GOD, EMPIRE AND WAR
THE NONCONFORMIST CONSCIENCE AND MILITARISM IN BRITAIN 1850–1900

by GREG CUTHBERTSON

Pacifism in the field of international relations had deep roots in nonconformist (or Protestant sectarian) thinking in Britain which, paradoxically enough, embraced at the same time a militancy in its approach to religious convictions. It is perhaps the existence of these twin strands in the nonconformist make-up which underlay so many of the contradictions in the actions of those who espoused this religious persuasion in the period from the Crimean War of 1854–56 to the outbreak of the second Anglo-Boer War in 1899. For this was the age of burgeoning British imperialism and the militarism which accompanied it became an integral part of popular consciousness, widely accepted as the price to pay for national greatness and in no sense merely a doctrine imposed on a reluctant populace by its appointed leaders.[1]

If pacifism can be regarded as the major moral force in nonconformist attitudes in the late nineteenth century towards disputes between peoples, then the South African war should have provided nonconformists with an opportunity to demonstrate their unity of purpose. There were perhaps signs that this was to be the case in the success of the peace movement in winning overwhelming support for the Czar of Russia's armaments reduction conference at the Hague in July 1899.[2] And, when war in South Africa broke out a few months later, many nonconformists, and not only those who stressed the Calvinist faith they shared in common with the Boers, felt grave disquiet at the turn of events. As John Clifford, the Baptist pacifist put it: 'Are we going from an international peace conference to South Africa to kill Christians?'[3] Yet pacifism rapidly lost ground in Britain at the turn of the century, and nonconformity began to waver on the question of peace in the conflict between Britain and the Boer republics.

The reason for this hesitancy seems to lie in the 'remarkable shift from evangelism and nonconformity to military and political allegiance' which was taking place in public thinking. This striking 'conversion' to the imperialist cause was particularly significant for the dissenting community, even though many played a memorable role in the anti-war agitation.[4] The war compelled free churchmen in both Britain and South Africa to choose between maintaining rather tenuous links with the nineteenth-century peace traditions and continuing to advocate the idea of empire. Many nonconformists chose the latter. The inner contradictions of the

nonconformist conscience can be no more strikingly shown than here.[5]

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As militarist ideology gained popular acceptance, so the peace movement became more vociferous in its campaigns. This movement was essentially a political organisation of middle-class liberals seeking to abolish war by means of education, propaganda and agitation. It had come into existence in 1816, and enjoyed the 'intellectual muscle' of the economist Adam Smith and the philosophers Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill. Despite the fact that the movement was not strictly Christian in origin, it soon became associated with Protestant dissent and particularly Quakerism. The absolute pacifism associated with the pre-Augustinian church was preached by most Quakers, and the powerful influence of increasingly prosperous and politically active families within the Society of Friends added a specifically religious content to the initiatives of the peace movement. Moreover, it was strengthened by support from advocates of the free trade movement which resulted in a fusion of moralism and utilitarianism achieved mainly through the efforts of the prominent English politician, Richard Cobden, and his devout Quaker colleague, John Bright.[6]

The founding of the Peace Society added an element of propaganda to the peace movement and made it more exclusive: it insisted that war was an outright wrong and adopted a harder line than either Cobden or Bright (who were not absolute pacifists) would have advocated. David Bebbington observes that the Society 'was marked by a tone of Evangelical crusading that was both a cause and a consequence of widespread Nonconformist participation'.[7] It was perhaps this close alliance with dissenting evangelicalism that precluded wider support for the Society and made it too dependent upon nonconformist fortunes. Consequently it declined after the 1850s as evangelicalism experienced its theological crisis. To compensate, the idealism of the early peace movement gave way to pragmatism when Henry Richards, ex-Congregational minister and secretary of the Society from 1848, opened the membership to a wider audience.

Whereas Quakers had been at the centre of the movement for peace in the early years, the lobby increased as the number of nonconformists in the British parliament swelled towards the end of the Victorian era.[8] Nevertheless its effect was hardly felt in the face of rising imperialist fervour, and the Society went into sharp decline in the 1870s and 1880s. Only the Quakers could be relied upon for consistent support. Nonconformity as a whole was no longer a recruiting ground for new members because of its increasing

support for Liberal Imperialism. As the pacifist dissenting tradition lost its crusading militancy it became a merely pacific nonconformity, until by the turn of the century it finally acquiesced in an imperialist ideology which espoused an implicit militarism.

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The militarist ethic did not win quick acceptance in nonconformist circles however. Pacifist roots sank deep into the nonconformist conscience, and the most prominent free church leaders refused to relinquish Cobdenite ideas even as late as the 1890s. Edward Miall's *The Politics of Christianity* (1863), for example, provides a number of propositions which commanded wide acceptance among contemporary nonconformists on political attitudes towards foreign policy in the 1860s and 1870s, and which follow the Cobdenite formula. Miall's role as Congregational minister and M.P. for Rochdale (1851–1857) and Bradford (1868–1873) placed him in a position to reflect and dictate general nonconformist political attitudes. He enunciated six guiding principles in foreign policy. First, war was 'a wanton and wicked proceeding' which caused physical and moral suffering; secondly the Christian 'will studiously cultivate a spirit of peace in foreign relations' and abstain from the systematic extension of territory. The third principle was 'to foster and develop feelings of "universal brotherhood"'. Scepticism about the role of governments in promoting peace and brotherhood led to Miall's fourth principle, 'to recall . . . all intriguing diplomats' in order to curb the exorbitant powers of the ruling class. The fifth principle was in effect the nonconformists' alternative to war, namely 'the submission of . . . differences to the arbitration of some neutral authority'. Arbitration was to remain an important plank in the nonconformist platform during the Anglo-Boer War. Finally, the last principle was 'general disarmament', which naturally found a place in the programme of the Peace Society but which proved too radical for most rank-and-file nonconformists.[9] Even when the nonconformists were part of the imperialist mass, they curiously paid lip-service to these fundamental notions. Among pacifist and non-pacifist nonconformist politicians Miall's guidelines informed their decision-making.

Although there was general agreement among nonconformists on Miall's principles,[10] and on the first two of the above interpretations of the religious implications of war, the Crimean adventure in the mid-1850s had generated division on the questions of non-intervention and non-resistance. The great majority of nonconformists were non-pacifists who refused to go any further than prescribing conditions under which resort to arms would be permissible as an 'expedient to restraint' in situations of national conflict. However much they found war abhorrent, most dissenters

saw the sword as the pre-eminent symbol of government in the Bible. Defensive war was approved by many Christians as a last resort. An inner conflict between the notion of muscular Christianity and the gospel of peace underpinned radical Reformation theology.

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The Crimean War brought in its wake a dramatic change in British attitudes towards the professional army, and this contributed to a militarisation of British society—troops were hailed as the 'people's army' and idealized notions of 'what they were fighting for' were recited in the press and from the pulpit. The widespread equation of morality with religion also drew nonconformity closer to a more secular view of war. As the image of the soldier improved through public acclaim, so the proponents of the Peace Society suffered their first defeat. The publication of much hagiography of a military kind confirmed the new sense of nationalism which was challenging the peace tradition. These trends 'offered the religious public plausible evidence both that the soldier could be a good Christian and that there could be such a thing as "the Church in the Army" '.[11] British people came to believe that the Crimean War was a 'war of Christian men', not because it was a 'holy' war against non-Christians but because it seemed to approximate closely the scholastic concept of a just war—namely that hostilities should only be entered into as a last resort and only in defence of the moral order.

Justification of war in Christian circles also received impetus during the Indian Mutiny of 1857 when preachers argued that war 'would help to spread the gospel'. The reasoning was along the following lines: We should hold India for God; if we neglect our charge, we shall draw down his judgement on us. God delivered India to the English in order that she could be converted. (This arrangement does not conflict with our national interests.) The war in India was further rationalised on the grounds that it would benefit everyone because it showed that the world was ruled by an omnipotent God and not by chance. It would also expose national sins, according to preachers of the time. In the case of India the national sin appeared to be Britain's failure to Christianise her most important colonial possession.[12] As imperialist cords were tightened during the Mutiny, 'what had basically been a trading Empire' was changed 'into an explicitly military one'.[13]

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In the 1860s Christian voluntaryism became a popular movement. By this means the regular army became less remote from Victorian society and became increasingly domesticated and assimilated to

civilian norms. Olive Anderson argues that the most significant measures in this process were the result of private evangelical initiative, rather than government action. This resurgence of Christian mission within the army meant a closer identification of churches and chapels with organised militarism. Therefore the evangelical movement which spearheaded this religious reform in the army achieved something of a 'nationalisation' of the army.[14] Its effect was also considerably more successful in terms of proselytism than the evangelism of pre-Crimean days when even the Methodist revival had had little impact on the ordinary soldier. This was achieved because by the end of the 1860s the British army recognised and catered for the religious views of non-Anglicans. These factors contributed towards the dilution of nonconformist pacifism. As the army became less exclusively establishment-oriented, so nonconformity improved its status, thereby drawing the support of its middle-class adherents away from the peace movement.

Anne Summers points out that the British army had to be domesticated in order to be integrated into the larger society. Religion was a means to making the army a popular institution, and it is significant that official policy aimed at promoting this perception in the public mind by 'creating an almost ostentatiously Christian army'.[15] In this sense the fundamental change in general attitudes towards war required both the moral impetus which could only be provided by religion, and the official sanction given by governmental support. It is however doubtful whether this change could have been achieved through unofficial religious efforts alone. When militarism became coupled with the official policy of imperialism it gained a new respectability.

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In the 1870s and 1880s, the political attitudes of nonconformists moved away from the Miall formula as R.W. Dale, another Congregationalist and minister of Carr's Lane Chapel in Birmingham, took on the mantle of theological and intellectual leader of the less conservative evangelical dissenters. And again the bone of contention in foreign affairs was intervention. Dale was uncompromising on the issue and insisted that 'to decline the duty of asserting by arms—when all other means have failed—the claims of liberty and justice must bring both shame and disaster'. This combination of self-conscious nonconformist moralism and assertive liberalism mirrored British society's growing acceptance of militarist imperialism. As early as 1863, Dale had spoken of the need to give 'material as well as moral support' to the oppressed Poles in their struggle against Russian domination. And in 1865 he unequivocally stated the case for intervention 'when the

independence and the very existence of a country are threatened by the ambition and selfishness of a foreign state', denouncing those who favoured intervention only when British interests were at stake. But perhaps the most telling pronouncement was that concerning peace. Here Dale exposed the differences of opinion that existed in nonconformist ranks, not only between pacifists and non-pacifists, but also between those who still subscribed to the Miall principles and the many nonconformists who now favoured a more forthright foreign policy: 'I believe in peace — true peace — at any price . . . even at the price of war.'[16] It was this willingness to meet force with force to counter all forms of oppression which became a cardinal characteristic of much nonconformist action during the late nineteenth century. It coincided with similar feeling within liberalism which provided an official channel for nonconformist expression.

R.T. Shannon has demonstrated this new tendency of nonconformity to take up the cause of the oppressed in his study of the Bulgarian agitation of 1876. He shows convincingly how the dissenters made common cause with the Tractarians in support of the minorities under the Turkish yoke. Anglican evangelicals, on the other hand, ranged themselves with the Conservatives on the side of Turkey in order to preserve British interests. The nonconformists were unanimous in condemning Turkish persecution, and the majority thought that force was justified as a means of liberating the beleaguered Bulgarians. Nonconformists eagerly identified with a religion that was discriminated against by the state because it was part of their own recent experience.[17]

The eastern crisis further weakened the peace movement, and in the British parliament John Bright found himself virtually the sole upholder of the principle of non-intervention. Nonconformists had been so successful as a political lobby, and their platform had rested so squarely on intervention, that they were bound to forget old causes like peace. Naturally the doctrine of intervention also became even more widely accepted by nonconformists as they became more actively involved in politics towards the end of the century. Many of them became Liberal M.P.s and consequently were caught up in party political divisions.

Nevertheless, nonconformists' pacifist leanings were still resilient despite the trinity of imperialism, jingoism and militarism. The pride in empire was there, coupled with an awareness of past military prowess and a belief in the superiority of Anglo-Saxon culture. But the nonconformist conscience avoided fanaticism because it was 'underpinned by a strong Christian ethic and leavened by the values of Victorian liberalism'.[18] Not only nonconformity was touched by such influences; this verdict is valid

for British society as a whole, and emphasises that there can be no simple explanation of Victorian militarism.

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Perhaps one of the most profound influences in changing the attitudes of nonconformists towards war in the 1880s was the emergence of paramilitary agencies like the Salvation Army and the Boys' Brigade. The Salvation Army was a variant of late Methodist revivalism. William Booth, the founder, had intended creating a bridge between non-chapelgoers and the nonconformist churches, but what resulted was a separate organisation. Booth consistently protested against the increasing tendency of dissent to become remote from the lives of the poor and to intellectualise the Christian gospel at the expense of saving men's souls. Salvationism's main emphasis was upon a personal relationship with a personal God. Intellectualism and theology were lacking and sacramentalism played no part.[19] In 1878 the Christian Mission (as it was first designated) had reconstituted itself as the Salvation Army, with a highly centralised system of government using the military trappings of bands, uniforms and official ranks. The application of this military form to the evangelistic work of the Army coincided with the Russo-Turkish war.

'War' was to be waged against evil and against what were called the 'dangerous classes' in urban society — a reference to the 'ruffianism' encountered among the urban poor — and so the Salvation Army adopted a 'civilising mission' which it took with it into the British colonies. In fact the Army became one of the most advanced exponents of religious colonisation. It represented the most aggressive form of Christianity and fostered a moral militarism and religious imperialism which epitomised middle-class respectability, and consequently evoked considerable hostile resistance from the working class, who resented the attack on their values and lifestyle. In terms of the militarisation of British society as a whole, the Salvation Army gave aggression a religious connotation and imbued imperialism with a moral justification. 'Onward Christian Soldiers' however was open to various constructions. The new movement caused confusion in the public mind between Christian warfare and imperial warfare, because it preached that 'as a great empire required an imperial race, so a Christian empire required a Christian populace'.[20] It was with even more confusion therefore that the religious public reacted to the Salvation Army's neutral stance during times of national conflict. Such a position was untenable to pacifist and non-pacifist nonconformists alike.

The Boys' Brigade, founded by William Smith of the Free Church of Scotland in Glasgow in 1883, was an attempt to exploit military organisation to win young working-class boys to the Christian cause. According to Bailey, it was the embryo of the first mass youth organisation in Britain. Its dummy rifles and Bibles reflected a muted militarism which filtered into popular consciousness and further sapped the strength that pacifism might have had in winning young hearts and minds. The credo of the Boys' Brigade movement was discipline combined with religion, and it had strong appeal.[21] The Brigade was also regarded as an important agency of social control in areas of urban unemployment and poverty, where there was a high incidence of antisocial behaviour. It was believed that youth organisations could help to inculcate attitudes in the young that would be supportive of church and state.[22] As a result of the perceived self-righteous assault on working-class mores, the Brigade elicited the same kind of resistance as the Salvation Army.

The activities of the Boys' Brigade were also seen as an attack on the principles of the peace movement. The amalgam of militarism and Christianity offered to children was seen by pacifists as a questionable policy, and there were objections to the role of the Brigade as a 'recruiting agency' for the regular army. Bailey shows that pacifist feeling ran high against the Brigade on the eve of the Anglo-Boer War in 1899, when an agitation within the National Sunday School Union, a nonconformist organisation, resulted in the formation of the rival Boys' Life Brigade.[23]

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One cannot discount the influence of the politicisation of nonconformity in legitimising militarism. The 1890s witnessed in certain quarters the rise of Liberal Imperialism, at the heart of which was an implicit militarism.[24] This too influenced the shift in the nonconformist stance. As the Liberal Party imbibed militarism, so nonconformity experienced the side-effects. Many free churchmen took Lord Rosebery's Liberal Imperialism to heart, and the old peace tradition of Cobden and Bright was eroded further.

As the South African war approached, and despite the revulsion expressed at the Jameson Raid of 1895, nonconformist Christianity increasingly accepted militarism. Nevertheless, as in other wars before and since, 'Christ was found in both trenches'[25] and not all free churchmen embraced Liberal Imperialism — some felt, with the controversial radical Liberal politician, John Morley, that it was no more than 'Chamberlain wine with a Rosebery label'.[26] The Little Englander stance was very much in evidence among certain Baptists, elements within Congregationalism and Prebyterianism, and more noticeably in Unitarian, Primitive Methodist and Quaker circles. These groups cautiously pledged their support to Lloyd George, who represented the anti-war lobby in the Liberal Party. Most nonconformists however took the safe middle course by supporting Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, the Liberal Party leader after Gladstone's death. The fires of imperialism were stoked by the supporters of his opponent for the party leadership, Lord Rosebery. Rosebery's nonconformist backing was impressive, with the weight of Wesleyan Methodism behind him, led by the formidable preacher, Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, the 'Cecil Rhodes of Methodism'.[27]

Without exaggerating the impact of clerical opinion in the formulation of British foreign policy in the late nineteenth century, it may be accepted that its pronouncements indirectly legitimised aggressive imperialism. The transformation within nonconformity, specifically between 1860 and 1890, from anti-imperialism to nationalistic fervour for empire, can be explained largely — and paradoxically — in terms of humanitarianism. The temper of the social gospel was favourably disposed to government action in foreign and colonial affairs. It is paradoxical that liberalised theology could contribute towards an exploitative ideology, but perhaps the social gospel was itself a product of capitalism. More certain is the fact that underlying humanitarianism was a conscious racism: the view that only the British state could protect native races against exploitation was nothing less than a mutation of the generally held notion that the whites were inherently superior to the blacks and so had the right to govern them. Nonconformists, no less than anyone else, believed that the British Empire was the greatest force for good in a world ripe for Christianity. More and more were even beginning to accept that because the Empire had been won by war, it could legitimately be extended by war. It seems that the 'military virtues were thus considered part of the essence of an Imperial Race' — the aggregate of imperialism, militarism and racism.[28]

Nonconformists preached Anglo-Saxon superiority during the Spanish-American war of 1898 and during the Fashoda incident of the same year. One can conclude therefore that before the outbreak of the South African war the 'racially based nationalism of the time ensured that residual Nonconformist reluctance to use force in support of imperial claims evaporated'.[29] It is not surprising then that the Colonial Secretary, Joseph Chamberlain, credited ministers of religion with winning support for war in South Africa in 1899. He claimed that 'almost without exception' they were on the side of the British government.[30] Obviously this was a generalisation which ignored the small but persistent opposition to the war by some nonconformist denominations in Britain and by the Swedish, German, Norwegian and American missionaries in South Africa.[31] But how much power did the pulpit wield in whipping up

support for the war? Was the sermon still 'the standard vehicle of serious truth'?[32] Did the millions of church and chapel adherents at the turn of the century pay particular attention to the convictions of preachers?

The militarisation of society through religion also attracted the attention of the publicist William Stead, himself a Congregationalist. His view of the role of preachers in fostering support for the South African war was from the inside. The tenor of his own writings against the war was religious. His Christian pacifist roots caused him to recoil from the pro-war statements of many clergymen. He derisively referred to them as 'Moloch Priests', a term he borrowed from the writings of Coleridge. He seemed concerned that pro-imperialist clergy were profoundly influencing the political opinions of their parishioners. He was also aware of a rising tide of imperialist fever within churches after war had been declared: 'The silence of many Christian pulpits before the War was notable enough, but it is less horrible than the utterances which have been heard in some of those pulpits since the War broke out.' He continued that he could have wished that they had maintained their silence: 'If our pastors and teachers are as dumb dogs, unable to utter a sound, when the nation is threatened by the catastrophe of War, they might at least hold their tongues, when the only use they can make of them is to envenom still more the angry passions and pharasaic pride of their flocks.' His condemnation was stinging, likening parsons to huntsmen eagerly on the trail with the 'hell-hounds of War'.[33] Stead's graphic imagery was directed against religious leaders again in September 1900, when he derided 'ministers of Christ' who 'exult in combining Christ and Carnage' and who offer 'Divine Worship' with hands 'dripping red with their brothers' blood'.[34] Stead gave some weight to this anti-war propaganda through the Stop-the-war Committee which he founded.

While there is no evidence that religious leaders actually shaped British government policies, as Chamberlain seemed to suggest in a speech on the war delivered in Birmingham in May 1900,[35] their role was one of endorsement of policies already decided upon.[36] John Hobson, the anti-war activist, agreed that the part played by clergymen in nurturing the pro-imperialist cause should not be underestimated. For him, the approval of churches had the effect of providing independent testimony to the justice of the British cause in the public mind. He recognised that nonconformity was divided on the war issue, but accused the wealthier and more respectable dissenters of following secular dictates. It was reprehensible to Hobson that religion was being used by the ruling class to stimulate a fanaticism in war by 'representing it as a sacred duty to risk life in trying to punish other people who are either heathen or wicked

peoples, who have deserved to die, and whose land and other property by right belong to us'.[37] Moreover, in Hobson's opinion, the pulpit was responsible 'for manufacturing Jingoism' only marginally less than the 'poisoned press'.[38] Worse still, Hobson declared that Christianity had served the interests of capitalism during the war. There was little doubt in Hobson's mind that the churches and British missionaries in South Africa were incapable of speaking their mind freely because of the hold over them exercised by finance capitalism. He averred that in particular churches were indebted to Rhodes, their 'munificent patron'. Hobson also exposed the propaganda value of claims by Christian ministers and missionaries that the war was being fought to secure justice for blacks in South Africa. In this way they were masking naked imperialism in the guise of a 'sacred war'.[39] Whether or not Hobson overestimated the role of missionaries in marshalling support for the war is outside the scope of this paper, but it could be argued tentatively here that even if they did not initiate such support, many certainly acquiesced in the face of pressure from mining magnates, uitlanders, politicians, and the tide of jingoism which was swelled by colonial expansion.

It must be remembered that behind Hobson's attack on religion during the war was his obsession with capitalism. He was inclined to overlook those nonconformists who like himself were opposed to imperialism, because they constituted only a fraction of society and, in a larger context, had little power. But even socialist nonconformists were divided: some, like Hobson, praised the Boer community as an alternative to 'a decadent civilization dominated by Jewish finance capital'; others defended war and empire as necessary stages in the civilising mission. The former predictably condemned war as the catastrophic consequence of capital accumulation and class rule.[40] Again the vagaries of the nonconformist conscience caused it to provide different answers to the same question.

Whatever stance nonconformists took on these vital issues of militarism, imperialism, racism and capitalism, however, they reflected the beliefs of a wider-based imperialist community. Perhaps Hobson was wrong in emphasising the leadership role of Christianity during the war. If he had played it down, he would have been more consistent with his own argument that even the profession of Christian principles had failed to prevent the British people from sinking to the level of savagery, a view which led to his conclusion that the nation had 'never been moulded or dominated by Christianity'.[41]

The peace movement was again bewildered by the outright sanction that many churchmen and nonconformist ministers gave to war, and by the apparent reticence of the majority to condemn it.

As Patricia Ashman explains, 'for those Christians who saw the war as unjust, it followed that their religious leaders, starting from the same beliefs, should preach its immorality'.[42] The fact that this was not the case provoked anti-war laymen to attack the sermons of pro-war ministers. They obviously felt the need to redress the imperialist tendencies of the pulpit, presumably because sermons were still considered a powerful medium for determining political attitudes. At the turn of the century, sermons of prominent preachers were published in a weekly newspaper called *The World Pulpit*. Therefore the thoughts of clergy were available even to those who were not churchgoers but who perhaps saw religious utterances as part of the larger voice of humanitarianism. Anti-war Christians and humanitarians consequently found themselves united in defence of peace and often made common cause against the 'drum-beating' clergy. The statements of Keir Hardie, the prominent Labour leader, himself a product of nonconformity, epitomised the coming together of these two forces. He argued that 'when clergymen advocate or support a war like the one now being waged they proclaim themselves infidels who do not believe in the Gospel'. As might have been expected from his background, he also joined Hobson in rebuking the churches for being the tools of capitalism by supporting the war.[43]

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By 1899 the nonconformist conscience in general had lost its single-minded commitment to peace. The momentous events of the second half of the nineteenth century, with its wars and the rise of so-called New Imperialism, had diluted the pacifist ingredient which had given the conscience its radicalism. The army had been drawn closer to the hearts of nonconformists as it began to shed its Anglican exclusivity. Nonconformist society was subtly militarised through its participation in the voluntary movement and through its own militant evangelicalism. As its theology and leadership changed, it was transformed stage by stage from essentially non-violent to morally interventionist and to humanitarianly imperialist, until it was finally caught up in the militarist imperialism associated with the Anglo-Boer War. These stages, though discernible, seemed to overtake the nonconformist conscience almost imperceptibly, through agencies like the Salvation Army and through compelling leadership by nonconformist ministers who constantly modified the attitude to militarism.

Nonconformity was also vassal to liberalism and so took its cue from that quarter as well. Ultimately the structural forces at work such as imperialism and capitalism, imposed themselves upon a middle-class nonconformity, which as a result of its changed material fortunes in British society, had lost its dissenting conscience.

University of South Africa,
Pretoria.

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36. M. Blunden, 'The Anglican church during the war', in P. Warwick and S.B. Spies (eds), *The South African war: the Anglo-Boer war 1899–1902* (London, 1980), p. 279.
37. J.A. Hobson, *The Psychology of jingoism* (London, 1901), pp. 41–61; 125–139.
38. See J.A. Hobson, *How the press was worked before the war*, South African Conciliation Committee pamphlet no. 14 (London, 1900).
39. J.A. Hobson, *The Psychology of jingoism*, pp. 130–133.
40. P. Kaarsholm, 'Imperialist ideology, romantic anti-capitalism and J.A. Hobson', African Studies Institute, University of the Witwatersrand, paper presented July 1982, pp. 1–8.
41. J.A. Hobson, *Psychology of jingoism*, p. 44.
42. P. Ashman, *Anti-war sentiment in Britain during the Boer war*, Ph.D. thesis, University Microfilms, p. 310.
43. E. Hughes (ed.), *Keir Hardie's speeches and writings: from 1888 to 1915*, 4th ed., (Glasgow, n.d.), p. 101.

THE ROLE OF 'CASH' WITHIN THE RELIGIOUS STRUCTURE OF WILLIAM FAULKNER'S 'AS I LAY DYING'

by A.M. POTTER

William Faulkner's work is impregnated with religion references, most of them specifically Christian. 'Reference' is perhaps a misleading term, for frequently lengthy passages, extensive scenes, or even whole books are conceived and structured in terms of the patterns generated by some or other aspect in particular of the Christian story.[1] The richest source 'of the material that Faulkner used to construct his works' was 'the King James Bible, his favourite story was that of Christ's Passion; but he also referred often to the story of Eden, and occasionally to those of Abraham and Isaac, David and Absalom, Joseph and his brothers, and many more'.[2]

Within the general context of Faulkner's use of religious material in his works, *As I Lay Dying* holds a prominent position. P.C. Rule has devoted an essay to the subject of 'The Old Testament Vision' in *As I Lay Dying*',[3] the subject of which is self-explanatory, while H.H. Waggoner in a book-length study of Faulkner, devotes a chapter to *As I Lay Dying* in which he demonstrates, among other things, the extensive use of New Testament patterns in the structuring of the Bundren's epic journey.[4]

As the title of this paper suggests, its emphasis will be on the rôle of Cash within this religious patterning; although a certain amount of additional analysis will have to be done initially to be able to place Cash's function in the context of the concerns of the book as a whole. Adams has placed Cash's rôle broadly but imprecisely within the book's religious framework by saying that 'he, like Jewel and Vardaman, resembles Christ in some ways',[5] but he does not elaborate other than pointing out that Cash is a carpenter, leaving us to work out for ourselves whether the parallels are more significant than this superficial, though highly suggestive one, would imply.

Waggoner is more precise as to Cash's rôle, seeing him to be 'the artist as craftsman, maker, and as the committed man'.[6] Towards the end of his chapter on *As I Lay Dying* he elaborates on this statement in the following way:

> Cash is an artist in his carpentry, respecting his materials, working the wood according to the grain and turning out a good job not for any 'practical' motive but simply because he cares about good workmanship. Cash is the artist seeing, caring, and taking pains, the artist as man and maker. 'A fellow can't get away from a shoddy job.'