten Thousand difficulties do not make one doubt," that "difficulty and doubt are incommensurate."<sup>110</sup>

Here Perry, contrary to evidentialists like Clifford, argues that religious believers do not need to be conscious of the reasons for their beliefs, and cites Newman as an example of this view. James' pupil, and Harvard graduate, the New Realist William Pepperell Montague<sup>111</sup> also discusses Newman's response to religious scepticism in his *The Ways of Knowing Or the Methods of*

<sup>107</sup> Quinton, 'Harvard Philosophy,' 335-336. Though Peirce doesn't mention Newman, Chauncey Wright (1830-1875) was aware of Newman's conception of the different forms of reason operative in science and religion. Chauncey Wright, 'The Genesis of Species,' in *North American Review* 113 (1871), 63-103, at 77.

<sup>108</sup> Harvard University, *A Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Harvard University for the Academical Year 1871-1872* (Cambridge, MA.: Metcalf & Hilliard, 1872), 43.

<sup>109</sup> Andrew J Reck, 'Walter Taylor Marvin,' in John Shook, ed. *The Dictionary of Modern American Philosophers* (Bristol: Continuum, 2005), 1630-1631. New Realism rejected the idea that we cannot know reality as it really is in itself. It thus rejected the idea that in perception, that which is perceived is separate from the object in itself. Edwin B Holt, ed. *The New Realism* (New York: Macmillan, 1912), 277. For further discussion see: Lewis W Beck, 'New Realism,' in *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy* (Oxford: University Press, 1995), 618.

<sup>110</sup> Ralph Barton Perry, *The Moral Economy* (New York: Scribner, 1909), 220-221.

<sup>111</sup> Montague was also connected with the 'New Realism' movement: Beck, 'New Realism,' 618.

*Philosophy*.<sup>112</sup> The recognition of Newman's thought by New Realist philosophers exceeds Harvard-trained philosophers. The New Realist philosopher Walter Marvin, based at Rutgers University, mentioned Newman in his *History of European Philosophy* and described him as a 'great English thinker.'<sup>113</sup> This indicates that Newman was discussed by proponents of an important philosophical movement originating in Harvard at the beginning of the twentieth century.

### *Newman and Critical Realism*

Opponents of New Realism also recognised Newman's contribution. For example, in contrast to 'New' and other earlier forms of direct realism, Critical Realists acknowledged that the world is perceived through representations.<sup>114</sup> It is interesting that the majority of its early proponents discuss Newman. With the exception of Arthur K Rogers, who did his doctoral research with John Dewey in Chicago,<sup>115</sup> all of these were trained at Harvard under William James. For example, James' pupil James Bissett Pratt refers to Newman's sermons in his work *Adventures in Philosophy and Religion*.<sup>116</sup> Durant Drake compares Newman with Immanuel Kant in *Problems of Conduct*.<sup>117</sup> Arthur Oncken Lovejoy contrasts Newman's philosophical position with scientific materialism.<sup>118</sup> George Santayana refers to Newman on several occasions<sup>119</sup> and indicates in his

<sup>112</sup> William Pepperell Montague, *The Ways of Knowing Or the Methods of Philosophy* (London: G Allen & Unwin, 1925), 218-219.

<sup>113</sup> Though Marvin was not trained at Harvard it is possible that his connection with James' pupils, Perry and Montague exposed him to Newman's ideas. Walter Taylor Marvin, *The History of European Philosophy* (New York: Macmillan, 1917), 370.

<sup>114</sup> Lewis Beck, 'Critical Realism,' in *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*, ed. T Honderich (Oxford: University Press, 1995), 171. For further discussion see: Durant Drake, ed. *Essays in Critical Realism* (London: Macmillan, 1920).

<sup>115</sup> Andrew J Reck, 'Arthur Kenyon Rogers,' in John Shook, ed. *The Dictionary of Modern American Philosophers* (Bristol: Continuum, 2005), 2067.

<sup>116</sup> James Bissett Pratt, *Adventures in Philosophy and Religion* (New York: Macmillan, 1931), 163; James Bissett Pratt, *Reason in the Art of Living* (New York: Macmillan, 1949), 9.

<sup>117</sup> Durant Drake, *Problems of Conduct: An Introductory Survey of Ethics* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1914), 100. He also cites Newman's *Certain Difficulties felt by Anglicans* and his *Apologia*. For further discussion see: Durant Drake, *Problems of Religion* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1916), 212, 251.

<sup>118</sup> Arthur Oncken Lovejoy, *Essays in the History of Ideas* (New York: George Braziller, 1955), 232.

<sup>119</sup> George Santayana, *Some Turns of Thought in Modern Philosophy: Five Essays* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1933), 50; George Santayana, *Winds of Doctrine: Studies in Contemporary Opinion* (London: J M Dent, 1940), 189; George Santayana, *The Idea of Christ in the Gospels* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1946), 18. George Santayana, *The Works of George Santayana*, ed. J McCormick (Cambridge, MA.: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1986-2011), VI, 169.

correspondence that he had read most of Newman's writings.<sup>120</sup> Finally Roy Wood Sellars discusses Newman's relationship to the Catholic Modernists.<sup>121</sup> This reinforces the idea that James' favourable reception of Newman influenced his students. The same also appears to be true of Dewey whose pupil, the Critical Realist A K Rogers, goes so far as to liken his philosophical position to that of Newman.<sup>122</sup>

Though Rogers cannot be described as a Harvard philosopher, his estimation of Newman appears to be quite significant. For example, in an article in *The Journal of Philosophy Psychology and Scientific Methods* on 'Belief and the Criterion of Truth,' Rogers likens his own approach to Newman's *Grammar of Assent*:

Truth for me is that which I can not help believing. . . . We have, in other words, to start with the psychological existence of a certain peculiar attitude of mind, not with a reasoned definition or an objective fact. We have the belief before the question of truth arises at all, and we have to go back to the fact of belief to determine whether any truth is left at the end of the inquiry. . . . my position here is very similar, up to a point, to that of Newman in his "Grammar of Assent"; the disclaimer will rule out, however, certain uses to which Newman puts his theory which are plainly illegitimate.<sup>123</sup>

In beginning with the propositions he cannot help believing it is clear that Rogers' position is the reverse of evidentialism, which demands sufficient evidence prior to the acceptance of a proposition. This interpretation of Rogers reading of Newman is supported by an earlier essay in the *Philosophical Review* in which Rogers states that:

Great changes in belief, epochs in our intellectual history, are seldom due primarily to mere argument, but, rather, to the half unconscious ripening of experience, the transforming, and suffusing with new meaning, of the old facts, brought about by processes lying back of anything we can put, at the time, in syllogistic form. What Newman says of his own development is true normally: "For myself, it was not logic that carried me on; as well might one say that the quick-silver in a barometer changes the weather. It is the concrete being that moves; paper logic is but the record of it."<sup>124</sup>

<sup>120</sup> In his correspondence Santayana indicates that he had read 'most of Newman.' William G. Holzberger, ed. *The Letters of George Santayana: Book Seven, 1941-1947* (Cambridge, MA.: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 2006), 93.

<sup>121</sup> Roy Wood Sellars, *The Next Step in Religion* (New York: Macmillan, 1918), 182; Roy Wood Sellars, *Religion Coming of Age* (London: Macmillan, 1928), 127.

<sup>122</sup> A K Rogers, 'Rationality and Belief,' in *The Philosophical Review* (1904), 30-49, at 44.

<sup>123</sup> A K Rogers, 'Belief and the Criterion of Truth,' in *The Journal of Philosophy Psychology and Scientific Methods* 13/15(1916), 393-410, at 393-394, 406n2.

<sup>124</sup> Rogers, 'Rationality and Belief,' 44.



These references indicate that Rogers, whose work contrasts sharply with the evidentialism of figures like Clifford, offers yet another example of a philosopher who recognised Newman's contribution to philosophy.

From this it is already apparent that Newman's work is appreciated by three important philosophical movements originating in Harvard at the dawn of the twentieth century. Though the impact of Bowen and James' appreciation for Newman may never be fully known it is clear that, even if he were an 'isolated' philosophical figure elsewhere, Newman's philosophical legacy was not underestimated by significant philosophers connected with Harvard, and their colleagues in other institutions at the start of the twentieth century. Moreover, the arrival in Harvard (1924) of a philosopher trained in a Cambridge (UK) far away from Massachusetts ensured that Newman continued to be an important figure of interest in Harvard philosophy; though it is clear that this appreciation had nothing to do with either Bowen or James.

### *Newman and Process Philosophy*

The great British Cambridge mathematician and process philosopher Alfred North Whitehead refers to Newman frequently. His friend and colleague, Bertrand Russell, recounts that 'as a young man, [Whitehead] was all but converted to Roman Catholicism by the influence of Cardinal Newman.'<sup>125</sup> After a period of agnosticism (1890-1912) Whitehead later embraced Theism.<sup>126</sup> Whitehead's interest in Theism grew during his time as Professor at Harvard (1924-1937).<sup>127</sup> Whether being in Harvard reawakened Whitehead's interest in Newman or not, he cites Newman several times in writings of this period. For example, in the Lowell Lectures (1925), published in his *Science and the Modern World* - a 'landmark in the history of philosophy,'<sup>128</sup> Whitehead indicates his hope of a conciliation between science and religion and affirms Newman's understanding of theological development.<sup>129</sup> Moreover, in his work on the *Adventures of Ideas*, he commends the conclusion of Newman's *Grammar of Assent, non in dialectica complacuit Deo salvum facere populum*, as 'the motto of

<sup>125</sup> Bertrand Russell, *Portraits from Memory: and Other Essays* (London: G Allen & Unwin, 1956), 103.

<sup>126</sup> Lewis S Ford, *The Emergence of Whitehead's Metaphysics: 1925-1929* (New York: Albany, 1984), 103.

<sup>127</sup> Bruce Kuklick, *A History of Philosophy in America 1720-2000* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001), 225.

<sup>128</sup> Alfred North Whitehead, *Alfred North Whitehead: An Anthology*, ed. F. Northrop & M. Gross (Cambridge: University Press, 1953), 361.

<sup>129</sup> Alfred North Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World* (New York: Macmillan, 1925), 115, 255.



every metaphysician'<sup>130</sup> and acknowledges the seminal importance of Newman's *Essay on the Development of Doctrine* for his understanding of the development of ideas.<sup>131</sup> Barrett<sup>132</sup> argues that Newman's ideas on development are like a 'clerical' undercurrent within Whitehead's work.<sup>133</sup> Barrett believes that Whitehead's proposals could have accommodated Newman's ideas more fully were he born a 'generation earlier.'<sup>134</sup> Whether or not this would have been the case, Barrett's observations indicate that Newman's work shapes Whitehead's ideas.

Whitehead's doctoral student, the Harvard-trained philosopher Charles Hartshorne, also refers to Newman.<sup>135</sup> For example Hartshorne book *Man's Vision of God and the Logic of Theism*, which applies Whitehead's work on metaphysics to the subject of theology, quotes this extract from Newman's Dublin University Sermons (1856-1857):

Order and harmony must be of His very essence. To be many and distinct in His attributes, yet, after all, to be but one,—to be sanctity, justice, truth, love, power, wisdom, to be at once each of these as fully as if He were nothing but it, as if the rest were not,—this implies in the Divine Nature an infinitely sovereign and utterly incomprehensible order, which is an attribute as wonderful as any, and the result of all the others. He is an infinite law, as well as an infinite power, wisdom, and love. Moreover, the very idea of order implies the idea of the subordinate. If order exists in the Divine Attributes, they must have relations one to another, and though each is perfect in itself, it must act so as not to impair the perfection of the rest, and must seem to yield to the rest on particular occasions . . . There is an understanding between attribute and attribute, so that one does not interfere with the other, for each is supreme in its own sphere; and thus an infinitude of infinities, acting each in its own order, are combined together in the infinitely simple unity of God.<sup>136</sup>

Reflecting on this passage from Newman's sermon, Hartshorne argues that 'Cardinal Newman' illustrates the way in which 'variety' may be imputed to God 'without departing' from traditional conceptions

<sup>130</sup> 'It is not by Logic that it has pleased God to bring about the salvation of his people.' Alfred North Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas* (Cambridge: University Press, [1933]1935), 294.

<sup>131</sup> Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas*, 7.

<sup>132</sup> Dewey's pupil mentioned above.

<sup>133</sup> William C Barrett, *The Illusion Of Technique: A Search For Meaning In A Technological Civilization* (New York: Anchor Press, 1978), 6.

<sup>134</sup> Barrett, *Illusion Of Technique*, 6.

<sup>135</sup> Charles Hartshorne, *Man's Vision of God and the Logic of Theism* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, [1941]1964), 218.

<sup>136</sup> John Henry Newman, *Fifteen Sermons Preached Before the University of Oxford* (London: Longmans, Green, 1909), 184-185.

which hold that God is ‘in all respects absolutely perfect or unsurpassable, in no way and in no respect surpassable or perfectible.’<sup>137</sup> Hartshorne’s use of this passage indicates that the way in which Newman understands ‘perfection’ and ‘change’ anticipates certain aspects of process theism, which holds that divine perfection does not necessitate divine immutability.<sup>138</sup>

Newman is also cited by the Harvard-trained process philosopher Paul Weiss, another of Whitehead’s doctoral students. In his work *Philosophy in Process*, Weiss states that he has ‘only one objection to Cardinal Newman: he writes like an archbishop. By turns he is solid, stolid, and tedious, as if he were hoping to be made a Cardinal.’<sup>139</sup> Weiss presents yet another example of a Harvard-trained philosopher who was aware of Newman’s work. Moreover, though Whitehead, Hartshorne and Weiss differ from Newman theologically they view him as an important interlocutor in the history of process philosophy.

### *Newman and Other Harvard Philosophers*

Before closing this section on Newman and Harvard philosophy, it is important to note that several other Harvard-trained philosophers discuss Newman’s work. In *A Philosophy of the Real and the Possible* Harry Todd Costello, who studied under Josiah Royce at Harvard (1909-1911), expresses his admiration for Newman’s ‘*Grammar of Assent*,’ even though he does ‘not agree with the conclusion at all.’<sup>140</sup> Whitehead’s doctoral student, the Harvard-trained social philosopher and behaviourist, B F Skinner cites Newman in his work *Contingencies of Reinforcement*.<sup>141</sup> Whitehead’s pupil Donald Cary Williams, who studied (1928) and taught philosophy at Harvard (1939-1967), discusses Newman’s *Apologia* in relation to philosophical ‘Personalism’ in his book *Principles of Empirical Realism*.<sup>142</sup> In *Reason, Truth and History* Hilary Putnam, whose doctoral studies were undertaken at Harvard, describes Newman as a ‘careful and responsible thinker’ and contrasts his conception of rationality with the work of Rudolf

<sup>137</sup> Hartshorne, *Man’s Vision of God*, 11, 218.

<sup>138</sup> Hartshorne, *Man’s Vision of God*, 218. This is not to suggest that Newman would condone the conclusions of process theology.

<sup>139</sup> Paul Weiss, *Philosophy in Process*, 11 Vols. (Carbondale, IL.: Southern Illinois University Press, 1955-1987), III, 129.

<sup>140</sup> Costello’s *A Philosophy of the Real and the Possible*, 6. For further discussion see: H Kallen, S Hook, eds. *American Philosophy Today and Tomorrow* (New York: Ayer Publishing, 1968), 100.

<sup>141</sup> B F Skinner, *Contingencies of reinforcement: a theoretical analysis* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ.: Prentice-Hall, 1969), 279.

<sup>142</sup> Donald Carey Williams, *Principles of Empirical Realism: Philosophical Essays* (Springfield, IL.: Charles C Thomas, 1966), 168.

Carnap.<sup>143</sup> Finally, William's doctoral student at Harvard, the philosopher Roderick Chisholm discusses Newman's work.<sup>144</sup> Though the positions taken by these writers differ, their references to Newman demonstrate that he continued to be read by philosophers trained at Harvard throughout the twentieth century.

In summary, it seems that Newman's ideas and writings have a large number of connections with philosophy at Harvard during the first half of the twentieth century. This is not universally the case - it is necessary to acknowledge, for example, that Clarence Lewis one of the most significant philosophers to be trained (1910) and teach (1920-1953) at Harvard during this time appears to make no mention of Newman. Similarly, Lewis' pupil, and successor, W V Quine (Harvard professor 1956-1978) is also silent on Newman. Nevertheless, it seems that Newman has been a relevant philosophical figure in Harvard Philosophy. Moreover these were not the only professional philosophers to appreciate Newman in this regard.

## Newman and Boston Personalism

Yet another manifestation of Newman's philosophical reception is his connection with the early proponents of American Personalism. Like the pragmatists mentioned earlier, this philosophical position challenged the notion that beliefs must be justified by a direct awareness of the evidence in their favour and instead argued that beliefs are the result of a complex interaction of all the faculties: will, feeling and reason.<sup>145</sup> Led by Borden Parker Bowne, Personalism flourished in the early 20th century at Boston University. What is interesting here is that Bowne<sup>146</sup> and many of his students refer to Newman, including Francis McConnell,<sup>147</sup> Edgar Sheffield Brightman, George Albert Coe,<sup>148</sup> and Ralph T. Flewelling.<sup>149</sup> For example in an article published in the *Personalist*, a journal founded by Flewelling which

<sup>143</sup> Hilary Putnam, *Reason Truth and History* (Cambridge, MA.: University Press, [1981] 2004), 136, 163.

<sup>144</sup> Roderick Chisholm, *Perceiving a Philosophical Study* (Ithaca, NY.: Cornell University Press, 1957), 76.

<sup>145</sup> Alfred Caldecott, *Philosophy of Religion in England and America* (New York: Macmillan, 1901), 80.

<sup>146</sup> Borden Parker Bowne, 'Cardinal Newman and Science,' *Independent* (1890), 1401-1402. Here Bowne also defends Newman's conversion from Anglicanism to Catholicism.

<sup>147</sup> Francis J McConnell, *The Increase of Faith: Some Present-Day Aids to Belief* (New York: Eaton & Mains, 1912), 159; *Public Opinion and Theology* (Nashville, TN.: Abingdon Press, 1920), 42.

<sup>148</sup> George Albert Coe, *The Religion of a Mature Mind* (Chicago, IL.: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1902), 87.

<sup>149</sup> Ralph T. Flewelling, *Winds of Hiroshima* (New York: Bookman Associates, 1956), 49.

served as a platform for American personalism, Brightman states that:

In its logical use, the word “personalism” is equivalent to the humanistic form of pragmatism for which not reason alone, but the whole personal life with all its needs, is the guide to truth. It is a reaction against the rigor and vigor of absolutism as well as against the vague excesses of mysticism . . . ‘personalism’ is an empirical method, aiming at practical certainty; Cardinal Newman’s *Grammar of Assent* illustrates it.<sup>150</sup>

Here Brightman argues that Newman’s *Grammar* articulates a form of philosophical ‘personalism’ because he argues that the whole person ‘not reason alone’ is the guide to truth. Here then is another example of the way in which Newman’s rejection of the notion that truth is obtained solely through a rationalist criteria of evidence is appreciated by philosophers during the twentieth century.<sup>151</sup>

Several Newman commentators recognise parallels between Newman’s proposals and Personalism. These include: Sillem,<sup>152</sup> Crosby,<sup>153</sup> Dulles,<sup>154</sup> Connolly,<sup>155</sup> Norris.<sup>156</sup> Unfortunately these particular writers do not explore Newman’s connection with early proponents of this approach such as Bowne or the other Boston Personalists mentioned above who engaged with Newman’s work. At this stage a pattern begins to emerge within Newman scholarship. Though commentators frequently draw parallels with Newman and a particular philosophical figure or movement, they often fail to appreciate that Newman is discussed by the founders of these approaches to philosophy. This pattern recurs in discussions concerning Newman and phenomenology.

<sup>150</sup> Edgar Sheffield Brightman, ‘The Use of the Word Personalism,’ in *The Personalist* 3 (1922), 254-259 at 257.

<sup>151</sup> In another article in this same issue of this journal Newman’s *Grammar* is credited with articulating ‘William James’ theory of the Will to Believe . . . long before James analyzed it.’ Kauffman, ‘The Religion of John Burroughs,’ 151.

<sup>152</sup> John Henry Newman, *The Philosophical Notebook of John Henry Newman*, ed. E Sillem, 2 Vols (New York: Humanities Press, 1969-70), I, 19.

<sup>153</sup> John Crosby has indicated parallels between Newman and Personalism. For further discussion see: John F Crosby, *The Selfhood of the Human Person* (Washington, DC.: Catholic University of America Press, 1996), 51-60; John F Crosby, *Personalist Papers* (Washington, DC.: Catholic University of America Press, 2004), 221-242.

<sup>154</sup> Avery Dulles, *John Henry Newman* (London: Continuum, 2009), 44ff.

<sup>155</sup> John Connolly, *John Henry Newman: A View of Catholic Faith for the Millennium* (Lanham, MD.: Sheed & Ward, 2005), 142.

<sup>156</sup> Thomas Norris, ‘Faith,’ in *Cambridge Companion to John Henry Newman* (Cambridge: University Press, 2009), 73-97, at 90.

## The Phenomenologist Reception of Newman

Another example of the failure of Newman commentators to properly explore his reception by philosophers arises in connection with phenomenology. Although Newman scholars find similarities between his work and the phenomenological movement, his link with Franz Brentano, a forerunner of phenomenology is neglected. Brentano visited Newman (1872) at the Birmingham Oratory.<sup>157</sup> It is clear that he had read Newman because his publication on *The Origin of Right and Wrong* describes the *Grammar* as an ‘interesting work . . . scarcely noticed in Germany.’<sup>158</sup> While Brentano uses the term ‘phenomenology’<sup>159</sup> it is his pupil, Edmund Husserl, who is credited with founding this philosophical movement. Though he makes no mention of Newman, Husserl’s associate, the phenomenologist Max Scheler, makes references to Newman in *Formalism and Ethics*,<sup>160</sup> *Person and Self Value*,<sup>161</sup> and in his essays gathered together as *On the Eternal in Man* (1916-1920), which illustrate his engagement with Newman.<sup>162</sup> All of this indicates that Newman’s philosophical contribution was appreciated by the early phenomenologists.<sup>163</sup>

It is unfortunate that Newman commentators tend to overlook Brentano’s reception<sup>164</sup> of Newman altogether, for example:

<sup>157</sup> Herbert Spiegelberg, Karl Schuhmann, eds. *The Phenomenological Movement: a Historical Introduction* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1982), 27-31. Also see: Newman, *Letters and Diaries*, xxvi, xiii, 81, 89-91.

<sup>158</sup> Franz Brentano, *The Origin of our Knowledge of Right and Wrong*, trans. R Davies (London: Westminster, [1889] 1902), 52.

<sup>159</sup> Franz Brentano, *Descriptive Psychology*, trans. B Müller (New York: Routledge, 1995), 137.

<sup>160</sup> Max Scheler, *Formalism in Ethics and Non-Formal Ethics of Values: A New Attempt Toward the Foundation of an Ethical Personalism*, trans. S Frings (Evanston, IL.: Northwestern University Press, [1913] 1973), 231.

<sup>161</sup> Max Scheler, *Person and Self-value: Three Essays* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, [1921] 1987), 151

<sup>162</sup> Max Scheler, *On the Eternal in Man* (New Brunswick, NJ.: Transaction Publishers, [1920] 2009), 235, 276, 284, 441.

<sup>163</sup> Following on from this, the German theologian and Newman commentator, Erich Przywara (1889-1972) compared Newman’s writings with those of Scheler. E Przywara, *Religionsbegründung-Max Scheler-J.H.Newman* (Freiburg: Herder, 1923) The phenomenologist Karol J’osef Wojtyla, later John Paul II (1920-2005), refers to Scheler and Newman in his writings. Köchler outlines Wojtyla’s position as a realist phenomenology: Hans Köchler, ‘The Phenomenology of Karol Wojtyla: On the Problem of the Phenomenological Foundation of Anthropology,’ in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* (1982), 326-334. For further a discussion of John Paul II’s approach to philosophy see: Rocco Buttiglione, *Karol Wojtyla: The Thought of the Man Who Became John Paul II*, trans. P Guietti (Grand Rapids, MI.: Eerdmans, 1997). Also see: Karol Wojtyla, *Valutazioni Sulla Possibilità Di Costruire L’etica Cristiana Sulle Basi Del Sistema Di Max Scheler*, trans. S Bucciarelli (Rome: Logos, [1953] 1980); ‘Fides et Ratio,’ in *The Encyclicals of John Paul II*, ed. J M Miller (Huntington, IN.: Our Sunday Visitor, 1996), 849-915.

<sup>164</sup> Despite this, there is a general awareness of Newman’s influence on Scheler.

Boekraad,<sup>165</sup> Walgrave,<sup>166</sup> Zeno,<sup>167</sup> Pailin,<sup>168</sup> Sillem,<sup>169</sup> Artz,<sup>170</sup> Hammond,<sup>171</sup> Wainwright,<sup>172</sup> Nichols,<sup>173</sup> and Ekeh.<sup>174</sup> While ignorance of Brentano's exposure to Newman's writings might be excused, Laurence Richardson's examination of Newman's *Approach to Knowledge* mistakenly argues that Newman's thinking was not known by German philosophers like 'Brentano.' Richardson goes so far as to declare that 'no case can be made for thinking that Newman played any direct part whatsoever in the development of this movement.'<sup>175</sup> This is odd when one considers the references that Brentano and indeed Scheler make to Newman's writing. What is even more surprising is that Richardson continues his discussion of *Newman's Approach to Knowledge* with the triumphant declaration that parallels between Newman's thinking and that of the phenomenologists give him 'a definite place in the history of contemporary philosophy.'<sup>176</sup> As pointed out by the philosopher John Crosby, in the introduction to Richardson's own book: 'Scheler was well aware of Newman.'<sup>177</sup> Here again it is apparent that while Newman commentators are keen to identify him with a philosophical school they typically underestimate his direct connection to it.

## SUMMARY

This essay has examined Newman's philosophical reception during both the nineteenth and twentieth century. It has maintained that the poor state of professional philosophy, in the early part of the

<sup>165</sup> A J Boekraad, *The Personal Conquest of Truth according to J H Newman* (Louvain: Nauwelaerts, 1955), 137-144, 139; A J Boekraad, *The Argument from Conscience to the Existence of God* (Louvain: Nauwelaerts, 1961), 154.

<sup>166</sup> Jan H Walgrave, *Newman the Theologian* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1960), 89.

<sup>167</sup> Dr Zeno, 'An Introduction to Newman's Grammar of Assent,' *The Irish Ecclesiastical Record* (1965) 389-406, at 390.

<sup>168</sup> David A Pailin, *The Way to Faith: An Examination of Newman's Grammar of Assent as a Response to the Search for Certainty in Faith* (London: Epworth Press, 1969), 172.

<sup>169</sup> Newman, *Philosophical Notebook*, I, 233.

<sup>170</sup> J Artz, 'Newman as a Philosopher,' *International Philosophical Quarterly* 16 (1976), 263-287 at 283.

<sup>171</sup> David Hammond, 'Imagination in Newman's Phenomenology Of Cognition,' *Heythrop Journal* 29 (1988), 21-32.

<sup>172</sup> William Wainwright, *Religion and Morality* (Burlington, VT.: Ashgate, 2005), 30.

<sup>173</sup> Aidan Nichols, *Scattering the Seed* (London: Continuum, 2006), 199.

<sup>174</sup> O Ekeh, 'The Phenomenological Context and Transcendentalism of John Henry Newman and Edmund Husserl,' in *Newman Studies Journal* (2008), 35-50, at 35.

<sup>175</sup> Richardson, *Newman's Approach to Knowledge*, 160, 170.

<sup>176</sup> Richardson, *Newman's Approach to Knowledge*, 160, 170.

<sup>177</sup> John F Crosby, introduction to *Newman's Approach to Knowledge*, by Laurence Richardson (Leominster, Gracewing, 2007), viii.



nineteenth century, made it necessary to survey the wide range of intellectuals who engaged with Newman's ideas in their contributions to this discipline. It was shown that many of the intellectuals surveyed examined the philosophical merit of Newman's published writings. Though he was criticised by these readers, it can be justifiably argued that Newman's 'isolation' from the mainstream was partly due to the poor state of professional philosophy at this time. Moreover it was argued that the prevalence of an ethic of belief, crystallised in the writings of Clifford, gave philosophy an excessive evidentialist focus; an emphasis that was contradicted in Newman's writings.

Though Newman's rejection of evidentialist approaches to religious belief separated his thought from many of his contemporaries, it is precisely this aspect of his work that endeared him to a number of twentieth-century thinkers. These include pragmatists like William James and other philosophers connected with Harvard, including New Realists, Critical Realists, and process philosophers. Elsewhere personalists, phenomenologists and philosophers of religion from a variety of different backgrounds have appreciated Newman's work. Unfortunately, a narrow conception of the history of philosophy has prevented many of Newman's commentators from obtaining an accurate view of his philosophical legacy. In this regard the survey above revealed a worrying pattern within Newman scholarship: although commentators recognise several parallels between Newman and a variety of philosophical movements, many fail to document the references made to Newman by important figures within these movements. This leads a number of them to the erroneous conclusion that while Newman has parallels with pragmatists, phenomenologists and personalists (and others) he has been ignored by the proponents of these philosophical positions. In short a pervading under-estimation of the relevant philosophical literature has led Newman commentators to underestimate his philosophical legacy.

The fact that Newman is cited by many philosophers indicates that his supposed neglect is actually due to a general failure on the part of Newman scholarship to establish a connection between his writings and the philosophical traditions reminiscent of his work. Having indicated that Newman's general philosophical legacy is potentially far greater than is generally envisaged it is clear that there is much work still to be done in determining the true extent of Newman's influence to this subject.<sup>178</sup>

*D. J. Pratt Morris-Chapman*  
*danielmorrishchapman@yahoo.co.uk*

<sup>178</sup> I would like to dedicate this article to my mentor the late Mervyn Davies – a “St. Andrew” in Newman scholarship: John Henry Newman, *Parochial and Plain Sermons*, 8 Vols (London: Longmans, Green, 1907–1909), II, 3.