

Mysticism and Religious Modernism: Lily Dougall (1858-1923)

JOANNA DEAN

“The religions of authority are tottering to their fall,” the Dean of St. Paul’s, W.R. Inge, said in 1905, “but the religion of Spirit is still near the beginning of that triumphant course which Christ foretold for it . . .”¹ Three decades later, slightly chastened about the “triumphant course,” he continued to distinguish between the faltering religion of authority and the resurgent religion of experience: “It became clear to me, as soon as I began to think seriously about the foundations of belief, that the centre of gravity in religion has shifted from authority to experience.”² Historians in Canada have largely focused on one side of this shift, and the loss of religious authority has been variously lamented, debated and discussed.³ Very little attention, however, has been paid to the corresponding rise of the religion of experience, the expansive spirituality that appeared in the margins or the “borderlands” of the major churches, in spiritualism, in metaphysical movements like Theosophy, New Thought and Christian Science, in the holiness and higher life movements, and in the popular interest in mysticism. Secular and religious historians alike have given little credence to the spiritual claims of the practitioners of many these movements. While some of the more esoteric expressions of this spirituality provide an easy target, as Ramsay Cook has shown in *The Regenerators*, they deserve closer attention, in part for their own sake, and in part for the light they shed on Inge’s tottering religions of authority.⁴

The focus in this essay will be on the most respectable of these religions of experience, the popular interest in mysticism that emerged in

the early-twentieth century in a veritable flood of books by such modern and liberal figures as W.R. Inge, Evelyn Underhill, Baron Friedrich von Hugel, Rufus Jones and William James. I will approach mysticism through the eyes of a Canadian writer and Anglican modernist, Lily Dougall (1858-1923). Dougall's life work, a corpus of ten novels, eight theological works and innumerable stories, articles and papers, is best understood as an ongoing attempt to understand a deeply-felt religious experience. She was not a mystic, but an examination of her understanding of mysticism, her brief adoption of the term and subsequent rejection of it, will not only suggest the power of experiential faith but also reveal the changing ways that faith could be interpreted and defined through the tumultuous freedom of religious liberalism at the turn of the century.

Dougall is a particularly useful lens because of her exclusion from the circles of ecclesiastical authority. The emphasis by historians on the collapse of the church has in large part been a result of their perspective. We have viewed religious history through the eyes of those with the most to lose: those clergymen and theologians who embodied religious authority. (And even then we have focused on their professional debates rather than their personal faith.⁵) Historians have rarely approached religion from the perspective of the members of the congregation who are too often assumed to be the passive recipients of the message from the pulpit. The study of a woman like Dougall, however, excluded by gender from the pulpit and the lectern in spite of her learning, brings a different perspective to bear on the decline of the church. Speaking from the pews, Dougall condemned the "tyranny of ecclesiastical authority."⁶ Ministers, she suggested in her novels, had been imprisoned by their doctrines and blinded by their creeds, and it was the laity, frequently intelligent single women, who were the most spiritual members of the church.⁷

The historical focus on religious institutions has also been a result of methodological difficulties with the experience of faith as a historical construct. Religious experience, particularly mystical experience, has been understood as a universal and unchanging phenomena, a core that exists at the heart of every religious tradition and thus outside the purview of history. It is ironic that it is the philosophers of religion, rather than the historians, who are now calling for a historicized and politicized understanding of religious experience. Scholars like Bernard McGinn, drawing upon the work of Steven Katz, have argued that mysticism cannot be unraveled from either the traditions from which it emerges, or the interpre-

tive framework in which it is expressed.⁸ McGinn argues that mysticism is not a pure experience or a “perennial philosophy” but needs to be understood contextually, and that the mystical text – rather than the mystical experience – and its place in tradition are the primary objects of study. Language and symbol are no longer impediments that obscure the central experience, but are inescapably enmeshed in, and inform, that experience. It is not just that our interpretation of the divine changes over time and place, but that experience itself is altered by the historical context. Mysticism, and by extension all religious experience, thus becomes implicated in culture and historicized. Grace Jantzen has taken the contextualization of mysticism one step further and politicized it in powerfully gendered ways arguing from a Foucauldian perspective that the modern interpretation of mysticism has served to marginalize women's spirituality. By understanding mysticism as a private, ineffable and subjective experience, she says, we have taken the power out of a spirituality that prior to the modern period presented a potent alternate discourse.⁹

Jantzen's analysis is focused upon the work and influence of pragmatist William James. The study of Lily Dougall reveals, however, that Jamesian interpretations of mysticism had to compete, in the early-twentieth century, with other modern constructions of mystical experience. As a young girl, Lily Dougall brought the language and symbols of her family's evangelical faith to bear upon her religious experience. Her father, John Dougall, was the publisher of a number of liberal evangelical papers, including the *Montreal Daily Witness* and the *New York Witness*. Correspondence between their two homes in New York and Montreal reveals that the Dougall family lived with a constant sense of the presence of God. As Lily explained when she was nineteen, “We believe He is close beside us always, not only as a God and King, but as a friend.”¹⁰ She wrote,

When I sought God with my whole heart I *found Him* . . . my whole life has been transformed. It is a happier, holier, deeper truer thing than it ever was before, not because I am changed, but because “there is a Friend who sticketh closer than a brother.” And this friend is not mythical or vague, or even a sometimes-reality, but a *tangible* (touchable) constant reality; One who (I say it reverently) answers when I speak to Him, and who grants always when I ask.¹¹

She rebelled against evangelicalism as a young woman. In a difficult and prolonged crisis she rejected what she felt to be the irrationalities, the rigidities and the vulgarities of evangelicalism, and turned instead to a broad Anglicanism. “[Evangelicals] see the panorama of the universe painted in monochrome only, in the light and shadow of right and wrong,” she wrote. “But to those who are not thus colour blind this code of the monochrome is a torturing and deforming thing.”¹² The loss of an evangelical experiential faith, however, left her groping with words to express her faith. As she noted, faith needed the imaginative constructions of symbol and language to stay alive: “When increasing knowledge shatters the traditional pictures of the unknown, it is better to build these up again that seek to live by a faith unaided by imagination, always bearing in mind that all words and images are merely symbols of the truth.”¹³

Leaving her family home in Canada, Dougall engaged in a wide-ranging course of study, including classes at the University of Edinburgh, lessons in Greek, private study of the Bible, and a persistent and critical examination of the religious phenomena. She settled permanently in Britain and cultivated friendships with such eminent figures as idealists Edward Caird and William Wallace. Hegelian idealism provided a new way of understanding her faith, an interpretation that was compatible with the legacies of her evangelical childhood, and was conducive to mystical experience.¹⁴ She initially explored this outlook through a series of popular melodramatic novels. Her novels kept straying awkwardly into religious terrain, however, and in 1900 Dougall found a new vehicle with a provocative work of liberal religious thought, *Pro Christo et Ecclesia*.¹⁵ The book brought her acceptance into the elite clerical and academic circles of Anglican modernism, and she established a reputation as a religious gadfly, prodding the Anglican and Free Churches through a series of books, articles and speeches, to become more liberal, more socially aware and more spiritual.

Her fellow modernists represented the fighting edge of liberal Anglican theology; they retained belief in a personal God, personal immortality and a historic revelation in Christ, but insisted that beyond these things, “there is a great deal of hay and stubble that has simply got to be cleared away.”¹⁶ Dougall described an immanent God who worked in and through nature, and rejected the orthodox belief in an intrusive supernatural as a primitive theology. Neither the virgin birth nor the physical resurrection of Christ were essential to her Christianity, nor did

she have much faith in the creeds, doctrines or the ministry of the church. But, unlike the more combative members of the Modern Churchman's Association who caused a national controversy in 1921 with their degree Christology, Dougall was diplomatic, even evasive in expressing these ideas. She felt it dangerous to remove the symbols and myths that propped up the faith, at least until a new imagery could be found.

The early literary intimations of Dougall's adoption of mystical terms of reference lie in three novels published in 1895. In *The Madonna of a Day* Dougall describes the conversion of a sceptical free thinking New Woman. The outrageously melodramatic plot is typical of Dougall's fiction: a young woman sleepwalks off a train in the Canadian Rockies on Christmas Eve and finds herself at the mercy of a rough camp of loggers. She narrowly escapes rape and forced marriage by playing upon their superstition that she, struck dumb and wearing a blue gown on Christmas Eve, is a vision of the Madonna. The experience transforms the brash young woman: her worldly cynicism is shattered by her recognition of the power of an ideal, however false, over the men, and at the same time a series of mystical experiences awaken her spirituality and lead her to realize that there is a higher reality behind symbols like the Madonna. The mystical experiences are found in nature, in the height and grandeur of the Rocky Mountains.

As her eye travelled upon the snow clad declivities of this high mountain she felt her mind lifted into a different class of thoughts and sensations . . . What did it mean? She found herself struggling with the belief that it meant something to her, just as words spoken from another mind to hers would have had meaning . . . The meaning came to her in a flash of thought that seemed like sunrise in her soul. The mountain sang of an inspiration toward an impossible perfection, the struggle for which was the joy, the only joy of the universe.¹⁷

Later, when locked into a mountain cabin, she sees a light flashing in the waterfall. Dougall always explained her melodramatic devices, and this one, we later learn, is a leak of coal gas that is kept lit so as to burn off the smell, but for the captive it takes on spiritual significance:

It was, in short, a physical salvation that she had something in her which responded to that appeal which nature is always making to the human mind to find rest in the contemplation of her loveliness . . . Our

help comes not from without but wells up from the depths within us. Beneath that depth what is there? It was said by one of old that underneath the soul is the hand of God.¹⁸

The imagery of the mountain, the light, and the corresponding depths in one's being are familiar ones to mystic accounts.

Another book, *The Zeit-Geist*, also places a transformative mystical experience at the climax of a melodramatic story. A young evangelical is struck on the head and left for dead in a dark and foreboding swamp. As he recovers he has a religious experience which Dougall describes in the language of mystic Meister Eckhart as the "eternal now": "Something of the secret of all peace – the *Eternal Now* remained with him as long as the weakness of the injury remained."¹⁹ He realizes the power of an immanent and pantheistic God:

. . . his heart in its waking felt after something else around and beneath and above him, everywhere, something that meant light and comfort and rest and love, something that was very strong, that was strength; he himself, Bart Toyner, was part of this strength and rested in it with a rest and refreshing . . . it came to him he had made a great mistake . . . he had thought, he had actually thought that God was only part of things; that he, Bart Toyner could turn away from God; that God's power was only with him when he supposed himself to be obedient to Him! Yes, he had thought this; but now he knew that God was all and in all.²⁰

A third novel written at the same time describes another young man, Caius, who is woken out of a self-righteous creed by the sight of a mermaid swimming in the sea. Caius' first sight of the mermaid is described in language drawn in part from evangelical conversion narratives, and in part from descriptions of mystical experience:

In the procession of swift winged hours there is for every man one and another which is big with fate, in that they bring him peculiar opportunity to lose his life, and by that means find it. Such an hour came now to Caius. The losing and finding of life is accomplished in many ways: the first proffer of this kind which Time makes to us is commonly a draught of the wine of joy, and happy is he who loses the remembrance of self therein.²¹

To lose one's life in order to find it is an image familiar to evangelicals, but the situation, even apart from the bizarre appearance of the mermaid, lacks any of the other hallmarks of a conversion narrative. Caius does not experience an extended period of anxiety, a conviction of sin, then repentance and a sudden assurance. The loss of self, however, in a joyous experience of the divine, is characteristic of a mystical experience.

For it must all have been a dream – a sweet fantastic dream, imposed upon his senses by some influence, outward or inward; but it seemed to him that at the hour when he seemed to see the maid it might have been given to him to enter the world of dreams, and go on in some existence which was a truer reality than the world in which he now was.²²

In conformity with both the conversion and mystical narrative, this moment is a transformative one. Caius struggles to fit her appearance into his understanding of reality: “He realized that some new region of life had been opened to him, that he was feeling his way into new mysteries of beatified thought and feeling.”²³ The mermaid is discovered, quite unbelievably on the last pages, to have been a woman floating in a mermaid costume. But the illusion is not spoiled, for Caius has by this time come to know the woman herself, who lives a contemplative life on the remote Magdalen Islands, and has come through her to realize the power of a spiritual life.²⁴

In each of these stories a higher reality is revealed through some melodramatic device. The coal gas was an illusion, as was the mermaid, but they point to a higher reality, a reality that in Dougall's theology has no need for expression through miracle or revelation, but will express itself through the natural world, through mountains, and through prayerful communion. In a later theological work, *Voluntas Dei* (1912), Dougall suggested, rather tentatively, that the Virgin Birth was a myth. She said that the old interpretation of Genesis mistook crisis for process, and argued: “Is it not possible that, in speaking of the process of the advent of Christ, the religious consciousness may again have mistaken crisis for process. But in admitting these mistakes, if they be admitted, we are bound always to admit that the truth they clothe was not a mistake.”²⁵ The Christian miracles, she suggested, were, like the mermaid, an illusion, but they truth they represent was unchanged.

Dougall did not at this time identify the fictional experiences as mystical. She had, as a young girl, expressed an aversion to mysticism. She recalled:

When quite young I once collected as many of the writings of the mystics as I could get, and read and read, but was put off by the “half metaphysical half imaginative” descriptions by mystics like Eckhart. I remember being worried by the effort to see my soul like an alp, its peak lost in heaven. The “Spark” at the apex of the soul, one with the uncreated God, vexed me by the picture it raised.

Her conclusion was to write the mystics off as unhealthy examples. “I remember feeling that the notable mystics were perhaps more different from the common devout man in the gift of a fantastical imagination and in love of expression than in having clearer perceptions of things unseen.”²⁶ Yet the fact that she had read the mystics at a young age and used their imagery in her work suggests the power of mystical language and symbolism in her evangelical childhood. Mysticism had influenced evangelical culture in a number of ways; in particular prominent holiness writer Thomas Upham (1799-1872) borrowed heavily from Roman Catholic mysticism.²⁷ Upham popularized Quietist mysticism but also altered it in the translation, minimizing the asceticism and the annihilation of self, and making Quietism, as he said, “essentially Protestant.”²⁸ The idea of divine union that lay at the core of Quietist mysticism was revised by Upham to a relationship with, rather than dissolution in, the Divine.

In an early autobiographical work Lily Dougall similarly altered a mystical experience. She described her father’s conversion in terms drawn from Schleiermacher’s mystical piety: “It is usually a new discovery to a man when he finds that religion is not anything he can do or believe, but the yielding to an inward power, other than himself, which transforms his deeds and beliefs . . . [he was] aware that there was a heavenly strength to be had in this life, which transforms conscious life into a conscious union with God.” The editing of this passage, however, reveals Dougall’s avoidance of the mystical concept of divine union for more evangelical Christological language. She substituted “which transforms conscious life into a conscious union with God” for “a power for holy work in the personal presence of Christ.”²⁹ The second phrase replaces the suspect “union” with a more benign “presence,” a presence, it is significant to

note, not of God but of Christ. In this simple shift of language the mystical experience became active, individualist and Christocentric.

Dougall lost her early suspicion of mysticism, however, and by 1910, when she published her third religious book, *Absente Reo*, a reviewer commented, “The writer is a mystic, a twentieth-century mystic.”³⁰ The book is structured as a series of letters to a young Anglican cleric in which she calls for a renewal through inward spirituality. Her companion Sophie Earp wrote: “Perhaps the central idea of the book may be said to be the importance of personal illumination rather than the ceremonial forms which accompany that inward illumination and vary with age.”³¹ The book is playful, yet deeply serious; through it Dougall preaches, with some relish, to the men who usually preached to her:

God is life and the fuller life comes only from Him. But this impulse of fuller religion implies independence of hackneyed thought, getting into the mountains of the soul at night time, and meeting there with God, going out a great while before it is day into the solitudes of the spiritual life. “And you – what are you doing? Is not the greater part of your time spent in forcing, as it were, the nose of the laity to the grindstone of hackneyed words, hackneyed ideas, hackneyed responsibilities.”³²

Dougall later told a friend that she felt she might have neglected the outer forms of religion in this book, in her attempt to stress the inner life, but, “. . . I am sure that mysticism produces the truest sanity.”³³

The shift in Dougall’s views appears to have been influenced by the Bampton Lectures on *Christian Mysticism* delivered in Oxford by W.R. Inge (1860-1954) in 1899. She wrote *Absente Reo* in the midst of a flood of books on mysticism: the Roman Catholic Baron Friedrich von Hugel (1852-1925) wrote *The Mystical Element in Religion* in 1908; American Quaker Rufus Jones (1863-1948) followed with the first of many books on mysticism, *Studies in Mystical Religion*, in 1909; and Evelyn Underhill (1875-1941) wrote the book that has become the most popular text on the subject, *Mysticism*, in 1911.³⁴ Their books went into multiple editions and printings; Inge, Jones and Underhill each wrote a number of subsequent works that were variations on the theme.³⁵

These writers laid the groundwork for the modern understanding of mysticism.³⁶ They were modernists; the people who preached the religion

of experience were the same people who would send religious authority tottering to its knees.³⁷ Inge was the president of the Anglican modernist organization, the Modern Churchman's Union, from 1924-1934; his predecessor from 1915-1922, Percy Gardner, also wrote on mysticism, and prompted the remark: "There is no one in Oxford who prays more and believes less than Percy Gardner."³⁸ Baron von Hugel was a Roman Catholic modernist who escaped censure in part because his audience was largely outside his own faith. Rufus Jones was a liberal Quaker.³⁹ Evelyn Underhill's liberal sympathies were so strong that she changed her mind about entering the Roman Catholic Church after the 1907 Papal condemnation of modernism, and subsequently returned to her childhood Anglican faith.

The confluence of modernism and mysticism had been predicted in 1844 by the Broad Churchman, Benjamin Jowett, who argued, "as faith loses in extent, it must gain in intensity, if we do not mean to shipwreck it altogether."⁴⁰ The religious history of the early-twentieth century suggests that if he was right about the potential for shipwreck, he was also right about an intensified liberal faith. Before World War One we find even such philosophers as Bertrand Russell toying with mysticism as an alternative to bleak agnosticism. As Russell argued,

the decay of traditional beliefs has made every religion that rests on dogma precarious, and even impossible, to many whose nature is strongly religious . . . For right action they are thrown back upon bare morality; and bare morality is very inadequate as a motive for those who hunger and thirst after the infinite. Thus it has become a matter of first importance to preserve religion without any dependence upon dogmas to which an intellectually honest assent grows daily more difficult.⁴¹

Russell failed to find a *modus vivendi* between the imperatives of mysticism and logic, and after 1914 opted for the latter. The vehemence of his later anti-religionist outlook, however, reflected the promise that mystical thought had once held.

The modernist interest in mysticism was paralleled by the empiricism of an emerging psychology of religion. In a series of lectures delivered in Scotland two years after Inge's Bampton Lectures, William James also emphasized the experience rather than the authority of religion.

In *Varieties of Religious Experience*, he bypassed the “overbeliefs” of creed and church and defined religion as “*the feelings, acts and experiences of individual men in their solitude, so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider the divine.*”⁴² As he noted:

The problem I have set myself is a hard one: *first*, to defend . . . “experience” against “philosophy” as being the real backbone of the world’s religious life . . . and *second*, to make the hearer or reader believe, what I myself invincibly do believe, that, although all the special manifestations of religion may have been absurd (I mean its creeds and theories), yet the life of it as a whole is mankind’s most important function.⁴³

James stressed the abnormal, arguing that the essential elements are most obvious in “those religious experiences that are one-sided, exaggerated and intense.”⁴⁴ He reduced religion to a subjective experience, an experience redeemed, it is important to note, by his confidence that the individual *is* in contact with some higher reality, and that this reality breaks in upon the world through “prayerful communion.” This was not Christianity, but something better described, as it was by the Canadian psychiatrist cited by James, Richard Maurice Bucke, as a “cosmic consciousness.”⁴⁵ James’ understanding of mysticism has been influential, particularly in the philosophy of religion; his emphasis on the abnormal and his description of the hallmarks of the mystical experience, ineffability, noetic quality, transiency and passivity, have succeeded in defining, and according to Grace Jantzen, marginalising the mystical experience.⁴⁶

Although she was fascinated by psychology, Lily Dougall had little patience with William James’ interpretations of mystical experience. She met with James briefly to discuss her book on the psychology of religion, *The Mormon Prophet* (1899), but was unimpressed by his description of a reservoir of soul into which all believers dip. “I said how it was possible to make [the conception of a reservoir] affect my thought or that of others, because it was unimaginable.” It was worse than useless, as she wrote to a friend: “The only imaginative image that I received from his conversation was that of frogs on the outskirts of a pond.”⁴⁷ Instead she turned to the modernist mysticism described by W.R.Inge, who as Dean of St.Pauls spoke from within the Anglican establishment, and the Quaker Rufus

Jones, whose American outlook probably appealed to her lingering sympathies with liberal evangelicalism. *Absente Reo* is informed by Inge's *Christian Mysticism*, and Jones' *Studies in Mystical Religion*. Jones subsequently collaborated with Dougall on a joint volume, *Concerning Prayer* (1916).⁴⁸

In contrast to James, Inge and Jones described mysticism as a normal and rational experience, a continuum whose lower reaches were accessible to any believer. Lily Dougall drew upon the language of personal idealism (and her girlhood evangelicalism) to compare mystical prayer to a relationship with a friend.

The mystical element in prayer is perhaps constituted by the loss of sense of self in communion, and may perhaps be defined as participation in God's side of man's communion with Him. Consciously and with effort, or unconsciously and involuntarily, man's soul often seems to go over the line of its own urgency toward God and become absorbed in God's urgency manward. Of course, when we come to analyze it, this is a common experience of all affection, all friendship; an identification with the other self is involved.⁴⁹

She quotes, approvingly, Rufus Jones' definition of mysticism as "the type of religion which puts the emphasis on immediate awareness of a relationship with God, a direct and intimate contact with the Divine Presence. It is religion in its most acute, intense and living stage."⁵⁰

Mysticism was understood to be the experience of heard prayer, familiar to every believer. Inge wrote: "I have never myself had what are usually called mystical experiences. But in truth the typical mystical experience is just prayer. Anyone who has really prayed, and felt that his prayers are heard, knows what mysticism means . . . The higher stages are for the saints who have given up all to win the pearl of great price."⁵¹ Similarly Dougall wrote, "The lamp of mysticism is more or less alight in every religious soul, and therefore in every true prayer, although often unrecognized."⁵²

The emphasis was on sanity and normality. As Dougall told a friend, "One so often comes upon the notion, in early religious training of the young, that any experience of [the mystical] sort may lead to mental weakness."⁵³ She argued that mysticism was not dangerous; it could not fail or lead to "psychic miasma." Jones repeatedly used the word sanity in

his discussions of mysticism, arguing that a mystical element informs the “sanest and most matter-of-fact person among us” in the call of duty and in the moments when prayer is lifted into “vital communion with God.” It was not necessarily a solitary pursuit: “These mystical experiences in a perfectly sane and normal fashion often come over whole groups of persons in times of worship.” Nor did it necessarily involve extraordinary experiences: “the sanest mystics discount visions and ecstasies.”⁵⁴ Inge similarly discounted visions. Mystics in his account were not spiritual athletes or religious extremists: Inge concluded the influential Bampton Lectures with a discussion of Wordsworth and Browning; by 1921, when he wrote *Studies of English Mystics*, he included scientists and intellectuals who have a momentary revelation, and even explorers like Gordon of Khartoum, in the pantheon of mystics.

As part of this emphasis on normality, these writers emphasized the practical, even business-like behaviour of many mystics. Dougall quoted Inge to show that St. Teresa’s visions did not impair her powers as an organizer, “her extreme practical ability.” She cited Jones’ argument that Eckhart was a “highly practical man, who did his day’s work with fidelity” and his observation on the “practical” side of Jean de Gerson’s life.⁵⁵ “As a matter of fact,” Inge stated, “all the great mystics have been energetic and influential, and their business capacity is specially noted in a curiously large number of cases.”⁵⁶

Inge and James wrote the “pathological aberrations” out of the tradition by insisting, in a typically modernist fashion, that these elements were incidental to mysticism. Dougall distinguished between mysticism and the “pathological” behaviour associated with the cloistered medieval mystics. She suggested that the popular image is skewed because only the more extreme mystics wrote about their experiences: “I am inclined to think that the greater mystics, and by far the greater multitude of mystics, have been, and always will be, greatly silent. The outcome of mysticism ought rather to be in action and in the progressive enlightenment of the reason.”⁵⁷ When Rufus Jones contributed a chapter on mysticism to a book, *Concerning Prayer*, co-written by a select group of religious thinkers gathered at Dougall’s home, he argued that they must discard the old negative mysticism that introduced such esoteric elements as the “mystic way” and the *via negativa* to create a new affirmative mysticism.⁵⁸

We can best help our age toward a real revival of Mysticism as an

elemental aspect of religious life, not by formulating an esoteric “mystic way” not by clinging to the ancient metaphysic to which Mysticism has been allied, but by emphasising the reality of mystical experience, by insisting on its healthy and moral character, and by indicating ways in which such dynamic experiences can be fostered, and realized, and put into practical application.⁵⁹

Similarly, Inge dismissed the *via negativa* as “the great accident of Christian mysticism,” a result of “Asiatic” influence.⁶⁰

These modernist mystics also wrote the erotic out of the mystical. Inge quotes Friedrich Schleiermacher’s description of religious experience in *Studies of English Mystics*.⁶¹ His quotation is, however, selectively edited, and Schleiermacher’s comparison of the mystical experience to “holy wedlock” – “Did I venture to compare it, seeing I cannot describe it, I would say it is fleeting and transparent as a maiden’s kiss, it is holy and fruitful like a bridal embrace. Nor is it merely like, it is all this” – has silently disappeared from the text.⁶² This may be more than a matter of British prudery. Modernist mysticism, like the holiness mysticism of Thomas Upham, insisted upon the independent identity of the believer and resisted a final dissolution in the divine; they were concerned about the loss of personality in the divine union, and in the implication that mysticism was pantheistic.⁶³ As Dougall wrote, following the arguments of personal idealism, “The self, if it finds God, certainly finds Him within – in the sense that it is within that the self speaks to God and God speaks to the self. This belief is not pantheistic, there is no identity of self with God. It would put an end to all communication for, as we have seen, all true union depends on difference.”⁶⁴ The model was one of a friendship rather than a marital relationship, as in Schleiermacher, or the more purely erotic relationships described in some early mystics. The loss of individual will and rational control in a passionate relationship with God has been replaced by a measured friendship with God. As Dougall wrote: “All spiritual activities seem to rise from man’s consciousness that when he is most alone, in the sense of having retired from the things of sense, he is in company with another spirit . . .”⁶⁵

This tamed and normalized mysticism was seen to be inherently rational. Dougall, who had rebelled against the suspension of reason in the evangelicalism of her childhood, was suspicious of any irrational faith. It was Inge who set Dougall’s mind at rest on this point by arguing that

mysticism was compatible with reason, indeed was characterized by its “uncompromising rationalism.” He had defined mysticism in idealist terms as “the attempt to realize, in thought and feeling, the immanence of the temporal in the eternal, and of the eternal in the temporal.”⁶⁶ In *Christian Mysticism* he distinguishes between those mystics who pursue the *via negativa* and blind themselves to the world of the senses, and the objective or symbolical mystics, typified by the Cambridge Platonists, whose mysticism was not an alternative to, but an exercise of, purified reason.⁶⁷ After 1899 Inge focused on those mystics who were also philosophers, who were as he put it, “almost free from these aberrations”; his main scholarly work was a study of Plotinus. Coleridge, whose ideas were central to liberal Anglicanism, had laid the groundwork for Inge’s argument. He had drawn upon the Cambridge Platonists, and developed their idea of reason as the “candle of the Lord,” the vehicle or medium of spiritual experience. Understanding was the faculty that deals with objects of sense, whereas higher rationality, which Coleridge distinguished from lower purely logical operations of the reason, was the eye of the spirit. Inge explained in Coleridgean terms in 1907: “the organ by which we apprehend divine truth is no special faculty, but the higher reason, which we distinguish from the understanding because we mean it to include the will and feelings, disciplined under the guidance of the intellect.”⁶⁸

Dougall followed Inge in insisting that mysticism was consistent with rational thought, and her words also took on a Coleridgean tone: “The opening of the Soul’s eye to the Love’s being is only the beginning of an education which cannot proceed, as the progressive creed of the Pharisee did, from the known to the unknown, but always from the imperfectly known to the unknowable.”⁶⁹ She said there would continually be discrepancies between the truth of revelation and orthodoxy, “the smug little system of thought,”⁷⁰ or the purely logical operation of reason. In *Absente Reo* she told her fictional clerical correspondent that a mystical faith provides a more secure base than the lower operations of reason. “My point in all this is, that this hearing element in prayer is necessary to make the individual soul appropriate and assimilate the inexpressible certainties of true religion as parts of its very life, deeper and higher and broader than any certainty that it can obtain by the instruction of man, or to put it another way, by any experience, racial or individual, that comes to it as knowledge.”⁷¹ The task is to reconcile the lower reason and faith, but if they were to contradict each other, she argued that faith provided the safer

path:

It is quite possible that the utmost in knowledge in progressive science and the strongest reasoning upon scientific discovery form a slower and less satisfactory way of arriving at the secrets of the universe than the way of personal experiment in religion; it is also possible that while man's psychic powers are not in complete agreement and unity it is quite as honest for a man to adhere to what satisfies his emotional and volitional nature although his reason be dissatisfied, as to adhere to what merely satisfies reason while the rest of his nature cries against it.⁷²

This revised mysticism had great promise for modernist thinkers. Mysticism provided new authority for a faith that had lost its old authorities in the Bible and creed. Inge wrote,

We cannot shut our eyes to the fact that both the old seats of authority, the infallible Church and the infallible book, are fiercely assailed, and that our faith needs reinforcements. These can only come from the depths of the religious consciousness itself, and if summoned from thence, they will not be found wanting. *The "impregnable rock" is neither an institution nor a book, but a life or experience* (emphasis mine).⁷³

Dougall paraphrased Inge in *Absente Reo*:

Not long ago men took Christianity on the valuation of the clergy, or they left it altogether; now men are trying to fit Christianity into the facts of life as they are found in history or as they see them today, and life looks very different to this person and that. In the process of sifting all Christians must fall back upon some rock which is not being assailed, some common ground on which they can find footing, and on it stand to fight their battle. *The only rock on which they can rest is the personal experience of God's voice in their hearts.* It is this and this alone which brings the peace which science and research and social institutions can neither give nor take away (emphasis mine).⁷⁴

Similarly Jones wrote, "We ought to challenge the elaborate logical constructions of bygone metaphysics, and base our interpretations upon the

sure ground of *vital religious experience* and on the inescapable implications of our minds as they co-operate with a universe which reveals rationality from outermost husk to innermost core.”⁷⁵

The reinforcement was an effective one: no less a liberal Protestant than Harry Emerson Fosdick has attested to the power of Jones’ mysticism in shoring up his faltering faith as a young man.⁷⁶ Of course a higher spirituality had been claimed by evangelicals and holiness thinkers throughout the nineteenth century. What the study of mysticism offered, however, was more than simply a heightened spiritual experience, but the legacy of a mystical tradition. In his 1899 lectures Inge traced mysticism from the Fourth Gospel, through St. Paul, into the early Platonists. He described Meister Eckhart, and the other introspective mystics of the fourteenth century, the Spanish Quietists, and then turned to Renaissance nature mysticism, Jakob Boehme, William Law, and the Cambridge Platonists. Finally he described the romantic mysticism of Wordsworth and Tennyson.⁷⁷ Here was a tradition that the modernists could claim.

In creating a usable tradition, modernists rewrote mysticism in their own liberal Protestant image. Inge disparaged “the debased supernaturalism which usurps the name of mysticism in Roman Catholic countries.”⁷⁸ He understood mysticism to be essentially Protestant, and identified with the Catholic mystics in their defiance of church authority. The mystics described by Inge are seen to be Protestants, even when in Roman Catholic garb; Eckhart and his school of introspective mystics anticipate Luther, and even the Counter Reformation Quietists eventually threaten the Roman Catholic church. “But the Jesuits say with their usual acumen that Mysticism, even in the most submissive guise, is an independent and turbulent spirit . . .”⁷⁹ His account of the characteristic features of western mysticism, drawn from an eleventh-century mystic, Amalric, is remarkably modern: “its strong belief in Divine immanence, not only in the Church, but in the individual, its uncompromising rationalism, contempt for ecclesiastical forms, and tendency to evolutionary optimism.”⁸⁰ Amalric, despite a few “perversions” has in Inge’s description anticipated liberal Protestantism, even to its evolutionary optimism.

The modernists could lay claim to a heritage that, whatever its “pathological aberrations,” had an uncontested knowledge of God. Inge wrote: “I was convinced very early, and I have never wavered in my conviction, that this testimony of the saints and mystic has far greater evidential value than is usually supposed, and that it may properly take the

place of those traditional 'evidences' which for one reason or another have lost their cogency."⁸¹ These mystics also offered a route, a map for reaching God that substituted for the rejected creeds and dogmas of orthodoxy. Dougall, for example, cited St. Teresa's advice to her nuns about prayer, "to sum up all one's faculties in concentrated attention upon silence."⁸²

The mystics also provided a language, a way of expressing spirituality, that, if it did not have the purity of the early gospels, was continually renewed by the experience of God, and appeared to be free of the institutional accretions of the intervening centuries. Mysticism offered an authority that was not an authority, a tradition that seemed to exist at the fringes and in resistance to the powers of the church.

Mysticism was also a potentially liberatory faith for women. Whereas the Church of England continued to deny women like Dougall any position of authority or responsibility, the voice of God in the heart made her an equal in the religion of experience. It was religious experience (as well as, admittedly, her many years of private study in Greek and theology) that gave Dougall the courage to lecture the young cleric in *Absente Reo* and challenge the church in her other modernist works. It was a religious framework with a strong female legacy, as feminists like Grace Jantzen are discovering today. Thomas Upham, for example, revived the work of Madame Guyon, von Hugel based his work on Catherine of Adorno, and Dougall referred to St. Teresa. It was, significantly, a woman, Evelyn Underhill, acting outside any theological or institutional authority, who became the leading twentieth-century writer on mysticism.

Dougall was in her fifties when she wrote *Absente Reo*, and she subsequently dropped references to mysticism. Several years after writing *Absente Reo* when she and Evelyn Underhill were invited to speak at a Church Congress, it was Underhill who spoke on mysticism, and Dougall, who was almost a generation older, returned to the evangelical language of her youth and spoke on the Spirit.⁸³ She also returned to an evangelical emphasis on Christian fellowship. After an initial flush of enthusiasm for the vitality of the various metaphysical movements, Dougall became concerned about the irrational directions taken by many of these groups:

The quest of the inward light is not safe for the solitary wayfarer. The solitary soul that lies silent, open to spiritual impressions, is open to two kingdoms: from one the sanities and moralities of the religious

life come as pedagogues, speaking in tones that are apt to seem harsh and prosaic, from the other the insanities and immoralities of the religious life come as guests, with exciting and interesting arguments.⁸⁴

She advised the solitary soul to find fellowship in groups like the Society of Friends. An article published posthumously makes an even more forceful criticism of ecstatic irrational prayer, describing it as the prayer of the Oriental Mystery Religions now practised in Christian Science, Theosophy, New Thought and “any Christian teaching that depreciates the intellectual life.” These new schools teach that “God’s saving activities can only be fully drawn upon when the needy soul has learned by practice to make the mind vacant and receive what is desired in ecstatic realization.”⁸⁵ Dougall writes that this form of prayer “is like a flood rising in hot river valleys, making the food fields fertile, but bearing on its tide malodorous things and germs of disease.”⁸⁶ Rather than pursue this kind of mysticism, Dougall was drawn to the emerging school of personal idealism or personalism that, in its emphasis on the individual personality and a nexus of relationships, was closer to her childhood roots. She spent the last years of her life promoting a heightened spirituality within the safe fellowship of such groups as the Student Christian Movement, the Anglican Fellowship, the Guild of Health and the Cumnor School.

Endnotes

1. W.R. Inge, *Studies of English Mystics, St. Margaret's Lectures, 1905* (London: John Mire, 1921), 238.
2. W.R. Inge, *Vale* (London: Longmans, 1934), 34. Inge was not alone in his description of the shift. For other retrospective accounts see, C.C.J. Webb, *Religious Experience* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1945); William Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury, *Religious Experience and Other Essays and Addresses* (London: James Clarke, 1958); and in United States, H.E. Fosdick, *The Living of Our Days: An Autobiography* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956), 234-236.
3. A number of Canadian historians, following Owen Chadwick's *The Secularization of the European Mind in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1975), have adopted a sociological concept of “secularization” and described the various ways in which the transcendent authority

of the church has been replaced by Weber's bureaucratic iron cage, the social gospel by the welfare state, theology by schools of sociology and popular devotion by consumer culture. Recent discussions of secularization in Canada include: David Marshall, *Secularizing the Faith: Canadian Protestant Clergy and the Crisis of Belief, 1850-1940* (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1992); Michael Gauvreau, *The Evangelical Century: College and Creed in English Canada from the Great Revival to the Great Depression* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's Univ. Press, 1991); and Ramsay Cook, *The Regenerators: Social Criticism in Late Victorian English Canada* (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1985). See also Phyllis Airhart, *Serving the Present Age: Revivalism, Progressivism and the Methodist Tradition in Canada* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's Univ. Press, 1992).

4. For an earlier example of the dismissal of unorthodox beliefs see C.P. Stacey, *A Very Double Life: The Private World of Mackenzie King* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1976). The participation of figures like Mackenzie King might, however, give cause for a more serious reflection on the meaning of movements like spiritualism and theosophy. See Gaius Glen Atkins for an early sympathetic description of these movements which he said "represent the free movement of the creative religious consciousness of our time" (*Modern Religious Cults and Movements* [New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1923], 6). Like many liberals of the period he blamed the aridity of the churches for the success of the cults: "Unsatisfied needs of the inner life have unlocked the doors through which they have made their abundant entry" (58). For a more recent sympathetic analysis see Sandra Sizer Frankiel, *California's Spiritual Frontiers: Religious Alternatives in Anglo-Protestantism, 1850-1910* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1988).
5. In a fascinating exception to this tendency Marguerite Van Die has shown in her nuanced study of Nathanael Burwash that an experiential faith, the witness of the Spirit, informed his liberal outlook (*An Evangelical Mind: Nathanael Burwash and the Methodist Tradition in Canada, 1839-1918* [Montreal: McGill-Queen's Univ. Press, 1989]).
6. [Lily Dougall], *Absente Reo* (London: Macmillan, 1910). Fearing that her reputation as a novelist would undermine her religious work, Dougall published most of her theological work anonymously; subsequent books were attributed to "The Author of *Pro Christo et Ecclesia*."
7. "The hard outline of [the preacher's] creed had grown luminous, fringed with the divine light from beyond, as the bars of prison windows grow dazzling and fade when the prisoner looks at the sun" (Lily Dougall, *The Zeit-Geist* [London: Hutchinson, 1895], 246). Other novels feature narrow-minded clerics, prophetic lay evangelists, and strong, intelligent, spiritual, single

women.

8. Bernard McGinn, *The Presence of God: A History of Western Christian Mysticism*, vol. I, *The Foundations of Mysticism* (New York: Crossroad, 1991). McGinn's work, of which we only have the first volume, is the most comprehensive recent discussion of Christian mysticism. The "General Introduction" and the Appendix, "Theoretical Foundations: The Modern Study of Mysticism," to the first volume are particular useful surveys of the theological, philosophic, comparativist and psychological analyses of mysticism in the last century. In his emphasis on context McGinn draws upon the work by Steven Katz, especially "Language, Epistemology and Mysticism," in *Mysticism and Philosophical Analysis*, ed. Steven T. Katz (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1978), 22-74.
9. "Far from being a neutral objective account, the Jamesian account of mysticism accepted by modern philosophers of religion is an account inextricably intertwined with issues of power and gender in ways which feminists need to deconstruct. The privatized subjectivized ineffable mysticism of William James and his followers is open to women as well as to men; but it plays directly into the hands of modern bourgeois political and gender assumptions. It keeps God (and women) safely out of politics and the public realm, it allows mysticism to flourish as a secret inner life, while those who nurture such an inner life can generally be counted on to prop up the status quo . . . since their anxieties and angers will be allayed in the privacy of their own hearts' search for peace and tranquillity" (Grace Jantzen, *Power, Gender and Christian Mysticism* [Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1995], 348).
10. M.S. Earp, "Selected Letters of Lily Dougall with biographical notes," typescript, 23, box 5, file 9, Dougall Family Papers (hereafter DFP), National Archives of Canada (hereafter NAC).
11. Lily Dougall to J.A. [Janie] Couper, 16 December 1885; cited in Earp, "Selected Letters," 60.
12. Lily Dougall, "Lovreen," unpublished manuscript, Vol II, 106-117, Box 4, Lily Dougall Papers (hereafter LDP), Bodleian Library (hereafter BL).
13. [Lily Dougall], *Voluntas Dei* (London: Macmillan, 1912), x.
14. See A.B. McKillop, *A Disciplined Intelligence: Critical Enquiry and Canadian Thought in the Victorian Era* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's Univ. Press, 1979) for a discussion of the transitional role of idealism in Canadian Protestantism, and its continuing cultural legacy in the idea of a moral imperative.

15. [Lily Dougall], *Pro Christo et Ecclesia* (London: Macmillan, 1900).
16. Hastings Rashdall, annual sermon to the modernist Churchman's Association, delivered at St. Peter's Bayswater, 6 October 1899; cited in Alan M.G. Stephenson, *The Rise and Decline of English Modernism* (London: SPCK, 1984), 61.
17. Lily Dougall, *The Madonna of a Day* (New York: Appleton, 1895), 55-56.
18. Dougall, *Madonna*, 99.
19. Dougall, *The Zeit-Geist*, 222.
20. Dougall, *The Zeit-Geist*, 142-143.
21. Lily Dougall, *The Mermaid* (New York: Appleton, 1895), 41.
22. Dougall, *Mermaid*, 58.
23. Dougall, *Mermaid*, 59.
24. See Scott Rothwell Swanson for an interesting discussion of the symbolism in *The Mermaid* ("Beyond Common Sense: Ideal Love in Three Novels of Lily Dougall," M.A. Thesis, Univ. of Victoria, 1993).
25. [Dougall], *Voluntas Dei*, 119-120.
26. [Dougall], *Absente Reo*, 266.
27. See Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, *Perfectionism* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1931), II: 339. Warfield notes, "In *Principles of the Interior or Hidden Life* (1843) [Upham] quotes not only from Tauler and Behman, A Kempis and Law, but from St Theresa, Francis de Sales, Molinos, La Combe, Madame Guyon, Fenelon, Antoinette Bourignon, and Pere Labaz" (*Perfectionism*, 371, n. 59). Thomas Upham's biography of Madame Guyon, *Life, Religious Opinions and Experience of Madame Guyon, including an account of the personal history and religious opinions of Fenelon, Archbishop of Cambrai*, first published in 1847, had a long publishing history. W.R. Inge wrote an introduction to a later edition that was edited and revised by an anonymous "English Clergyman" (Thomas Upham, *Life, Religious Opinions and Experience of Madame Guyon, including an account of the personal history and religious opinions of Fenelon, Archbishop of Cambrai* [London: Allenson & Co., 1957]). For a recent assessment of Upham's influence, see Darius Salter, *Spirit and Intellect: Thomas Upham's Holiness Theology* (Metuchen: Scarecrow Press, 1986).
28. Upham, *Life of Madame Guyon*; cited in Warfield, *Perfectionism*, 376.

29. Dougall, "Lovreen," 21, 25.
30. *The Transvaal Leader*, 1 November 1910, clipping file, 11, box 6, LDP, BL.
31. Earp, "Selected Letters," 219.
- [Dougall], *Absente Reo*, 209-210.
33. Lily Dougall to H.D.O. [Hilda D. Oakeley] Melbourne, Derbyshire, 7 September 1910; cited in Earp, "Selected Letters," 220. Dougall met Oakely in 1899 when Oakely was the head of the new Women's College attached to McGill University. She later became a reader in philosophy at King's College, London.
34. W.R. Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, 7th ed. (London: Methuen and Co., 1899) 7th ed. (London: Methuen and Co., [1932]) 1964); Baron von Hugel, *The Mystical Element in Religion as studied in St. Catherine of Genoa and her friends*, 2 vols. (London: Dent, 1908); Rufus Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion* (London: Macmillan, 1909); and Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism, A Study in the Nature and Development of Man's Spiritual Consciousness* (London: Methuen and Co., 1911).

Inge's many subsequent works include *Studies of English Mystics; Faith* (London: Duckworth & Co, 1909); *The Platonic Tradition in English Religious Thought* (London: Longman's, 1926); and *Mysticism in Religion* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1948). In 1917-18 he delivered what he considered his magnum opus, the Gifford Lectures on "The Philosophy Of Plotinus" published, in two volumes, in 1918. During his life, however, he was probably better known for his popular weekly articles in the *Evening Standard* (1921-46). Jones was the author of more than fifty books, mostly on mysticism and Quaker history (see the bibliography in *Rufus Jones Speaks to Our Time*, ed. Harry Emerson Fosdick [New York: Macmillan and Co., 1951], 287). For Underhill's publishing history see Dana Greene, *Evelyn Underhill, Artist of the Infinite Life* (New York: Crossroads, 1990) and *Evelyn Underhill: Modern Guide to the Ancient Quest for the Holy*, ed. and intro. Dana Greene (Albany: State Univ. of New York Press, 1988), which contains an extensive bibliography of works by and about Underhill. For a more distanced analysis see Christopher J.R. Armstrong, *Evelyn Underhill (1875-1941) An Introduction to her Life and Writings* (London and Oxford: Mowbrays, 1975).

36. Bernard McGinn describes the significance of this period for our understanding of mysticism: "Modern understanding of 'mysticism,' especially as it affects the English-speaking world, began in earnest toward the end of the nineteenth century" (*Presence of God*, 267). Indeed, McGinn's definition of mysticism, as "the preparation for, the consciousness of, and the reaction to what can be described as the immediate or direct presence of God" (xvii), still owes a great deal to the world of modernists and personal idealists, and reflects a deliberate departure from the understanding of mysticism as "union" with the divine, particularly a union in which the personality is lost, and a substitution with the broader concept of the "presence" of God.
37. Of course not all modernists shared their faith in this avenue to faith; leading modernist Hastings Rashdall was outspoken in his criticism of mysticism (see P.E. Matheson, *The Life of Hastings Rashdall* [Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1928], 227, 241-244, 251).

Stephenson, *English Modernism*, 66.

39. It may be that this mysticism was less apparent in American modernism; Kenneth Cauthen did not consider Jones' mystical liberalism in *The Impact of American Religious Liberalism*, 2nd ed. (New York: Univ. Press of America, 1983) because, although religious experience was central to liberalism, the "distinctive mystical type of religion espoused by Jones is not so widespread as the other types" (36). Nor did W.R. Hutchinson consider modernist mysticism in *The Modernist Impulse in American Protestantism* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1976). The influence of Roman Catholic modernism upon Anglican modernism may have led to a faith more conducive to mystical expression than American Protestant modernism.
40. Benjamin Jowett to B.C. Brodie, 23 December 1844, in *Life and Letters* by E.A. Abbott and Lewis Campbell (1897), I: 114-115; cited in Basil Willey, *More Nineteenth-Century Studies: A Group of Honest Doubters* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1963).
41. "The Essence of Religion," in *Collected Papers of Bertrand Russell*, eds. Richard A. Rempel, Andrew Brink and Margaret Moran (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1985), 12: 114-115. Between 1901 and 1914, Russell, in response to the Anglicanism of Ottoline Morrell, seriously considered mysticism in a series of works: "Prisons" (1911); "The Essence of Religion" (1912); *The Perplexities of John Forstice* (1912); and "Mysticism and Logic" (1914) (see *Collected Papers*, 12: part III).

42. William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature*, ed., and with an introduction by, Martin Marty (New York: Longmans, 1902; reprint, New York: Penguin, 1985), 31. Although it was published after Inge's *Christian Mysticism*, James had been working on the project since 1896. James is known as a pioneer in the secular field of the psychology of religion, but his work was highly influenced by both Pietism and romanticism. Grace Jantzen argues that William James derives his understanding of mysticism from Swedenborg and such romantics as Carlyle and Emerson (Grace Jantzen, "Mysticism and Experience," *Religious Studies* 25 [1989]: 295).
43. Cited by Martin Marty, "Introduction" in James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, xix.
44. James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, 45.
45. "The prime characteristic of cosmic consciousness is a consciousness of the cosmos, that is, of life and order of the universe. Along with the consciousness of the cosmos there occurs an intellectual enlightenment . . . To this is added a state of moral exaltation, an indescribable feeling of elevation, elation and joyousness, and a quickening of the moral sense . . . With these come what may be called a sense of immortality, a consciousness of eternal life, not a conviction that he shall have this, but a consciousness that he has it already" (R.M. Bucke, *Cosmic Consciousness: A Study in the Evolution of the Human Mind* [Philadelphia: 1901], 2; cited in James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, 398).
- Bucke has been too quickly dismissed by Canadian historians. Ramsay Cook wrote, "It is, however, evidence of Bucke's independence, not to say eccentricity, that at a time when liberal Protestants were turning away from 'conversion experiences' and seeking rational, historical and sociological defence of religious belief, Dr. Bucke, the scientist, insisted that the mystical and emotional were the essence of religion" (*The Regenerators*, 100). Bucke, eccentric though he admittedly was, was not a throwback to an earlier time, but was in fact a harbinger of a modern mysticism that co-existed with, and indeed supported, the secular city described by Cook. He was associated with Walt Whitman and Madame Blavatsky, as well as William James – *Cosmic Consciousness* was in its 27th printing in 1973.
46. Jantzen argues that James selectively misinterpreted medieval mystics (*Power, Gender and Christian Mysticism*, 348).
47. L. Dougall to M.S. Earp, 14 November 1896; cited in Earp, "Selected Letters" 149-150. Rufus Jones had briefly entertained James' idea of a reservoir, arguing: "The vast realm of subconscious life, which for all we know, borders

upon infinite Life, *rises out of it* and may receive incursions from it” (Rufus Jones, *Social Law in the Spiritual World: Studies in Human and Divine Inter-Relationship* [Philadelphia: J.C. Winston Co., 1904]; cited in Leonard Hall Bridges, *American Mysticism: from William James to Zen* [New York: Harper and Rowe, 1907], 28).

48. Rufus Jones, “Prayer and the Mystic Vision,” in *Concerning Prayer, Its Nature, Its Difficulties and Its Value*, 2nd ed., eds. [Lily Dougall], B.H. Streeter, et al (London: Macmillan, 1918), 110.
49. [Dougall], *Absente Reo*, 274.
50. Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion*, xv; cited in [Dougall], *Absente Reo*, 277.
51. Inge, *Vale*, 38.
52. [Dougall], *Absente Reo*, 273.
53. Lily Dougall to H.D.O. [Hilda Oakeley], Melbourne, Derbyshire, 7 September 1910; cited in Earp, “Selected Letters,” 220.
54. Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion*, xviii, xix, xx, 144.
55. Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, 222, and Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion*, 71, 314; cited in [Dougall], *Absente Reo*, 268-269.
56. Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, xvii.
57. [Dougall], *Absente Reo*, 270.
58. “Mysticism will not be revived and become a powerful present day force until it is liberated from dependence on outworn and inadequate forms, and until it conquers for itself more congenial thought terms thought which in a vital way it can translate its human experience and its vision of God” (Rufus Jones, “Prayer and the Mystic Vision,” 110).
59. Jones, “Prayer and the Mystic Vision,” 117.
60. Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, 115.
61. For Schleiermacher’s description see, *On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers*, trans. John Oman, with an introduction by Rudolf Otto (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1958).
62. Inge, *Studies of English Mystics*, 27-28.

63. Inge, like von Hugel, argued that it was panentheistic, that God was both immanent and transcendent (Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, 179; McGinn, *Foundations*, 295; and Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion*, 9).
64. [Dougall], *Voluntas Dei*, 93.
65. [Dougall] *Voluntas Dei*, 51. The question of loss of personal identity was a difficult one which divided modernists, and was glossed over by Dougall (see Inge, *Personal Idealism and Mysticism*, chapter V; and C.C.J. Webb, "Rashdall as Philosopher and Theologian," in Matheson, *Life of Hastings Rashdall*, 240-249).
66. Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, 5.
67. See Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, 290.
68. Inge, *Personal Idealism and Mysticism*, 5.
69. [Dougall], *Pro Christo et Ecclesia*, 167.
70. [Dougall], *Absente Reo*, 293.
71. [Dougall], *Absente Reo*, 20.
72. [Dougall], *Voluntas Dei*, 15.
73. Quoted in Stephenson, *English Modernism*, 73.
74. [Dougall], *Absente Reo*, 127.
75. *New Studies in Mystical Religion* (London: Macmillan, 1927), 23-24.
76. Fosdick, ed., *Rufus Jones Speaks to our Time*, v.
77. Jones' wide readership reveals that, in tracing a usable past for the Society of Friends, he was also establishing a mystical heritage for other liberal Protestants (see in particular, *The Flowering of Mysticism: the Friends of God in the Fourteenth Century* [London: Macmillan, 1939]; and *Spiritual Reformers in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* [London: Macmillan, 1914]).
78. Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, xiv.
79. Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, 243.
80. Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, 139.
81. Inge, *Vale*, 39.
82. [Dougall], *Absente Reo*, 279.

83. Program of the Church Congress, Box 6, LDP, BL. Underhill also subsequently moved to a more corporatist understanding of spirituality.
84. [Lily Dougall], "Reading Summer School, Impressions by Members, By on Onlooker," *The Friend, a Religious, Literary, and Miscellaneous Journal* LIII, No. 38 (19 September 1913): 609-610.
85. Lily Dougall, *God's Way with Man, An Exploration of the Method of the Divine Working suggested by the Facts of History and Science*, with an introduction and biographical note by Canon B.H. Streeter (London: Student Christian Movement Press, 1924), 55.
86. Dougall, *God's Way with Man*, 56.