

**The Interaction Between the Mission Theology and the
Practices and Publicity of Six British Evangelical Mission
Agencies.**

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Submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Leeds,
Leeds Trinity University School of Arts and Communication and
School of Social and Health Sciences

December, 2018

The candidate confirms that the work submitted is his own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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Acknowledgements

I am extremely grateful to Professor Kirsteen Kim who saw value in this project and was willing to take me on as a student. Thanks are also due to professors Denis Kobzev and Graham Roberts for their supervision and support.

I wish to acknowledge my gratitude to the leadership of Wycliffe Bible Translators for allowing me to take a period of study leave in order to pursue this research and to the trustees of Wycliffe for funding my studies.

This research would have been impossible without the participation of the directors of six different mission agencies who consented to be interviewed and to provide me with background information on their organisations.

As in everything else in my life, immense gratitude is due to my wife, Sue, for her patience, support and encouragement.

Soli Deo Gloria

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of James Leonard Arthur, who during his final illness predicted that his then twelve-year-old son would, one day, obtain a PhD. It's been a canny wait, but this is for you, Dad.

Abstract

Evangelical mission agencies are organisations which exist in order to promote the dissemination of Christianity around the world. They do this through overt proclamation of the Christian message and by serving the populations they encounter through a range of activities including medical work, education and advocacy.

This study examines the way in which the theological position of six British evangelical mission agencies has an impact on their practices.

Four significant issues in mission theology are identified from the literature and the agencies are classified into different groups according to their alignment with these issues. By examining the literature produced by the six agencies, the practices of the organisations in the different groups were compared and contrasted.

There is no obvious correlation in the practices of the agencies who were assigned to the same group on the basis of their theological position, nor are there any clear differences between those assigned to different groups. The conclusion is that the agencies' positions with regard to these particular theological issues have a limited impact on their practices.

The study considers the reasons for this disconnect between theological values and actions.

Because of their structures and innate pragmatism, the agencies are ill-equipped to reflect on their principles and practices from a theological standpoint. Today the church is growing worldwide, while experiencing a recession in Western Europe. These changes mean that the rationale for British mission agencies is in question and also that a new paradigm for mission is developing. The ability of British agencies to react to these changes will, to a large extent, depend on their capacity to reflect theologically on their situation. An appendix to this study provides suggestions for steps that agencies can take to face these issues.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

Evangelical Mission Agencies

Christianity is by its nature a missionary religion (Stanley, 2018, 193). The last words of Jesus Christ recorded in Matthew's Gospel were a command to his followers to make disciples wherever they went (Matthew 28: 19,20). The book of the Acts of the Apostles starts with the ascension of Jesus and charts the early spread of Christianity from its origins as a sect within Judaism to its presence right across the Roman Empire within a few decades of Jesus' life. Today, Christianity has spread throughout the world and the number of Christians continues to increase (Centre for the Study of Global Christianity, 2013, 14).

Acts describes early mission work being carried out by groups of friends and travelling companions whose membership changed on a regular basis. These missionary teams had no authority in and of themselves but existed to serve the church (Schnabel, 2004, 1578). Over time, more organised structures, for example missionary orders such as the Franciscans, began to develop in order to support the church's outward mission (Neill, 1990, 99). The Catholic missionary orders were in the vanguard of mission from the western church until the eighteenth century. The rise of Evangelicalism as an activist movement within the Protestant church led to the development of a new type of structure, the voluntary missionary society. Inspired by the exploits of explorers such as Captain Cook, William Carey proposed the creation of a society which would fund and support missionary work in the same fashion as commercial companies funded their explorations (Carey, 1792). Carey's innovation led to the rapid establishment of a number of missionary societies in the UK, Europe and the USA (Goheen, 2014, 149; Latourette, 1954, 1033; Tennent, 2010, 262; Walls, 1996, 251). These early missionary societies have evolved over time into what are generally termed mission agencies today (Knell, 2006). Currently, there are an unknown number of mission agencies in the UK.¹ They range from small organisations which exist to support the work of one individual or family, to large multi-million-pound agencies with hundreds of missionaries working in different

¹ There are over 100 agencies listed on the Global Connections website, but there is no obvious method of estimating how many agencies exist which are not affiliated to Global Connections (Global Connections, 2015). Global Connections is a network which seeks to serve churches and mission agencies in the UK. More information is given in chapter 2.

parts of the world. Today's agencies are involved in a wide range of work, from evangelism and church planting to education and environmental care. Some organisations specialise in one particular field, while others are generalists.

The author has worked with one agency, Wycliffe Bible Translators, for over thirty years, including a period working as a translator in West Africa and a time as the Executive Director in the British office. As a charity, the work of Wycliffe is overseen by a board of trustees, with the day to day management of the charity delegated to a leadership team. Wycliffe has around 350 missionaries, generally termed "members", who work in various parts of the world. The members are responsible for raising the finance needed for their living costs and a proportion of their work expenses from churches and friends in the UK. For the most part, those members who work overseas are seconded to churches or local organisations who manage their work and they are not controlled directly from the British office. The main function of the UK office is to promote the work of the charity through fundraising and recruitment of new missionaries. There is a significant logistics operation, which channels donations received on the behalf of members to the correct location and assures that appropriate personnel support is in place for the international workers. In contrast to the members working around the world, many of the home office staff are salaried by the charity.² Although Wycliffe Bible Translators is a specialist organisation, concentrating on work in minority languages, many of these features, including the members having to raise their own support, are typical of today's mission agencies as a whole.

The motivation for this study lies in my experience working with Wycliffe Bible Translators. After twenty years serving in various roles in Africa and Europe, I undertook a course of study leading to a master's degree in theology (University of Wales, awarded in 2014). While reflecting on mission theology during the course of these studies, I became aware that my own decision making as a mission practitioner and leader tended to be based on pragmatic factors, with little consideration for the theological context. This personal reflection evolved into the concern that my agency (and mission agencies in general) was not bringing a theological and missiological understanding to the table when planning for the future. In a context where

² It is not unusual for agencies which require overseas staff to raise their own funds, to pay salaries to some home-based people. This is because it can be difficult to raise funds for essential, but unglamorous roles such as book-keeping.

Christianity is no longer a predominantly Western religion, mission agencies face significant long-term challenges. The way in which they respond to these challenges will determine their relevance and, indeed, their survival in years to come. My experience leads to the concern that agencies will respond to the challenges they face with short-term, pragmatic solutions rather than theologically considered ones. Emerging from this concern, this study explores the necessity of theological or missiological reflection for mission agencies and then investigates the way in which theological issues reflect the practices of a sample of agencies. The study concludes that, in the main, agencies are ill-equipped to engage in the sort of reflection which is required of them and that they need to broaden the base of their governing boards to include those with the requisite background and skills.

The Crisis in Mission

Despite the spread of the church around the world and the growth in the number of mission agencies in the UK, the eminent South African missiologist David Bosch says that there is a crisis in mission (Bosch, 1995, 1). He suggests that there are numerous reasons for the existence of this crisis, among which he highlights six, which include cultural questions such as the advance in science and technology and the increasing gap between the rich and the poor. He also lists a number of factors relating to the church: the dechristianising of the West, the parallel growth of the church in the rest of the world, the feeling of colonial (and missionary) guilt in the West and the growth and development of majority world theologies (Bosch, 1995, 3). For convenience, these can be divided into demographic factors and theological factors; though, as will be seen, this division is somewhat artificial.

Demographic Roots of the Crisis

According to Bosch the West is “slowly but steadily being dechristianised” (Bosch, 1995, 3). This trend for the west, Europe in particular, to become less Christian has been confirmed by the Centre for the Study of Global Christianity and is matched by a rapid increase in the number of Christians in the Global South³ (Centre for the Study of Global Christianity, 2013, 14). Because of this, the “world can no longer be divided into Christian and non-Christian territories” (Bosch, 1995, 3). For mission agencies which were

³ Finding convenient terms to describe the growth of the church worldwide is fraught with difficulty. A number of authors have chosen the term “Global South” to represent Africa, Asia, Latin America and Oceania. This study will do the same, while recognising that much of what is being termed the Global South lies in the Northern Hemisphere.

founded with the aim of taking the Christian message from Britain to the rest of the world, this change poses a problem:

“... agencies and institutions that once did pioneering work at the cutting edges of the Christian mission have too often been left facing in the wrong direction as the battle has moved on. In this situation they face a stark choice: either they engage in a radical re-formation, repositioning themselves to respond to the quite new challenges of the twenty-first century, or they are doomed to rapid and rather sad decline and extinction.” (Smith, 2003, 11).

A 2017 paper demonstrates the way in which this threat to mission agency existence is further complicated by a number of factors. Not only is the number of Christians in the UK in decline, but those who remain are less interested in supporting overseas mission work. Meanwhile, the number of UK mission agencies has continued to increase (from 1970 to 2000 the number of agencies increased from 56 to 100). This presents an extremely challenging situation for agencies, who find themselves competing for support with a growing number of other organisations at the same time as their pool of potential supporters both shrinks and becomes less interested in their work. In the long term, this situation is not sustainable (Arthur, 2017).

Theological Roots of the Crisis

According to Bosch, the crisis in mission cannot just be attributed to the growth in numbers being experienced by the church in the Global South, but also to the growing influence of non-Western theology.

“The younger churches refuse to be dictated to and are putting a high premium on their autonomy. In addition, Western theology is today suspect in many parts of the world. It is often regarded as irrelevant, speculative and the product of ivory tower institutions.” (Bosch, 1995, 4).

Frostin makes a similar point in a succinct fashion when he says that the change in the demographics of the church has “not only statistical, but theological implications as well” (Frostin, 1985, 127). Other authors pick up this theme.

“... Third World Theology is now likely to be the representative Christian Theology. On present trends (and I recognize that these may not be permanent) the theology of European Christians, while important for them and their continued existence, may become a matter of specialist interest to historians” (Walls, 1996, 9, 10).

“Christian theology eventually reflects the most compelling issues from the front lines of mission, so we can expect that Christian theology will be dominated by these issues rising from the Global South.” (Carpenter, 2006, 67).

The Swiss academic Pascal Bazzell, takes up the biblical story of Cornelius, a God-fearing Roman officer who provoked the Apostle Peter to rethink his attitudes to Gentiles in Acts 10 and suggests that this is a metaphor for the way that the church always has its thinking challenged by missionary interactions (Bazzell, 2016).

The West African theologian, Tite Tiénou suggests that the growth of non-Western theology is important because it helps to correct the impression that Christianity is a Western faith (Tiénou, 2006, 41) and challenges the West's assumption that it is the centre of Christian scholarship (Tiénou, 2006, 47).

As the church grows in the Global South, this is reflected in the numbers of missionaries being sent from the new churches. Pierson highlights the growth in missionaries from Asian countries in particular, while also noting that there is an increasing number from Africa and Latin America (Pierson, 2003, 14). However, just as the growth in the World Church is leading to the development of new theologies, so the expansion of the world mission movement necessitates new models of mission. The way in which South American leaders helped to shape the Lausanne Covenant is an early example of the way in which mission is being rethought in the light of the growth of Christianity worldwide (Stanley, 2013a, 158).

Writing from a South Korean perspective, Moonjang Lee says:

“The modern Western missionary era has ended, and a new paradigm for global mission has not yet been devised. Although various aspects of the colonial paradigm for Christian mission have undergone revisions in order to negotiate with the changing environment in global contexts, we might say that we are still trapped in an old habit of thought and practice in Christian mission that needs radical adjustment and modification.” (Lee, 2016b, 125).

Some of the issues which are being raised with regard to the existing mission paradigm seem minor, such as the suggestion that using terms such as ‘mobilisation’ in mission recruitment is unwise because their military connotations may be offensive in some settings (Matenga and Gold, 2016, xi; Smith, 2003, 4). At a deeper level, Ma and Ma raise questions about the whole concept of missions focusing on unreached people groups. From their perspective, it might be wiser to concentrate on training national Christians to be involved in internal mission work (Ma and Ma, 2003, 6).

The development of a new paradigm of mission will emerge from a process of reflection and so must take place in community (Tiénou, 2006, 39) and

will involve active dialogue between the West and the Global South (Moon and Lee, 2003, 264).

“What is required in the thinking and practice of mission is a global collaboration and joint efforts among mission thinkers, practitioners and leaders. It will take experience, input and reflections, both from the growing South and from the waning North. The North has a long history of mission engagement, human knowledge and financial resources. With its long history of Christianity and mission, only the North can provide self-analysis and discernment of the received thinking and practices.” (Ma, 2006, 103).

A number of authors suggest that mission should be regarded as polycentric, in that there is no one centre of mission, but mission is from everywhere and to everywhere (Franklin, 2017, 61; Yeh, 2016). Deiros takes this a step further and suggests that mission is so complex it should be talked about as polyhedral - a three-dimensional solid rather than a flat two-dimensional construct (Deiros, 2006, 278). Whatever metaphor is used, it is important to have a multi-cultural team working together to develop new models for mission. Kirk Franklin highlights this point in his own experience working with the Wycliffe Global Alliance (Franklin, 2017, 61).

According to Deiros mission theology must be forward looking (Deiros, 2006, 267, 277). As accepted views and methodologies are increasingly questioned from the point of view of the Global South a new paradigm for mission will emerge which points to the future, rather than being based on the past. The extent to which British agencies can engage with this emerging paradigm (both to understand it and help shape it) is critical.

The Korean Theologian, Wonsuk Ma challenges three underlying assumptions about mission:

- only Christian nations do mission,
- only resource-rich countries can do mission,
- mission is by the developed to the developing or undeveloped (Ma, 2011, 14-21).

For Ma, the central issue in the needed paradigm shift is one of power. Taking the example of Jesus and the church in the book of Acts he demonstrates that the biblical pattern is for mission from the powerless, whereas the “‘established’ mission paradigm in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is that of mission with power, be it political, cultural, economic or military” (Ma, 2011, 20). A change in paradigm will require a new way of

thinking and for Western actors to be prepared to adopt an entirely new posture. Smith makes a similar point, when he suggests that the fact that Western agencies have generally carried out their mission from a position of economic and social power makes a free exchange of ideas rather difficult (Smith, 2003, 30). Linked to this is Hanciles' assertion that Western Christians tend to project their own experience onto Christians in other parts of the world and to see everything in their own terms, rather than in the terms of others (Hanciles, 2008, 131). The difficulty of engaging across these cultural boundaries is illustrated in a paper by Hesselgrave. In it, he suggests that there is a need for wide-ranging dialogue about mission (Hesselgrave, 2007, 145), however, two pages later, he cites a list of important authors on the subject of mission, none of whom are drawn from the Global South (Hesselgrave, 2007, 147).

The danger is that agencies in the UK, unable to participate in the development of this paradigm, become disconnected from the process and hold on to a model of mission which is attractive in the UK, but increasingly irrelevant in the wider world. This implies that not only do British agencies have to engage in missiological and theological reflection as was indicated in the previous section, but they must do so in collaboration with Christians from the Global South.

Responses to the Crisis

Missiologist David Smith suggests that Christians in the West have responded to the crisis that they face in one of two ways (Smith, 2003, 5). The first is what he terms "business as usual". They identify mission with one particular paradigm and regard any change in the paradigm as repudiating the call of Christ. Effectively they live in denial (Smith, 2003, 6). The other response is "radical revisionism" (Smith, 2003, 8). In this approach former ideas of what constituted mission are completely repudiated and all continuity with the historic Christian movement is lost. According to Smith, neither of these approaches is appropriate for the situation in which the church finds itself (Smith, 2003, 10).

In 2011, Global Connections commissioned academic Paul Hildreth to produce a report on the way in which British mission agencies were responding to the changing situation they faced. Hildreth's report was based on interviews with a number of mission leaders (the author was one of those interviewed) and focussed on decisions that the agencies were making. It did not seek to explore in any depth the rationale for those changes. By

contrast, the current study examines the theological rationale which lies behind the decisions that agencies are making. Hildreth suggested that agencies were responding to the crisis in two ways. The first he termed “operating within the model”. Some agencies, in particular the larger ones who are less threatened by the current situation, are responding by improving their managerial processes, making their communications and fund-raising sharper and adapting their funding models to meet current challenges. These tweaks are well-intentioned and often demonstrate good stewardship. However, they do not reflect the extent to which the operating environment has changed for mission agencies and are unlikely to be successful long-term. Hildreth’s other observation was that some agencies were looking to find ways of deploying their workforce which reflect the current realities of the world. It is generally the medium-sized and smaller agencies who are following these strategies. They are more threatened by the changes in the world, but also have a flexibility to change and adapt which may not be present among the larger agencies (Hildreth, 2012).

These two authors suggest that there are two different types of response to the crisis in mission. Smith outlines two extreme theological responses; the first is to deny that there is a problem in the first place and the second is to completely reformulate what mission means. In contrast to this, Hildreth suggests that mission agencies are responding by making managerial and organisational changes which seem unrelated to any theological concepts. In neither case is there a suggestion of involvement in the sort of reflective process that was outlined in the previous section.

This chapter has examined the crisis in mission and the following one will review the literature on mission agencies. However, other than Hildreth’s study, there is no literature exploring the way in which British agencies have responded to this crisis and there are no publications which explore the theological basis for agencies’ response.

Overview of this Study

The aim of this study is to explore the way in which the theology and actions of evangelical mission agencies interact and influence one another at a time when agencies are facing a variety of external pressures. For practical reasons, it is not possible to observe the way in which agencies work around the world, so the research has been carried out through a combination of interviews with agency directors and through an analysis of agency literature.

In order to explore the theological positions of the agencies in the study, a number of issues which were regarded as important by mission scholars, but about which there was not universal agreement were identified. These issues were used as the basis of a taxonomy by which the agencies could be assigned into groups according to the positions they held on each of the issues. The purpose of the taxonomy is not to provide a classification of the agencies *per se* but rather to serve as an analytical tool or framework to simplify the task of examining agency theology and practice. It might be expected that those agencies who adopt common positions on a number of basic theological issues might also have similar practices in other areas. This expectation was investigated by comparing the agencies which were assigned to the same groups. Likewise, it could be assumed that agencies which appeared in different groups might have some systematic differences in practice. This was investigated by comparing across the groupings in the taxonomy. This process of comparison within and across the groups not only demonstrated similarities and differences between agencies, it also threw light on the interaction between the beliefs and actions of individual agencies.

Research Questions

This study was carried out by focusing on three specific research questions:

- What are the possible elements of a taxonomy of evangelical mission theology?
- How do mission agencies self-identify in terms of the elements of this taxonomy?
- What do the strategic and communications decisions made by the agencies and their alignment with the taxonomy reveal about the agencies?

Structure

Chapter 1: Introduction

The first chapter of the thesis is this introduction.

Chapter 2: Evangelical Mission Agencies

This chapter examines the nature of evangelical mission agencies along with some of the international structures which exist to promote and coordinate Christian mission and closes by outlining the purpose of this study.

The concept of evangelical mission agencies is a somewhat nebulous one which cannot easily be defined. This study approaches the problem by reviewing the literature relevant to the three terms which make up the nominal phrase evangelical mission agencies. Firstly, evangelicalism, a movement within Protestant Christianity, is examined. This involves considering both the origins of evangelicalism in the eighteenth century and its current expression. Those issues which distinguish evangelicalism from other forms of Christianity are also examined. The second step is to look at the nature of Christian mission. Mission is another term which is not easy to define and so it is examined from a variety of aspects in order to build an understanding of how it is conceptualised and understood in different contexts. With this foundation in place, some of the general characteristics of the evangelical mission movement are considered. Having examined evangelicalism and mission, the chapter then looks at the various structures which have existed alongside the church in order to promote mission work. Roman Catholic and wider Protestant structures are considered before turning specifically to evangelical mission agencies. Although it is not possible to define evangelical mission agencies from an examination of the literature, a working definition is developed which is used in the study.

There are a number of international coordinating organisations which seek to support the mission work of churches and agencies. Three of these structures which are relevant to the study in different ways, the Evangelical Alliance, the World Council of Churches and the Lausanne Movement, are considered in turn. The Lausanne movement is particularly important as documents from this organisation will be instrumental in developing the taxonomy used in the study.

The final section of the chapter summarises the discussion thus far and identifies a number of lacunae in the literature that this research project aims to fill.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The methodology chapter has two sections, the first outlines the rationale for the methods used and the second describes the methods themselves.

The rationale for the methods chosen lies in three academic domains which are relevant to the study. The first is the area of practical theology, a branch of theology which reflects on religious practice with a view to producing praxis which is more in accordance with the gospel (Heimbrock, 2011, 164). The second area is the question of qualitative as opposed to quantitative

research. This study is qualitative in nature and this has an impact on the methods which are chosen for the study and the way in which they are used. The final discipline which is relevant is that of Schein's view of organisational culture and values (Schein, 1992). This approach describes a way in which underlying beliefs and values are expressed in terms of concrete actions and structures. Schein's concepts will be used in the analysis of the some of the information gathered during the study. A fourth rationale, which is purely pragmatic is the use of a taxonomy as an analytical tool.

There are four different questions covered in the section on the methods used. The first looks at the way in which a sample of mission agencies was identified and also introduces the six agencies that were chosen. The second examines the way in which the agency directors were interviewed. This involves technical issues such as developing the interview protocol and transcribing the interview data. More conceptual issues such as the nature of qualitative interviewing and the assurance of validity are also discussed. The third section outlines the various sources of agency literature which were used in the study. The final sub-section concerns the manner in which the data were stored, protected and analysed.

Chapter 4: Elements of A Mission Taxonomy

The fourth chapter sets out to answer the first of the research questions by identifying the elements of a possible taxonomy of mission agencies. The taxonomy is derived from two documents produced at large mission congresses held by the Lausanne Movement. The chapter explains how the two documents, the Lausanne Covenant and the Cape Town Commitment were produced, briefly examines their structure and considers their importance within the evangelical mission movement.

Having introduced the documents themselves, the chapter outlines four theological themes which emerge from them: unreached people groups and proclamation versus social action from the Lausanne Covenant, and the mission of God and a missional hermeneutic from the Cape Town Commitment. Each of these themes is discussed in detail outlining why they are important and exploring the different ways in which scholars react to them. These four themes form the basis of the taxonomy of mission agencies.

Chapter 5: Overview and Classification of the Results

Chapter 5 focuses on the second of the research questions, the way in which the agencies align with the issues in the taxonomy. This question was

answered in two stages: the first involved interviewing the directors of the agencies regarding the way in which the agencies are aligned with taxonomy; the second comprised the verification of this alignment by referring to agency publications.

The chapter briefly introduces each of the directors and then discusses their responses with regard to the four issues in the taxonomy. From the interview data it was possible to assign the six agencies to four different groups and also to refine the taxonomy itself significantly. An analysis of the agency literature confirms the classification of the agencies.

Chapter 6: Comparing and Contrasting the Agencies

The sixth chapter continues the analysis of the agencies by comparing those agencies which were assigned to the same group in chapter 5. This comparison was performed by examining the agency literature (magazines, web pages, Twitter feeds and annual reports) to see what commonalities and what differences existed between agencies which had been assigned to the same group in the taxonomy. Following the comparison of agencies within the same group, the groups are contrasted to assess whether there are any consistent differences between agencies in different groups.

The analysis shows that the position of the agency in the taxonomy does not predict the way that the agency will behave over a wide range of activities.

Chapter 7: Conclusions and Recommendations

The final chapter draws together the threads of the analysis in three sections. The first explores the extent to which British evangelical mission agencies are equipped to navigate the challenges they face owing to the crisis in mission outlined in the first chapter. The second section examines the relevance of this work for the study of mission theology. The final section suggests avenues for future work and explores alternative taxonomies for classifying mission agencies.

Summary

This chapter briefly introduces the notion of evangelical mission agencies and Bosch's concept of a crisis in mission. It then outlines the way in which a study of the theology and practices of a sample of mission agencies was carried out against the background of this crisis.

Chapter 2

Evangelical Mission Agencies

Introduction

This chapter explores the nature of evangelical mission agencies, the organisations which form the basis of this investigation. In practice, it is difficult to define exactly what a mission agency is, so the chapter examines the three component parts of the phrase: evangelicalism, mission and the organisational structures which support mission. This investigation both demonstrates the variety that is inherent in the mission agency sector and allows the development of criteria for determining which types of structure will be considered in this study. The chapter continues with a consideration of some of the international structures which unite churches and mission agencies, one of which — The Lausanne Movement — serves as the basis for the taxonomy developed in chapter four. The chapter concludes by questioning whether mission agencies continue to be relevant, today.

Evangelicalism

Evangelical mission agencies are an expression of the evangelical wing of Christianity. In order to introduce the role and diversity of mission agencies, this section explores the distinctives, motivations and diversity of evangelicalism.

Evangelicalism is a movement within the Protestant church which has been described as one of the “powerhouses of the Christian Church in the Western world” (McGrath, 1988, 9). It cannot be equated with any single denomination, but is a loose affiliation of denominations, movements, independent churches and para-church agencies (Armstrong, 2014, 296; Bebbington, 1989; Noll, 2004, 16). According to McGrath, the self-designation Evangelical demonstrates that the movement is primarily focused on the “evangel”, the gospel itself, rather than on any particular church structure which a term such as Protestant would connote (McGrath, 1988, 14).

Origins of Evangelicalism

Bebbington suggests that evangelicalism arose during the revivals of the 1730s (Bebbington, 1989, 1). The religious roots of evangelicalism are found

in the Magisterial Reformation, English Puritanism and German Pietism (McGrath, 1988, 14). Philosophically, the movement was also influenced by the Enlightenment (Bebbington, 1989, 18) whose stress on the individual and on the need for rational, evidence-based reasoning provided the context for the development of a form of Christianity which stressed the salvation of the individual and the importance of interpreting Christian experience and practice through the lens of the Holy Scriptures (Stanley, 2001, 13). Stewart states; “The evangelical version of Protestantism was created by the Enlightenment” (Stewart, 2005, 137). In Walls’ terms, evangelicalism was a contextualisation of the gospel to the world of Northern Europe (Walls, 1996, 84).

Evangelical Distinctives

Evangelicalism does not constitute a distinct ecclesiastic grouping with a defined membership or creed. Because of this, it is difficult to define exactly what evangelicalism is. Nassif calls it a “moving target” (Nassif, 2015, 221) while McDermott describes it as a “many-headed monster that regularly transforms itself into new shapes” (McDermott, 2014, 260).

This diversity notwithstanding, the historian David Bebbington suggests that there are four qualities which are typical of all evangelicals. These are:

- **Conversionism**, the belief that lives need to be changed.
- **Activism**, the expression of the gospel in effort.
- **Biblicism**, a particular regard for the Bible.
- **Crucicentrism**, a stress on the sacrifice of Christ on the cross (Bebbington, 1989, 3).

These four qualities are sometimes referred to as the “Bebbington quadrilateral” (see for example (Atherstone, 2014, 107)). The distinctions between evangelicalism and other expressions of Christianity are not always clear cut. It is not so much that evangelicals believe things that other Christians do not, but rather that they emphasise the four aspects of Bebbington’s quadrilateral to a greater extent than other Christians do. However, within evangelicalism, the different aspects of the quadrilateral are not paid equal attention by all groups. Noll suggests that at different periods of history, different aspects of the quadrilateral have been emphasised by evangelicals (Noll, 2004, 18). Warner says that contemporary English evangelicalism can be divided into two broad categories; entrepreneurial-pragmatists who focus on conversions and activism and the more

conservative group who concentrate on biblicism and crucicentrism (Warner, 2007, 20).

Bebbington's quadrilateral provides a useful introduction to evangelicalism, both because it highlights some of the key features of the movement and because it is referred to in the literature on the subject. For this reason, the four dimensions of the quadrilateral will be briefly discussed below.

However, there are other aspects of evangelicalism which are not covered by Bebbington's description and which are relevant to this study which also need to be discussed.

Conversionism

Evangelicals believe that people must be converted, make some sort of decision to follow Christ, in order to be considered Christians. They reject the idea that people can be Christians by birth, heritage or culture. New believers are encouraged to share their testimonies; to explain to their friends and families their experience of conversion.

Evangelicals believe that conversion is a supernatural experience due to the direct intervention of God in an individual's life; in response to repentance and an expression of faith (Bebbington, 2005, 29). Typically, conversion is seen as an instant phenomenon or a crisis experience. Wesley feeling his heart strangely warmed in Aldersgate (MacCulloch, 2009, 750) or the large numbers of converts at Billy Graham rallies (Stanley, 2013a, 33) are typical examples. However, latterly there has been a growing acceptance that conversion may actually be a process and that it may be impossible to identify a specific crisis moment (Bebbington, 2005, 35; Warner, 2007, 16).

Activism

Activism is a feature of evangelical life. Whether it is involvement in sharing the Christian message at home or abroad, or taking part in social causes, evangelical Christians place a value on action. The desire for active involvement can be at the expense of developing a deeper spiritual life (Warner, 2007, 16). At times evangelicals have placed a greater emphasis on a willingness to be active than on theological training when it comes to preparing people for ministerial or missionary roles (Bebbington, 1989).

Biblicism

According to Bishop Ryle (1816-1900) the first principle of evangelical religion is 'the absolute supremacy it assigns to Holy Scripture'. In the modern era, J I Packer placed the supremacy of Scripture as the first in a list

of six evangelical fundamentals, while Stott said simply “evangelicals are Bible people” (Quoted in (Bebbington, 1989). Though Stott provides some nuance to this statement when he says that evangelicals want to live under the authority of Scripture but can be selective in their submission to it (Stott, 2016, 16).

Evangelicals are expected to read the Bible regularly, ideally daily, as part of their private devotions (Bebbington, 2005, 22), and Bible-based preaching is a key feature of evangelical church services.

However, as McDermott points out, while evangelicals share a common commitment to the centrality of Scripture, they do disagree about how it should be interpreted⁴ (McDermott, 2014, 252).

Crucicentrism

The death of Jesus Christ on the cross lies at the centre of evangelical faith. Evangelicals believe that human beings are alienated from God and subject to judgement because of their sin. They typically believe that Jesus died as a substitute, taking their place and suffering God’s judgement that was due to mankind (Bebbington, 2005, 26).

Other Distinctives

Other authors have suggested that there are other defining characteristics of evangelicalism both as replacements and as additions to Bebbington’s quadrilateral.

Theologian Alistair McGrath adds the value of Christian community and a focus on the Holy Spirit (McGrath, 1988, 51). However, while these are indeed characteristics of some forms of contemporary evangelicalism, they are neither exclusive to evangelical religion, nor typical of all contemporary or historical expressions of evangelicalism.

McGrath also names Christocentrism, a focus on the importance and majesty of Jesus Christ, as a key feature of evangelicalism (McGrath, 1988, 51). He is supported in this view by Barclay and Warner (see (Warner, 2007, 17).

⁴ A contemporary example of different interpretations is the controversy which surrounds the so called “new perspective on Paul” which proposes an alternative approach to Paul’s letters to that which has been adopted since the Reformation (Wright, 2013, 3).

Schismatism

Walls suggests that evangelicalism arose as a protest against a Christian society that wasn't Christian enough (Walls, 1996, 81) and evangelicals have tended to define themselves in opposition to traditional Christianity in what Warner terms "polemical self-definition" (Warner, 2007, 5). This tendency to see themselves as guardians of the true gospel leads some evangelicals to take a critical posture towards those they disagree with (Tizon, 2008, 3). As a result, many evangelicals do not consider Christians of other traditions to be genuine believers at all. Orthodox Bishop Angaelos, who was invited to attend the evangelical Cape Town 2010 conference, recalls his distress when, during a presentation, his own people were declared to be unreached by the gospel (Bishop Angaelos, 2015, 8). evangelical statements of faith are often effectively boundary markers, indicating who is in and who is out.

Within the evangelical fold, issues such as the infallibility of Scripture (Warner, 2007, 7) or the nature of justification in the book of Romans (Wright, 2009, vii) can lead to deep division. Such is the degree of separation, that some evangelicals refuse even to accept fellow evangelicals as Christians (Roebeck, 2015, 71, 77). Because of this, it may be more accurate to speak of evangelicalisms, than evangelicalism (Hesselgrave, 2007, 132; Stewart, 2005, 152).

This tendency to division and separatism does not define evangelicalism in the same way as the aspects of Bebbington's quadrilateral. It is however important for our purposes in that it has played a factor both in the development of some mission agencies and has the potential to impact the way in which agencies work together (see (Stott, 1995, 53)).

Pragmatism

David Bebbington suggests that from the early days of evangelicalism, the movement has been typified by a pragmatic and flexible approach - adapting church life to contemporary requirements (Bebbington, 2005, 131). This was demonstrated in the way in which early evangelicals adopted field preaching (Bebbington, 1989, 64), were prepared to allow women to preach and take a leading role in church and eventually in the establishment of the Methodist Church when Anglicanism was found wanting by the Wesleys and their followers (Bebbington, 1989, 65). This pragmatism is particularly important when it comes to considering the way in which evangelicals approach missionary work, as will be noted below.

Evangelicalism as a Phenomenon

As a movement, evangelicalism has no formal structure or hierarchy. It is trans-denominational, with evangelicals being found within most of the mainline protestant churches in the UK (McGrath, 1988, 77). As noted above evangelicalism has a tendency towards separatism. However, it is equally true that the evangelical belief and experience provide a framework in which a variety of confessional and liturgical differences can be reconciled. Wolfe writes “evangelicals believed that, underlying all their institutional, theological and geographical diversity, they had as ‘true believers’ a fundamental spiritual unity in Christ” (Wolffe, 2006, 217). Though limited in scope, evangelicalism constitutes a significant ecumenical movement (Armstrong, 2014, 296; Roebeck, 2015, 69).

Socio-Political Evangelicalism

Although evangelicalism has historically described a movement within Protestant Christianity, the term also has socio-political connotations, particularly in the United States.

“Under President Trump, the word “evangelical” has been tossed around a lot, used interchangeably with other broad terms like “conservative Christians” and “the religious right.” Evangelicals are portrayed as cohesive, all-powerful, and monolithic; they are almost always discussed in the context of politics, and the unspoken assumption is that they are white.” (Green, 2018).

While there is considerable overlap between those who might be described as theologically evangelical and socio-politically evangelical, the two groups are not synonymous. A significant proportion of American evangelicals are of Asian or African-American origin and, for the most part, they do not support the “religious right”. Equally, younger white evangelicals tend to have more liberal social views than their parent’s generation. It is true that a significant number of American evangelical leaders have spoken on behalf of President Trump and his government, but there are also those who have presented an alternative (Gerson, 2018).

A 2013 report by the Theos Think Tank reported that there is no evidence for the growth of a “religious right” following the American pattern in the UK (Walton et al., 2013). However, it is not impossible that the socio-political usage of the term evangelical to describe a form of socially-conservative, right-wing politics may replace the more traditional theological sense in time. That being said, in this study, the term evangelical is used purely in a

theological sense and should not be assumed to have any particular political significance.

Defining Mission

The agencies that form the basis of this study exist in order to carry out or promote mission. However, there is no universally agreed definition of what mission is nor how it should be carried out. This section examines the term mission and its historical use particularly within evangelicalism. The fact that there is no single conception of mission helps explain the different approaches adopted by mission agencies and also provides the basis for the diversity in mission theology which forms the basis for the taxonomy developed in chapter four.

Until the sixteenth century, the term “mission” was used in Christian theology in conjunction with the doctrine of the Trinity; the sending of the Son by the Father and the sending of the Holy Spirit by the Father and the Son (Bosch, 1991, 1). It was first used in terms of the intentional spread of the Christian faith by the Jesuits in the sixteenth century (Bosch, 1991, 1; Kim, 2009, 9; Stroope, 2017, 238). Used in this manner, the word mission became closely associated with European colonial expansion (Bosch, 1991, 1; Smith, 2003, 15). The church’s understanding of mission has evolved over time as typified by Bosch’s suggestion that different paradigms of mission have existed at different points in the church’s history (Bosch, 1991, 181). Even within a relatively narrow churchmanship and over a short space of time, thoughts about mission can be shown to evolve. In 1975 the Anglican clergyman John Stott published a short book of lectures on mission; in 2016 this book was reprinted with responses to Stott’s lectures by his friend and protege Christopher Wright⁵. While Wright shows a great deal of affection and respect for Stott’s positions, he is clear that over the passage of time the understanding of mission has developed beyond that which Stott had expressed (Stott and Wright, 2016).

The fact that the church’s understanding and approach to mission is evolving means that there are often significant disagreements over issues which one might consider to be fundamental to any definition of mission. For example, Wright finds the justification of mission running through the whole narrative of Scripture (Wright, 2016, 37). However, DeYoung and Gilbert

⁵ John Stott and Christopher Wright are important figures in the development of the mission theology which is explored in chapter 4.

take a much more restricted view of mission which finds its justification in the Great Commission passages of the New Testament, rather than in the overarching narrative of the Bible. In their view, mission consists of proclaiming the Christian message, and while they agree that social action is part of a Christian's responsibility, they do not include it as a legitimate part of mission. "The Mission consists of preaching and teaching, announcing and testifying, making disciples and bearing witness. The Mission focuses on the initial and continuing verbal declaration of the gospel, the announcement of Christ's death and resurrection and the life found in him when we repent and believe" (DeYoung and Gilbert, 2011, 59). By way of contrast, Davy, appears to suggest that "saving souls" is no more than one aspect of mission:

"I consider 'mission' to be, primarily, an act of God to restore creation to himself. Moreover, it is an activity in which the people of God (whether in the days of the Old or New Testaments or in our own day) are invited, indeed required, to participate. This participation is, I believe, a holistic endeavour which addresses every aspect of human life in transformational ways. Therefore, while it certainly includes, for example, the traditional notion of 'saving souls', mission is not restricted to this." (Davy, 2014, 14)

Even on the apparently simple question of whether mission involves travel to another country, there is disagreement. "Mission possesses several indispensable elements... It involves going to every corner of the globe, wherever people live..." (Kirk, 2014, 31). By contrast, while not denying the need to serve people in far off places, Archbishop Anastasios writes: "... the faithful Christian must realise that mission does not mean leaving our geographical or social environment for other, unknown and exotic countries..." (Archbishop Anastasios, 2015, 24).

Ultimately, there is no clear agreement across the literature as to what exactly constitutes mission. There are disagreements regarding the activities which are essential components of mission as well as about the biblical foundation for mission. It is not surprising that Baker suggests, that some mission practitioners have abandoned the attempt to define mission in theoretical terms, in favour of looking at their own practices; "mission was defined as what they did" (Baker, 2014, 19).

This diversity of views with regard to the basis of mission will be used in this study as a mechanism for exploring the beliefs and practices of British, evangelical Mission Agencies. In this context, it is not necessary to discover or develop a definition of mission which will cover all possible eventualities. Rather, there is a need to develop a taxonomy within which different

approaches and understandings of mission can be classified and explored. This taxonomy will be developed in chapter 4.

Reflections on Mission

This introduction to the nature of mission provides the opportunity to introduce three reflections on the nature of mission over time which are relevant to this project.

The Necessity of the Cross-Cultural Transmission of Christianity

The historian Andrew Walls has demonstrated that Christianity does not grow in a linear fashion, expanding from one area to another. The expansion of the Church is actually serial, with growth occurring at the periphery with a corresponding decline from the centre (Walls, 2002, 3-26). So, the church expanded from Jerusalem to the wider Mediterranean world, as the Jerusalem centre declined. Similarly, the early church centres in Asia Minor and North Africa were replaced by growing churches in the East and Europe. Because of this serial growth, the transmission of the faith across cultural boundaries and into the periphery is necessary not just for the expansion of Christianity, but for its very survival. If Christianity does not cross cultural boundaries, it will be unable to survive a decline in its heartlands. Walls suggests that we are living through another period where the church is expanding at the peripheries — in Africa, Asia and Latin America, while its former centre of Europe and North America sees a decline. This ties into the demographic roots of the crisis in mission referred to in the previous chapter.

Paradigms of Mission

Building on the paradigm theory of Thomas Kuhn, and the historical analysis of the church proposed by Hans Küng, the South African missiologist, David Bosch suggests that the church's understanding of mission has passed through six distinct paradigms over time (Bosch, 1991, 181-189). He suggests that each of these paradigms represents a fundamental break from the understanding of mission which preceded it. The six paradigms are:

1. The apocalyptic paradigm of primitive Christianity.
2. The Hellenistic paradigm of the patristic period.
3. The medieval Roman Catholic paradigm.
4. The Protestant (Reformation) paradigm.
5. The modern Enlightenment paradigm.

6. The emerging ecumenical paradigm.

Bosch examines each of these paradigms in some detail. However, he is unable to describe the current, emerging model but he does suggest some elements which may combine to produce the paradigm as it develops (Bosch, 1991, 368 ff.). According to Bosch, there are several factors both within the worldwide church and in wider society which are leading to what he terms a crisis in mission (Bosch, 1991, 3). Bosch is not the only one to speak in these terms; David Smith speaks of the need to “engage in a search for a new paradigm of faithful, missionary obedience” and of “Christians who continue to operate in a fading missionary paradigm” (Smith, 2003, 7). The Korean theologian Moonjang Lee writes: “The modern Western missionary era has ended, and a new paradigm for global mission has not yet been devised” (Lee, 2016b, 125). A number of other writers refer to the need to develop a new paradigm of mission, see for example (Ma, 2011, 20; Moon and Lee, 2003, 264) and (Tiéno, 2006, 39).

The significance of this paradigm shift for the current study is that it suggests that mission is undergoing a process of change and that the mission agencies in the study should be engaging with the impact of those changes. This question will be discussed more fully in the concluding chapters.

Is Mission the Correct Term?

In a 2017 book, Professor Michael Stroope questioned the appropriateness of contemporary uses of the term mission (Stroope, 2017). Stroope contends that mission is not a biblical term but that (as mentioned in chapter 1) it only took on its current sense in the modern era. He argues that by taking a modern term and applying it to the past, we prejudice our reading of Scripture and church history; imposing modern understandings of mission and missionaries onto situations where it does not apply. His solution is to suggest that a term such as “pilgrim witness”, which he believes better reflects the historical record, be used in place of the modern term mission (Stroope, 2017, 355). Stroope’s suggestions have not been universally accepted (see for example a review in the Church Times (Atherstone, 2017), however they do serve to illustrate the extent to which there is a wide-ranging debate about the nature of mission.

Evangelicalism and Mission

The British missionary movement is, to a significant extent, the product of the evangelical revivals of the 1730s. Walls describes the missionary

movement as “an autumnal child of the evangelical revival” (Walls, 1996, 74).

The evangelical revival provided a cadre of people who were motivated for foreign missionary service. While all sections of the church agreed that overseas mission was a good thing, it was predominantly evangelicals who actually presented themselves as missionary candidates. In addition to providing people, the evangelical movement also gave rise to mission societies and other structures which provided the logistic framework required for mission work to proceed (Bebbington, 1989; Rouse, 1967; Walls, 1996, 74; Walls, 2001, 28). This included the creation of specifically evangelical societies within broader denominations for example, Anglican evangelicals who were committed to their Church, but also interested in mission, founded The Society for missions to Africa and the East Instituted by Members of the Established Church (later the Church Missionary Society; CMS) in 1799 (Cox, 2009, 75).

Goheen highlights three motives which were at work in this period. Firstly, the motive of obedience to the Scriptures, in particular to the ‘Great Commission’ in Matthew 28:18-20 (see below for more discussion of the Great Commission), which came into focus as a missionary text at this time. Secondly, evangelicals were motivated by a love for people whom they considered as being lost and in need of conversion. Thirdly, the expectation of a biblical millennial age drove Christians to spread the message of Christ across the world (Goheen, 2014, 148). Equally, it is possible to see the evangelical involvement in mission as a concrete expression of the qualities in Bebbington’s quadrilateral; in particular, those of conversionism and activism.

The focus on conversionism predisposes evangelical Christians to seeing the world divided into two classes of people, those who have undergone a conversion experience and those who have not. No distinction is made between the spiritual state of the unconverted at home (who could well be regular church goers) and those abroad who may never have encountered Christianity (Walls, 1996, 74). The stress on activism encouraged those same evangelical Christians to take the message of the gospel to those they saw as unconverted. The passion of the evangelical revival was “evangelism, at home and to the ends of the earth” (Rouse, 1967, 309). Carey’s 1792 “Enquiry”⁶, which did a great deal to foster the development of

⁶ The full title of Carey’s work is “An Enquiry into the Obligation of Christians to Use Means for the

the British missionary movement was primarily a defence of the concept of activism; in Carey's terms, "the use of means" (Carey, 1792).

Bebbington's two other qualities - crucicentrism and biblicism - found expression in the content and form of the message that missionaries carried, including a stress on the death of Jesus and a renewed priority being given to the translation and transmission of the Scriptures.

While it is true that many evangelical Christians have been motivated to be involved in international mission, this has not been a universal feature of evangelicalism. John Wesley was concerned that focusing on overseas mission work would distract the Methodist church from vital evangelism in Britain. The Methodist Missionary Society was not, in fact, founded till after the death of Wesley (Cox, 2009, 93). In 1843 it was reported that only 44% of Particular Baptists and 46% of Independent Churches supported their denominational mission societies (Bebbington, 2005, 49). In a 2010 survey by the British Evangelical Alliance which claimed to be "A snapshot of the beliefs and habits of evangelical Christians in the UK" there was no mention of overseas mission (Evangelical Alliance, 2010). This would indicate that though overseas mission is one of the ways in which evangelicals express their activism, it is not intrinsic to their identity. Because of this, as will be discussed in later chapters, evangelical mission agencies invest considerable time and finance in publicity in order to attract support.

In 1941, the International Missionary Fellowship (IMF) was founded to provide mutual support between the leaders of non-denominational, evangelical mission agencies in the UK. However, in the post-war years, the IMF was found not to have the authority and breadth that was needed to meet the challenges it faced. In 1958, a new agency, the Evangelical Missionary Alliance (EMA) was inaugurated. Membership of the EMA was open to mission societies (denominational and non-denominational), theological and Bible colleges, and individuals, on the understanding that they were in agreement with the EMA statement of faith. The EMA provided practical support to the mission societies in areas such as legal and visa advice and made policies to guide the work of its members. In 2000, the EMA was renamed as Global Connections (GC). The name change was in response to the changing nature of mission work including the growth of the world church, the rise of mission to the UK and the changing nature of the

Conversion of the Heathens. In Which the Religious State of the Different Nations of the World, the Success of Former Undertakings and the Practibility of Future Undertakings are Considered" The shorter title will be used for convenience in this study.

relationship between churches and agencies in Britain. Today, GC provides a forum for agencies, churches and others to discuss current issues, and to learn from each other, as well as representing and advising on crucial issues. In July 2015 Global Connections had 290 members, of which 141 self-identified as mission agencies (Global Connections, 2017).

The Evangelical Mission Movement

The modern evangelical movement is often traced back to the 1792 publication of William Carey's *Enquiry* (Carey, 1792) and the subsequent formation of the Baptist Missionary Society. Today, there are over a hundred mission agencies in the UK as well as numerous individual churches, diocese and denominations which are involved in missionary work around the world. These various organisational structures are engaged in a wide range of activities and justify their work different ways. Thus, it is difficult to describe the movement in simple terms. In his discussion of the mission movement, Michael Stroope suggests that it is best described as a tradition:

“The modern mission movement as metaphorical language aptly describes a modern tradition — a shorthand symbol for a host of events, people, ideas, and emotions. Through shared experience and the communication of the phrase, the modern mission movement has become the ground of understanding that serves as a way of organizing reality and translates aims into specific actions.” (Stroope, 2017, 324).

Stroope suggests that this tradition is supported and maintained through eight symbols:

- Reference to the Bible
- Exemplary Persons.
- Historic Figures.
- Publications.
- Low Entry Threshold.
- Missionary Conferences.
- Cohesion Through Exclusion.
- The Value of Pithy Sayings.

Although the contention that the mission movement can be described as a tradition is not relevant to this discussion, Stroope's list of symbols do provide an overview of some of the issues which drive and unite the movement. Each symbol will be briefly examined in turn and then the list as

a whole will be examined in relationship to the discussion of evangelical distinctives from earlier in this chapter. In chapter 7 the list will be examined in the light of the data gathered during the study. Before proceeding, it should be noted that Stroope is writing about an international movement from an American perspective, while this study specifically concerns British mission agencies. However, each of these agencies works internationally and many of them are part of a larger multi-national structure. This International dimension to British agencies means that a broad overview such as Stroope's should not be discounted because it does not focus on the UK.

Reference to the Bible

According to Stroope, "interpreters from a range of denominational and confessional perspectives construct justifications for the modern mission movement by way of biblical foundations and themes" (Stroope 2017, 324)

In popular literature promoting mission, many authors find their justification for mission in Matthew 28:19-20 and parallel passages in the other Gospels and in the first chapter of Acts⁷ (see for example, (Dowsett, 2001; Wells, 2006, 15-20)). Others focus on particular biblical characters who are seen to embody a missional approach. The Old Testament prophets, particularly Jonah, are frequently cited as examples, (for example, Shields, 1998, 29,

⁷ The Great Commission passages from the Gospels and Acts are:

Matthew 28:18-20

Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Mark 16:15-18

"Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone. Anyone who believes and is baptized will be saved. But anyone who refuses to believe will be condemned. These miraculous signs will accompany those who believe: They will cast out demons in my name, and they will speak in new languages. They will be able to handle snakes with safety, and if they drink anything poisonous, it won't hurt them. They will be able to place their hands on the sick, and they will be healed."

(There is doubt as to whether the traditional ending of Mark's Gospel (from 16:8) is authentic given that it is not found in the oldest available manuscripts (Aland et al., 1975, 196)).

Luke 24: 46-49, Acts 1:8

"Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things. Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

John 20:21

"So, Jesus said to them again, 'Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.'"

All Scripture quotations are taken from the New Living Translation of the Bible (1996).

30), while from the New Testament Jesus Christ and the Apostle Paul provide models for mission (Goldsmith, 2002). A more recent approach is what is termed a missional hermeneutic. Rather than seeking a justification for mission in particular stories or passages from the Bible, a missional hermeneutic seeks to read the whole Bible from the standpoint of mission. It looks at the missional basis of the Bible, rather than the biblical basis of mission (Wright, 2006, 22). The theme of a missional hermeneutic will be developed in more detail in chapter 3. For the present it is sufficient to note, that it is similar to other approaches in as much as it recognises a continuity between mission today and the narrative of the Bible.

Exemplary Figures

The second of Stroope's symbols is exemplary figures.

“Such heroic individuals as William Carey, Henry Martyn, Hudson Taylor, and Lottie Moon embody the values and spirit of the movement. The founding acts of the movement can be found in the imagery of young William Carey at his cobbler's bench with leather maps of the world on the walls and at the meeting of ministers at Kettering where Carey delivered his sermon. These lives and their actions have grown to mythological proportions, providing a powerful narrative for many of the beliefs of the tradition.” (Stroope, 2017, 324).

William Carey (1761-1834) is a pivotal figure in the British mission movement and the founder of the Baptist Missionary Society. Henry Martyn (1781-1812) was a young Anglican missionary who travelled through India and Iran, dying in Tokat in Anatolia. Hudson-Taylor (1832-1905) founded the China Inland Mission (later OMF), the first of the faith missions and Lottie Moon (1840-1912) was a missionary to China who is well known in Southern Baptist circles in the USA. The influence of William Carey and James Hudson-Taylor will be considered in depth later in this chapter.

Modern examples of exemplary persons would be Jim Elliot (1927-1956), who, along with four companions, was martyred by the indigenous Auca people in Ecuador, and Brother Andrew (b. 1928) who smuggled Bibles through the Iron Curtain during the Cold War. Elliot's story was originally popularised in a biography written by his wife (Elliot, 1958). Subsequently, a number of plays and films have been based on his life story and on the ensuing story of the Auca people. In a similar fashion, Brother Andrew became known through a biography entitled *God's Smuggler* (first published in 1964) (Van Der Bijl et al., 2005), which was subsequently made into a

film. Brother Andrew is also well known as the founder of the Mission Agency, Open Doors (Open Doors, 2015).

Historic Figures

“Third, the invented tradition is more than its modern heroic figures, such as Zinzendorf and Carey. It is built on a line of progenitors, represented in individuals and groups, that can be traced back through the medieval period and Constantine to the early church and Paul.” (Stroope, 2017, 325).

The evangelical mission movement (and evangelicalism itself) is a modern phenomenon. In order to give mission a sense of historic continuity, historic characters such as Patrick (385-461), Boniface (672-754) and the Nestorian missionaries of the fifth and sixth centuries are often co-opted into the story of evangelical mission. An example of this approach can be found in the reaction to St Patrick’s day on the evangelical Desiring God website:

“While the day has become a celebration of all things Irish, the original feast was about gospel advance. It was not about parades, but pioneering the church among an unreached people. It was not about lifting Lenten restrictions on eating and drinking, but bringing God’s amazing grace to a pagan nation.” (Mathis, 2013).

Publications

Stroope’s fourth symbol of the modern mission movement is publications: “mission magazines and journals, mission biographies, and popular mission histories are public monuments to the movement’s founders, exemplars, and heroes.” (Stroope, 2017, 325).

Andrew Walls has pointed out the importance of missionary magazines to the missionary movement and wider society in the nineteenth century:

“The year 1812 saw the birth of the first of the great missionary magazines, *Missionary Register*. The *Register* printed news from all over the world and, in the catholic spirit of missionary endeavour, from all agencies. It was eagerly read all over the country... The magazines helped to form opinion, they developed images and mental pictures, they built up attitudes. Their effect on popular reference books in the nineteenth century was considerable.” (Walls, 1996, 251,2).

Today, there are no wide-ranging, evangelical missionary magazines of this sort published in the UK. However, most agencies produce their own magazine, though websites and social media are rapidly taking the place of print, not least on the grounds of cost. The advent of Facebook, blogging and twitter also means that individual missionaries can tell their own stories

without the intermediary of an agency, church or publisher. Although most missionary publications are produced by individual agencies, with the aim of promoting their own work and garnering support, a degree of unity across the movement is provided with the focus on exemplary people. It is not unusual for an agency to quote an appropriate saying which was made by the founder of another agency in their publicity. For example, on July 17 2017 the OMF twitter feed quoted C.T. Studd the founder of WEC saying “Christ wants not nibblers of the possible but grabbers of the impossible” (OMF UK).

Low Entry Threshold

Stroope suggests that the mission movement typically makes it easy for people to become involved, particularly through funding the work of mission.

“...funding mission through pledges and offerings provides opportunity for wide voluntary participation and thus a low threshold for “joining” the movement. No matter how small the amount or infrequent the contribution, participation in the cause can occur for anyone.” (Stroope, 2017, 325).

Typically, agencies encourage people to give regularly (ideally, through an automatic repeat payment mechanism) and to sign up to pray. Contact pages and donation information are prominent on most agency websites and missionary magazines generally have forms which readers can fill in if they want to be involved with the agency in some way. Through this sort of mechanism, many Christians are linked to an agency, and these links can last decades. Supporters tend to be loyal to the organisations to which they commit themselves.

Missionary Conferences

“...mission conferences are platforms to recite the progress and triumphs of the modern mission movement and thus reinforce the tradition’s narrative. The mission enthuses those present, flags of nations line the walls and stage, and tales of exploits and victories are recounted. In this manner, speakers and organizers promote tenets of the movement and reinforce solidarity with its participants.” (Stroope, 2017, 326).

Conferences have been a part of the mission movement for over a century. William Carey first suggested the need for an international mission conference in the early nineteenth century, though it was not until 1910, that such a conference was actually held.

In the modern era, evangelical mission conferences tend to be of two types; the first is large international gatherings such as those held by the Lausanne

Movement in which thousands of mission practitioners and church leaders are drawn together from across the globe. These conferences which will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter serve as a global rallying point for the international mission movement. The second type of conference is national and regional conferences aimed at young people, particularly students, with the aim of motivating them to become involved in mission. The best known of these conferences is the Urbana conference which is sponsored by the Intervarsity organisation (Intervarsity, 2018). Around sixteen thousand young people attend the Urbana conferences, many from outside of the USA. Duncan Olumbe, a Kenyan missionary, describes how attending the Urbana conference was key to his long-term involvement in mission work (Matenga and Gold, 2016, xxiv). In Europe, MissionNet has sponsored a number of conferences which have run along similar lines to Urbana, however they have struggled to find a viable financial model and have had to cancel their planned 2017 congress (MissionNet, 2018).

Creating Coherence Through Exclusion

“The modern mission movement is read by most as ‘modern Protestant missions.’ The narrative of modern mission tradition highlights the expansion of Protestantism in the modern era, and thereby the modern mission movement is glossed as a Protestant movement over against that of Catholics and Orthodox.” (Stroope, 2017, 326).

A striking example of this tendency from the opening session at the 2010 Cape Town Conference was referred to above.

“Countries that were homes of historic Orthodox Churches in Eastern Europe were referred to in this session as unreached, and that was quite disappointing. Did this mean that I was unreached? Were my spiritual children also open to being evangelised? Not re-evangelized, but evangelised because they were not considered to be so in the first place. What were the definitions and who were we?” (Bishop Angaelos, 2015, 8).

Whether there is a deliberate attempt to exclude discussion of other church traditions and their mission, or whether the sense of evangelical identity is so strong that other traditions are simply not mentioned, is difficult to judge, but the impact is the same in either case.

The Value of Pithy Sayings

Stroope’s final suggestion of a symbol for the mission movement is the use of slogans and pithy sayings: “watchwords and slogans encapsulate the spirit of the mission tradition in compact, pithy statements. Somewhat like

flags that symbolize new states and republics, these watchwords and slogans represent and continually reinforce the ideals of the mission tradition” (Stroope, 2017, 326).

The founder of Wycliffe Bible Translators, William Cameron Townsend is reported to have said: “The greatest missionary is the Bible in the mother tongue. It needs no furlough and is never considered a foreigner.”

This phrase has the benefit of being short, memorable and making one point - that Bible translation is an important factor in mission. It has been widely used in the promotion of cross-cultural missions in general and Bible translation in particular. Searching for the whole phrase turns up 2,890 results on Google (May 22 2018).

Other examples of these sorts of phrase include:

“God’s work done in God’s way will never lack God’s supply”: James Hudson Taylor (45,000,000 hits on Google).

“Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God”: William Carey (36,000,000 hits on Google).

“He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose”: Jim Elliot (7,000,000 hits on Google).

These quotes, and others like them, are used in missionary magazines, on websites and in books encouraging people to get involved in mission. The original context of the quotes has sometimes been lost⁸, but the sayings themselves have continued to be used.

Reflections on These Features

According to Stroope, these eight symbols are typical of the evangelical mission movement, and the brief discussion above seems to indicate that they are all, to some extent, descriptive of the movement. An outstanding question is whether these symbols can be considered to be distinctly evangelical; this can be done by considering the extent to which they align with the Bebbington quadrilateral outlined earlier in this chapter.

The tendency to refer to the Bible in order to justify mission work echoes the biblicism axis in Bebbington’s model. Activism is an important value in the mission movement and this is reflected in the low entry threshold and to some extent in the way that missionary conferences, publications and pithy

⁸ Notwithstanding extensive research, it has proved impossible to source an original citation for the quote about the Bible from Townsend, despite its relatively modern origin.

sayings are used to encourage people to be involved in mission in one form or another. It is not clear that the stress on important figures from mission history reflects Bebbington's work to any great extent. Although the symbol of creating coherence through exclusion is not directly reflected in the Bebbington quadrilateral, it does reflect the evangelical propensity to schismatism mentioned earlier in this chapter.

It is noteworthy that the issues that Stroope identifies do not align with the crucicentrism or conversionism axes of Bebbington's quadrilateral. There are a number of possible explanations for this.

- Stroope's list of symbols is not exhaustive and, either consciously or unconsciously, does not identify other symbols which would reflect these two axes.
- Whether or not the list of symbols is exhaustive, the fact that some evangelical missions are focused entirely on various forms of social action, rather than proclamation and making converts means that crucicentrism and conversionism are not essential aspects of the mission movement as a whole.
- It is possible that the way in which some organisations project themselves publicly plays down the importance of crucicentrism and conversionism to the agency in favour of highlighting other aspects such as activism.

Perhaps all three of these reasons are true to some extent. This issue will be re-examined in chapter 7 in the light of the data gathered in the study.

Mission Structures

This section places evangelical mission agencies within the broader context of the different structures which exist in order to support the church in the work of mission. It considers both Catholic and Protestant organisations before turning to evangelical agencies and considering the factors which have shaped their development.

According to Andrew Walls, successful deployment of missionaries requires a form of organisation which can mobilise new missionaries and support those on the field (Walls, 2002, 28). Through history, a number of different structures have existed alongside churches and denominations, whose purpose has been to promote and support mission in one way or another. This section examines the background to some of these structures. There is

a brief introduction to Roman Catholic mission structures before turning to examine Protestant structures, in particular evangelical mission agencies, in more detail.

Justification for Mission Structures

Both Roman Catholic and Protestant missionary structures have developed as a pragmatic response to a perceived need, rather than on the basis of a thought through, theological rationale⁹ (Knell, 2006, 21; Neill, 1959, 82). Evangelical missiologist, Ralph Winter argues that the universal church needs two structures: a structured settled community and a more fluid structure designed for mission (Winter, 1974). Winter refers to these structures as modalities and sodalities. The modalities are settled fellowships where membership is open to all regardless of age, sex or marital status and are equivalent to local churches. Sodalities are groups which exist for a particular purpose, have a membership restricted by age, sex or marital status and which people must make a definite decision to join. For Winter, all Catholic and Protestant church and mission structures can be described by these terms.

However, there are others who argue that there is no theological rationale for the existence of agency structures in addition to the church (Devenish, 2005, 68). Peters argues “the right to existence of the missionary society as historically developed has been seriously questioned if not outrightly denied” (Peters, 1972, 217). Bishop Stephen Neill says that the existence of missionary societies is “theologically indefensible” (Neill, 1959, 84). Camp agrees that there is no theological basis to Winter’s proposals, but suggests that churches should accept missionary societies as separate structures on a purely pragmatic basis (Camp, 1995, 207). Given the amount of time, money and energy which has been and continues to be invested in mission agencies, it seems futile to argue whether or not they should exist. We are faced with a *fait accompli* and whatever the arguments for and against the existence of agencies, Camp’s position is an appropriate one for the situation in which we exist. However, the relationship between agencies and churches remains an outstanding issue.

Within the Roman Catholic Church and to some extent the Protestant denominational mission agencies, the relationship between the church and

⁹ “There never was a *theology* of the voluntary society. The voluntary society is one of God’s theological jokes, whereby he makes tender mockery of his people when they take themselves too seriously.” (Walls, 1996, 246).

the agency is clear cut, with the authority of the church taking precedence over that of the agency. However, this is certainly not the case for the non-denominational missions. Local churches and denominations have personal contacts with missionary societies through missionaries that they sponsor, but they generally have no authority or even a mechanism by which to influence the direction and priorities of the agencies. Equally, there is an anomaly in the position of the missionary, are they responsible to the church which commissioned them to mission and which prays for them and quite possibly provides their financial support, or are they responsible to the mission agency for whom they work on a day-to-day basis?

A further dimension to the issue of church-agency relationships is provided by the situation on the mission field. In 1959, Stephen Neill wrote about the tensions which can exist when a mission agency plants a church in a country and continues to exercise some sort of control even when the church is capable of independent government (Neill, 1959, 59). Forty years later, the author observed the same issues being repeated in Ivory Coast, during his own missionary service.

Roman Catholic Structures

In his overview of Roman Catholic theology, Kasper identifies three broad structures or orders for mission within the Catholic church; monasticism, religious communities and spiritual movements (Kasper, 2015, 281-287).

Monastic orders are communal expressions of the life of the church, which through prayer, the celebration of the liturgy and an ordered life witness to the Christian message. By offering hospitality, the monasteries provide other Christians a place for retreat and reflection. The monastic orders seek to influence the outside world, but they do so primarily through their life as a community.

Religious Communities developed, in part, as a response to monastic communities which had grown rich and powerful. The focus of Religious Communities is not so much on their communal life, but on the mission which they are called to carry out. Historic religious orders include the Franciscans and Jesuits while more contemporary examples include the Missionaries of Charity founded by Mother Teresa.

Spiritual Movements are primarily lay associations who live and witness to being Christian in the midst of the world.

To this list could be added Roman Catholic relief and development agencies such as Caritas (Caritas, 2018).

These structures have a degree of independence, which provides the church with some flexibility in the way that she carries out her mission. However, the various orders all operate ultimately under the authority of the Church in one way or another.

Protestant Structures

There are three types of mission structure which exist within Protestantism: mission agencies with a close tie to a particular denomination such as the Baptist Missionary Society (BMS) (BMS World Mission, 2018), non-denominational agencies such as OMF (OMF, 2018) and what might be termed missional denominations. Subsequent sections will look at mission agencies in some detail. Missional denominations are church denominations which are involved in church planting or mission work around the world, but which do so through the same denominational structure which exists in the UK, without the intermediary of a specific missionary society or structure. New Frontiers International (NFI) is an example of a missional denomination. As NFI is involved in planting churches in various contexts, they question the validity of traditional mission agencies, only seeing a place for highly specialist organisations which take on roles such as Bible translation that churches do not have the expertise to do (Devenish, 2005, 68). Robertson's 2014 PhD thesis examines the missiology of three of the new missional denominations in some detail (Robertson, 2014).

Evangelical Structures

The first permanent British missionary organisations were the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge (SPCK, founded in 1698) and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG, founded in 1701). These organisations were established by parliamentary charter and their management was linked to the bishops of the Church of England. As a result, the things they could do well were largely things that the Church had always done: that is, ordain and equip clergy." (Walls, 1996, 241). They primarily served to meet the pastoral and ecclesiastic needs of the British population in the newly established colonies, rather than as evangelistic organisations reaching out to native populations (Cox, 2009, 49).

These societies were well equipped to carry out the church's normal functions, but they lacked the flexibility to engage in the new role of evangelising the indigenous populations of the colonies and further afield. For this, new structures were required. In 1792, William Carey, an evangelical Pastor, published his "Enquiry" (Carey, 1792). Carey's was not the first apology for mission work to be published in the UK, but it proved to be the most influential (Noll, 2004, 218). Carey outlined the theological case for mission work and then gave an overview of the religious situation in the world and of the way in which mission work had progressed. However, it is the third section of his book in which he discussed the "means" to be used for mission which has proved to be the most influential.

His first suggestion was to draw people together to pray for the progress of the church around the world (Carey, 1792, 80), and then he made the following proposal:

"Suppose a company of serious Christians, ministers and private persons, were to form themselves into a society, and make a number of rules respecting the regulation of the plan, and the persons who are to be employed as missionaries, the means of defraying the expense, etc., etc. This society must consist of persons whose hearts are in the work, men of serious religion and possessing a spirit of perseverance; there must be a determination not to admit any person who is not of this description, or to retain him longer than he answers to it." (Carey, 1792, 82-83)

Voluntary societies had come into being in various areas of commerce and culture in Great Britain during the early 1700s (Bebbington, 2005, 174; Noll, 2004, 137) and Carey took his inspiration from the trading societies created to encourage commerce with the colonies. However, his suggestion of a voluntary society led by laity alongside clergy was revolutionary in an age where Christians looked to the leaders of their churches to provide all aspects of leadership and direction in religious life (Stanley, 2003, 41; Walls, 1996, 246). During this period, Walls suggests that the rise of voluntary societies, including missionary societies, assisted in the declericalization of the church, provided new openings for the involvement of women and gave an international expression to the church (Walls, 1996, 253).

Inspired by Carey, The Baptist Missionary Society¹⁰ (BMS) was formed in 1792¹¹ and he and his family sailed to India as the society's first

¹⁰ The Baptist Missionary Society was initially called the Particular Baptist Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (Stroope, 2017, 315).

¹¹ BMS was not the first British evangelical mission society, The Society for the Furtherance of the Gospel was founded in 1768. This was the British wing of the Moravian mission movement and one

missionaries in 1793. Shortly thereafter, a number of other missionary societies were established including the London Missionary Society in 1795, The Scottish Missionary Society in 1796 and the Glasgow Missionary Society in 1796 with others in their wake (Goheen, 2014, 149; Latourette, 1954, 1033; Tennent, 2010, 262). The influence of this British movement spread back to the continent with the foundation of a number of continental missionary societies (Walls, 1996, 251).

These initial societies were all linked to church denominations. The London Missionary Society had its roots in the Congregational Church and the Scottish and Glasgow Missionary Societies were both linked to the Church of Scotland and to the dissenting Free Church. Carey argued that it was preferable for societies to be denominationally based: "There is room enough for us all... each denomination would bear good will to the other, and wish, and pray for its success... but if all were intermingled, it is likely that their private discords might much retard their public usefulness." (Carey, 1792, 84).

An analysis of the Global Connections website shows that the number of evangelical mission agencies has continued to increase. Today, as mentioned earlier, there are over a hundred different mission organisations in the UK; specialising in a variety of roles including church planting, Bible translation, relief and development, children's education and the provision of transport (Global Connections, 2015).

In the early nineteenth century, the infrastructure for mission work continued to expand in the UK as missions developed support networks including local auxiliary societies. "While Americans led the evangelical world in revivals, the British usually led it in organisation." (Wolffe, 2006, 159).

The subsequent development of evangelical mission agencies will be examined from four overlapping viewpoints: the rise of faith missions, Ralph Winter's three eras of mission, changing terminology and the rise of aid and development work.

The Importance of Faith Missions

In 1824 the charismatic Church of Scotland minister Edward Irving preached a sermon to the London Missionary Society in which he called for missionaries to go to the field trusting in God to provide for them and not

of the first British societies to be formed in the wake of the Pietist revival on the continent (Noll, 2004, 214).

relying on external structures. The most famous exponent of Irving's principle was George Müller, who founded an orphanage in Bristol in 1835, for which he never solicited funds (Bebbington, 2005, 174). In the mission world, James Hudson Taylor adopted the same principle for the China Inland Mission (CIM) which he founded in 1865. The CIM eschewed traditional fund-raising techniques and missionaries were not paid a salary, but were expected to look to divine providence for their income (Bebbington, 2005, 177; Stanley, 2003, 43). In this, the CIM was the first of what are often termed "faith missions" (Fiedler, 1994, 1). Bebbington suggests that the rise of faith missions influenced by Romanticism, a nineteenth century cultural movement which placed an emphasis on will, spirit and emotion, as opposed to the Enlightenment focus on reason, which had undergirded earlier mission structures (Bebbington, 2005, 173-179).

The CIM was neither a denominational, nor an interdenominational society; it was non-denominational, with no formal links to existing church structures. Its focus was geographical, rather than ecclesiological. In another change from accepted practice, women were accepted as missionaries in their own right, not simply as assistants or the wives of missionaries (Fiedler, 1994, 292). Unlike some of the denominational agencies, CIM did not require their missionaries to be ordained (Cox, 2009, 85; Walls, 1996, 168). These new strategies allowed the CIM to grow rapidly, and by 1905 it was referred to as an octopus, with more than 800 missionaries working throughout China (Wigram, 2007, 1). Initially the growth of faith missions outside of China was slow, but this changed at the turn of the twentieth century with the foundation of the three largest (both in terms of numbers and influence) mission agencies; the African Inland Mission (1895), The Sudan Interior Mission (1898) and the Sudan United Mission (1904).

Such is the dynamism and flexibility of the faith mission approach that the majority of mission agencies in the UK fall into this category. However, this does not mean that they are immune to criticism. In his biography of the founder of Wycliffe Bible Translators, Svelmoe describes faith missions as "one of the oddest, most dysfunctional, yet most enduring and, eventually, influential institutions ever established by evangelical Protestants" (Svelmoe, 2008, 58-59). He goes on to make three specific criticisms of faith missions:

- It was possible for anyone to establish a new mission society without any reference to other missions or to any ecclesiastical authorities.

- The early faith missions were highly competitive, and people would move from one to another if they found that the first agency did not meet their personal needs.
- The faith missions were prepared to accept people of low educational attainment as missionaries. (Svelmoe, 2008, 59).

While accepting the validity of these criticisms and recognising that there is a degree of confusion caused by the proliferation of mission agencies, it is also true that the things for which Svelmoe criticises them are the entrepreneurial nature and democratising spirit which allowed faith missions to thrive and become an important force.

Winter's Three Eras of Mission

Missiologist, Ralph Winter¹² approaches the development of the protestant missionary movement from a different perspective. He divides the modern missionary era into three eras¹³ (Winter, 1992). The first era is typified by William Carey and his contemporaries, who directed their attention to the newly colonised coastal areas of Africa and Asia. Winter's second era arose as the continental interiors were opened up and a new group of mission agencies came into being who concentrated on reaching the people living in the remote hinterlands. The first of these was the CIM which was followed by a number of other faith missions focusing on the inland areas including African Inland Mission (1895) and Sudan Interior Mission (1898) (Fiedler, 1994, 481). Winter's third era required access to hazardous and isolated areas such as jungles, mountains and deserts and represented mission to "unreached peoples". A number of new agencies came into being at this time, these include New Tribes Mission (NTM) and Wycliffe Bible Translators. In addition to these missions who were focused on reaching people in hard to access places, specialist agencies were founded in order to provide transport and communications for the missionaries in isolated situations. The Missionary Aviation Fellowship was founded in 1945 (Mission Aviation Fellowship, 2008).

However, Winter's analysis does not account for the further development of mission agencies in the post-war years. Following on from the Second World War, many evangelical Christians saw mission to Europe as a vital bulwark

¹² Winter's ideas have gained wide currency in the evangelical church due to their inclusion in the widely used textbook *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement* (Winter and Hawthorne, 1992). His analysis is restricted to Protestant mission work.

¹³ Winter is reported to have updated his 1992 paper to include a fourth era of mission, but on receiving a number of negative comments he withdrew it from publication (Priest, 2011, 295).

against the growth of atheistic communism. In the immediate post-war years, the American Agency, Youth With a Mission (YWAM) spread into Europe. Though the primary motivation for their work was to spread the gospel, the leadership of YWAM saw their work in Europe as building a bulwark against the spread of Communism to the United States. Billy Graham, who was to play a central role in the development of the Lausanne Movement, was a key figure in these early “invasions” of Europe (Learned, 2012, 51-52). Other agencies which focused on reaching both sides of the Iron Curtain, including Greater Europe Mission (1949) and Transworld Radio (1954) came into being. These American-based agencies all have British affiliates.

Changing Terminology

Bryan Knell who has worked as an advisor to a number of mission agencies suggests that there has been a subtle change in the language used to describe mission organisations which reflects a change in their nature. He notes that what were once termed mission(ary) societies now tend to be called mission(ary) agencies (Knell, 2006). In Knell’s view, the term missionary society reflects their original conception as groups of people, missionaries, with a similar vocation, who were banded together for mutual support. The modern use of the term agencies indicates that the organisations are more focused on particular tasks, rather than on the mutual support of the missionaries. In this study, the term mission agencies will generally be used to describe the contemporary situation, whereas mission societies will be used in historical contexts.

It is also important to note that the majority of mission agencies in the UK now function as charities. The boards of patrons who supervise the work of the agency have morphed into trustee boards who have responsibility under charity law for the good governance of the organisation.

Aid and Development Work

Andrew Walls makes the following statement about the early development of mission societies:

“The missionary society was, as Carey indicated, a use of means for a specific purpose. The original purpose was what Carey called ‘the conversion of the heathens’. The purpose of both the older and the newer societies was essentially evangelistic; insofar as it was formulated, the theory was that when the church was founded the mission would move on. In practice it did not, perhaps could not, happen that way. As new churches appeared the society remained as a natural channel of communication, through which

flowed aid, personnel, money, materials, technical expertise. The societies, as we have seen, developed other roles, as educators of Church and Public, as a conscience for peoples and governments. All these roles were already established in the missionary societies before 1830, and they are all there still.” (Walls, 1996, 253).

This statement describes the way in which mission societies added various forms of social action to their original work of evangelisation. As Walls states, today’s agencies are also involved in a wide range of activities. However, the transition from the early societies to the contemporary situation was not as smooth as this quote might seem to imply.

From the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century¹⁴ there occurred what has been termed the “Great Reversal”, during which evangelical missions retreated from involvement in social issues, concentrating, instead, on proclaiming the gospel (Bebbington, 1989, 213; Goheen, 2014, 228). From the middle of the twentieth century, many evangelicals once again included social action as a part of mission, though a distinction between proclamation and social action continued to be maintained.¹⁵ However, with the rediscovery of social action as an aspect of mission, a new sort of agency came into being; ones which focused almost exclusively on this area. These agencies have little, if any, engagement in active proclamation of the Christian message, considering their work to be a demonstration of the gospel in and of itself. One of the largest of these organisations in the UK is Tear Fund which was founded in 1968 (Stanley, 2013a, 184). The reason for highlighting the development of these new organisations is that they have grown enormously and now overshadow the more traditional mission agencies. For example, in their 2016 report to the Charity Commission Tearfund reported an income of £72,162,000 compared with OMF’s £7,415,174 (Charity Commission, 2018b). The rise of the Christian aid and development agencies represents both a change in the orientation of Christian mission from the UK and a potential threat to the continuing existence of the traditional agencies as financial support is diverted to other causes.

A Working Definition of Evangelical Agencies

It is difficult to define agencies in terms of the work they do. The primary purpose of the earlier mission agencies was evangelistic, though education

¹⁴ Goheen dates the Great Reversal from 1865 to 1935 (Goheen, 2014, 228).

¹⁵ This theme is developed in greater detail in chapter 4.

and medical work were often part of their remit as well. Latterly, specialist organisations have come into being with a wider focus such as support for the persecuted church, Bible translation, relief and development and other areas of social action.

Equally, it is difficult to define mission agencies in terms of their relationship to churches. The faith missions are governed independently of any church or denominational structure. Others, such as Grace Baptist Mission are quasi-independent, as the missionary arm of a denomination (Grace Baptist Mission, 2014). The Anglican CMS shares many of the characteristics of a mission agency but is actually a community of the Church of England; a missional and dispersed expression of the Church (Church Mission Society, 2016). Moving a step further, there are also churches and denominations that are involved in overseas mission work without any intervening agency structure (Johnson, 2003).

Practically speaking, within the UK context, the simplest way to identify evangelical agencies is by looking at organisations which self-identify as such through membership of Global Connections, a network of UK agencies, churches, colleges and support services (Global Connections, 2015). This excludes a few agencies who have chosen not to join Global Connections, but it does include a substantial number. This study will focus on agencies which are members of Global Connections.

Evangelical Mission Agencies and Pragmatism

Earlier in this chapter, pragmatism¹⁶ was identified as one of the features of evangelical Christianity. This tendency to pragmatism is present among evangelical mission agencies. In the introduction to his broad-based study of mission, Stanley Skreslet mentions the different sources that have informed his work. He suggests that the Roman Catholic sources tend to be theologically orientated, whereas those from an evangelical perspective tended to be more pragmatic (Skreslet, 2012, 3). This is illustrated by the case of Cameron Townsend, the founder of Wycliffe Bible Translators: “Townsend was a pragmatist, willing to shed preconceived notions and ideologies in pursuit of his central vision of Bible translation and the

¹⁶ There is a suggestion by some authors that evangelical pragmatism is an American trait which is less evident among Europeans ; . The author’s experience is that Europeans tend to be equally pragmatic. Even if it were the case, the fact that mission agencies tend to work as international coalitions, means that they are often driven by the pragmatism of their US-based funders.

salvation of the lost. But for Townsend, what began in pragmatism usually ended in passion.” (Svelmoe, 2008, 248).

The origins of pragmatism can be traced back to the influences of the Enlightenment on the early foundations of evangelicalism. Two particular strands of Enlightenment thought are relevant to the discussion of mission and mission agencies.

The first strand is that the focus on human progress which was integral to the Enlightenment is not the same as the Christian meta-narrative with its sense of history moving towards a final end point or *telos*. However, the Enlightenment concept provided an intellectual support for the Christian viewpoint (Tennent, 2009, 88). The concept of human progress has been integral to mission work (Goheen, 2014, 157) and provides part of the basis for much missionary education and development work (Bosch, 1991, 334, 5). The second strand of Enlightenment thought which is relevant to this discussion is the focus on the visible, material world as opposed to the spiritual. This provided a framework by which mission could be viewed as a practical, measurable task, rather than as a more abstract, spiritual one (Bebbington, 1989, 64). The combination of these two led to an ambitious pragmatism, exemplified in the statement from the Student Volunteer Movement: “We can do it, if we will” (Hawthorne, 2013, 23).

Mission societies are an example of this sort of pragmatism. “The concept of voluntary societies, as a parallel structure for mission was not a theological conviction - it was a practical necessity” (Sunquist, 2013, 410) (see also (Knell, 2006, 21). The tendency to pragmatism was reinforced by the growing financial resources devoted to mission and by the technical and economic advances that facilitated travel and communication (Arthur, 2017, 5; Bosch, 1991, 337).

A focus on pragmatism can lead to mechanistic approaches to mission which ignore issues that are difficult to quantify; this is discussed with regard to unreached people groups in chapter 4. However, the concern at this point is the contention that the pragmatic focus of western mission agencies causes them to concentrate on their actions, while neglecting to reflect adequately on their actions, context and beliefs (Shenk, 1999, 691). While advocating for pragmatic methodology in mission, C. Peter Wagner tacitly admits that this is problematic when he suggests that a “consecrated pragmatism” is required in forming mission strategy, though he does not indicate how this could be achieved (Wagner, 1992, 578). Clifton Warner is

very clear that a pragmatic approach to mission needs to be tempered by “theological reflection” (Warner, 2000, 493).

In the opening chapter of the book *Global Missiology for the 21st Century*, William Taylor, the former Executive Director of the World Evangelical Alliance Missions’ Commission, bemoans the fact that evangelical missions have been typified by pragmatism rather than reflection. Taylor suggests that in a rapidly changing world, a lack of appropriate reflection has led to a number of serious deficiencies in the way that mission is conceived, among these he lists:

“The crippling omissions in the Great Commission—reducing it to proclamation alone—which lead to only a partial understanding of the mission of the church, resulting in spiritual anaemia and a thin veneer of Christianity, regardless of culture or nation.

The reduction of world evangelization to a manageable enterprise with an over-emphasis on research, statistics, quantifiable objectives, and desired outcomes.

An over-emphasis on short-term missions that minimizes longer-term service, and an inadequate biblical theology of vocation.” (Taylor, 2000, 3-4).

Taylor’s contention is that a process of reflection on the history and theology of mission, in the light of the changing contemporary situation, is essential if those involved in mission are to have the impact on the world that they desire. Taylor emphasises that reflection and action are not opposed to one another, rather they should be complementary, the one reinforcing the other (Taylor, 2000, 3). Kirk Franklin, executive director of the Wycliffe Global Alliance, makes a similar point: “I have learned that leaders are good at being practitioners because we want to be people of action. However, in doing so we might lack reflection, unknowingly missing the combined benefits. We need both — we should be reflective practitioners.” (Franklin, 2017, 92) Reporting on the second Lausanne congress in Manila, Samuel Escobar wrote: “In his presentation ‘The Challenge of Other Religions’, Colin Chapman questioned the pragmatism of those who go about devising strategies to reach people of other faiths without having done their biblical or theological homework.” (Escobar, 1991, 9).

Given the crisis in mission which was mentioned in the introduction and the importance of multi-cultural reflection in developing a new paradigm for mission, this preference for pragmatism over reflection calls into question the ability of British (indeed, Western) mission agencies to respond appropriately.

International Mission Structures

There are a number of international bodies which draw together churches and agencies involved in mission. One of these groups, the Lausanne Movement provides the documents which form the basis for the taxonomy developed in chapter four. This section introduces the Lausanne Movement by placing it in the context of two other international organisations the World Evangelical Alliance and The World Council of Churches.

The Evangelical Alliance

The World Evangelical Alliance describes itself as a network of churches in 129 nations that have each formed an Evangelical Alliance and over 100 international organisations “joining together to give a world-wide identity, voice, and platform to more than 600 million evangelical Christians.” (World Evangelical Alliance, 2016).

Early Evangelical Alliances

In 1846, about 800 delegates from evangelical churches in 12 countries representing 53 different ‘bodies of Christians’ gathered in London, with the aim of promoting the unity that they believed already existed between Christians. During the thirteen-day conference, it was decided to create an evangelical alliance as an expression of this unity. However, there was a heated debate over the subject of slavery. The British delegation believed that no slave owner should be a member of the Alliance, while the Americans, who were all personally opposed to slavery, believed that such a statement would not be helpful given the tensions over slave ownership in their country. It proved impossible to create an international structure for the Evangelical Alliance, but a number of national bodies were formed which thrived in their own contexts and which continued to meet for periodic conferences and to sponsor a Universal Week of Prayer¹⁷ (Dowsett, 2014, 399; Fuller, 1996, 19).

The World Evangelical Fellowship

In the aftermath of the Second World War, there were numerous attempts to create a more stable world order through the establishment of international organisations such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and

¹⁷ National Evangelical Alliances were formed in Britain, Canada and Switzerland in 1846, followed by France, Germany and Sweden in 1847. In the United States an Alliance was inaugurated in 1847, but owing to the civil war it was not fully established on a national basis until 1867 (Fuller, 1996, 19).

the United Nations. In a similar fashion, there were attempts to create a new spiritual order through the establishment of global Christian organisations, in particular the World Council of Churches (1948) and the World Evangelical Fellowship (1951) (Dowsett, 2014, 401; Stanley, 2013a, 72).

The creation of the World Evangelical Fellowship (WEF) was the result of a number of years of consultation which culminated in a conference in The Netherlands in 1951 at which the Fellowship was formally constituted (Dowsett, 2014, 402; Fuller, 1996, 28). The purpose of the WEF was stated as “the furtherance of the gospel, the defence of the gospel and fellowship in the gospel” (Dowsett, 2014, 409).

The WEF, which was renamed the World Evangelical Alliance in 2001 (World Evangelical Alliance, 2016) was envisaged as a ‘light-touch’ organisation. The aim was to support the national Evangelical Alliances and regional groupings, rather than have the WEA direct their work. The WEA has generally functioned on a very small budget and has had few full-time staff. This means that the Alliance has had a limited international profile and has been threatened with closure at times (Dowsett, 2014, 401; Fuller, 1996, 68; Stanley, 2013a, 74, 75).

The WEA Today

Today the WEA “seeks to strengthen local churches through national alliances, supporting and coordinating grassroots leadership and seeking practical ways of showing the unity of the body of Christ” (World Evangelical Alliance, 2016). It does this through a structure which includes commissions devoted to creation care, mission, theology and women among other issues.

The World Council of Churches

“The WCC brings together churches, denominations and church fellowships in more than 110 countries and territories throughout the world, representing over 500 million Christians and including most of the world's Orthodox churches, scores of Anglican, Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist and Reformed churches, as well as many United and Independent churches.” (World Council of Churches, 2018).

William Carey called for the establishment of a world missionary congress in Cape Town in 1810. However, this suggestion was turned down because it was believed that a meeting of missionaries from different backgrounds would create too much discord (Rouse, 1967, 312, 314).

However, in 1888 it was found possible to organise the first Ecumenical Missionary conference in London; this was followed by a second conference

in New York in 1900 and a third in Edinburgh in 1910 (Stanley, 2009, 73). Though the Edinburgh conference was the smallest of the three conferences, it was to have the most lasting impact as it gave birth to an ongoing structure. At the close of the conference a continuing committee was appointed under the chairmanship of John Mott (Stanley, 2009, 40). This continuing committee became the International Missionary Council (IMC) which was eventually to merge with the World Council of Churches in 1961. Through the twentieth century and into the twenty-first, the IMC organised a number of international conferences which had an impact on the development of ecumenical thinking on mission.¹⁸ The IMC is now referred to as the WCC Commission for World Mission and Evangelism (CMWE).

The Origins of the WCC

The formation of the Evangelical Alliance in 1846 and the 1910 Edinburgh Conference and the birth of the IMC were expressions of a growing ecumenical spirit in the church worldwide which would eventually give birth to the World Council of Churches (WCC) in 1948. The WCC emerged from three intra-denominational movements and programs of activities (Mayer and Meyer, 1953, 162):

1. Movements that aimed to bring Christian thinking to bear on the practical problems of the contemporary world. The most significant of these was the Universal Christian Council for Faith and Life.
2. Movements which focused on discussing the doctrinal issues which lay behind the lack of unity across Christendom. These included the World Conference on Faith and Order which was founded in response to the Edinburgh conference (Latourette, 1954, 1344; Thiele, 1956, 352, 3).
3. Movements which aimed to coordinate existing church activity, and which promoted cooperation. Of these, the most significant was the IMC which was merged with the WCC in 1961.

During the 1920s and early 1930s it became apparent that both the Universal Christian Council for Faith and Life and the World Conference on Faith and Order were faced with a huge amount of work and a realisation

¹⁸ The IMC organised conferences in Jerusalem (1928), Tambaram (1938), Whitby (1947), Willingen (1952), Achimota (1958), New Delhi (1961). Following the merger between the IMC and World Council of Churches, further conferences were organised in Mexico City (1963), Bangkok (1972/3), Melbourne (1980), San Antonio (1989), Salvador De Bahia (1996) and Athens (2005). In 2010 a major conference was held in Edinburgh which involved a number of stakeholders including the WCC (Geevarghese, 2010, 10).

grew that it would be better for the organisations to merge in a way that allowed for Faith and Order to concentrate on theological aspects of unity, while Faith and Life could look at more practical aspects (Thiele, 1956, 354). The two organisations met in Utrecht and drafted a constitution for the World Council of Churches, which it described as a “fellowship of churches which accept our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour” (Latourette, 1954, 1378). The outbreak of the Second World War delayed the formal inauguration of the WCC (Cavert, 1948, 507).

The membership of the WCC consisted of national churches and/or denominations who were able to sign up to its simple declaration of faith. This differed from the IMC whose members were missionary councils and groupings of churches (Latourette, 1954, 1379). This posed some slight organisational problems for the two organisations who wished to remain in close contact. This was solved by allowing members of the IMC to send observers to WCC meetings (Cavert, 1948, 509). The first WCC meeting held in Amsterdam in May 1948 was larger than previous Faith and Life and Faith and Order meetings combined, with 500 delegates from 161 churches (Thiele, 1956, 363). At this meeting the WCC adopted a constitution which was essentially the original document with minor changes (Cavert, 1948, 507).

The WCC and Evangelicals

The relationship between the WCC and the IMC was always a close one, with the two organisations carrying out a number of joint ventures. Through the 1950s there was a heated debate within the IMC as to whether the two organisations should merge and at the 1958 Achimota (Ghana) conference, the Council took the controversial step to merge with the WCC (Yates, 1996, 155-158). The merger was formalised at the New Delhi conference in 1961 the merger was completed and the new Division on World Mission and Evangelism (now the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME)), of the WCC took over the work of the IMC. Many evangelicals were alienated by the merger of the IMC with the WCC. There were two basic reasons for this:

Firstly, many evangelicals were suspicious of the perceived theological liberalism of the WCC (Goheen, 2014, 168; Hunt, 2011, 82; Michaels, 1974, 10). Secondly, there was a concern that an ecclesiastic body such as the WCC would not give due place to the importance or needs of world mission (Geevarghese, 2010, 10). John Stott suggests that this concern turned out to be well founded and that, as we shall see in the next section, the WCC

Uppsala conference provided a stimulus for the development of the Lausanne movement (Stott, 1997, xii).

The Lausanne Movement

The Lausanne Movement describes itself as “a network of evangelical leaders, thinkers and reflective practitioners, [with the] purpose to strengthen the church for world evangelisation” (Dahle et al., 2014, 3). However, it is perhaps best known as the sponsor of three global conferences which have drawn large numbers of evangelicals together to debate issues related to world mission.

The Origins of Lausanne

The immediate precursor of the Lausanne movement was the 1966 World Congress on Evangelism held in Berlin in 1966, the first post-IMC international mission conference convened by evangelicals (Jackson, 2015, 34). The Berlin Congress was jointly organised by the Billy Graham Evangelistic Organisation and *Christianity Today* magazine as a celebration of the magazine’s tenth anniversary (Stanley, 2013a, 69). This conference was intended to be a one-off event which would not be repeated. However, in 1970 Billy Graham convened a small group to discuss whether it would be desirable to arrange a follow-up to Berlin. Graham and other evangelical leaders were, at this point, very exercised by the direction that the WCC seemed to be taking. The 1968 Uppsala Assembly had established a programme to combat racism which gave grants to Black Power organisations in the US and liberation movements across Southern Africa. From an evangelical standpoint, the WCC seemed to be defining mission in an unacceptable fashion, and it was believed that it was important to state a more orthodox and comprehensive view of the missionary task (Stanley, 2013a, 156; Yates, 1996, 197, 198).

The result of these deliberations was a missionary congress which was held in Lausanne Switzerland in July 1974. The Billy Graham organisation provided much of the financial sponsorship for the congress as well as providing administrative support, and Graham was one of the key plenary speakers (Dahle et al., 2014, 4). The conference drew together 2,700 participants from 150 nations (Stott, 1997, xi).

Though the Lausanne Movement grew out of a reaction to the World Council of Churches, both organisations trace their lineage to the Edinburgh 1910 conference. While the WCC is undoubtedly the organisational heir of

Edinburgh, Cameron and Engelsviken argue that Lausanne is the inheritor of its missionary spirit (Cameron, 2014, 64; Engelsviken, 2014, 28).

There were some significant differences between the Berlin and Lausanne Congresses which need to be highlighted. The Berlin Congress was partly sponsored by J. Howard Pew of Sun Oil, who, in a reaction to liberalism and the social gospel movement believed that the congress should not discuss social action as this would distract from the primacy of evangelisation and no one had the ability to gainsay this position (Stanley, 2013a, 70). However, by 1974, the organisers of the Lausanne Congress had begun to develop a wider understanding of mission, one which included aspects of social action (Dahle et al., 2014, 4; Yates, 1996, 202, 208). Moreover, in contrast to Berlin, there was a much more significant number of delegates from the developing world who saw mission in much broader terms than many North Americans and Europeans (Stanley, 2013a, 70). The final document produced at the congress, the Lausanne Covenant, sought to bring a balance between the concern for evangelism and social action (Goheen, 2014, 170; Yates, 1996, 207; Stott, 1975b, 289). The Lausanne Covenant will be examined in further detail in chapter 4.

Before and during the conference delegates were asked whether there should be some sort of follow-up. 72% of the delegates voted for the establishment of a continuation committee. This first met in 1975 in Mexico City. The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelisation (LCWE) as the Continuation Committee became known defined its work in terms of four functions: intercession, theology, strategy and communication and working groups were established to oversee each one (Stott, 1997, xvi).

Lausanne Today

Subsequent to the 1974 Lausanne Congress, the LCWE has sponsored two more global congresses; Manila in 1989 and Cape Town in 2010. They have also sponsored three global leadership forums (Pattaya in 1980 and 2004 and Bangalore in 2013) as well as a large number of conferences addressing specific issues (Dahle et al., 2014, 5).

Today, the Lausanne movement is essentially a movement of individuals, rather than one of churches or organisations. That being said, many of the individuals who serve Lausanne as staff or volunteers have been nominated by churches or agencies (Engelsviken, 2014, 39).

The most obvious manifestations of the Lausanne Movement are the various conferences and consultations which it organises from time to time along

with the working groups which address issues such as mission and the media and the string of publications which have appeared in print and online.

Lausanne and the WEA

The establishment of the LCWE was a controversial and delicate undertaking given the prior existence of the WEF (Stanley, 2013a, 172). At the Lausanne Congress, there was significant disagreement as to whether a separate body, distinct from the WEF should be founded. John Stott and Jack Dain argued that the WEF should carry on the work of the Congress, whereas Billy Graham pressed for a separate body which would be wholly focused on evangelisation. The establishment of a continuing committee rather than a formal organisation was a compromise between these two positions. However, the committee soon consolidated into a formal organisation (Dowsett, 2014, 406). More than twenty years after Lausanne, John Stott continued to lament the existence of two organisations who, if they did not compete, did divide the effort of the church (Stott, 1995, 53).

There have been a number of attempts to effect a merger between the WEF and the LCWE, particularly in 1980 when the WEF was traversing a financial crisis while Lausanne was able to attract significant funds. However, the LCWE were unwilling to consider a merger and WEF had to undergo a radical restructure in order to survive (Fuller, 1996, 68). Though relationships between the two organisations are cordial, there is clearly a degree of frustration between them, too.

“Many of the current Lausanne working groups and networks, and the consultations they plan, duplicate the WEA Commissions and working groups that have been steadily at work for decades. Is there not an element of ‘I belong to Apollos, I belong to Paul’ about all this, which the apostle so roundly condemned.” (Dowsett, 2014, 408).

Ultimately, the WEA is an organisation which serves and is responsible to churches, through the various national alliances. Lausanne has no similar roots and it is unclear how LCWE will serve churches or to whom it is accountable (Daane, 1975, 3).

Lausanne and the WCC

The relationship between Lausanne and the WCC is rather ambiguous. At the time of the 1974 Congress, Billy Graham stated that “We have had only the warmest relations with the World Council of Churches”. However, although Lausanne is only a short distance from the WCC offices in Geneva,

there were no official greetings sent from the congress to the WCC, nor were any WCC officials invited to attend the congress (Michaels, 1974, 9).

Relationships had improved by the time of the 2010 Lausanne congress in Cape Town and the WCC was invited to send observers and to address the meeting. However, as has been noted, this conciliatory gesture was compromised when a plenary speaker implied that a WCC delegate came from a place where there were no Christians (Bishop Angaelos, 2015, 8).

Are Agencies Relevant in Today's World?

Christianity is dependent on a process of cross-cultural diffusion (Walls, 1996, xvi, xvii), however, this diffusion is not dependant on “any one instrument” (Walls, 1996, 258). Missionaries and mission agencies in their current form evolved in a particular context for the spread of the gospel, and as the context changes, so new structures may need to develop. Stroope’s view is that the modern mission movement “is dated and thus no longer has the ring of a present reality” (Stroope, 2017, 351). Walls says that the western missionary movement is now in its “old age” (Walls, 1996, 255) and so it is appropriate to ask whether or not agencies are necessary as separate structures alongside churches. Mission scholar Mike Barnett asks the question as to whether missionaries, mission agencies and mission scholars are necessary and responds, “Absolutely. But are they *the key*? ... Churches are *the key*” (Barnett, 2010, 229, 230). He goes on to make the point that historically Christianity has spread through the migration of “ordinary people” and that this is still the case: “Around the world today, doctors, educators, businesspeople, agriculturalists, soldiers, athletes and immigrants carry the gospel to those who have yet to hear it” (Barnett, 2010, 230). Others have explored the importance of migration and diaspora communities for the spread of the Christian message in more depth, see for example (Kim and Ma, 2011) and (Hanciles, 2008). At this point, it is enough to note that there is a large community of people involved in spreading the Christian message around the world independent of traditional mission agencies.

Smith suggests that churches can grow and develop in the absence of missionaries. He cites the development of indigenous forms of Pentecostalism in Latin America as well as the Chinese church under communism:

“The expulsion of Western missionaries from China following the Communist revolution created a crisis of confidence for the

missionary movement as a whole and there was anxiety in Europe and America concerning the viability of the Chinese church in this situation. And yet, thirty years later, the unexpected had happened and scholars now talk of 'a flood of manifestations of the revival of religion, especially popular religion, which was nothing short of spectacular'. The number of Christians in China has grown tenfold since 1949 and has been conservatively estimated at between 20 and 30 million. Even more significant is the fact that Christianity has become a clearly identifiable Chinese religion and part of the Chinese social scene." (Smith, 2003, 119).

Looking at the African context, Walls suggests that the presence of missionaries has restricted the development of authentic African expressions of Christianity and that missionaries had to be forced to leave "by international warfare, political change, economic depression at home, or simply by schism - before the story could proceed" (Walls, 1996, 258).

This issue of missionaries and mission agencies restricting the development authentic indigenous Christianity is addressed in the Lausanne Covenant.¹⁹ Section 10 regrets that missions have often brought the gospel wrapped in an alien cultural wrapping, such that the new churches have become enslaved to foreign cultures rather than shaped by the Christian message itself. Section 9 suggests that there are times when mission agencies should move on from a context in order to allow the local church to grow and flourish in their absence. Section 8 starts by expressing gratitude to the various mission agencies who have worked in evangelism, social action, Bible translation, etc. and then states: "They too should engage in constant self-examination to evaluate their effectiveness as part of the Church's mission." (Stott, 1997, 9-55).

Paul Borthwick, writing about the involvement of North American Christians in mission considers the relationship between North American expatriates and local Christians. While he does not specifically address the issue of mission agencies, his remarks are pertinent to this discussion. According to Borthwick, the North American church can respond to the growth in the world church by taking one of three approaches to mission:

- The North American church as passing the baton (or the torch).
- The North American church as the leader in an ever-growing parade.
- The Majority World and North American churches as an interdependent team. (Borthwick, 2012, 192, 3).

¹⁹ The Lausanne Covenant is introduced in detail in chapter 3.

Borthwick rejects the first two options as unsatisfactory, saying that the North American church needs to stay involved in mission, but that she “must recognise how much we need our Majority World sisters and brothers” (Borthwick, 2012, 213). However, Richardson suggests that the current mission agency structures in the USA are alienating to young people (Richardson, 2013, 134). Although these discussions are from a North American perspective, lessons can be drawn for the British context.

In summary, mission agencies are a mechanism for the cross-cultural diffusion of Christianity. However, there are other ways in which the faith is being transmitted today. In addition, there are situations in which the presence of missionaries and external agencies could be unhelpful for the growing church. Because of this, mission agencies need to consider whether they actually have a purpose in today’s world and if they do, they need to evaluate continually the role that they are playing.

In the experience of this author, it is difficult for missionary agencies to consider whether they have a purpose. Agency leadership is involved in a continual process of promoting the work of their agency in order to raise support. Against this background, it takes a significant conceptual leap to consider actively whether the agency actually has a purpose at all.

In the January 2015 edition of *Billions*,²⁰ the OMF UK director Peter Rowan asked the question as to whether OMF was still needed. In the article, Rowan first gives a brief review of the changes in the context in which mission agencies exist and then sets out some of the reasons why he believes that OMF has a future. In his view, “There is a role for OMF so long as we model cross-cultural servanthood”. Like Borthwick, Rowan sees no place for Western agencies which dominate their national partners. In line with the Lausanne Covenant, he also suggests that OMF must continue to review its work and approach and be prepared to innovate in the face of changing circumstances. The extent to which this article reflects internal discussions within OMF about the future of the agency is not clear. Equally, the fact that other agencies have not publicly discussed whether they should continue should not necessarily be taken to indicate that they have not engaged in such discussions at board or leadership team level.

²⁰ The OMF magazine, *Billions*, is introduced in chapter 5. Bibliographic references to the publication are found in Appendix III.

Summary and Purpose

This chapter introduces the concept of evangelical mission agencies. The term evangelical refers to a movement within Protestantism which cannot be tightly defined, but which is best described in terms of qualities which are shared to some extent by all evangelical Christians. Likewise, mission is a term which is defined in a variety of different ways. The evangelical mission movement is united by a number of different symbols which typify it. However, there is not universal agreement as to the legitimacy of the various structures which support and encourage mission. With this background, it is appropriate to understand and define mission agencies on a pragmatic basis. For the purposes of this study, evangelical mission agencies are considered to be those organisations which self-identify as such through their membership of Global Connections.

The existing literature on mission agencies focuses on the internal structure of the agencies (the discussion of faith missions and the terminology used to describe the organisations), where the agencies focus their work (Winter's three eras) and the sort of work that agencies do (the issue of aid and development). It is difficult to prove the absence of literature, but while there are a number of studies which look at agency structure and function there are fewer studies of what agencies believe and what motivates them to approach their work in the way that they do. The studies which do exist, (for example, Wigram's historic study (Wigram, 2007) and Wall's contemporary one (Wall, 2014), tend to focus on one agency rather than looking at a broader sample of the sector.

As there is no overall consensus as to what exactly constitutes mission, there is the possibility that mission agencies will have different understandings regarding some underlying, theological issues. It is also possible that these different understandings will help to frame the way in which agencies respond to the emergence of a new paradigm of mission discussed in this chapter and the demographics challenges raised in the introduction. Equally, the propensity of evangelical Christians and mission agencies to adopt a pragmatic rather than a reflective approach is likely to have an impact on the way in which agencies are involved in developing a new mission paradigm, or how they respond to it as it develops. Currently there are no comparative studies of the different ways in which evangelical mission agencies understand mission theology or of the way in which these theological understandings shape the actions of the agencies. This study is intended to address this issue by examining the way in which a sample of

agencies understands a range of theological issues and how this affects the agencies' actions. It is not possible to observe directly the actions of mission agencies in numerous locations across the globe, so ways in which the agencies act will be observed from their printed and online literature, reflecting the importance of agency communications to the mission movement which was noted in this chapter.

This study will add to the understanding of mission theology and practice, in particular the extent to which the actions of mission practitioners are shaped by their theological presuppositions.

Chapter 3 Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to investigate the positions which a sample of mission agencies hold with regard to a number of theological issues and to explore the way in which these issues have an impact on the agencies' actions as expressed through their documentation. The following research questions will be explored:

- What are the possible elements of a taxonomy of evangelical mission theology?
- How do mission agencies self-identify in terms of the elements of this taxonomy?
- What do the strategic and communications decisions made by the agencies and their alignment with the taxonomy reveal about the agencies?

Each of these questions will be approached using a different method. The first question, the elements of a taxonomy, will be answered through a search of the relevant mission literature. The second question, the alignment of the agencies in the sample with the taxonomy will be approached initially by interviewing the directors of the agencies and then confirming their responses through an analysis of the agency literature. The final question will be answered by an examination of the agency literature.

This chapter has two main sections, the first one gives the rationale for the various research methods used in the study. The second section introduces and explains the research methods themselves.

Rationale for the Methods Used

This study falls into the academic domain of practical theology and is based primarily on gathering quantitative data. It also makes use of Edgar Schein's model of organisational culture. This section introduces each of these subjects in turn. There is also a brief section explaining the use of the term taxonomy in the study.

Practical Theology

This study involves investigating the way in which a number of mission agencies identify with a range of theological questions. As such, the study falls within the broad discipline of practical theology which involves investigating social settings and religious praxis from a theological perspective (Ganzevoort and Johan, 2014, 91; Miller, 2015, 282; Nipkow, 1993, 55). This starting point, based on real world situations, distinguishes practical theology from the related field of applied theology. Applied theology starts by reflecting on information drawn from theological disciplines rather than on information drawn from practice (Swinton and Mowat, 2006).

Practical theology may be defined as: "... critical theological reflection on the practices of the Church as they interact with the practices of the world, with a view to ensuring and enabling faithful participation in God's redemptive practices in, to and for the world" (Swinton and Mowat, 2006, 6). Typically, there are three steps to a practical theology approach, the first is to gather data, the second is to reflect theologically on the data and the final step is to use that reflection to refine and improve Christian practice (Heimbrock, 2011, 164).

The data in this project have been gathered through interviews and literature analysis and reflected on through the framework of the theological taxonomy which is developed in the following chapter. Although standard qualitative research techniques are used in gathering and processing the data, these cannot determine the theological value of the information gathered (Fuchs, 2001, 9) and so there is a need for a theologically based reflection on the data, though this reflection must not neglect the "analytical niceties" of an academic research project (Ballard, 1992, 3). The aim of practical theology is to arrive at better practices which are more in line with the gospel.

However, this project is limited in the way that it can lead to improved practices as the researcher has no formal role within any of the agencies being studied. Therefore, as an outcome of the study a document outlining the general issues raised has been developed and will be made available within the mission agency community. Likewise, a series of shorter and more specific documents has been produced for each of the agencies who took part in the study. These documents include specific suggestions of ways in which agencies could possibly improve the way in which they approach their ministry. However, the majority of the documents are given over to providing a theologically based rationale that the agencies can use to

guide their own reflections in order to reach conclusions within their own framework. These documents are found in Appendix IV.

Practical theology presupposes that the researcher and the object of the research are formed in a shared faith tradition (Miller, 2015, 287) or that the research takes place within a faith community (Ballard, 1992, 3). In this fashion, practical theology provides a framework for the role of the researcher in this study. The author is an evangelical Christian, who has extensive experience working with a mission agency, including six years as Chief Executive Officer of Wycliffe Bible Translators. This shared faith tradition and life experience inform the researcher's understanding of the issues raised in the study.

Theological and Missiological Reflection

Practical theology involves a process of reflection. This is sometimes referred to as theological reflection or, in the context of mission, missiological reflection. In order to clarify what is meant by them, it is necessary to briefly examine these terms. The Dutch theologian Johannes van der Ven suggests that though there is a large literature on the subject of theological reflection, there is also some confusion as to what it actually consists of.

"Anyone who dips into the abundance of literature on theological reflection has a hard time suppressing first of all a sense of astonishment at so much productivity, but also amazement at so much confusion... this enormous production has not led to a clear insight into the essence and aim of theological reflection and has perhaps actually raised the level of confusion." (Van der Ven, 1998, 210).

However, others have found unifying principles in the literature. In his doctoral thesis on the subject, Roger Walton suggests that there are five themes which are essential to theological reflection:

- The subject matter for reflection emerges from the pressing problems of the day, such as poverty or inequality, rather than from the normal subject matter of dogmatic theology. These contemporary issues are brought into dialogue with Scripture and church tradition.
- The theological method proceeds by reflection on the issues. Revelation and insight are gained through meditating on and discussing the issues.
- Reflection is a corporate, not an individual process. Ideally people from different backgrounds and experience should be drawn together.

- Attention needs to be paid to the underlying suppositions and background of the team as these will have an effect on the outcomes.
- The aim of the reflective process is a change in practical living, not simply an accumulation of knowledge. (Walton, 2002, 11, 12).

In some models of theological reflection, the practical outcomes would themselves become the focus of a new cycle of reflection (Green, 1990, 57).

Missiological reflection involves a similar process to theological reflection; however, it differs in the way in which different elements and disciplines need to be brought to bear. Kirsteen Kim says, “Historically missiological reflection has emerged within a variety of disciplines including communications and evangelism, development and social studies, historical studies, religious studies, anthropology and cultural studies, ecumenics, biblical studies, and systematics” (Kim, 2002, 1). Hanciles also stresses that missiology is an interdisciplinary subject which needs to be integrated with other subjects (Hanciles, 2014, 130). Pocock suggests that there are three integrated systems which bring understanding to missiological questions and concerns: (1) theology, (2) missionary experience, and (3) the systems and contributions from various fields of social sciences, including “anthropology, sociology, psychology, communications, linguistics, demography, geography, and statistics” (Pocock, 1996, 10). Ott suggests that missiological reflection should take into account three disciplines; theology, mission history and the social sciences (Ott, 2013, 195). Hesselgrave gives a similar list; the Bible and church tradition, the social sciences and mission history and biography and then goes on to warn: “To explore any missiological issue without seeking out and examining relevant data from all three of these repositories of information is to truncate missiological inquiry and place both missionary theory and practice in jeopardy” (Hesselgrave, 1996, 1).

However, while other disciplines are brought to bear in missiological reflection the basis of the work must always be biblical and theological. “We do not begin to think about our missionary task by asking, ‘What works?’ or ‘How do we . . .?’ Rather, we begin with a biblical and theological foundation. It is out of this bedrock that our missiology flows” (Payne, 2013, xvi).

Goheen insists that missiology is grounded in the Bible (Goheen, 2014, 27). Balia and Kim suggest that the foundations for mission are found in the whole of Scripture, not just in isolated verses (Balia and Kim, 2010, 17) and that a consideration of the *missio Dei* is a feature of mission theology (Balia

and Kim, 2010, 23). This highlights two of the issues which are incorporated into the taxonomy developed in the following chapter.

Craig Ott warns that the absence of an appropriate theological basis for mission can lead to two problems. The first is that the ends can be used to justify means which are inconsistent with biblical values. The desire for a quick fix can lead to the neglect of a sound theological framework. Secondly, the ends themselves may be inappropriate. Often the results of mission are defined in terms of numbers (conversions, churches planted, etc.) without any attention to deeper issues. Quantity is valued over quality (Ott, 2013, 197). Payne makes a similar point;

“This divorce of our field-based methods from healthy missiology rooted deeply in a biblical and theological foundation resulted in numerous problems in the kingdom—the number of live bodies increased in our churches but not always with an equivalent increase in conversions and sanctification.” (Payne, 2013, xvi).

Payne sums up this situation by suggesting that mission practitioners need to be “excellent theologians” (Payne, 2013, xvi).

While Goheen insists that missiology must “remain rooted in the gospel and the Word of God”, he also says that it must address issues in their time and place. The implication is that missiology is not fixed and will change according to context. Missiologists need to address the “burning issues” of the day (Goheen, 2014, 27). According to Ott, the rapid pace of change in the contemporary world means that mission practice cannot rely on past methods and must be rethought in the light of current issues (Ott, 2013, 209). Payne suggests that some methods used in mission may have an indefinite lifespan, while others can only be used for a short time (Payne, 2013, xix). However, any changes in methodology must be consistent with “biblical wisdom and integrity” (Ott, 2013, 209).

With this background understanding of missiology and taking into account the description of theological reflection given by Walton, the following observations can be made about missiological reflection:

- It should be a constant, ongoing process, reflecting on missional practice in the light of a constantly changing context.
- Missiological reflection is an interdisciplinary activity, drawing on mission praxis and the social sciences, but with a priority given to theological and biblical studies.
- Ideally, missiological reflection is a corporate activity, drawing on a team of people with different expertise and experience.

- The aim of missiological reflection is a change in mission practice consistent with biblical revelation, good theology and the emerging context.

In summary, missiological reflection²¹ should be a continual and cyclical process, which starts with mission practice and results in changed practices, which themselves become the object of further reflection. This relationship between reflection and practice means that they are not necessarily opposed to one another. There is a need to be both “pragmatic and biblical” (Ott, 2013, 210). Practical theology in the context of mission, therefore involves gathering data about mission practice, missiological reflection on those data and developing new practices as a result.

Qualitative Research

The data collected during this study concern the theological position of a number of evangelical mission agencies. Issues, such as these which are a matter of belief and conviction, are often “complex and multidimensional” and not susceptible to being easily quantified (Robson, 2011, 228). Also, because such values are foundational to the nature of the organisation concerned, researching them “implies questioning motives, emotions, and taboos” (Hofstede et al., 2010, 23). According to Denscombe, a quantitative approach, with a focus on numbers leading to quantifiable and generalisable conclusions is not appropriate in this type of context²² (Denscombe, 2007, 248). For this reason, this study adopts a qualitative approach, one which

²¹ An example of the practice of missiological reflection is provided by Kirk Franklin’s 2017 book (Franklin, 2017), which is based in part on his PhD thesis (Franklin, 2015). In it he describes the way in which a series of reflective processes allowed the leadership of the Wycliffe Global Alliance to reshape the organisation from being a subsidiary of an American mission agency into a truly international organisation in which the voices of all partners, not just those providing the funds, were given equal voice. In accord with the corporate nature of missiological reflection, the book includes short essays by a number of those who participated in the process. Having been a leader in Wycliffe Bible Translators at the time, I am aware that the process that Franklin describes was not without tension and did not always move smoothly. However, if the international leadership of the organisation had not taken the time and allocated the finances to allow people from around the world to gather together and to reflect on various theological and pragmatic themes, then the Wycliffe Global Alliance would not have been able to reshape itself in the way that it has done, and many potential partners would continue to be excluded from involvement in their work. Though the approach adopted by the Wycliffe Global Alliance would not be appropriate for every situation, it graphically illustrates the importance and relevance to spending time engaged in what some term, missiological reflection.

²² The differences between quantitative and qualitative research have been explored by a number of authors. It is important to note that one approach is not intrinsically superior to the other, but that they serve different purposes and are appropriate in different contexts (Denscombe 2007, 247), (Mason 2002, 1), (Seidman 2006, 7-8), (Swinton 2006, 44).

focuses on “description, interpretation and understanding” (Swinton and Mowat, 2006, 46).

If it is to have any value, qualitative research must be both systematic and rigorous (Mason, 2002, 7; Swinton and Mowat, 2006, 30). However, this rigour and systemisation must be combined with a degree of flexibility as qualitative data gathering and analysis is an iterative process in which the researchers reflect on and refine their methodology as the research unfolds (Denscombe, 2007, 288; Swinton and Mowat, 2006, 56). The way in which the current research process was developed and refined is covered in the section on methods later in this chapter. Qualitative research should also aim to offer explanations of the phenomena that it explores rather simply provide descriptions (Mason, 2002, 7). These explanations will be developed in chapter 7.

Qualitative data take the form of spoken and written words as well as visual images. Sources for the data can include interviews and document research (Denscombe, 2007, 286), both of which were used in this work. It is important to note, that although the majority of data gathered during this study are qualitative, some quantitative data were also obtained. The quantitative data are of two types: the first consists of information such as the financial turnover of the agencies or the number of missionaries working with each agency. These data are obtained from sources including the agency annual reports. The second type of quantitative data are derived from the qualitative data gathered in the study. In this case, the number of items coded in a particular manner (for example, the use of the Old Testament in agency magazines) is added together to give a figure for the total number of items meeting the appropriate criteria.

This research project uses a multiple-case study approach (Miles and Huberman, 1994, 29). Case studies involve investigating one or a small number of issues in depth and lend themselves to using more than one technique for data gathering as part of the process (Denscombe, 2007, 35-37). Investigating more than one organisation makes it possible to compare and contrast observations between agencies. By comparing the similarities and differences between the agencies in the study, a more robust theory can be developed to explain their behaviour than would be possible by investigating one agency in isolation (Miles and Huberman, 1994, 24).

Organisational Culture and Values

In order to provide structure, consistency and a vocabulary for some of the discussions of the issues raised in this study, it is necessary to frame them within a particular model. There is a number of large-scale studies which have set out to describe the culture and behaviour of organisations, which could provide a structure for these discussions.

Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner produced a model of organisation culture based on the study of 30 companies with divisions spanning 50 countries.

They published their research with three aims:

- To dispel the notion that there is one best way to manage an organisation.
- To give readers a better understanding of their own culture and of differences between cultures.
- To provide insight into the way in which global and local concerns can influence international companies (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1997, 2).

They suggest that “culture is the way in which people solve problems” (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1997, 7). The surface phenomena such as the way that people dress and interact are expressions of deeper values which address the particular problems that people who belong to a culture face. Culture itself can be examined according to three criteria: the way that people relate to others, their attitude to time and their attitude to the environment.

Geert Hofstede produced an extensive study of the way that cultural values have an impact on the workplace. He worked with a large dataset of IBM employees which covered over 70 countries. His work is set out in two books, both of which have been updated since their initial publication (Hofstede, 2001; Hofstede et al., 2010). Hofstede suggests that culture can be compared to the software running on a computer, in that it will have an effect on the way in which an individual reacts in a given situation. His research reveals four dimensions of culture:

- Social inequality, including the relationship with authority.
- The relationship between the individual and the group.
- Concepts of masculinity and femininity: the social and emotional implications of having been born as a boy or a girl.

- Ways of dealing with uncertainty and ambiguity, which turned out to be related to the control of aggression and the expression of emotions (Hofstede et al., 2010, 30).

However, though these models are well established and widely used, they are not suitable for this study for two reasons. Firstly, both of these models are applied to the way in which different national cultures are expressed within international organisations and the ways in which managers can learn to work within culturally complex organisations. Were the current study investigating the international dimension of some of the larger multinational mission agencies, these models would provide some useful insight, but this is not the case. Secondly, these models are also limited in their applicability to mission agencies which are non-profit organisations and lack the clear financial bottom line which is found in commercial organisations (Collins, 2006, 17). These limitations mean that a different approach to looking at organisational culture is needed.

Edgar Schein has developed a model for examining the culture that exists within an organisation (Schein, 1992) which will provide a framework for analysing the issues raised in this research which is more applicable to the context of this study.

Schein defines organisational culture in these terms:

“... A pattern of shared basic assumptions that was learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaption and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to those problems.” (Schein, 1992, 17).

As with the other models mentioned above, the key to understanding an organisation’s culture lies in the assumptions that lie at the core of the organisation, rather than in its actions. In Schein’s terms, “behaviour is derivative, not central” (Schein, 1992, 19).

This model identifies three levels of culture.

Artefacts

“At the surface is the level of artefacts, which includes all the phenomena that one sees, hears and feels when one encounters a new group with an unfamiliar culture.” (Schein, 1992, 25). Artefacts include all of the physical products of the group, including the publications that will be examined during the course of this research project. While artefacts are easy to observe, they are much more difficult to decipher. Schein illustrates this by referring to the

fact that both the Egyptians and Mayans built pyramids, but their reasons for doing so were very different (Schein, 1992, 26). It is difficult and unwise to attempt to infer the deeper levels of culture from observing artefacts alone because in doing so one will inevitably draw inferences based on one's own experience and values (Schein, 1992, 27).

Espoused Beliefs and Values

When an organisation is first founded, or when it faces a new challenge, the first solution proposed to deal with the issues will reflect the view that some individual holds on the nature of the problem and the appropriate way to deal with it. Over time an organisation will be presented with a variety of beliefs and values from its founder and other leaders. Those beliefs and values which are found to serve the organisation well will be adopted by the organisation as assumptions which underlie the way in which it behaves. These “derived beliefs and moral and ethical rules remain conscious and are explicitly articulated because they serve the normative or moral function of guiding members of the group in how to deal with certain key situations, and in training new members how to behave” (Schein, 1992, 29).

Artefacts will reflect many of the beliefs and values at this level; however, to explain some artefacts it may be necessary to look deeper.

Basic Underlying Assumptions

The final level of culture consists of “Underlying Assumptions”. These are concepts that “have become so taken for granted that one finds little variation within a social unit” (Schein, 1992, 31). These assumptions tend to be held unconsciously and are non-debatable within an organisation (for example, the suggestion that engineers should design things with safety in mind) and are very difficult to change. New members of the organisation come to share these assumptions as part of their socialisation into the organisation.

Schein allows for a deeper level of values beyond the basic underlying assumptions. These are described as the “deeper dimensions around which shared basic underlying assumptions form”. Included amongst these is “the nature of reality and truth” (Schein, 1992, 138), which would include the religious basis for the mission agencies.²³

²³ This deeper level of values is not accepted in all models of organisational culture, see for example (Hofstede et al., 2010, 182). However, it does seem reasonable to expect that the Christian commitment of an organisation such as a mission agency would find expression in its values and

A precedent for using Schein's work to examine non-profit organisations such as mission agencies comes from Wall's 2014 PhD thesis, which uses the model to investigate the culture of Across, a mission agency working in Sudan²⁴.

In this study, it is assumed that the way in which the agencies hold to the issues which form the basis of the taxonomy will emerge as Espoused Beliefs or Basic Underlying Assumptions and they will then find expression in some form in the artefacts of the organisation. This will be examined in more detail in chapter 7.

A Taxonomy of Mission Agencies

This study revolves around the development of a taxonomy for mission agencies. However, the taxonomy itself is not the purpose of the study, it is an analytical tool which is used to compare and contrast agencies according to the theological viewpoints that they espouse.

In chapter 4, a list of key issues in modern mission theology is identified. In chapter 5, the agencies are classified according to their position with regard to these four issues. This allows the agencies to be assigned to groups with similar viewpoints. The agencies within each group are then examined with regard to a variety of issues, to ascertain to what extent the commonalities with regard to the key issues of the taxonomy are extended across the board. In a similar fashion, different groups can be contrasted to see what, if any, commonalities there are between agencies with different positions on the issues in the taxonomy. In this way, the taxonomy serves as a tool for comparing the way in which agency theology and practice interact.

If the taxonomy were to prove useful as a tool for classifying agencies and predicting their beliefs and behaviour, this would be an added benefit of the study, but this is not the purpose for using the tool.

Methods

This section introduces the methods used for the three basic activities which form the basis of this research: identifying a sample of agencies for the study, interviewing the agency directors and researching the literature

artefacts.

²⁴ Wall demonstrated that Schein's model is a valid vehicle for our research in two ways. He engaged in an extended theological reflection on the appropriateness of using this model to explore the culture of mission agencies (Wall, 2014, 55-92) and then successfully used it as a tool to explore issues confronted by Across (Wall, 2014, 259-285).

produced by the agencies. A final section explores the way in which the information gathered through the interviews and literature research was analysed in order to establish the way in which the factors in the taxonomy aligned with Schein's model of organisational culture.

Choose a Sample of Agencies for the Study

Choosing a sample for qualitative research involves two processes. The first is to set boundaries for the study which define the limits of the study given the time and resources available. The second is to select a sample within those boundaries (Miles and Huberman, 1994, 27).

There are currently over one hundred UK based mission agencies (see chapter 2). These agencies exhibit a wide range of structures and are engaged in many different activities. In order to draw meaningful comparisons between the agencies in the study, it was necessary that they all share similar structure and functions. For this reason, the study was limited to faith missions (Fiedler, 1994, 32) which focus on supporting long-term missionaries.²⁵ This gave a possible list of 17 agencies from which the author's agency, Wycliffe Bible Translators, was removed on the grounds of objectivity. This set the boundaries for the sample.

The directors of the remaining 16 were each sent an outline of the nature of the research project and invited to participate. Twelve directors replied to this initial contact and they were each sent an information sheet which gave a more detailed outline of the project and the commitment that would be required from the organisations involved. This information sheet also offered each agency which took part in the study a detailed overview of the conclusions which were drawn about that agency and the offer of a formal consultation with the agency leadership or board.

Six agencies responded positively to the information sheet. Two of the agencies work in specific countries, three have a continental or regional focus and one works worldwide. The agencies also varied in size and in age and provided a broad cross-section of the sector. Given the variety within the group and the evident willingness of their leadership to participate in the study, it was decided to use these six agencies in the sample and not to pursue contact with the others who had not responded to the information sheet. These agencies are introduced below.

²⁵ Carey's original concept of the missionary society was of an organisation which would support the work of missionaries overseas see chapter 2,

France Mission Trust

France Mission Trust is the smallest of the agencies in this study. They describe themselves²⁶ as “A French-led evangelical movement with over 50 years of experience sharing the message of the Bible in France” (Global Connections, 2015).

Their principle objective is:

“The spread of the Christian gospel in French-speaking contexts and the planting of new evangelical churches in connection with the work of the parent mission in France. To meet these aims, the charity runs a support office in the UK to publish English-language prayer materials and information about France and handle gifts designated for missionary work in France.” (FMT16)²⁷.

France Mission is a France-based organisation established in Brittany in 1957. Today, its formal status is as a union of churches, which is similar, though not identical to a British denomination. France Mission Trust was established in the UK in 1974, in order to support the work of France Mission. The UK operation is managed by a director, Paul Cooke²⁸, who works four days a week and a number of volunteers who represent the agency in different regions of the UK.

In 2016, France Mission Trust had a charitable income of £388,997. They currently support 12 missionaries from UK.

International Nepal Fellowship

“The International Nepal Fellowship (INF) is a Christian mission serving Nepali people through health and development work.” (Global Connections, 2015). INF describes its mission and ethos as follows: “Empowering Nepal's poorest people and communities through life-changing health and development, centred in Christ's love for His world.”

“INF draws its distinctive ethos and values from its evangelical, non-denominational, Christian heritage. Supporting work amongst the poor and marginalised peoples of Western Nepal, upholding the church of Nepal, is a holistic expression of its Christian faith. INF/UK identifies with and upholds the national church and wider Nepali Christian community including the development of Christian

²⁶ The descriptions of the agencies are drawn from the pages on the Global Connections website which give a concise introduction to all of the member agencies (Global Connections, 2015).

²⁷ Owing to the large number of agency documents referenced in this study a system of abbreviations is used. This is outlined in Appendix III.

²⁸ The names of the agency directors are a matter of public record. Nevertheless, as part of the ethics approval process, they all gave permission for their names and quotations from their interviews to appear in this thesis.

fellowship in communities of Nepalis living outside of Nepal.” (INF16).

INF works closely with its sister organisations INF International and INF Nepal. INF Nepal is responsible, on the ground, for all of their programs carried out in Nepal.

INF was founded in 1952, when two British medics, who had wanted to work in Nepal for over a decade, were finally granted permission to establish a clinic in the country (INF Director, 00:09:17).

INF’s income for the year 2015-2016 was £1,187,717. The UK office of INF is in Birmingham, where the Director, John Reynolds is supported by a staff of six, some of whom work part-time. (INFWeb Staff). The September 2015 edition of Today in Nepal indicated that the agency supported 16 British staff in Nepal.

Latin Link

Latin Link is “an international community serving local churches throughout Latin America” (Global Connections, 2015).

They describe their vision as “to see vibrant, Bible-believing Christian communities in every part of Latin America, impacting their neighbours, their societies and the wider world” (LL16).

In practice, this means that they support missionaries from the UK working in Latin America, but they also seek to facilitate Latin Christians who have a call to work in other parts of the world.

Latin Link’s income for the year 2015-2016 was £2,271,455. “In the year to 31 March 2016, Latin Link Britain and Ireland had 113 Latin Link members serving alongside the local church in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua and Peru in Latin America and (in Europe) in Britain, Ireland and Spain.”

The Latin Link UK offices are in Reading and the Director is Andrew Johnston.

One peculiarity of Latin Link is that it was formed from the merger of two other agencies (The Evangelical Union of South America, and Regions Beyond Missionary Union) in 1991 (LLWeb History). According to Andrew Johnston, these agencies each had a different ethos, and it is still possible to see these differences in the approach to mission adopted by some older staff and in some long-standing projects.

Mission Africa

Mission Africa is “an interdenominational evangelical protestant mission, who want to share the love of Jesus with the people of Africa; reaching the unreached, loving the unloved, discipling new believers.” (Global Connections, 2015).

A fuller description of their work is given on the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland website:

“Mission Africa (The Qua Iboe Fellowship) exists to advance the evangelical Christian faith in Africa. Our work may be summarised under four headings: 1) Evangelism, 2) Education and Literacy, 3) Medical work, 4) Compassionate work.” (The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland).

Mission Africa’s reported income for 2016 was £683,700.

Mission Africa was originally founded as the Qua Iboe Mission in 1887 (Graham, 1984) to support the work of a missionary from Belfast, Samuel Bill. Since that time, the agency has been based in Belfast, though it recruits missionaries and support from across the United Kingdom. Initially, Mission Africa focused its efforts in Nigeria, but it also expanded into French West Africa during the 1930s. By the 1960s, the current director estimates that they had 70-90 missionaries working in Africa. However, the Biafran war in 1968 had a dramatic impact on missionary numbers and today Mission Africa is a much smaller organisation than it was at its zenith (MA Director, 00:11:07). Today, Mission Africa supports 13 missionaries or missionary couples in Burkina Faso, Chad, Kenya and Nigeria. They also support a number of short-term individuals and teams in each country.

The Director, Paul Baillie, works in an office in Belfast, where he is supported by a small administrative staff.

OMF

OMF describes its purpose as “serving the church and seeking to bring the gospel to all the peoples of East Asia” (Global Connections, 2015).

“The objects of OMF UK are:

- The advancement of the Christian faith worldwide.
- The advancement of education according to Christian principles.

The mission statement of OMF UK is “to glorify God by serving the UK Church as a catalyst for cross-cultural mission with special focus on the peoples of East Asia” (OMF16).

Founded in the UK in 1865 as the China Inland Mission, OMF is the oldest of the Faith Missions and the oldest agency in this study (Fiedler, 1994, 65). As the name suggests, OMF's work was initially in China. The group grew rapidly until 1948 when all missionaries were forced to leave China. At this point, they began to work more broadly across South East Asia and they changed their name to Overseas Missionary Fellowship (later shortened to OMF) to reflect this. Today, OMF is an international agency with its headquarters in Singapore. It supports 1,400 missionaries of whom 40% are Asian (OMF Director, 00:09:10).

OMF UK has its headquarters in Borough Green in Kent. The director, Peter Rowan, is supported by a large administrative staff. There are 205 British members of OMF working around the world, and in 2016, the agency reported an income of £7,415,174.

WEC

“WEC International takes the good news to the peoples and nations who have yet to hear it: the good news that Christ came to bring forgiveness of sins and peace with God, and to displace hatred with love.” (Global Connections, 2015).

The 2016 Report from WEC describes their work in this way:

“Our aim: To work together with the UK church to mobilise, train, send out and support workers who will see churches established and flourishing amongst the remaining unevangelised peoples of the world. We seek to mobilise many more workers for this huge task. This charity is the UK arm of that agency.” (WEC16).

WEC was founded in 1913 as the Heart of Africa mission with the aim of supporting two British missionaries in Congo. As their vision expanded from Central Africa to the whole world, they changed their name to Worldwide Evangelisation Crusade, which was subsequently changed to Worldwide Evangelisation for Christ and eventually shortened to WEC (WECWeb History). WEC UK is the largest of the constituent entities of WEC International. WEC UK missionaries who work overseas are seconded to the local entity, with administrative support from WEC international.

In 2016, WEC UK reported an income of £3,071,000.

WEC UK describes its staff as full-time volunteers and in 2016, they had 239 of whom 100 work in the UK and the rest overseas. The UK-based volunteers include missionaries working with churches in the UK as well as the office and support staff, who work mostly from an office in Coventry.

Summary

Table 1: Summary of The Agencies Studied

Agency	Founded	2016 Income	Number of Overseas Missionaries	Geographic Focus	International Structure	Director
France Mission	1974	£388,997		France	The British support arm for a French group	Paul Cooke
INF	1952	£1,187,717	16	Nepal	The British branch of a multinational agency	John Reynolds
Latin Link	1991	£2,271,455	113	Latin America	The British branch of a multinational agency	Andrew Johnstone
Mission Africa	1887	£683,700	11	Kenya and West Africa	Independent British agency	Paul Baillie
OMF	1865	£7,415,174	200	SE Asia	The British branch of a multinational agency	Peter Rowan
WEC	1913	£3,071,000	139	Worldwide	The British branch of a multinational agency	John Bagg

Director Interviews

The next stage of the research was to interview the directors of the various agencies in order to assess the way in which the organisations aligned to the issues raised in the taxonomy.

Qualitative Interviewing

In choosing an interview method, it is important to identify the type of information which is being sought through the process. In this case, the interviews were used to evaluate the way in which individual mission agencies were aligned against a set of factors. The majority of the data gathered were ideographic, that is to say, personal, emerging from experience, rather than nomothetic knowledge which is falsifiable, replicable and generalisable (Swinton and Mowat, 2006, 46). When measuring nomothetic knowledge, it is appropriate to use highly-structured interviews or surveys with a large sample size (Pole and Lampard, 2002, 131). By contrast, ideographic information is best accessed via in-depth, semi-structured (or loosely-structured (Pole and Lampard, 2002, 131)), interviews with a small number of people (Robson, 2011, 231; Rubin and Rubin, 1995, 5; Swinton and Mowat, 2006, 45). Semi-structured interviews are also suitable for multiple-case studies, in which the observations gathered from one study are to be compared with others (Miles and Huberman, 1994, 35), but not extrapolated to the wider population (Pole and Lampard, 2002, 131; Swinton and Mowat, 2006, 46).

A semi-structured interview is one in which the interviewer has worked out a set of questions in advance but is free to modify the order and wording of the questions as the conversation develops. The degree of informality that this introduces is appropriate in a context where the interviewer already knows the interviewees well and also provides for the freedom to explore particular issues or questions as they arise (Robson, 2011, 231). It is important in semi-structured interviewing to allow the interviewee the time to elaborate and expand their answers and to recount their experiences in order to get the full picture of their understanding of an issue (Rubin and Rubin, 1995, 19; Swinton and Mowat, 2006, 56).

Developing the Interview Protocol

Though there is a degree of freedom involved in semi-structured interviews, it is necessary to develop a schedule for the interviews so as to ensure that despite the informality of the situation, there is a commonality across the

various interviews. Typically, the protocols for semi-structured interviews can be relatively simple and include three main sections (Robson, 2011, 238):

- Introductory comments.
- List of topic headings and possibly key questions to ask under these heading with a sheet of associated prompts.
- Closing comments.

This pattern was followed in developing the schedule for these interviews. The introductory comments included some basic questions about the interviewee and the agency they worked for in order to allow them to relax (Rubin and Rubin, 1995, 129).

The list of topics included the four themes central to the taxonomy and an additional section that focused on the Lausanne movement and publications. The reasoning for these questions will be developed in the following chapter.

Under each of the topics there was a set of questions and prompts designed to encourage the interviewees to share their understanding of the topic and its relevance to their organisation.

The interview schedule was tested in practice interviews with three agency directors who did not form part of the study. As a result of this experience a number of changes were made to the protocol:

- It was found necessary to slow the pace of the interviews and to ask summary questions at the end of each section to allow the interviewees time to express their thoughts fully.
- The test interviewees responded well to questions which asked for narrative answers of the form “tell me a story about...” and prompts to ask this form of question were included in the schedule.
- It emerged from the interviews that the relationship between the mission agency and churches in the UK was an important factor in determining how the interviewees responded to other questions. In order to clarify this an additional topic on church relations was included in the schedule.
- Finally, it was discovered that in a setting where the researcher knew the interviewees personally, it was important to mark the transition from friendly conversation to the more formal interview. To do this, the interviewees were told that the recording devices had been switched on and that the interview had started. Equally at the end of

the interview, the formal end of the questions was signalled when the recording devices were turned off.

The final interview protocol is included as Appendix I.

Issues of Validity

It is necessary to reflect on the validity of the information gathered during the interview process.

Firstly, it is important to consider whether the directors of the agencies have an adequate understanding of the extent to which their organisations align with the issues under consideration. It would be possible to mitigate any concerns in this area by interviewing a larger sample from the leadership of each agency. However, interviewing a larger sample would be beyond the scope of this project and it is not clear that any great advantage would be gained from it. As leaders of the organisations concerned, the agency directors are required to understand and shape the espoused beliefs and values of the agency and to represent the agency publicly. It seems reasonable to expect that they would be able to express those beliefs and values in an interview. The second phase of the study, an examination of the organisations' publications, provides a secondary reference which served to validate the information from interviews.

A second concern is the degree to which it is possible to compare the interview data from different organisations. The rigorous use of a semi-structured interview technique which follows a well-designed schedule ensures that each agency director had the opportunity to discuss the same issues, while allowing them to elaborate and explain details as and when that was appropriate.

Ethical Issues

The interviews were carried out with the permission of the Leeds Trinity University School of Arts and Communications Ethics Committee²⁹. Those agency directors who indicated a willingness to take part in the study were sent an information sheet which outlined the nature of the research, explained how their data would be handled and gave details of the grievance process if it were needed. It was clearly indicated that the subjects could withdraw from the study at any point.

²⁹ Permission to carry out the interviews was granted in a letter of 15 September 2016 reference SAC/2016/012.

Those who indicated that they were willing to proceed were sent a consent form which indicated that they were willing to be interviewed and to have the interview recorded, transcribed and form part of a thesis and other publications. The consent forms were signed by the interviewee and the researcher with copies being held by each party.

Interviewing and Transcribing

The interviews were conducted as semi-structured interviews and were conducted between 8 March and 5 April 2017. Three of the interviews were held face to face in the offices of the particular agency and the other three were held as video conversations using Skype.

Each interview was recorded as an audio file on a MacBook Pro with a backup recording being made on an iPhone.

As soon as was convenient after the interviews, a contact form was filled out which recorded formal details of the interview, such as the date and time. This form also included space for questions that were raised by the interview which needed to be followed up and for general impressions which may have been significant.

The recordings were transcribed using F5 transcription software (Apple App Store, 2018) and copies of the transcription were sent to the individuals concerned for comment and correction. All of the directors accepted the transcriptions as accurate representations of what they had said during the interviews.

Literature Research

Literature from three different sources were examined for each agency in the study; print magazines, website and social media feeds, and official reports. A full list of the sources used along with the abbreviations used to refer to them in the text is found in Appendix III.

Printed Magazines

Each of the agencies produces a printed magazine for distribution to their supporters. These magazines typically have a mixture of stories describing the agencies' work along with appeals for financial or prayer support and invitations for people to work with the agency. In addition to distributing them in printed form, all of the agencies also make their magazines available online in electronic format.

The frequency with which the agencies publish their magazine varies, with some publishing quarterly and others only annually. In each case magazines

published between 2014 and 2017 were obtained in electronic format for analysis.

Web and Social Media Data

Each of the agencies has a website and various social media outlets containing a vast amount of information necessitating a sampling method which would reduce the data to a manageable amount.

For the website two approaches were adopted:

1. The front page of the agency website and each page which could be accessed directly from the front page with one click were saved as a PDF file and used for analysis.
2. The whole website for each agency was searched for the terms “mission of God”, “*missio Dei*” and “unreached people groups” to confirm whether or not those terms were used by the agency.

One year’s worth of tweets (from the date of sampling) from each agency’s official Twitter feed were saved as a PDF file for analysis.

Official Reports

The agencies involved in this study are all charities and as such are required to file annual reports which give an overview of their work as well as various financial and regulatory information. These reports are available from the Charity Commissioners in England reports for 2014-2017 were obtained and analysed for each agency.

Data Analysis and Protection

The transcribed interviews and the various publications were imported into MAXQDA12 data analysis software (MAXQDA, 2018) for coding.

An initial coding system was developed based on the themes of the taxonomy developed in chapter 4. The coding system was a combination of a subcoding system and a descriptive system (Saldaña, 2015, 91, 102). A subcoding system consists of a series of parent codes which indicate broad themes and child codes which add more details. Descriptive coding summarises the basic topic of a passage in a short phrase or word.

The coding system was refined and developed during the coding process as issues became clearer. The final list of codes is found in Appendix II.

Following an initial coding, each document was reviewed after a number of days to ensure that the codes had been applied appropriately and that nothing had been missed.

A data protection scheme was adopted which both ensured that no unauthorised persons had access to the material and also ensured that the data could be recovered if problems arose. All of the project data were stored on an encrypted partition on a MacBook Pro laptop computer. This was backed up in encrypted form to a local dual hard drive server on an hourly basis. There were also daily off-site encrypted backups to carbonite.com.

Organisational Culture

It is important to note that Schein's model of organisational culture is used in this study to provide a framework and vocabulary for the discussion of the specific issues which are raised in the taxonomy. This involves identifying the level at which previously identified issues function within the different cultures of the six organisations. The aim is not to analyse the culture of the agencies *per se*.

There is no single method for studying organisational culture and the researcher should choose an approach which is appropriate to the purposes of the study and the context of the organisation (Schein, 1992, 203). Schein suggests that research on organisations can be categorised according to the extent to which the researcher and subject are involved in the research (Schein, 1992, 205). Quantitative research always involves the researcher in a high level of involvement. In Schein's terms, the agencies had minimal involvement in the study of the various publications, while they were partially involved in the director interviews. Given that the majority of the agency staff work in various locations around the world, it was not possible to adopt an approach with maximal subject involvement. Nor would such a time-consuming approach have been appropriate when the aim was to use Schein's model to examine specific issues as opposed to analysing the whole culture of the organisations involved.

Identifying the Different Levels of Culture

The various publications (magazines, websites, twitter feeds and reports) and the statements made by the directors are considered artefacts in Schein's model. It is through careful examination of the artefacts that the other levels of culture are identified. The artefacts were examined with reference to the taxonomy in two ways. Firstly, the extent to which the issues in the taxonomy were overtly mentioned or alluded to were noted. Secondly, the artefacts were analysed to see to what extent they reflected

what would be expected if the issues under consideration were part of the deeper organisational culture. This allowed the issues in the taxonomy to be classified in one of three ways:

- Absent: the specific issue did not form part of the organisational culture.
- Espoused beliefs.
- Underlying assumptions.

Espoused beliefs are always overtly expressed within the organisations, whereas underlying assumptions shape the culture of the organisation but may not always find expression in the organisation's artefacts. When in doubt, the two levels can be differentiated by the consistency by which they find their expression in the artefacts. Underlying assumptions are more deeply rooted in the organisation and give rise to more consistent observable behaviour than espoused values (Schein, 1992, 32).

Summary

This chapter outlines the methods used in the study and the rationale for using them. The rationales are found in the academic domains of practical theology, qualitative research and organisational culture and values. The study also uses a taxonomic approach which was developed in order to allow comparisons and contrasts to be drawn between agencies.

The methods used for selecting a sample of mission agencies were outlined and a brief description of each of the agencies given. The process for developing a protocol for the director interviews was presented, along with procedures for transcribing, storing and protecting the data. Methods for ensuring that the process was both valid and met with appropriate ethical standards were noted. The methods used for investigating the agency literature were outlined and finally the procedures for data analysis and protection were presented.

Chapter 4

Identifying Elements of a Mission Taxonomy

Introduction

This chapter identifies and briefly examines key themes which form the basis of the taxonomy which will be used to explore the theological position of British mission agencies. The themes will be selected through a study of two of the major documents produced by the Lausanne Movement; The Lausanne Covenant and The Cape Town Commitment.

These two documents provide a view of evangelical thinking about mission at different points of time in the recent past. They highlight issues which were important to those who organised and attended the conferences where they were produced, as well as illustrating the way in which the evangelical understanding about mission has developed in the intervening years.

This chapter explores the way in which the two documents were produced, their content and the impact that they have had on the evangelical world. Having introduced the documents, the chapter then identifies a number of key themes which emerge from them. The wider context in which these themes emerged is examined as is the different ways that the themes are expressed in the two Lausanne documents. This will provide the basis for the development of a taxonomy which can be used to study agency theology in subsequent chapters.

The Lausanne Movement

The Lausanne Movement was introduced in chapter 2. In the context of this study, the importance of the Movement lies in two documents which emerged from the 1974 Lausanne Congress and the 2010 Cape Town Congress³⁰. The Lausanne Covenant (LC) and the Cape Town Commitment (CTC) will be used as the basis for the taxonomy which is developed in this chapter. These documents have been chosen for two reasons. Firstly, they are the products of meetings at which large numbers of evangelical mission scholars and practitioners from around the globe were present and as such

³⁰ A third Lausanne Congress was held in 1989 which led to the development of a document entitled the Manila Manifesto. However, this is seen as an extension to the Lausanne Covenant and only to be published together with the Covenant (Houston, 1997, 228). For this reason it is not used in this study.

they are representative of a significant proportion of the evangelical mission movement. Secondly, the Lausanne Covenant is widely regarded as one of the most significant evangelical documents on the subject of mission, for example, the historian Alistair Chapman says that it is “a comprehensive summary of evangelical beliefs on everything from the authority of the Bible to partnership in mission” (Chapman, 2009, 357). There is further discussion of the importance of the LC below. While it is too early to ascribe an impact to the Cape Town Commitment, its role as a successor to the LC and as the product of a significant global gathering means that it is a document of significant historical significance. The documents are presented in turn below, after a brief reference to the two editors of the documents.

John Stott and Christopher Wright

The task of drawing together the Lausanne Covenant was given to the British clergyman and author, John Stott. Stott went on to be appointed the chair of the Lausanne Theological Commission and was also responsible for the production of the Manila Manifesto. In 2005 he was succeeded as chair of the Theological Commission by his protégé Christopher Wright from Northern Ireland who edited the Cape Town Commitment.

As this study will be considering the theological position of British evangelical mission agencies, it is important to note that the editors of the documents which will be used as the basis of the study are both British and have had extensive influence on the British mission movement in addition to their work with Lausanne. As rector of All Souls Langham Place, a large Anglican Church in the centre of London, and the author of numerous books and the founder of the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity, Stott was described by the Daily Telegraph as “one of the most influential Anglican Clergymen of the twentieth century” (2011) and following his death, obituaries appeared in British newspapers “where he was afforded more space than is given to most cabinet ministers” (Cameron, 2014, 61). Christopher Wright taught theology in India before serving as principal of All Nations Christian College, one of the UK’s largest missionary training institutions, for 13 years (Wright, 2016b, 39-41).

In 1975, a year after the first Lausanne Congress, Stott presented a series of five lectures on mission at the Oxford Union. These lectures unpacked a number of the themes which were raised at Lausanne and were subsequently published in book form (Stott, 1975a). As mentioned in chapter 2, this book was republished in 2016 with a reflection on each of Stott’s chapters written by Wright. In his reflections, Wright sometimes affirms

Stott's position, but at others he expands on or disagrees with what Stott wrote. The way in which this book is presented provides a valuable insight into the thinking of the two principle architects of the Lausanne documents and is a valuable resource as we seek to compare them (Stott and Wright, 2016).

The Lausanne Covenant

Professor Michael Goheen says that the Lausanne Covenant has played “an authoritative role in defining the evangelical tradition of mission for almost four decades” (Goheen, 2014, 169), while an article in Christianity Today describes it as “the defining theological document for mission and evangelism” (Neff, 2010, 36). However, as John Stott recounts, the Covenant was not universally accepted, being referred to as “the most significant ecumenical confession on evangelism that the church has ever produced” (Stott, 1997, 1) but also as “claptrap” and “an enormous cold pudding” (Stott, 1975c, 50). This document, which consists of fifteen sections, was developed as a summary statement and call to action at the Lausanne Congress in 1974. Excluding marginal Scripture references, the Lausanne Covenant is just under 2,800 words long.

Process

In his opening address to the Lausanne Congress, Billy Graham expressed his hope that the meeting would “frame a biblical declaration on evangelism” and that it would “re-emphasize those biblical concepts which are essential to evangelism” (Graham, 1975, 34). The first draft of the declaration was developed two to three months before the congress on the basis of the contributions of the main speakers which were written in advance. This draft was revised twice before being presented to the delegates. Hundreds of comments and suggestions were conveyed to the drafting team who carefully worked through them, including as many as possible while maintaining the integrity of the original document. The final document which was submitted for the approval of the delegates expresses “a consensus of the mind and mood of the Lausanne Congress” (Stott, 1997, 1).

The choice of the term “Covenant” for the final document rather than an alternative one such as the “Lausanne Declaration” indicates that the document was directed towards God and the delegates themselves, rather than towards the wider world. It also indicates that the delegates intended to act on their resolutions rather than simply affirming their beliefs (Cameron, 2014, 68; Schreiter, 2011, 413; Stott, 1997, 1).

Overview

The Lausanne Covenant consists of an introduction, a series of fifteen affirmations and a conclusion.³¹

The introduction sets out the purpose of the document which is to “affirm our faith and our resolve, and to make public our covenant”. This affirmation is based on a foundation of gratitude for God’s salvation, penitence for failure and the challenge of the unfinished task of evangelism.

The bulk of the document is formed by the various affirmations which consist of single paragraph statements followed by a list of relevant Bible verses.

The affirmations cover the following subjects:

- 1) The Purpose of God.
- 2) The Authority and Power of the Bible.
- 3) The Uniqueness and Universality of Christ.
- 4) The Nature of Evangelism.
- 5) Christian Social Responsibility.
- 6) The Church and Evangelism.
- 7) Cooperation in Evangelism.
- 8) Churches in Evangelistic Partnership.
- 9) The Urgency of the Evangelistic Task.
- 10) Evangelism and Culture.
- 11) Education and Leadership.
- 12) Spiritual Conflict.
- 13) Freedom and Persecution.
- 14) The Power of the Holy Spirit.
- 15) The Return of Christ.

The covenant closes with the following call to action:

“Therefore, in the light of this our faith and our resolve, we enter into a solemn covenant with God and with each other, to pray, to plan and to work together for the evangelization of the whole

³¹ The text of the Covenant is available online at the Lausanne Website, it has also been published with an exposition and commentary by John Stott ; . For ease of reference the different sections of the Covenant will be referenced in the format LC5 for the fifth section etc. A similar convention is adopted for the Cape Town Commitment.

world. We call upon others to join us. May God help us by his grace and for his glory to be faithful to this our covenant! Amen, Alleluia!”

Though the conclusion set an inspirational tone, it is in the fifteen affirmations that Billy Graham’s desire for a “biblical declaration on evangelization” is developed and it is these which have had the biggest impact on mission practice and thinking.

Impact

The Lausanne Commitment has had an influence on both the organisation of mission structures in the evangelical world and on evangelical mission thinking.

Regarding the former, the Lausanne website includes the following quote from David Ruiz of the WEA Missions Commission: “I would estimate that 85% of mission organizations in Latin America use The Lausanne Covenant as their statement of faith” (The Lausanne Movement, 1974). According to Tennent, within a few years of its publication the Lausanne Commitment “had become the guiding statement of faith of countless churches, new Christian movements, seminaries and mission organisations around the world” (Tennent, 2014, 45) (see also (Utuk, 1986, 129)). Cameron says that the LC was the basis for hundreds of collaborative ventures in the twentieth century (Cameron, 2014, 65) while Reapsome says that it led to the formation of a number of national and international movements in Europe, Asia, Australia, Africa, North America and Latin America (Reapsome, 2000).³²

The Lausanne Covenant has had a broad impact on thinking about mission, (see, for example, (Jackson, 2015, 36; Noll, 2001, 274; Stanley, 2013a, 173; Utuk, 1986; Warner, 2007, 53). In this context, two issues in particular bear highlighting, unreached peoples and the question of evangelism and social involvement; these will be expanded below.

The Cape Town Commitment

In his concluding remarks at the 2010 Lausanne Congress in Cape Town Doug Birdsall, the director of the Lausanne Movement, said that the Congress was perhaps “the widest and most diverse gathering of Christians

³² However, Jackson provides another perspective when he notes that at a major Australian Evangelical mission conference, the sort of event which typifies Lausanne, there was no reference to the Lausanne Movement or what it stands for (Jackson, 2015, 31).

ever held in the history of the Christian Church”³³. Despite the last-minute absence of the sizeable Chinese delegation, there were 4,200 delegates assembled from 198 different countries. The theme of the conference was ‘God in Christ, reconciling the world to himself’ (Carlson, 2014, 286).

The Cape Town Commitment which emerged from the meeting is the longest of the three Lausanne Congress documents with over 20,000 words. It consists of two parts: the first is entitled A Confession of Faith and the second a Call to Action.

Process

The process for the development of the Cape Town Commitment was markedly different that of from the Lausanne Covenant. The first part of the document was developed prior to the Congress and presented on the penultimate day of the meeting, while the second part which was developed during the congress itself, was not finalised till a number of months afterwards.

Doug Birdsall and Lindsay Brown describe the production of the first part of the commitment in the foreword to the study edition.

“It was first discussed in Minneapolis in December 2009, at a gathering of 18 invited theologians and evangelical leaders, drawn from all continents. A smaller group, led by Dr. Christopher J. H. Wright, chair of the Lausanne Theology Group, was asked to prepare a final document, ready to be presented to the Congress.” (Brown and Birdsall, 2012, xi).

According to Wright the leadership of the Lausanne movement did not want a simple statement about mission in the vein of the Lausanne Covenant, but something more comprehensive. These concerns were met by framing the Commitment in terms of love for God, rather than by making cognitive statements of belief (Wright, 2011).

There was no opportunity to debate the document presented to the congress, nor were the delegates asked to give an affirming vote on the contents. Elements of part one were used in the liturgy for the communion service on the final evening, which Wright considers an affirmation of the document through worship (Wright, 2011). However, a number of delegates,

³³ The claim to diversity was disputed by the CMWE observers to the conference (Kim, 2010). Even within evangelicalism, the spread of speakers and delegates was somewhat limited. There were fewer speakers from Charismatic and Pentecostal backgrounds than at previous Lausanne gatherings and it was noted that some high-profile evangelicals were not invited to take part because their views might be held to be controversial (Stafford, 2010, 37).

particularly some from Latin America, felt that the fact that there was no discussion or formal affirmation of the Commitment hindered their ability to commit themselves to the document (Padilla, 2011, 87; Steuernagel, 2014, 121).

Birdsall and Brown describe the genesis of the second part of the Commitment:

“An extensive listening process began more than three years before the Congress. The Lausanne Movement’s International Deputy Directors each arranged consultations in their regions where Christian leaders were asked to identify major challenges facing the Church. Six key issues emerged. These (1) defined the Congress programme and (2) formed the framework for the call to action. This listening process continued on through the congress and Chris Wright and the Statement Working Group worked to record all contributions faithfully” (Brown and Birdsall, 2012, xi).

The six key issues identified were:

- Truth: Making the case for the truth of Christ in our pluralistic and globalised world.
- Reconciliation: Building the peace of Christ in our divided and broken world.
- World Faiths: Bearing witness to the love of Christ among people of other faiths.
- New Missions Priorities: Discerning the will of God for evangelization in our century.
- Authenticity and Integrity: Calling the church of Christ back to humility, integrity and simplicity.
- Partnership: Partnering in the body of Christ towards a new global equilibrium.

These six themes formed the focus for the six days of the Congress, with Bible study and plenary sessions in the mornings and smaller groups or ‘multiplexes’ investigating a variety of related themes in the afternoons (Dahle, 2014, 278).

The drafting committee of eight people observed all of the plenary sessions in the conference hall, attended a number of multiplex sessions and read all of the presentations. From this material, they drafted the ‘Call to Action’. The committee aimed to be as faithful to the Congress as possible and a number of the presentations are quoted verbatim (though not referenced as such) in

the final document. Wright described the volume of information that the committee had to deal with as being like standing under Niagara Falls and catching the water in a bucket. As a consequence, this, the draft of “Call to Action” took a number of months to prepare and was not available at the end of the conference as had been hoped (Wright, 2011).

Content

As has been noted, the Cape Town Commitment consists of two distinct parts. These are subdivided into major sections which are listed below. These sections are further broken down into sub-points each with an extensive text explanation.

Part I For the Lord we love: The Cape Town Confession of Faith

1. We love because God first loved us.
2. We love the living God.
3. We love God the Father.
4. We love God the Son.
5. We love God the Holy Spirit.
6. We love God’s Word.
7. We love God’s World.
8. We love the gospel of God.
9. We love the people of God.
10. We love the mission of God.

Part II For the world we serve: The Cape Town Call to Action

IIA Bearing witness to the truth of Christ in a pluralistic, globalised world.

IIB Building the peace of Christ in our divided and broken world.

IIC Living the love of Christ among people of other faiths.

IID Discerning the will of Christ for world evangelization.

IIE Calling the Church of Christ back to humility, integrity and simplicity.

IIF Partnering in the body of Christ for unity in mission.

Impact

The leadership of the Lausanne Movement see the Cape Town Commitment as acting as a blueprint for the Movement over the next ten years. “Its prophetic call to work and to pray will, we hope, draw churches, missional

agencies, seminaries, Christians in the workplace, and student fellowships on campus to embrace it and to find their part in its outworking.” (Brown and Birdsall, 2012, xii). However, it would be premature to identify its impact less than a decade after it was produced.

The Taxonomy

In this section, the four key themes that form the basis of the taxonomy which is used to examine the theology and practice of evangelical mission agencies are identified. Two themes are taken from the Lausanne Covenant; unreached people groups and the relative priorities of proclamation and social action. The themes of the mission of God and a missional hermeneutic are adopted from the Cape Town Commitment.

Themes from the Lausanne Covenant

It was noted above that the Lausanne Covenant has impacted mission thinking in a number of ways, but that two things in particular stand out; unreached peoples and the issue of proclamation and social action (Goheen, 2014, 39; Utuk, 1986, 129; Yeh, 2016, 129). These will be examined in more detail below.

Unreached Peoples

Unreached people groups are socio-ethnic groups who considered not to have received the Christian message.

During the Lausanne Congress, the American missiologist Ralph Winter presented a paper entitled ‘The Highest Priority: Cross-Cultural Evangelism’ (Winter, 1975). Winter’s central thesis was that although there are Christians in most countries of the world, the missionary task was far from finished because there were many people unreached by the Christian message because of cultural or social boundaries. He cited the example of the Church of South India, which represents only 5 of the more than 100 castes in the region. According to Winter, “it would be much more difficult - it is in fact another kind of evangelism - for this church to make great gains within the 95 other social classes, which make up the vast bulk of the population” (Winter, 1975, 214).

Winter went on to define three distinct forms of evangelism: E1 is evangelising people from your own cultural background, E2 is evangelising those from a related language and culture, while E3 evangelism involves people from a completely different linguistic or cultural background.

According to Winter, 97% of the world's unevangelised population could only be reached by E3 evangelism and current mission strategy was not taking this into account.

The implications of Winter's paper were twofold. Firstly, he demonstrated that the remaining missionary task was far more extensive than people had believed. Secondly, by focusing on people groups, Winter developed criteria by which it would be possible to identify those who had been reached by the Christian message and so give a strategic focus to missionary activity.

Winter's paper led to the development of what has been termed the 'frontier' missions movement which is distinguished from 'regular' missions. The term 'frontier' is reserved for the kind of cross-cultural mission work where there is no existing church movement among particular people (Johnson, 2001, 90).

In order to identify those groups which had not been reached by the Christian message and so focus work on the 'unreached' it was first of all necessary to define the various terms such as people groups³⁴. Of particular concern was the definition of what Winter initially called 'hidden peoples', but which came to be referred to as unreached people groups (UPGs) (Johnson, 2001, 92). The difficulty in defining UPGs lies with the problem of identifying when Christianity has made sufficient inroads into a people group that a self-sustaining church has developed, a situation termed a "missiological breakthrough" (Johnson, 2001, 90). This has not proved an easy task and Datema lists 14 different definitions for UPGs which emerged from conferences and meetings prior to 1983 (Datema, 2016, 46). The debate over terminology has continued up till the present day and currently there are three lists of UPGs which are widely used in the mission world, each has a slightly different philosophy and hence identifies different numbers of unreached groups (Datema, 2016, 61). The World Christian Database based at Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary defines unreached groups as being less than 50% evangelised which led to the identification of 4,129 different groups in 2015 (Gordon Conwell Seminary ND). The International Missions' Board of the Southern Baptist Church considers groups that are less than 2% evangelical, of which they say there are 6,792 (November

³⁴ The evangelical Foreign Missions Association agreed on a definition of people groups which reads: "A people group is a significantly large sociological grouping of individuals who perceive themselves to have a common affinity for one another because of their shared language, religion, ethnicity, residence, occupation, class or caste, situation etc. or combinations of these. From the viewpoint of evangelization, this is the largest possible group within which the gospel can spread as a viable indigenous church planting movement without encountering barriers of understanding or acceptance." (Johnson, 2001, 91).

2016) as being unreached (International Mission Board ND). The third group, the Joshua Project, identifies 6,571 UPGs, which are groups that are less than 2% evangelical and less than 5% Christian adherent (November 2016) (Joshua Project, 2016).

In recent years, a further component has been added to the concept of UPGs, the notion of being 'unengaged'. These are groups that are not only unreached according to one of the definitions, but where there is also no active Christian witness (Datema, 2016, 61).

Winter coined another term which is widely used in frontier missions — 'closure' (Winter and Koch, 1999, 69). This refers to the point at which all of the people groups of the world have self-reproducing Christian groups and there is no further need of frontier missions. Based on a literal reading of Matthew 24:14,³⁵ many writers identify closure with the point at which Christ will return to the earth. This apparent ability to speed Christ's return is seen as highly motivational by many evangelicals (Hunter, 1999, 77; Pegues and Bush, 1999, 77; Winter and Koch, 1999, 16).

The defining of terms and collection of data is important in order to shape the strategic approach of mission agencies, as a motivational tool and also because of the vast sums of money which are expended by the mission movement (Datema, 2016, 47).

Winter's people group approach has been highly influential; shortly after the Lausanne congress, Donald McGavaran wrote of his paper; "Nothing said at Lausanne had more meaning for the expansion of Christianity between now and the year 2000" (quoted in (Johnson, 2001, 89)). More recently, it has been described as a "watershed moment for evangelical missions" (Parsons, 2015, 5). Many agencies and churches have shaped their mission strategies around the concept of UPGs or related ideas such as the 10:40 Window.³⁶ For example, the British based agency, the Africa Inland Mission (AIM) has refocused its work in order to focus on UPGs (Africa Inland Mission ND). At the Cape Town Conference in 2010, Paul Eshleman, presented a keynote paper on UPGs, at which he presented a list of all of the Unreached and Unengaged People Groups worldwide and challenged the delegates to

³⁵ Matthew 24:14 reads, "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come" (NIV). Those in the frontier missions movement, tend to interpret this literally as saying that the gospel will reach every people group and then Christ will return.

³⁶ The 10:40 window is a motivational tool for interesting people in mission which identifies the majority of unreached people groups as living in a band between 10 and 40 degrees north across Africa and Eurasia (Johnson, 2001, 95).

adopt a group and to ensure that they were evangelised in the near future (Yeh, 2016, 152). In 2010, in celebration of the Edinburgh 1910 mission conference, a conference was held in Tokyo which “decided to stay with what it knows best: frontier missions, that is, proclaiming the gospel to unreached peoples who do not have a missionary or church among them or a Bible in their language” (Yeh, 2016, 64). This conference was the brainchild of Ralph Winter, although he did not live to see it happen.

However, although the frontier mission movement has been hugely influential in shaping the strategy and vocabulary of evangelical missions, it is not without its critics.

At one level, it is relatively easy to criticise the lists of unreached people groups.³⁷ Identifying every socio-linguistic group in the world and then determining the extent to which each group has been evangelised is an extremely difficult undertaking, illustrated by the fact that there are three different lists of UPGs. However, if the lists are not accurate, then any strategy built on them must also be questionable. Mark Pickett demonstrated that the socio-linguistic criteria which are usually used to define UPGs are inadequate to describe the Newar people of the Kathmandu valley in Nepal (Pickett, 2015). It is difficult to apply the concept of UPGs in the world’s growing cities where intermarriage and social mixing tend to reduce group identity (Datema, 2016, 45).

Concern has also been expressed that by focusing evangelistic efforts on distinct people groups³⁸, missionaries could contribute to inter-ethnic conflict in Africa or help to maintain the inequalities of the caste system in India (Scott, 1981, 61). In 1991, Samuel Escobar, who was one of the keynote speakers at Lausanne, wrote a sustained criticism of frontier missions, which he termed “managerial missiology” (Escobar, 1991). Escobar highlighted

³⁷ As a participant at the Cape Town 2010 conference, the author was surprised by the list of unengaged and unreached peoples presented by Paul Eshleman. The list included a reference to a particular people group in Madagascar, saying that there were no churches and no missionaries amongst them. However, at the time he was in Cape Town, his wife was in Southern Madagascar, working with church leaders from a variety of denominations from this particular people group.

³⁸ A focus on distinct people groups, is referred to as the “Homogeneous Unit Principle”. This concept which was first proposed by Donald McGavran, D. (1970) *Understanding church growth*. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids.

suggests that “people like to become Christians without crossing racial, linguistic or class-barriers” (McGavran 1970, 163). While homogeneous churches have developed in many parts of the world, the principle seems to run counter to the New Testament pattern of the Church as a place where races and nationalities are reconciled (Ephesians 2:11-22, Galatians 3:28).

three areas of concern, the first was that the frontier mission approach attempted to reduce mission to a manageable enterprise:

“One way of achieving manageability is precisely to reduce reality to an understandable picture and then to project missionary action as a response to a problem that has been described in quantitative form. Missionary action is reduced to a linear task that is translated into logical steps to be followed in a process of management by objectives, in the same way that the evangelistic task is reduced to a process that can be carried out in accordance with standard marketing principles.” (Escobar 1991, 10)

According to Escobar, this managerial approach prioritises mission activities which can be quantified, such as radio broadcasts, while devaluing things such as poverty alleviation which do not contribute directly to the measurable objective of church growth. This approach is highly unsatisfactory in the developing world, where social action is as important as evangelism (Escobar, 1991, 11). This question will be revisited in the following section.

His second criticism was that managerial missiology has a pragmatic approach to evangelism which de-emphasises theology and focuses on method. “Tough questions are not asked because they cannot be reduced to a linear management by objectives process.” This pragmatic approach, with its focus on speed has no place for mystery, for suffering or for the slow theological development which are typically part of cross-cultural mission (Escobar, 1991, 11-12).

Escobar’s third criticism is that the American structural social sciences which underpin this approach do not adequately account for the transformation that the gospel can achieve in a society, while at the same time leading to an absolutism which does allow other missiological methodologies to exist alongside it (Escobar, 1991, 12). It is significant that this level of criticism of the UPG approach was levelled by one of the key speakers at Lausanne. More recently, missionary anthropologist Paul Heibert, while acknowledging that UPG helped to focus missionary effort, has produced a six point critique of this which focuses on what he sees as the inadequate sociology and theology which lies behind this approach (Heibert, 2009, 90-94).

Proclamation Versus Social Action

Mission agencies are involved in a range of social action activities alongside the promotion of the Christian message. The way in which the balance between these activities is viewed has changed over time and there is still no universal agreement on the question.

Historically, evangelical mission societies would combine proclamation of the Christian message with social action such as providing medical care and starting schools. However, the “Great Reversal” reduced the evangelical view of mission to the verbal proclamation of the gospel (Bebbington, 1989, 213). Goheen identifies three reasons for this move; premillennialism, individualism and a reaction to the social gospel. Premillennialism is an approach to eschatology which sees little value in the present created order which is considered little more than a stepping stone to eternity.

Individualism meant that sin was seen purely in individual and personal terms, not as a societal phenomenon which needed to be addressed. The social gospel emphasised the social dimension of salvation and downplayed the relationship between the individual and God (Chester, 1993, 104; Goheen, 2014, 229). A turning point came in the middle of the century when fundamentalists³⁹ or new evangelicals began to challenge their community to take the social dimension of their faith seriously. A key point in this process was the publication of *The Uneasy Conscience of Fundamentalism* by prominent evangelical theologian Carl Henry in 1947 (Henry, 1947). Henry argued that the gospel affects all of life and so he called upon fundamentalists to work out the social implications of their faith.

Over the following years, evangelicals began to take more of an interest in social action; this is demonstrated in the UK by the founding of the evangelical relief and development agency Tear Fund in 1968 (Stanley, 2013a, 184). However, there was no agreement across the whole of evangelicalism as to the relative importance of social action and proclamation. At the 1966 Berlin Conference, Carl Henry wanted to see social action included in the agenda, but Howard Pew of Sun Oil, who partly funded the congress insisted that nothing should distract from the focus on evangelism, and so social action was not included in the agenda (Chester, 1993, 402; Stanley, 2013a, 70). However, by 1974, the organisers of the Lausanne Congress had begun to develop a wider understanding of mission, one which included aspects of social action⁴⁰ (Dahle et al., 2014, 4; Yates, 1996, 202). Because of this, Billy Graham expressed a wish that the Congress would clarify the relationship between evangelism and social action (Graham, 1975, 34).

³⁹ The fundamentalists were so called because they maintained the fundamentals of their faith, which they believed the liberals had forgotten.

⁴⁰ John Stott admitted that his position on the importance of social action developed between the Berlin Congress and Lausanne (Stott and Wright, 2016, 22).

At Lausanne, in contrast with Berlin, there was a significant number of delegates from the developing world (Stanley, 2013a, 70). Among these were a number of Latin Americans including René Padilla and Samuel Escobar (Escobar, 1975; Padilla, 1975). According to Stanley, the Latin Americans had a view of mission which included social action, partly because their political and social context pushed them to articulate a version of evangelicalism that responded to a Marxist analysis of social injustice and also because they wanted to avoid being closely identified with North American influences (Stanley, 2013a, 158). They were concerned not so much to strike a balance between social action and evangelism, but to stress the importance of repentance and discipleship for Christian mission. They wanted to see the church live up to the ethical demands of the gospel, rather than accepting an easy discipleship and evangelism which was content simply to count converts (see also (Chapman, 2009, 356,7; Hunt, 2011, 84).

It fell to John Stott, as chair of the drafting committee, to come up with a document which was acceptable to those who wanted to see a focus on evangelising unreached people groups as well as those who wanted to stress the social aspect of mission. It is a credit to his diplomatic skills that he was able to devise a form of words which represented the interests of all of these parties to some extent (Atallah, 2010, 14).

The key texts relating to evangelism and social action are found in sections, 4, 5 and 6 of the Lausanne Covenant. Section 4 defines evangelism as “the proclamation of the historical, biblical Christ as Saviour and Lord, with a view to persuading people to come to him personally and so be reconciled to God.” (LC4)

Section 5 sets out the distinction between evangelism and social action.

“Although reconciliation with other people is not reconciliation with God, nor is social action evangelism, nor is political liberation salvation, nevertheless we affirm that evangelism and socio-political involvement are both part of our Christian duty. For both are necessary expressions of our doctrines of God and man, our love for our neighbour and our obedience to Jesus Christ.” (LC5).

And section 6 looks at the relative priority of the two: “In the Church’s mission of sacrificial service evangelism is primary” (LC6). This formulation assigns an importance to Christian social action, but it indicates clearly that evangelism is the primary aspect of mission. This primacy of evangelism was restated in section four of the Manila Manifesto which states that

“Evangelism is primary because our chief concern is with the gospel” (Stott, 1997, 236).

However, the compromise reached with the final version of the Covenant was not enough to satisfy everyone and only around 80% of delegates were willing sign their assent to the document⁴¹. It is suggested that even Billy Graham’s wife was unwilling to sign the final covenant (Chester, 1993, 1545). According to Chapman everyone in the Lausanne departure airport knew that evangelicalism was “divided in its understanding of how the church should pursue its mission” (Chapman, 2009, 357). These divisions, especially over the roles of evangelism and social action would continue to preoccupy the Lausanne Movement for some time to come (Chester, 1993, 1291-1293; Stanley, 2013a, 177).

Because of the ongoing discussion and disagreement, the Lausanne movement and the World Evangelical Alliance decided to sponsor jointly a Consultation on the Relationship between Evangelism and Social Responsibility (CRESR) which would “complete Lausanne’s business” (Stott, 1997, 171). The consultation was held in Grand Rapids in 1982 and described the relationship between evangelism and social action in three ways. Social action is a *consequence* of evangelism as new Christians start to serve their communities. It is also a *bridge* to evangelism, providing opportunities for evangelistic activity that might not exist otherwise. Lastly, social action and evangelism are described as *partners*, working together in the same way as the blades of a pair of scissors (Stott, 1997, 181). However, despite this positive affirmation of the role of social action, the consultation emphasised that evangelism should be considered as primary for two reasons. Firstly, Christian social action cannot exist where there are no Christians, so evangelism must logically take precedence. Secondly, evangelism focuses on the eternal destiny of the individual, whereas social action has a temporal focus and, because of this, is considered as being less important (Stott, 1997, 183).

The CRESR statement received a mixed response; Stott wrote that some dismissed it as being too radical, while others considered it too inconclusive (Stott, 1995, 51). Brazilian theologian Valdir Steuernagel says that the Grand Rapids consultation did not resolve the tension between evangelism and social action, but that the Lausanne movement acted as though it had (Steuernagel, 1991, 55).

⁴¹ Of the 2,473 delegates, 2,000 signed the Covenant (Stanley, 2013a, 173).

The Cape Town Commitment mentions a wide range of social actions which are considered to be legitimate aspects of mission. In addition, contrary to the Lausanne Covenant and the CRESR statement, the CTC does not insist that evangelism should be considered as primary⁴². Christopher Wright, the editor of the Cape Town Commitment, suggests that rather than talking about the primacy of evangelism, it is preferable to talk about the centrality of the gospel, from which both evangelism and social action flow (Wright, 2016b, 50).

Today, there are a number of writers who suggest that the concept of a distinction between evangelism and social action is misplaced. Scott Sunquist says that the distinction is derived from Enlightenment thinking, rather than from Scripture (Sunquist, 2013, 1808), while Tennent argues that Luke's Gospel demonstrates that it is impossible to distinguish between the two (Tennent, 2010, 142). Bryant Myers, former president of World Vision, says that the question of the relationship between social action and evangelism is "the wrong question" because it is impossible to distinguish between them (Myers, 2012, 269).

However, there are those who continue to argue that the distinction is real and that social action is either secondary to evangelism or that it shouldn't be considered as a legitimate part of mission at all (DeYoung and Gilbert, 2011; Ott, 2016, xviv). At the other extreme, Martin Lee of Global Connections has expressed the concern that some mission agencies are focusing on social action to the exclusion of proclamation (Lee, 2014).

The extent to which there continue to be differences on this question is illustrated by a recent survey of evangelical mission mobilisers and missionary candidates. Some respondents did not regard social action as an aspect of mission, while others had no interest in being involved in evangelism (Matenga and Gold, 2016, 34 ff.).

Themes from the Cape Town Commitment

The significant themes identified from the Lausanne Covenant relate to the practice of mission. The Cape Town Commitment, by contrast, makes fewer innovations in terms of mission praxis. When reviewing changes in mission

⁴² Although the CTC does not insist that evangelism be considered as primary in mission, the question was raised in controversial fashion at the congress when John Piper, one of the plenary speakers, used his devotional talk to make a plea for the primacy of evangelism over social action (Yeh, 2016, 142).

since 1974, Christopher Wright highlights the emergence of creation care in CTC I.7 as a significant addition (Wright, 2016b, 52). However, this is not so much an innovation as the application of the original Lausanne position on social action to a particular context.

However, in the same overview, Wright highlights two significant developments which occurred between Lausanne and Cape Town. These relate to our understanding of the nature and rationale for mission, rather than specifically to its praxis. These are the mission of God or *missio Dei* (Wright, 2016b, 35) and the biblical basis for mission (Wright, 2016b, 37).

The Mission of God

As discussed in chapter 2, mission has been understood in various ways through history. It has been considered as saving people from eternal damnation, sharing the benefits of Christendom with the wider world or as the extension of the church into new territories⁴³. However, in 1991, David Bosch wrote: “During the past half a century or so there has been a subtle but nevertheless decisive shift toward understanding mission as *God’s mission*” (Bosch, 1991, 389). This concept, and the Latin phrase associated with it, *missio Dei*, first came to prominence at the IMC conference in Willingen in 1952 (Bosch, 1991, 390)⁴⁴.

Skreslett explains *missio Dei* in these terms: “Mission is seen, not as something begun by any human organisation, but as an eternal reality rooted in God’s sending of the Son and the procession of the Spirit from the Godhead” (Skreslet, 2012, 32).

In this view, mission is derived from the nature and actions of the triune God rather than the activities of the church. However, this approach was open to a number of interpretations and through the 1960s thinking about the *missio Dei* developed in two diverging directions. The first view understood mission as God’s evangelising action through the church, while the second view, championed by the Dutch theologian Hoekendijk, saw mission as the establishment of peace, *shalom*, in the wider world with the church being incidental or even inimical to the process (Bosch, 1991, 391,2; Engelsviken, 2003, 485; Skreslet, 2012, 33).

⁴³ David Bosch suggests that the history of the church can be divided into six eras, each of which has a distinct understanding of mission (Bosch, 1991, 182).

⁴⁴ According to Engelsviken in a paper written to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Willingen conference, the term *missio Dei*, was not actually used at the conference itself, but first appeared in Hartenstein’s report from the conference (Engelsviken, 2003, 482).

There are still diverging opinions regarding the interpretation of the *missio Dei*, and some question the usefulness of its formulation (Skreslet, 2012, 32). However, others consider it to be a significant advance in mission theology. “The recognition that mission is God’s mission represents a crucial breakthrough in respect of the preceding centuries. It is inconceivable that we could again revert to a narrow, ecclesiocentric view of mission.” (Bosch, 1991, 393).

The evangelical suspicion of the IMC meant that evangelicals were slow to adopt the concept of the *missio Dei*. According to Tennent, they rejected what they saw as the secularisation of the gospel and an undue focus on social and political involvement at the 1969 Uppsala Conference of the IMC, while failing to appreciate the benefits of a *missio Dei* approach which undergirded this focus (Tennent, 2010, 58). However, in 1976, Robert Recker, Professor of Missions at the evangelical Calvin Seminary, produced a paper which synthesised reformed-evangelical theology with a *missio Dei* focus, while rejecting outright the Hoekendijk, world-centric approach (Recker, 1976). By 1991, Bosch was able to write that “many evangelicals” had accepted a *missio Dei* view (Bosch, 1991, 390,1).

Today, a *missio Dei* focus is broadly accepted within evangelical missiology (Keum, 2014, 398; Stetzer, 2016, 93). This is illustrated by the publication of three recent US missiology text books, each of which uses the *missio Dei* as its basic framework (Flemming, 2013; Goheen, 2014; Tennent, 2010). On a pragmatic level, Wycliffe Global Alliance has developed a philosophy of Bible translation which frames their work as participation in the mission of God (Wycliffe Global Alliance, 2013).

Tennent expresses this evangelical view of *missio Dei* in this way:

“Mission is first and foremost about God and His redemptive purposes and initiatives in the world, quite apart from any actions or tasks or strategies or initiatives the church may undertake. To put it plainly, mission is far more about God and who He is than about us and what we do.” (Tennent, 2010, 54,5).

The two Lausanne documents under consideration, bridge the time when evangelicals grew to accept the concept of the *missio Dei*. In 1974, at the time of the Lausanne Congress, evangelicals were somewhat suspicious of the idea of *missio Dei*. However, by the time of the Cape Town meeting, the concept was broadly accepted. This is reflected in the language used in the respective documents. They both contain statements about the nature and rule of God.

“We affirm our belief in the one eternal God, Creator and Lord of the world, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who governs all things according to the purpose of his will.” (LC1).

Further statements go on to say that God loves the world (LC3), judges all people (LC5) and has redeemed people through Christ (LC6).

“... the one eternal, living God who governs all things according to his sovereign will and for his saving purpose. In the unity of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, God alone is the Creator, Ruler, Judge and Saviour of the world.” (CTC 2).

However, when it comes to the domain of mission, there is a clear, if subtle, evolution in the language used.

Building on the language of John 20, the Lausanne Covenant makes the following statement; “We affirm that Christ sends his redeemed people into the world as the Father sent him” (LC6).

This implies, that mission originates in the character and actions of the triune God. However, the implications of the Trinity for mission are not developed and the Lausanne Covenant talks about “the evangelistic work of the church” rather than the mission of God (Engelsviken, 2003, 490; Jackson, 2015, 45). The Lausanne Covenant presents mission as an activity which though inaugurated by God is actually delegated to the Church.

By contrast, the Cape Town Commitment has an intentional focus on the mission of God. “When the Cape Town Commitment comes to define the mission to which we are committed, it begins by presenting a summary of the mission of God himself” (Wright, 2016b, 37). The first part of the Cape Town Commitment, the Confession of Faith, includes 15 references to the mission of God and the final segment is entitled “We Love the Mission of God”. Here, mission is an activity of God, in which the Church is called to participate.

Wright adds another aspect to the notion of God having a mission. “So, the ‘mission of God’ has come to refer not merely to the God who sent and sends, but to the God who has an overarching purpose for his whole creation and is constantly ‘on mission’ to accomplish it” (Wright, 2016b, 37). The implication of this is that the whole narrative of the Bible, not just selected proof texts, reveals God’s mission. This leads into the next section.

The Biblical Basis for Mission

Given the evangelical commitment to biblicism mentioned in chapter 2, it is no surprise that evangelical Christians seek to find support for their view of mission in Scripture. William Carey built his case for “the conversion of the

heathens” on the necessity of obeying Christ’s command in Matthew 28:19,20 (Carey, 1792). These verses have come to be widely referred to as “the Great Commission”.

In the intervening years, many evangelical books and articles promoting mission have been based on this passage, or parallel passages in the other Gospels and Acts, see for example (Dowsett, 2001). Christopher Wright, wrote about his experiences as a child attending evangelical mission rallies with his parents, where a limited number of verses were used to promote missionary work (Wright, 2006, 21). Tennent suggests that the “Great Commission” is “frequently treated as an isolated pericope [or an extract from a text], separated from the rest of the Gospel as well as the larger biblical context of the *missio Dei*” (Tennent, 2010, 127).

Both the Lausanne Covenant and the Cape Town Commitment have numerous references to Scripture. In his introduction to his commentary on the Lausanne Covenant, Stott says “the Covenant will commend itself only in so far as it can show itself to be a true expression of biblical teaching and principles” (Stott, 1997, 6). Though there is no parallel statement attached to the CTC the large number of references to Bible passages indicates that the authors shared similar convictions.

It is important to note that the purpose of the Scripture references is to demonstrate that the statements are aligned to the teaching of the Bible; they do not provide us with the full biblical background that the authors built upon to develop the two documents. Nevertheless, it is valuable to investigate how the way in which those who developed the documents sought to illustrate the biblical basis for their work.

In his examination of the Lausanne Covenant and the Cape Town Commitment, Schreiter suggests that the LC uses language derived from Matthew and Luke, whereas the CTC, with its stress on love, is derived from Pauline and Johannine themes (Schreiter, 2011, 414). However, an enumeration of the verses quoted in both documents does not fully support Schreiter’s contention. Comparing⁴⁵ the NT quotations in the LC and the first

⁴⁵ The Scripture references in the LC and CTC were counted for the books of the Bible cited in each section. Where two different chapters of a book were cited within a section, this was counted as two occurrences of that book, while repeated citations of the same chapter were counted only once. Thus, Matt. 4:1-3 and Matt. 4:1, 5 would be counted as one occurrence, Matt. 4:1, 5:1 would be counted as two occurrences.

Percentages were calculated for the total number of citations in each document. However, given the disparity between the proportion of citations from the New Testament, it was necessary also to calculate the percentage of specifically New Testament citations in order to provide a valid

part of the CTC, reveals that while the CTC does quote John more frequently than the LC (24% to 18%), it also quotes Matthew and Luke proportionately more often than the LC (16% to 11%) while quoting Paul marginally less frequently (43% to 45%). The most revealing statistic in the use of Scripture quotes lies not within the differences between various New Testament authors, but in the extent to which the two documents cite the Old and New Testaments. 8% of the references quoted by the LC are taken from the Old Testament, whereas the equivalent figure for the first section of the CTC is 34%. In percentage terms, the CTC quotes the Old Testament more than four times more frequently than does the LC.

This development may be attributed to the contribution of Christopher Wright who is an Old Testament scholar. In his discussion of mission, John Stott focuses on “mission as sending”. God is the one who sends the prophets, his Son and the Spirit (Stott and Wright, 2016, 21). As has been noted, in his discussion of Stott’s work, Wright suggests that there is another dimension to mission, that of purpose. “However, a broader concept of mission includes not just the act of sending in itself, but the overall purpose, goals or plan within which those sendings take place and makes sense.” (Wright, 2016b, 34). This overall purpose is revealed through the narrative of the Old and New Testaments and thus our understanding of mission needs to be drawn from the whole Bible. Both Stott and Wright agree that the story of Jesus is central to our understanding of mission. However, Wright is keen to place this story within a broader context. For him, the Old Testament tells the first part of an overarching narrative which establishes a framework for the coming of Christ (Wright, 2016a, 83-85). Wright takes things a step further by suggesting that when we take a “whole-story-of-the-Bible” view of mission, then our view of the Bible itself is transformed. “But not only do we arrive at a more fully *biblical theology of mission*, we also gain a more *missional understanding of the Bible* itself.” (Wright, 2016b, 39). Thus, “Mission is not just one of a list of things the Bible happens to talk about, only a bit more urgently than some. Mission is, in the much-abused phrase, ‘what it is all about’” (Wright, 2006, 22).

This approach to reading the Bible is termed a missional hermeneutic, which the biblical scholar Richard Bauckham describes as, “a way of reading the bible for which mission is the hermeneutical key... a way of reading the whole of Scripture with mission as its central interest and goal” (Bauckham).

The Cape Town Commitment's espousal of a missional hermeneutic is developed in section 6: "We love God's Word";

The Bible tells the universal story of creation, fall, redemption in history, and new creation. This overarching narrative provides our coherent biblical worldview and shapes our theology (Wright, 2006, 22). At the centre of this story are the climactic saving events of the cross and resurrection of Christ which constitute the heart of the gospel. It is this story (in the Old and New Testaments) that tells us who we are, what we are here for, and where we are going. This story of God's mission defines our identity, drives our mission, and assures us the ending is in God's hands.

This approach adopted by the Cape Town Commitment is not universally accepted amongst evangelicals. Shortly after the 2010 Cape Town meeting, the influential author Kevin DeYoung co-authored a popular book which takes issue with the concept of the missional hermeneutic and which insists that the biblical basis for mission is only found in the "Great Commission" passages at the ends of the Gospels and in the first chapter of Acts (DeYoung and Gilbert, 2011).

Using the Taxonomy

Four key themes have been identified for the taxonomy:

- Unreached People Groups.
- Proclamation Versus Social Action.
- The Mission of God.
- The Biblical Basis of Mission.

Though each of the themes is prominent in the Lausanne literature, as has been demonstrated, there is legitimate room for disagreement within each of them. This means that it is possible for the agencies in the study to adopt different positions with regard to each of the themes, while maintaining a broad evangelical theology. This possibility of differences within the key themes makes this study possible.

The position of each organisation with regard to these themes was assessed by interviewing the agency directors and then confirming the response with reference to agency publications as outlined in the previous chapter. A grid was drawn up, recording whether or not the agency uses each of the four concepts. Those agencies which give the same answers were classed as

belonging to the same group⁴⁶. In addition to a simple yes/no answer as to whether or not the agency uses the concept, further background information about how the agency directors understand each of the themes was gathered in order to help interpret the way in which agencies are classified in the taxonomy.

Summary

This chapter examines the first of the three research questions: What are the possible elements of a taxonomy of evangelical mission theology? In order to do this, the chapter outlines the process by which a taxonomy for mission agency theology was developed. The taxonomy is based on two documents which emerged from international congresses held by the Lausanne Movement. Chapter 2 introduced the Lausanne movement and examined its significance to the evangelical mission movement. The two Lausanne documents, the Lausanne Covenant and the Cape Town Commitment were introduced in this chapter and two key themes which emerged from each were introduced and described. The four key themes are:

- Unreached People Groups.
- Proclamation Versus Social Action.
- The Mission of God.
- The Biblical Basis of Mission.

Although each of these themes is mentioned in the Lausanne Document, there is not universal agreement among evangelicals as to their meaning or importance, allowing for agencies to adopt different positions.

The following chapter will explore the way in which the six agencies in the study align with the themes in the taxonomy.

⁴⁶ The way in which the taxonomy was used was further developed on the basis of the answers received from the agencies. This process is outlined in the following chapter.

Chapter 5

Overview and Classification of the Results

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the second of the research questions; How do mission agencies self-identify in terms of the elements of the taxonomy developed in the previous chapter? This question is answered in two stages. Firstly, the directors of each of the mission agencies were interviewed with a focus on the four areas of the taxonomy. The agencies were sorted into groups according to the responses given by the directors. This grouping was then validated by analysing the way in which various publications from each of the agencies handled the themes in the taxonomy.

There are three sections to the chapter. The first introduces the agency directors and then looks at their responses to the themes in the taxonomy. The second section gives an overview of the various sources of literature which were analysed for each agency and then discusses the extent to which the literature validates the answers given by the directors. The final section is a brief analysis and discussion of the results.

Director Interviews

This section introduces the agency directors and then assesses the agencies alignment with the taxonomy, by considering the way in which the directors responded to the interview questions. The section closes with some general reflections on the responses to the interviews.

The Directors

The directors came into their roles with varying experience.

Paul Cooke, the director of France Mission Trust was appointed as director directly from an academic background, having been a long-time supporter of the organisation.

John Reynolds, the director of INF came into the role of director from a career in corporate banking.

Andrew Johnson worked as a missionary with Latin Link before becoming director.

Paul Baillie, the director of Mission Africa had served as both a missionary and church minister with the Presbyterian church before being appointed as director. Paul has a PhD in theology.

Dr. Peter Rowan, the director of OMF worked as a theology lecturer with OMF in Malaysia, before being appointed director of the UK-based agency.

John Bagg, the director of WEC worked as a missionary teacher in Senegal with WEC before becoming director.

Responses to the Taxonomy

This section examines the directors' responses with regard to the four themes of the taxonomy developed in chapter 4. The agencies will then be classified into groups according to their positions on the different issues under consideration.

The Mission of God

In this section of the interview, the directors were asked whether they were aware of the term "mission of God", how they would define it and whether it was used within their organisation. There were also a number of narrative questions which gave them the opportunity to expand on their earlier answers.

All of the directors were able to give a broad definition of the term "mission of God" or "*missio De*". Four of the directors spoke in terms of God's action in "bringing in the kingdom" or "restoration" and of the overarching narrative from creation to the second coming of Christ. Only two of the directors gave definitions which were based on the Triune nature of God, rather than on his actions (a third sent an unprompted follow up email which added this aspect to his recorded answer).

However, while all of the directors were able to give a definition of the mission of God, only two of the directors, those from OMF and INF, said that the term was in current use within their organisation.

Missional Hermeneutic

The directors were asked whether they were aware of the technical term "missional hermeneutic" and how they would define it, if they were. This was followed by series of questions exploring how the agency used the Bible to support its work and to what extent they relied on the Old Testament as compared to the New.

All of the directors found support for mission work in both the Old and New Testaments, but they differed in their emphasis. The director of Mission Africa, an Old Testament scholar, was keen to emphasise the relevance of the Old Testament for mission work, whereas the director of France Mission said that while they would use the Old Testament they would “swiftly pass into the New”.

However, only two of the directors were aware of the technical term “missional hermeneutic” and only one of those was able to define it.

Unreached People Groups

This section explored the directors’ understanding of unreached people groups and to what extent the concept was used within their agency. All of the directors were aware of the term unreached people groups, but only three of the agencies actually use the term.

Mission Africa had a policy of working among unreached peoples, but in recent years a lack of missionary recruits means that they have not pursued this approach. Latterly, they have been approached by a partner church in Kenya who wish to start work among an unreached people in their own country. Mission Africa are supportive of this initiative in principle but have no personnel resources to commit to it. Both OMF and WEC base much of their strategy around reaching unreached people groups. However, they do not do so uncritically, and the directors of both organisations expressed reservations about the underlying theory of UPGs. All three agencies who work with UPGs referred to the Joshua Project list (Joshua Project, 2016) for their definition.

While the other three agencies do not use the terminology of unreached people groups, they all insisted that the people groups that they work with secular French, Roman Catholic Latins and the poorest in Nepal, should all be considered as effectively being unreached people.

Proclamation and Social Action

The relationship between proclamation and social action was examined by asking the directors to explain their understanding of the relationship between the two, and then through a number of questions which allowed them to talk about how these principles are worked out in practice in the life of the agency. Of the four factors under consideration, the responses in this area were the most complex. Three of the agencies expressed a degree of constraint from their supporting churches to speak about this subject, in a way which runs counter to their own preference.

None of the directors considered social action as a priority over proclamation. The directors of WEC and Mission Africa, while not invalidating social action, both hold a strong view that proclamation should be a priority in mission.

The directors of INF and OMF both argued that proclamation and social action should be held in equal priority.

The remaining two directors, those of Latin Link and France Mission, expressed different preferences during the course of the interviews. They both indicated a view that proclamation should be a priority, while also saying that the two should be given equal priority. The reasons for this apparent contradiction will be discussed below, at this point, it is important just to note that it exists.

General Remarks

The primary aim of this study is not to compare the responses of the various agency directors to the interview questions. However, there are a number of observations which can be drawn from this comparison which will be helpful in the next stage of the process.

All of the directors were aware of the 2010 Cape Town Commitment and all but one of them had read it. By contrast, only the OMF director was aware of having read the Lausanne Covenant. Within OMF, the Cape Town Commitment is distributed to the leadership and new candidates across the organisation. However, there was no evidence that the leadership or staff of the other agencies took active steps to make people aware of either of the Lausanne documents. It is important to note that the boards and leadership teams of the majority of the agencies in the study do not engage in regular theological or missiological reflection. This raises questions about the way in which agencies can profit from advances in mission thought. This lack of reflection is particularly highlighted by the lack of engagement with the Lausanne literature which provides the framework for this study. As far as their directors were aware, none of the agencies had studied or reflected on the Lausanne Covenant or the Cape Town Commitment in a formal fashion. One director remarked that the CTC was too long to be used in a board meeting, while another said that the “board leave that sort of thing to me”. Though the sample size is small, the lack of interaction with the Lausanne movement does call into question some of the claims about the extent of Lausanne’s influence on mission thinking noted in chapter 2. The fact that the agencies have not interacted with the Lausanne documents in any depth

does not invalidate this study, which focuses on wider theological issues which are raised by the Lausanne documents, not on the documents themselves.

Of the six directors interviewed, two were able to give examples of their board reflecting on other missiological documents; in one case it involved papers written by the director in order to address particular issues, and in the other, the board reflected on Bryan Knell's book on the relationship between churches and agencies (Knell, 2015).

None of the agencies in this study exist as completely independent entities, all have relationships with churches in the UK and in the countries where they work and some of them form part of large, multinational organisations. This network of relationships has an impact on the way in which the organisations make decisions.

With regard to relationships with the church in the UK, the situation is mixed. The directors of the two larger organisations, OMF and WEC, both remarked that not all churches in the UK were well enough informed or resourced to play the sort of role in missionary support that the agency would hope for. A number of the directors felt constrained by their supporting constituency in the way that they publicise their work. The director of Mission Africa said that churches in the UK would prefer for him to speak about social action projects, rather than gospel proclamation, though that goes against his personal conviction. In contrast, the directors of Latin Link and OMF, both of whom have a more holistic approach to mission, feel a pressure to prioritise proclamation over social action in their publicity.

All of the agencies have some sort of partnerships with churches in the countries where they work. For the larger, multi-country agencies, the picture is complex with different relationships in different countries. France Mission Trust and INF both have very close relationships with the churches in their respective countries and shape their publicity and presentations to the British church in the light of requests from their overseas partners.

OMF, WEC and Latin Link are the British sections of larger international organisations. This means that, to some extent, decisions taken at an international level are imposed on the UK operations. This has the potential for causing tension; as is revealed in the case of OMF, where the British director has reservations about an internationally promoted publicity campaign.

Classification

In this section, the agencies are aligned with the taxonomy according to the responses given by the directors. This initial classification will be verified with reference to agency publications later in the chapter. In order to make the preliminary alignment, it is necessary to recap briefly the responses from the interviews.

For the most part, the directors were unaware of the technical term “missional hermeneutic”, however all of them said that they would base their understanding of mission on both the Old and New Testaments.

Two of the six directors said that the term “mission of God” was in current use within their organisations.

Three of the six directors interviewed said that “unreached people groups” is a concept that is used within their agency.

Two organisations prioritise proclamation over social action, two said that they were of equal importance while the others adopted both positions simultaneously.

From the results of the director interviews, the agencies can be tabulated as follows.

Table 2: The Alignment of the Agencies With the Taxonomy

Agency	Use of the Bible	Mission of God	Unreached People Groups	Proclamation and Social Action
France Mission Trust	OT and NT	-	-	Proclamation/Both
Latin Link	OT and NT	-	-	Proclamation/Both
Mission Africa	OT and NT	-	+	Proclamation
WEC	OT and NT	-	+	Proclamation
INF	OT and NT	+	-	Both
OMF	OT and NT	+	+	Both

The table shows that the agencies can be divided into four groups according to their positions with regard to the issues in the taxonomy.⁴⁷ For the purposes of classification, the positions on the use of the Bible and Proclamation and Social Action can effectively be ignored as they do not act to distinguish between agencies. This means that a simplified table can be drawn up as follows.

Table 3: The Taxonomy Refined

Group	Agency	Mission of God	Unreached People Groups
1	FMT	-	-
	Latin Link	-	-
2	Mission Africa	-	+
	WEC	-	+
3	INF	+	-
4	OMF	+	+

Discussion

The concept of the mission of God relates to an understanding of the nature of mission which sees the church's role in mission as being to participate in the overarching work of God across history. By contrast, the notion of unreached people groups refers to an approach to an understanding of mission which prioritises proclaiming the Christian message to people who have not had the opportunity of hearing it. It is the interaction between the theoretical understanding of mission embodied in the mission of God and the approach generated by a focus on unreached people groups which provides the basis of the classification of agencies into four groups.

It might be expected that those who hold to a mission of God approach would have a broad understanding of mission which encompasses both

⁴⁷ In the summer of July 2017, the author presented this classification system to two groups of mission scholars and practitioners. On June 17, he met with the leadership of the Wycliffe Global Alliance, a group heavily invested in missiological and theological reflection (see (Franklin, 2017)) and on July 17, he gave a seminar to staff and MA students at Redcliffe College, a mission training institution. Though not in a position to give detailed criticism, both groups affirmed the direction of the research and agreed that the proposed framework could prove a useful tool for categorising agencies.

proclamation and social action. This expectation was born out in the results which showed that the two agencies which use the phrase mission of God were also the ones which unambiguously considered proclamation and social action as having equal priority. It might also be expected that this broad approach would lead them away from a strategy which focuses on unreached people groups. This is the case for the group three agency, INF. However, OMF bases its understanding of mission on the mission of God, while its practice focuses on unreached people groups.

In the absence of a theory of mission grounded in the mission of God, agencies might be expected to adopt a range of positions with regard to unreached people groups. This expectation is supported by the data. The two agencies in group one refer to neither the mission of God nor unreached people groups. Incidentally, these are also the agencies with an ambiguous view of proclamation and social action. Meanwhile, the agencies in group 2 do not use the term mission of God but have adopted an approach based on unreached people groups.

The first research question for this study examines the elements of a taxonomy to describe the theology of mission agencies. The literature search identified four elements which could be used as a basis for such a taxonomy. However, the interviews with the six directors revealed that the agencies could be classified into four groups based on just two of the four factors: their use of the terms mission of God and unreached peoples. The second question concerns the alignment of the agencies with this classification. This is discussed above.

The robustness of the classification as applied to the current sample of agencies is tested in the following section which looks at the way in which the four factors of the framework are reflected in the agencies' publications and practice.

Agency Publications

In this section the initial classification of the agencies according to the responses from the directors is verified with reference to the various publications produced by each of the agencies.

Each agency's documents are examined in turn. The documents themselves are briefly introduced. The way in which the documents reflect the framework is then examined, this is followed by a comparison between the way in which the documents and the director interviews reflect the

taxonomy. In order to simplify references to the agency documents a full list of those consulted is provided in Appendix III, which includes a system of abbreviations used to identify particular documents.

France Mission Trust

Literature Sources

France Mission Trust produces a magazine entitled *Action Missionaire: Prayer News from France Mission Trust*, three times a year. Electronic copies of the magazine dating from autumn 2013 to summer 2017 were provided by the agency. This was a sample of 12 magazines, representing four full years of publication. The magazines are in A5 format and each has 16 pages. The layout and content of *Action Missionaire* is consistent between editions. The 14 inside pages consist of 7 double page spreads, with stories about France Mission missionaries and staff. The suggestion is that each page should serve as information for the readers' prayers on a given day of the week. There is little by way of teaching on the nature or purpose of mission as the content is mainly factual stories about the lives of individuals.

The last four years' worth of FMT financial reports were obtained from the Charity Commission website. The reports each consist of 3 pages of A4 and are presented as simple texts without any elaborations.

The front page of the France Mission Trust websites links to 39 different pages which were saved for analysis. When saved as PDF files, these pages each consisted of two sides of A4. The majority of these web pages are devoted to hard information, such as an introduction to the staff of the organisation and instructions on how best to support the agency. There is little by way of stories about mission work, or material exploring the nature of mission.

France Mission Trust does not have an official twitter feed; however, its director maintains a twitter account which is corporate rather than personal. A year's worth of tweets from this account were downloaded and analysed as 4 pages of A4. The majority of the tweets are requests for people to pray for activities of the mission, there are also links to current news from France that British people might not be aware of.

The Mission of God

There is no mention of "the mission of God", "*missio Dei*" or "God's mission" in any of the France Mission Trust documents.

Unreached People Groups

The term “unreached people groups” is not found in the France Mission Trust documents, nor is there any evidence of the concept being used within the organisation.

Proclamation - Social Action

The agency documents suggest that France Mission Trust is focused much more on proclamation rather than on social action. The annual report for 2016 gives the first of the agency’s objectives as: “The spread of the Christian gospel in French-speaking contexts and the planting of new evangelical churches in connection with the work of the parent mission in France.” (FMT16).

The majority of stories on the agency’s website and in the magazine related to church planting, Bible studies and other forms of proclamation. In total, there are 68 stories about various forms of proclamation, 6 stories that combine proclamation and social action and none that focus on social action alone.

Missional Hermeneutic

Twenty-nine quotes from Scripture were identified in the agency documents. Of these 23 (76.7%) were from the New Testament and 6 (23.3%) from the Old. The majority of Scripture quotes in the FMT publications fall into two categories. Eleven of 29 (38%) citations were statements of theological or missiological principles as in the following example:

“Paul declared the need for what mission strategists call contextualization when he wrote: ‘I have become all things to all men that by all means I might save some’ (1 Corinthians 9:22). This wasn’t just a technique which would guarantee results since Paul himself only spoke of ‘saving some’. But it is glorifying to God because when we communicate the gospel clearly then ‘every mouth will be silenced’” (Romans 3:19) (AM139 p.4)

Nine (31%) of the quotes refer to calls to action; encouraging the readers to do something in response to the quotation. For example, in summer 2017, referring to the results of the presidential election, Action Missionaire had the following statement: “So, as Paul exhorts us, let’s pray for ‘all those in authority’ in France, that they might govern justly and wisely, allowing believers to “live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness” (1 Timothy 2:2)” (AM140 p.2)

Comparison with the Director Interview

The director of FMT said that the concepts of the Mission of God and unreached people groups were not used within the agency. This position was confirmed by the FMT literature examined during the study. Neither the specific terms, mission of God, *missio Dei*, nor unreached people groups were found in the literature, nor were the concepts discussed in the absence of the specific terms. This confirms France Mission Trust's position in group one of the taxonomy.

In the interview, the director said that the agency had a strong "proclamation focus", but also suggested that mission should involve both proclamation and social action. The literature demonstrates a strong focus on proclamation, with a majority of the stories in *Action Missionaire* describing church planting activities. The role of social action is less prominent in the literature than might have been expected from director's interview and shows that the agency is focused on proclamation, rather than on a holistic view of mission.

The director said that France Mission Trust would tend to find its support for mission work from the New Testament rather than the Old. This is supported by the documentation which shows a clear preference for quoting from the NT over the OT. When the documents refer to Scripture, they do so to short passages or verses taken out of their original contexts. This is not at all an unusual approach; however, it does indicate that the agency is not using a missional hermeneutic, which does rely heavily on readings of Scripture in their broader context. This confirms the director's statements on the subject.

With regard to the issues covered in this study, there is broad agreement in the way in which the director explained the position of France Mission Trust and the way in which that position is described in the agency's documentation. The exception is that publicity documents adopt a more proclamation focused and less nuanced position than the director.

INF

Literature Sources

INF International produces a magazine called *Today in Nepal* twice a year. This is distributed by the UK branch of the agency, which does not produce its own specific magazine. This A5 format publication generally has 20 pages. Editions from March 2014 to March 2017 were obtained, seven magazines in all, covering three and a half years. Each edition of *Today in Nepal* has a theme, such as Empowering Communities (TIN229), which is

developed in the articles in the magazine. The majority of stories in Today in Nepal revolve around the lives of the Nepali people served by the agency, rather than being about the agency staff and missionaries. Today in Nepal was the only magazine in the sample which had a regular readers' letters feature.

The INF financial reports were downloaded from the Charity Commission website. These are simple reports, following the required format and with minimal graphics or illustrations.

The INF twitter account only sent out one tweet in the year up to 31 July 2017, this was saved for analysis.

Twenty-nine individual web pages linked to the INF home page. These were saved as PDFs for analysis. Typically, each web page was saved as one side of A4. The majority of the saved pages involved information on supporting the work of INF. There were a number of stories about life in Nepal, but these were linked directly to appeals for finance.

The Mission of God

There is no mention of the mission of God or any of the other associated terms in the INF documents studied.

Unreached People Groups

The INF documents make no mention of unreached people groups.

Proclamation - Social Action

INF in the UK is a part of an international family of organisations which exist to support the work of INF Nepal, which is described in the following terms:

“INF Nepal is a national non-government organisation which carries out health and development work in western Nepal.” (INFWeb AboutUs)

This focus on social action is maintained through all of the INF documents. Of the 54 stories identified, 51 (94%) concerned social action whereas only 2 (4%) referred to proclamation, without referring to any social action activities, the remaining story had elements of both social action and proclamation.

INF are involved in a wide range of social action activities, including health care and responding to emergencies:

“A more unusual way in which ACN⁴⁸ responded to the needs of communities was a health camp for animals. Survivors of last year's earthquake continue to face many challenges. In the hills of Gorkha many people are dependent on farm animals for both food and income. But cattle sheds have been destroyed and, with the monsoon rains, animals are very vulnerable to infection. With the help of INF/UK's generous supporters, ACN ran an animal health camp in co-ordination with the local veterinary office. The expectation was that around 2,500 animals would be brought to the camp by their owners, but twice that number came.” (INF16).

Missional Hermeneutic

There is no evidence of the use of a missional hermeneutic in the INF literature. Of the 21 Scripture quotes identified in the documents, 18 (86%) are from the New Testament.

The majority of the Scripture quotes occur in the section of the INF website which explains their beliefs. Each of the principles outlined is explained or developed from the Bible as in the following example:

“We believe the writers of the Bible were inspired by God. Consequently, the Bible is useful for our training, equipping and transformation as we meditate on, study and apply it [2 Timothy 3:16,-17].⁴⁹ We therefore affirm the importance of prayer, worship and reading the Bible together in our community.” (INFWeb Inspiration).

Comparison with the Director Interview

The director of INF suggested that the concept of *missio Dei* is very important to the organisation:

“And so, for me, the imperative as I do my planning is What is God doing? What do I see him doing? and how do I line up with that? It's about God's mission. I would see God's mission - *missio Dei* - is central and that we have to fall into that rather than assuming that we have a mission.” (INF Director, 00:31:35)

When asked whether the term mission of God was widely used in INF, he replied: “I think *missio Dei* is. I think we understand the importance of it. I think what we see, very much, is that it is not our mission” (INF Director, 00:31:32).

However, in the documents which were used in this study, there was no specific mention of the *missio Dei*, nor of any of its English equivalents.

⁴⁸ Asai Chhimekee Nepal (a Nepali non-Governmental Organisation).

⁴⁹ “All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.”

Equally, there was no text that expounded the concept without actually mentioning it.

The director's contention that the concept of unreached people groups is not used within INF is borne out by the documents.

On the basis of the interview with the director, INF was placed in group three of the taxonomy. However, the discrepancy between the director's statements and the contents of the documents raises the question as to whether it would be better placed in group one alongside France Mission Trust and Latin Link.

With regard to proclamation and social action, the director made the following statement:

"I mentioned in our planning meeting last week, "word and deed" and someone said, 'John, no one uses those words anymore', I said, 'I do'. As a mission, one of the clear things that we have had for a very long time is that the two are part of one single whole." (INF Director, 00:47:45).

However, while the agency may have the position that proclamation and social action are both important aspects of mission, in practice, it is the Nepali church which is responsible for proclamation in their context.

"The one thing that sets us apart is that the church in Nepal and INF grew up together as friends and we have never sought to influence and lead the church. That path has been unique and that does make us quite different. So, things like church planting... we've never church planted, but coincidentally, everywhere we have started a project a church has been planted." (INF Director, 00:54:41).

Because of this, the agency has concentrated on social action projects and this is reflected in the documentation.

The way in which the director described the use of Scripture, is mirrored in the documentation.

Latin Link

Literature Sources

Latin Link produces a magazine called *Latin File: the magazine of contemporary Latin mission*, twice a year in the Spring and Autumn. The agency provided copies of the magazine covering the years 2013-16; eight editions in all. These magazines were obtained in hard copy and to facilitate analysis they were scanned as PDFs and imported into MAXQDA. Each edition of the magazine consisted of 20 A5 pages. Each edition of Latin File

has a theme, for example the impact of drugs in Latin America (LF Autumn13) or the history of Latin Link (LF Autumn16). The theme is reflected in stories and interviews with Latin Link workers and analytical articles which examine the background issues. Each edition also has information about new Latin Link missionaries. The autumn editions include the agency's financial statement for the year presented in graphical form.

The trustees' report and financial statements for Latin Link for the years 2013-2016 were obtained from the Charity Commission website. These reports are lengthy, in excess of 25 pages, and give significant details about the agency's activity. From 2014, the reports contain photographs and are laid out in an attractive fashion, rather than as a simple factual report. It is clear that they are intended for a wider audience than just the regulatory authorities. This is borne out by the fact that readers of Latin File and the Latin Link website are encouraged to download the reports.

The Latin Link homepage links to 27 other pages; all of these pages were downloaded and saved for analysis. Typically, each of these pages was saved as 4 or 5 sides of A4 PDF. However, in each case, only one of these sides contained significant content, the majority of the space being filled by unformatted website information. These pages included a lot of information on how to donate to the organisation or support it in other ways, there were also a significant number of pages devoted to recruitment. The Latin Link site also contained a number of pages which gave background information on the agency and which explained its history and ethos.

One year of tweets from the Latin Link account were saved and analysed. These represented 96 sides of A4 when saved as a PDF file. Three subjects dominate the Twitter account; photographs of missionaries and others visiting the Latin Link office in Reading, requests for prayer and recruitment adverts.

The Mission of God

The term "God's mission" is used on a webpage advertising Latin Link videos:

"How is Latin Link working out God's mission, and how can you be a part of it? A fast-paced 3-minute introduction to our ministry which offers an up-to-date glimpse of how Latin Link is impacting the world today, as well as how to get more involved." (LL Films).

Two tweets, retweeted from other accounts, referred to mission as being an activity of God's in which we are called to participate, rather than being something which God delegates to the church.

Apart from these three examples, two of which come from other sources, there was no reference to “the Mission of God”, “*missio Dei*” or “God’s mission” in the Latin Link documents or across the whole of the website.

Unreached People Groups

There is no mention of Unreached People Groups in the Latin Link literature.

Proclamation - Social Action

The 2016 Latin Link report makes it clear that the agency seeks to integrate proclamation and social action:

“The gospel message requires word and action. ‘Integral mission’ (Spanish, ‘*misión integral*’) emerged out of Latin America in the 1970s and combines the proclamation and demonstration of the gospel. In Spanish, ‘*integral*’ has the sense of ‘wholeness’ – so integral mission is about looking after both spiritual and physical needs, and not separating evangelism and social involvement. It often shows particular concern for those living in poverty and also in pursuing justice.” (LL 2016).

There are examples of this integration found in the other documents, such as stories of people being helped to overcome addiction to drugs through becoming Christians (LF Autumn13 p.8).

However, there are a larger number of articles which make no overt link between proclamation and social action and of these, the largest number refer to social action. There are 16 stories which recount situations in which social action and proclamation are integrated, 29 which talk about proclamation alone and 46 which referring solely to social action.

Missional Hermeneutic

Seventeen Scripture quotes were identified in the Latin Link publications, of which 12 (70.5%) were from the New Testament. Eight of the quotes (47%) were used to illustrate articles, without being expanded or explained. For example, the following verse was used as the header in a story about staff working in the Latin Link office. “Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.” (1 Peter 4:10) (LF Autumn14 p.3).

The other significant use of Scripture quotes (29.4%) was to state theological or missiological principles which were then developed in the documents as in the following example.

“As Christians we know that God is interested in justice. Psalm 103:6 says: ‘the Lord works for justice and righteousness for all the oppressed’. Out of God’s concern for justice, stemming from

his loving, holy nature, we should be concerned to act justly and to seek justice for others.” (LF Spring15 p.7).

Comparison with the Director Interview

The director of Latin Link said that the concept of the “mission of God” was not used within the agency. In the Latin Link literature, the terms “mission of God” or “God’s mission” occur three times. Two of these are retweets, quotes from other organisations and do not arise from within the agency itself. This leaves one isolated use of the term, which is not explained or expanded upon in context. While noting these examples, they do not constitute evidence that the director’s position is not reflected in the agency.

There is no mention of the specific term “unreached people group” nor of the broader concept. This accords with the director’s position.

The Latin Link literature confirms the analysis that the agency belongs in group one of the agency taxonomy.

The director was of the view that while Latin Link should talk about both proclamation and social action, a priority should be given to proclamation. However, while the literature does reflect both aspects, the priority is placed on social action, rather than proclamation.

There are relatively few quotes from the Bible in the Latin Link documents; 17 in all. Of these, the majority were from the New Testament. The director said that Latin Link used both the Old and New Testaments to shape its approach to mission, but he did not say whether a priority was given to one or the other.

Mission Africa

Literature Sources

Mission Africa produces a magazine, *Dispatch*, three times a year in the spring, summer and winter. The agency provided electronic copies for the last four years, from winter 2013 to summer 2017. In the spring of 2014, the magazine was not produced because of staff shortages and so 11 editions were available for analysis. The magazines vary in length from 24 to 32 pages. Each edition of the magazine has a theme, for example, reflection on missionary life (MAD Spring2016). The majority of each magazine is given over to stories and articles written by Mission Africa missionaries on the given theme. Occasionally, there is a longer article, covering several pages which explains an aspect of mission theology or practice.

The agency financial reports for the years 2015-2016 were obtained from the Northern Ireland Charity Commission website; these reports were simple factual reports following the approved format.

In all, 31 distinct pages were linked to the home page of the Mission Africa website, these were downloaded as PDFs and imported into MAXQDA. The saved web pages consisted of 2 or 3 sides of A4, the first side contained the content and the second two various formatting data, links and the organisations standard footer. As with the other agencies, a significant amount of the Mission Africa website is devoted to recruitment and support issues. However, there were also a number of pages devoted to stories from missionaries, explaining their work and their vocation.

Tweets from the Mission Africa account from 31 July 2016 to 31 July 2017 were downloaded. This account is not very active, and the total represented 11 tweets which were saved on four sides of A4. The majority of tweets was devoted to prayer requests and to advertising upcoming events sponsored by the agency.

The Mission of God

The terms “mission of God”, “*missio Dei*” and “God’s mission” do not occur in any of the documents examined from Mission Africa, nor are they found on an exhaustive examination of the Mission Africa Website.

Unreached People Groups

Mission Africa communicates very clearly that they work with unreached people groups. The “about us” section on their website states the following:

“The founding ethos of the mission, to bring the Good News of Jesus to the people of Africa, remains as strong as ever. Mission Africa remains committed to pioneering evangelism among people yet to be reached with the gospel.” (MAWeb About).

While the section advertising short-term mission opportunities says:

“Do you have the vision to bring the Good News of Jesus to some of the world’s largest unreached people groups?” (MAWeb Opportunities).

The Spring 2016 edition of Dispatch includes a number of maps and graphics showing the location of the unreached people groups that Mission Africa works with (MAD Spring2016).

Proclamation - Social Action

Mission Africa sees proclamation of the Christian message as its highest priority.

“The founding ethos of the mission, to bring the Good News of Jesus to the people of Africa, remains as strong as ever.” (MAWeb About).

“Poverty and disease may be being slowly eradicated, but humanity’s need for a Saviour remains unchanged.” (MAD Spring2016 p.4).

However, this does not mean that Mission Africa sees no place for social action:

“Mission Africa seeks to strike the right balance between helping practically and spiritually.” (MAD Winter2013 p.2).

However, although the agency has a position which gives priority to proclamation, a majority of stories in Dispatch and on the website (25 out of 45) are actually about social action projects with no overt link to proclamation.

Missional Hermeneutic

There is no evidence of a missional hermeneutic being used in the Mission Africa publications. However, there is one quote which shows the need to read the New Testament in the light of the Old:

“In the Old Testament the Lord uses the great annual harvest festivals to remind the people of His saving acts in history, as well as his providential care for His people. In the New Testament, the Lord points to the ripened fields of wheat as a powerful symbol of the unfinished task of evangelizing the lost.” (MAD Winter2013 p.2).

However, of the 43 Scripture quotes identified in the Mission Africa publications, 31 (72%) were taken from the New Testament.

There are a number of articles in Dispatch which explore the meaning of Scripture passages and apply them to the work that the agency is doing in Africa. As a result, 16 (37%) of the passages cited overall are statements of principle which are unpacked in the text. Seventeen (40%) of the citations are illustrations which are not explored in the text. These two categories represent the majority of the uses of Scripture in the Mission Africa Documents.

Comparison with the Director Interview

The Mission Africa documents support the director’s position that the term “Mission of God” is not used within the organisation.

There are numerous references to “unreached people groups” in the Mission Africa literature; this confirms the director’s view that this is an important concept for the agency.

The fact that the literature confirms that the concept of the “mission of God” is not used in Mission Africa, but “unreached people groups” is, supports placing the agency in group 2 of the taxonomy.

With regard to the priority of Proclamation and Social Action, the Mission Africa documents present a somewhat conflicted picture. At times, there is a clear indication that proclamation is considered to be a higher priority than social action. However, in practice there are more stories about social action than proclamation in the magazine, and there are a number of adverts seeking to recruit people for medical and other social roles. Overall, the agency adopts a position which balances proclamation and social action rather than one which focuses on one aspect.

In his interview, the director suggested that because of his own background as an Old Testament teacher, the Dispatch magazine might feature more Old Testament based content than was previously the case. There was no clear evidence of this contention, with a significant majority of citations being from the New Testament.

OMF

Literature Sources

OMF produces a magazine called *Billions* three times a year. PDF copies of the magazine for the years 2014-2017 were provided by the agency for analysis (as only two editions were published in 2014, this gave a total of 11 examples). *Billions* is an A5 format publication of 28 pages.

Billions includes a number of stories about the experiences of missionaries and local Christians. However, there is a larger proportion of reflective articles examining mission theory and practice than in any of the other magazines.

The OMF reports for 2013-2016 were obtained from the Charity Commission website. These are text reports, following the standard format, but with a significant amount of explanatory and illustrative text complementing the formal information.

Twenty-six individual pages were linked to the OMF UK home page; these were downloaded and saved for analysis. Typically, the webpages have two or three paragraphs of text followed by links and formatting information. As

with the other agencies, much of the website was devoted to recruitment and support information; however, there was also a number longer articles reflecting on mission practice.

The output of the OMF UK twitter account for the year ending 28 July 2017 was saved for analysis. This amounted to 97 sides of A4. The OMF tweets include a significant proportion of posts with pictures overlain with inspirational quotes as well as a number of prayer requests. OMF makes much more use of repeated hashtags than any of the other agencies.

The Mission of God

In an article for Billions entitled What is Our Mission?, there is the following statement: “OMF is a catalyst of the mission of God amongst East Asia’s peoples.”

The concept of the mission of God is also expanded in the same article:

“We have a comprehensive mission, and the gospel we proclaim is not a brief ‘formula’ but a person and a story – the whole biblical story of what God has done in Christ to bring redemption to the whole of creation.” (Billions May15 p.24).

In another edition of Billions which concentrated on the topic of theological education the following statement was made, which clearly links the agency’s work to the mission of God:

“The mission of the Church on earth is to serve the mission of God, and the mission of theological education is to strengthen and accompany the mission of the Church.” (Billions Sept16 p.10)

On the 12 October 2016, OMF tweeted that they were giving thanks for the willingness of the Indonesian church to work with them in “God’s mission” (OMF Tweets).

Unreached People Groups

There are numerous mentions of unreached people groups and allusions to the concept in the OMF documents. For example, the May 2016 edition of Billions asks people to commit to praying for unreached people groups on a regular basis (Billions May16 p.2).

The OMF Twitter account regularly uses the hashtag #thetaskunfinished as part of a publicity campaign which has been running for a while. A clear relationship between this hashtag and the concept of unreached people groups is demonstrated in this tweet from March 14, 2017: “What is an unreached people group (UPG)? Great video explaining what #thetaskunfinished is all about twitter.com/globalcast/sta...” (OMF Tweets).

Proclamation - Social Action

The documents demonstrate that OMF places an equal priority on proclamation and social action. This is expressed in the Billions article What Is Our Mission, referred to above

“We seek to follow the New Testament example of a way of mission that fully proclaims the gospel of Christ by word and deed, in the power of the Holy Spirit (Romans 15:17–18). Our aim in ministry, like that of the Apostle Paul, is for the obedience of faith, not for conversion only, but for the life of obedience that flows from faith in Jesus (Romans 1:5; 16:26).” (Billions May15 p.24).

Of the 9 different stories identified in the documents, 4 (44%) focused on proclamation, 3 (33%) on social action and 2 (22%) covering both subjects.

Missional Hermeneutic

There are indications of a missional hermeneutic within the OMF documentation.

“Good news finds its roots in Isaiah 40-66. Isaiah 52:7 is foundational for the New Testament’s understanding of the gospel; the themes of peace, salvation and kingdom are brought to fulfilment in the person and work of Jesus Christ. The good news is that God reigns and that his purposes for the whole of his creation are centred in Jesus – Saviour and Lord of the world. We exist to make all of this known.” (Billions May15 p.24).

The majority of Scripture quotes in the OMF documentation (21 out of 27) were from the New Testament.

Of the Scripture quotes, the largest number (11) are statements of principle, such as the following example:

“In 1 Cor. 12 Paul compared the body of believers to a human body. He affirmed that we aren’t all alike, that we have different gifts and are all enabled to serve in varying capacities in the Church.” (Billions Sept15 p.15).

Comparison with the Director Interview

The OMF director suggested that the concepts of the “mission of God” and “unreached people groups” are used within the agency. This is supported by the documents and confirms that OMF is correctly placed in group 4 of the taxonomy.

The director made the following statement about evangelism and social action:

“I think that our evangelism ultimately has to have social consequences and lead to social action and that our social action

and social engagement has to ultimately involve evangelism. I think the two should be seen as one.” (OMF Director, 00:56:11).

This balance between the two activities is reflected in the documentation.

The documentation also supports the director’s statements about OMF’s balance in the use of the Old and New Testaments: “the richness and the depth of what the Bible says for God’s purposes for his whole creation and the role of his people in that task has to be from the whole Bible.” (OMF Director, 00:25:31).

WEC

Literature Sources

The WEC magazine, *Worldwide*, is produced once a year. It is an A4 format publication of 12-16 pages. Electronic copies of *Worldwide* for the years 2014-16 were provided by the WEC publicity department and imported into MAXQDA. Of all of the magazines in this study, *Worldwide* makes the most use of graphics, colour and complex layouts. The magazines include a mixture of longer articles, short stories from missionaries and call-out boxes containing facts about different countries and unreached people groups.

WEC’s annual reports for the years 2013-16 were downloaded from the Charity Commission website. These are formatted with graphics, sidebars and stories to illustrate the detail of the formal report.

The WEC UK twitter account from 31 July 2016 to 31 July 2017 was downloaded as a PDF file, containing 92 pages, and saved for analysis. A large number of the tweets were prayer requests and a significant number of others advertised events.

Forty individual pages linked to the welcome page on the WEC website. These were saved as PDFs. Typically, each page consisted of one side of A4 which included the information germane to the web page and another side or two of links and formatting data. In addition to the usual recruitment and information pages, the WEC website includes a large number of short articles including stories of missionary life and reflection on mission practice and theory.

The Mission of God

The terms “mission of God”, “God’s mission” and “*missio Dei*” do not occur within the WEC documentation, nor are they found by searching the whole of the website.

Unreached People Groups

There is a clear focus on Unreached People Groups throughout the WEC documentation. The Worldwide Magazine is subtitled “The Magazine for Reaching the Unreached”.

This focus is underlined by the following statement in the annual report for 2015-2016: “WEC UK exists to take the good news to the peoples and nations who have yet to hear it: the good news that Christ came to bring forgiveness of sins and peace with God, and to displace hatred with love.” (WEC2016).

On May 31 2016, WEC tweeted: “Could you be church where there is no church in Chad? Then we need you.” (WEC Tweets).

There are numerous other encouragements for people to pray and to join WEC in reaching groups around the world. However, their focus on reaching the unreached extends to WEC’s work within the UK:

“The world is on our doorstep! In the UK there is a thriving and growing population of people from areas of the world where the gospel is not easily heard. Although living in the UK, most of these families still have no real knowledge of Christ or contact with the Christian church. Neighbours Worldwide aims to reach unreached ethnic groups in the UK and Ireland.” (WECWeb Stories)

Proclamation-Social Action

There is a clear organisational orientation towards proclamation over and above social action. While WEC is involved in social action projects, these clearly exist in order to facilitate evangelistic work. In answer to the question “What does WEC do?”, the following answer is given on the website.

“WEC International takes the good news to the peoples and nations who have yet to hear it: the good news that Christ came to bring forgiveness of sins and peace with God, and to displace hatred with love. To achieve this, we work alongside local churches to:

- evangelise, make disciples and start churches.
- translate Scriptures and teach literacy.
- train leaders, run clinics and hospitals.
- rescue and rehabilitate addicts.
- care for children in crisis, work with young people.” (WECWeb About).

Reflecting this orientation, 11 (61%) of the 18 stories identified in the magazines and on the website refer to proclamation alone, a further 4 (22%)

involve both proclamation and social action, while only 3 (17%) make reference to social action without mentioning proclamation.

Missional Hermeneutic

There is no evidence of the use of a missional hermeneutic in the WEC documentation. However, the use of Scripture quotes is distributed relatively evenly between the Old (9 or 56%) and New Testaments (7 or 44%).

Of these 16 Scripture quotes, 12 were calls to action as in the following example which comes from an article discussing the individual's motivation to be involved in mission work: "How am I putting aside worldly concerns? (1 John 2:16).⁵⁰ Make sure your decision is not motivated by a desire for position, security or recognition." (Worldwide17 p.6).

Comparison with the Director Interview

According to the director, WEC does not use the term "mission of God" in its work and publicity. This is reflected in the literature examined in this study.

The director's statements about WEC's focus on unreached people groups were reflected in the many references to this term and related concepts throughout the documentation.

The WEC literature confirms the agency's position in Group 2 of the taxonomy.

With regard to the relative priorities of proclamation and social action, the director stated the following in his interview:

"I said we have these three objectives; reaching people, planting churches, mobilising — for a long time the international leadership grappled with whether we should have a fourth, which is compassion ministries. Anytime that has been grappled with, we have always concluded 'no'. While we support compassion ministries, they must be a means to an end, they are not an end in themselves." (WEC Director, 01:23:34).

This position was borne out in the documentation. For example, in an article on the website about caring for vulnerable children, it was clear that while WEC aimed to meet their physical and emotional needs, their motivation was to share the Christian message with them.

The director suggested that WEC takes a balanced approach to the Old and New Testaments, which is supported by the way in which the two

⁵⁰ "For the world offers only a craving for physical pleasure, a craving for everything we see, and pride in our achievements and possessions. These are not from the Father, but are from this world."

testaments are used in the documentation. The WEC leadership turn to the Bible for inspiration and guidance when they face specific decisions:

“And that is a process of discernment. For us, that is a process of not only sitting in a room, but also searching Scripture, saying what does Scripture say? Let’s look back at that. Are there relevant Scriptures that we can read and meditate on? Again, we have meetings where the Word of God seems clear, but God has said no. For us that process of discernment is one of listening, of testing against Scripture.” (WEC Director, 00:42:30).

This is reflected in the way that the Bible is used primarily in terms of a call to action, rather than as a support for theological positions in the documents.

Discussion

There is broad agreement between the statements made by the directors regarding the elements of the taxonomy and the information in the agency documents. This coherence is likely to be due to a number of factors.

- The agency directors are responsible for determining the overall strategy and direction of the agency. In this context, it is to be expected that the agency literature would reflect the position adopted by the director on a number of issues.
- The directors are responsible to their boards for the content of any publications which are distributed by the agency. This means that they should be aware of the content of agency magazines and online material, so when they were asked whether a given term was used within the agency, they were in a position to give an accurate answer.
- With the exception of INF and OMF, the directors of each agency write an introductory article for each magazine. These introductions tend to reflect on issues and give explanations for the reasons behind the decisions made by the agency, rather than telling stories about agency activities.

Exceptions

However, although there is a broad coherence between the positions espoused by the directors and that found in the agency literature, there are a number of possible exceptions or problems which need to be explored in order to complete the picture.

Mission Africa

There are indications both from the interview with the director and within the agency's documents that Mission Africa places a higher priority on proclamation than on social action. However, there is a relatively high number of stories about social action in the agency publications.

The director touched on this discrepancy during his interview. He suggested that there were two factors to be considered. Firstly, he suggested that the discrepancy was not as great as it first appeared because most of the people who are involved in social action work are also involved in leading Bible studies and other proclamation focused activities. His second point was that the emphasis on social activity in the agency literature was in response to the expectations of their supporting constituency.

“I suppose in recent years there has been this debate within mission circles, including us, about should we shift our balance more towards aid and development work. There is a lot of pressure on us, I think, and some of the younger supporters are more orientated towards aid and development and what-not.” (MA Director, 00:25:40).

“They don't want to hear a story about Naaman, being converted, they want to hear about what so and so has done with the roof of the library in such and such a college.” (MA Director, 00:36:03).

This pressure from supporters could push Mission Africa to bias its communication towards social action as opposed to proclamation. This seems to have consequences for the agency's recruitment.

“The other big success story is that we don't particularly struggle to get people to work in compassionate work, with children or in hospitals.” (MA Director, 01:12:58).

Latin Link

In contrast with the situation with Mission Africa, the Latin Link director suggested that their supporters would like to read stories about “people being saved”. However, the agency is unable to furnish their constituency with this sort of information and so they default to giving reports about social action.

“People want to hear that people are saved. That's what our supporters are wanting. Being good evangelicals, they want to hear that people are saved — the trouble is we can't always say that. I think sometimes we don't even know that, but we do know what we are doing to try to make that happen. So, I think, more and more we are talking about this holistic mission — the both/and — trying to express the both/and, I think. There have been times when, maybe, we have expressed too much of the social action.

We need to be careful that we are also talking about the proclamation. We have to find that balance.” (LL Director, 00:53:39).

In Latin File and on the Latin Link website, there is a number of reports about evangelistic work. Some of these reports include stories of people being “saved”, but this is not the case for all of them. The director’s concern that the agency over-emphasises the social action aspect is reflected in the fact that the documents include more stories and articles about social action than they do about proclamation.

INF

The director of INF said that the concept of the mission of God was very important to the agency, however, there was no evidence of the term or concept in any of the agency literature.

There are a number of reasons why this discrepancy may have occurred.

- Today in Nepal, is produced by INF International, not INF UK. It is possible that the international organisation does not share the UK branch’s view of the importance of the mission of God, which would explain its absence from the magazine which constitutes the majority of the literature reviewed.
- Equally, it could be that the concept of the mission of God is important to INF in terms of its internal processes and strategies. This is hinted at in the director’s comment: “And so for me, the imperative as I do my planning is What is God doing? What do I see him doing? and how do I line up with that?”. (INF Director, 00:31:32). In this situation it is possible that the agency saw no need to talk about the mission of God in publications which were aimed at an external audience.
- A third possibility is that though the concept of “mission of God” is important to the director personally, it has not been inculcated into the wider culture of the agency and hence does not appear in the literature. Equally, the concept could be held at the level of an underlying assumption, in which case it may not be expressed because it is taken for granted.

OMF

Though there is no apparent disparity between the OMF director’s position and the agency literature, it should be noted in passing that some of the most obvious examples of the use of the concept of the “mission of God” in

the OMF magazine, *Billions*, occur in articles written by the British director, Peter Rowan. (*Billions* May15 p.24). This does not invalidate the observation that both the director and the OMF literature use the concept of the “mission of God”.

Summary

This chapter has investigated the second research questions in this study:

- How do mission agencies self-identify in terms of the elements of the taxonomy?

This question was addressed by interviewing the directors of the six agencies with regard to the various elements of the taxonomy. This allowed the agencies to be grouped into four categories according to their use of the concepts “mission of God” and “unreached people groups”. The validity of this grouping was then reviewed by referring to the agency literature.

This chapter has developed a taxonomy which classes mission agencies into groups according to their positions on two issues. With one possible exception, the way in which the agencies were classified according to the director’s statements was supported by the positions revealed in the agency literature.

However, while this chapter has demonstrated that it is possible to develop a taxonomy, it has not yet demonstrated that there is any value in doing so. The following chapter will explore this aspect in more depth by looking at the third of the research questions.

Chapter 6

Comparing and Contrasting the Agencies

Introduction

This chapter seeks to answer the third research question: what do the strategic and communications decisions made by the agencies and their alignment with the taxonomy reveal about the agencies? In order to achieve this, a range of strategic and communications issues are examined and compared to the way in the agencies align with the taxonomy. The aim of this process is to reveal the way in which the agencies' theological positions, as demonstrated by their place in the taxonomy, interacts with their actions.

In the previous chapter the six agencies in the study were classified into one of four groups according to whether their director indicated that they used the terms mission of God or unreached people groups. This classification was then verified with reference to the agencies' publications.

This chapter firstly examines groups one and two, each of which include two agencies, to see to what extent there is similarity between agencies within a group over a wider range of issues. The agencies are compared with regard to their background: charitable objectives, history, operating context and concept of mission. The two issues from the Lausanne documents which were not included in the taxonomy (use of the Bible and proclamation-social action) are then examined in some detail. Other issues which emerge from the agency literature are also taken into consideration.

The agencies in groups three and four are then examined according to the same criteria, though it is impossible to compare these in the same way as it is agencies which share a common classification.

In the second section of the chapter, all six agencies are compared according to a wide range of issues in order to investigate what commonalities exist beyond the taxonomy developed in chapter 4.

Group 1

France Mission Trust and Latin Link were included in group one on the grounds that they do not use either of the terms mission of God or unreached people groups. This section looks at a broader range of issues in

order to explore the extent to which there is commonality between the agencies.

Agency Background

Charitable Objectives

France Mission Trust has a central objective:

“The spread of the Christian gospel in French-speaking contexts and the planting of new evangelical churches in connection with the work of the parent mission in France.” (FMTReport16).

This objective is supported by a number of others, which include providing financial support for churches and pastors in France and encouraging British Christians by involving them in the work in France.

Latin Link lists two charitable objectives:

“1. To advance the mission of Christ in and from Latin America and also amongst Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking people elsewhere in the world, and in particular to join in evangelism, church planting, the discipling of Christians and the training of leaders, working in partnership with Christians in Latin America.

2. To provide relief to the poor and those who are suffering hardship as a result of natural disaster, sickness, old age, or disease, or by reason of their social and economic conditions.” (LLReport16).

Agency History

France Mission Trust

France Mission Trust (FMT) was formed in 1974 as a British charity with the aim of supporting France Mission, a French Church Union. France Mission have grown from having six churches in 1974 to 58 today, they also have 100 missionaries, of whom 12 are sent from the UK by FMT (FMT Director, 00:11:58).

Because they exist in order to support the work of France Mission, FMT’s activities are defined by the work and needs of the French Charity. FMT provide financial support to help French churches acquire buildings, which they see as a significant need (FMT Director, 00:50:40). They also recruit and send missionaries to France, though this is not seen as a high priority. The decisions about where these British missionaries should work in France are made by the board of France Mission, not by FMT (FMT Director, 00:17:09).

Latin Link

Latin Link (LL) is the product of a 1991 merger between two mission agencies which realised that they could no longer survive as separate entities; Regions Beyond Missionary Union (RBMU) and The Evangelical Union of South America (EUSA). Through these agencies, LL can trace its roots back to the 1840s.

At the time of the merger, EUSA tended to focus on church planting, while RBMU placed an emphasis on social action. According to the current director, these two strands exist in the organisation today and it is possible to identify which organisation a particular missionary or project was associated with (LL Director, 00:10:12).

The major area of engagement is in sending missionaries from the UK:

“In the year to 31 March 2016, Latin Link Britain and Ireland had 113 Latin Link members serving alongside the local church in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua and Peru in Latin America and (in Europe) in Britain, Ireland and Spain.” (LLReport16).

However, LL are also involved in facilitating missionaries from Latin America who come to work in the UK and other parts of the world.

Latin Link is an international community with a calling to love and serve God and our neighbour. Most members of Latin Link work in Latin American countries; some work with Latin Americans in other parts of the world. Others go from Latin America to work in Europe and elsewhere. This is our ‘Latin’ link. (LLWeb Who).

Operating Context

France Mission Trust works in a relatively limited context, restricting itself to supporting the church planting work of France Mission. Latin Link, by contrast, works in eleven different countries in Latin America as well as supporting Latin missionaries in Europe (FMTRReport16). However, both France and much of Latin America are historically predominantly Roman Catholic. It might be expected that this similar religious context would have an effect on the way in which the two agencies operate.

Concept of Mission

The primary objective of FMT is to plant churches in France. This is reflected in their view of mission, is summed up on their website in the slogan *Bâtir des Églises qui se multiplient* (literally: "Building churches that multiply themselves") (FMTWeb Vision). However, although the focus is on church

planting, a form of proclamation, this does not mean that the agency is not involved in some forms of social action.

“It would have to be gospel focused; proclamation would be an important part of it, but proclamation on its own would be insufficient, it would have to be embodied, incarnated in love.” (FMT Director, 00:30,02).

“If you just preach the word but don’t do the deeds then you are not credible, if you just do the deeds without preaching the word then you are not audible. It’s a matter of doing both together.” (FMT Director, 00:48:37).

As has already been noted, LL has an approach to mission which they term Integral mission:

“The gospel message requires word and action. ‘Integral mission’ (Spanish, *‘misión integral’*) emerged out of Latin America in the 1970s and combines the proclamation and demonstration of the gospel. In Spanish, *‘integral’* has the sense of ‘wholeness’ – so integral mission is about looking after both spiritual and physical needs, and not separating evangelism and social involvement. It often shows particular concern for those living in poverty and also in pursuing justice.” (LLReport16).

The director explained an evolution in his own thinking with regard to this subject as follows:

“For me, moving towards this — what I call — holistic mission is moving towards a more biblical view of mission and particularly what Jesus did and how he demonstrated mission. Looking at Jesus — and we would do a lot of this as well — he did actually care for people’s physical needs and he often did that before he sorted out their spiritual needs. So, we are very much involved in both these areas — looking after people — very often it is when you provide for people’s physical needs — I know this in my own outreach — when you provide for their physical needs, it is then that they ask the question of why did you do that? It then gives the opportunity of sharing Jesus with them.” (LL Director, 00:50:33).

Lausanne Themes

Use of the Bible

FMT and LL have similar statements about the nature, purpose and inspiration of the Bible in their declarations of faith.

“We believe that the Bible is the Word of God and that it is therefore invested with full and total authority. It is the only infallible rule of faith and life. The revelation brought by the Bible cannot be modified or completed by any other. We believe that the Holy Spirit presided with sovereign power over the origin and formation of the sixty-six books of the Biblical canon. We believe that the Holy Spirit Himself ensured the perfect instruction and

complete truth of the Bible to the finest detail. Thus, benefiting from the Holy Spirit's total and absolute inspiration, the human authors of the Bible have communicated to us the very word of God." (FMTWeb Statement).

"The Bible — God has revealed himself for all peoples of the world in the Bible. It consists of the Old and New Testaments alone and as originally given is without error. Though written by human authors, every word was given by inspiration of God so that the Bible is in its entirety the Word of God and fully reliable. It is the final authority in all matters of faith and conduct." (LLWeb Basis).

However, there appear to be some differences in the ways that the organisations actually use and apply the Bible in practice.

When asked about how FMT uses the Bible, the director suggested that they would look at the Book of Acts for practical principles that would guide their work. "And then, biblical principles; I suppose France Mission — when Paul went around, he established elders in every local church. Our desire in FMT is to see French leadership wherever we can; local leadership." (FMT Director, 00:26:02).

With regard to LL, the director asserted that the Bible was central to their activities, but he was less specific about the way in which they might draw conclusions from it:

"We use the Bible regularly in leadership team meetings — we would use the Bible in our staff prayer time — we have a weekly devotional as part of that. Our trustees always start with a passage from the Bible etc. At our regular supporter conferences, we always start with a Bible talk and so on — basically it is absolutely key for us. We are evangelical by persuasion and the Bible has a very important role in what we do and as our authority in leading us and guiding us." (LL Director, 00:21:25).

This difference in approach is reflected in the agency documents. A significant number of the Scripture quotes in the FMT documents (9 out of 29 compared with 0 out of 17 for Latin Link) were used as calls to action. For example: "So, as Paul exhorts us, let's pray for 'all those in authority' in France, that they might govern justly and wisely, allowing believers to 'live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness' (1 Timothy 2:2)" (AM140 p.2).

By contrast, LL had no calls to action, but were far more likely (8 out of 17 compared with 3 out of 29) to use Scripture to illustrate a principle. An example of this would be the use of Hebrews 10:23-25⁵¹, not as a call to

⁵¹ "Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us

unity, but as a verse illustrating an article about teams working together. (LF Spring14 p.11).

Proclamation - Social Action

As noted above France Mission Trust and Latin Link each see a role for both proclamation and social action, but they approach this issue from different perspectives. FMT focus on church planting and see social action as an accompaniment to this work, while LL see both proclamation and social action as parts of an integrated whole.

This section explores the implication of these different perspectives on the work of the agencies.

Proclamation

Both agencies are involved in a similar range of proclamation activities; including church planting, discipleship ministry and student work as the following examples show.

“FMT missionaries Jonathan and Rachael Vaughan are currently serving in a church plant in Le Pré Saint Gervais, in the inner suburbs of Paris. An emphasis on Bible teaching is coupled with a range of activities aimed at people in the local community (gospel choir, IT classes, evening talks, art exhibitions). Rachel is involved in a local mums’ and toddlers’ group.” (FMT WebWho).

Latin Link “... started Proclamation Church in Cariré two years ago, with one weekly cell group meeting in our house. Today we have 11 cell groups and a Sunday congregation of over 60 people.” (LLReport14).

Both organisations are involved in work which seeks to encourage and strengthen Christians in their faith.

“We’ve started doing one-to-one studies with some believers in the church who are growing in their faith. It’s very encouraging as we look at God’s Word together and apply it to our own lives, sharing and praying together. We seek to follow the example of Christ as He taught His disciples to grow in His word and then to go out and share with others what they’d learnt.” (AM140 p.12).

“I started some one-to-one discipleship with Josué in 2008. Last year he told us that our example of family life and Christian ministry has had a deep influence on his life choices, including marriage and career.” (LLReport16).

consider how we may spur one another on towards love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”

Sophie Crump of FMT and Phil Rout of LL show the ways in which both agencies are involved with local student organisations:

“Last December, I had the privilege of taking part in an international choir formed by Rennes GBU (student Christian Union). The concerts took place in the Brittany towns of Rennes, Quévert, and Vannes. Over 200 guests came along to hear the Good News of Christmas! Songs were sung in French and English, and a clear gospel message was given by Joel Daut, the FM Pastor in Vannes. ... The feedback was brilliant: one student who came along said that the look on our faces when we were singing made her want to believe in God!” (AM139 p.13).

“Reaching students requires a message focused on the heart of the gospel but connected with all of life. It can't be just words but must be backed up by relationship and real-life experience. Students are thrilled by encountering Jesus in all of Scripture, and their hearts are transformed through knowing him more deeply. At the same time, we help them to see that Christian discipleship affects everything: Christian stewardship and integral mission are important 'staples' within ABU.” (LLReport16).

Though both agencies are involved in a similar range of activities, there is a significant difference in the frequency with which they speak about them. For FMT, in 75 different stories on the website and in their magazines, 68 (91%) focused on proclamation in one form or another, whereas for LL the proportion was 29 out of 81 (36%).

Social Action

Both agencies are involved in social action projects, for example one FMT team runs a Fair-Trade shop in Marseilles (AM138 p.8), while LL teams are involved in a wide variety of programs under the rubric of integral mission. The FMT social action projects generally operate through churches in one way or another:

“We've also — more recently — with the refugee crisis in Calais... Although we don't have a church in Calais, France Mission has a ... is part of a broad group of churches that do have a presence there, so we were able to direct some funds to other organisations who are working directly in the camps, and also one of our own France Mission churches in a completely different part of France does have a strong outreach to refugees, so we were able to direct some funds to them.” (FMT Director, 00:51:49).

By contrast, LL runs projects with a wide range of church and non-church partners as in the following examples.

“Latin Link member Ruth Green oversees the Shalom Centre in Arequipa, Peru, which caters for children with special needs. This involves direct contact with the children, their mothers and

Arequipa's International College, of which Shalom is a social aid project.” (LLWeb Films).

“A Summer Step team arrives in Guatemala City (till 18 August). The team will be working with Puerta de Esperanza (Door of Hope), helping in educational support activities with children who live and work in the Terminal (the main bus station and market).” (LLWeb TheologicalEd).

Not only do LL work with a wide range of partners, they are also involved in a broad range of social action activities including creation care.

“Latin America and the Caribbean have long suffered from the effects of global greed and environmental carelessness, such as deforestation, disappearing glaciers, natural disasters, pollution, and intensive mining and agriculture. In our region in Cusco, farmers in the high Andean areas suffer the effects of drought and unpredictable weather patterns due to climate change. They are losing significant proportions of their crops and cattle, forcing many to migrate to cities. Christians have a Scriptural mandate to care for creation. So, I am part of a group of theologians, pastors, and NGO representatives from the region seeking to make creation care an integral part of church life across the region.” (LLReport16).

There is no indication that FMT are involved in activities of this sort.

Partnerships

Both agencies work closely with partner organisations on the field. FMT exists to support France Mission and decisions about the allocation of personnel and finances are made by the French body. LL has close links to a number of churches and other organisations across Latin America and seek to meet their needs:

“Most of our projects — they would be working very specifically with the church or a church related project. So, a church might say that they are involved in a local orphanage and they require some helpers, or it might be more specific — they are working with disadvantaged children and need a doctor who is able to give medical examinations or whatever — and then we will look for those specific things.” (LL Director, 00:48:23).

However, their website and publications rarely mention any other UK-based mission agencies. In one edition of their magazine, devoted to the subject of human trafficking, they give details of four agencies working in this field, two of which are British (Latin File Spring 15) however, this is the only mention of other British agencies in the literature under examination.

By contrast, FMT make frequent references to other agencies. Their website contains links to 16 other UK-based agencies who work in France and who

could be considered their competitors (FMTWeb Useful). They also hold joint publicity events with other agencies in the UK (AM134 p.2) and mention when missionaries from other agencies are seconded to work under FMT auspices (AM132 p.5).

Perhaps the clearest contrast between the two organisations is illustrated by this short quotation from an edition of the FMT mission which introduced a short-term worker who has spent six months with the organisation: “Emily is spending the second part of her Year Abroad in Ecuador with Latin Link.” (AM139 p.12)

Though Emily is mentioned in the LL documents, there is no reference to her prior service with FMT (LLReport15).

Summary

The group 1 agencies, FMT and LL have a common position in that neither of them use the terms “mission of God” or “unreached people groups”. They also have a similar understanding of the nature of the Bible and both say that proclamation and social action are legitimate part of mission.

However, from this shared background, they have developed different models of mission. FMT is focused on church planting and sees social action as a support to this, whereas LL works with a holistic or integral model of mission.

When it comes to proclamation, both organisations are involved in a similar range of activities. However, clear differences are evident in their approach to social action. FMT is church focused and it is only involved in church-based social action which it sees as a support to proclamation. However, LL, with its broader view of mission is involved in projects which are church-based and others which function outside of church structures. This broader scope of action also allows LL to be involved in a wider range of social action projects than FMT.

As a result of these factors, FMT are far more likely to speak about church planting work in their magazine, whereas LL tend to report on social action projects.

The two organisations adopt different approaches when using the Bible in publicity materials, too. FMT uses the Bible as a call to action, whereas LL is more likely to use it to illustrate issues. These issues will be looked at in more detail in chapter 6.

Although these organisations occupy the same group in the taxonomy, there is no clear unifying theme in their actions or publicity.

Group 2

Mission Africa and WEC do not use the term “mission of God”, but they do both talk about unreached people groups and as a result they were both assigned to the same group in the taxonomy. This section explores the extent to which there is commonality between the organisations over other issues.

Agency Background

Charitable Objectives

Mission Africa describes itself in the following terms:

“Mission Africa (The Qua Iboe Fellowship) exists to advance the evangelical Christian faith in Africa. Our work may be summarised under four headings: 1) Evangelism: engaging in the spread of the gospel where the church is either weak or non-existent. 2) Education and Literacy: strengthening the church in Africa by providing education, especially theological training for pastors and ministers; the provision of all kinds of Christian literature. 3) Medical work: supporting Christian Hospitals through the provision of trained personnel and equipment. We also support hospital pastoral work, such as chaplaincy. The mission has a long history of helping people living with conditions such as Leprosy or HIV / AIDS. 4) Compassionate work. We attempt to demonstrate the love of Christ in practical terms. This can include: helping the poor and vulnerable (such as widows and orphans); providing wells and clean water; promoting peace and reconciliation in fractured societies. These activities are generally undertaken in partnership with other like-minded evangelical churches and missions.” (MAReport2016).

In comparison, WEC has a single objective: “To advance the Christian religion throughout the world by all means, in accordance with our statement of faith” (WECReport2016).

Agency History

Mission Africa

Samuel Bill, an independent missionary from Belfast founded the Qua Iboe Mission, named after the region of South-West Nigeria where he worked in 1887 (MAWeb About). From the 1930s onwards, the agency attempted to expand its work beyond Nigeria and some missionaries went to work in Francophone West Africa. However, the majority continued to be based in

Nigeria. In the early 1960s, they were supporting 70-90 mission personnel, but this was changed by the Biafran war.

“... you see we had too many eggs in one basket and a lot of missionaries ended being interned, sent home and not allowed to go back into Nigeria, because they had been perceived as being part of the Biafran side — I don't think they necessarily were — but perception is everything.” (MA Director, 00:11:07).

Missionary numbers have not recovered following the Biafran war and today, Mission Africa tends to have around 10-20 missionaries at any one time (MA Director). The website currently lists 13 missionaries (MAWeb Missionaries). However, this drop in numbers has not stopped Mission Africa from seeking to expand its work and since 2000 they have started work in both Kenya and Chad. The agency's name was changed to Mission Africa in 2002 to reflect this broadening of its work (MA Director, 00:11:07).

Mission Africa has maintained a strong link to Northern Ireland, where its offices and board of trustees are based. Mission Africa has roots in the “reformed” strand of evangelicalism:

“the practical fact of the matter is that most people who are involved in Mission Africa have come from a reformed background. Certainly, the leadership and the council have been overwhelmingly reformed⁵², from one reformed denomination or another” (MA Director, 00:13:15).

This was the only example of an agency director indicating that their organisation had links to a particular section of the evangelical church.

WEC

WEC was founded in 1913 as the Heart of Africa Mission, by two missionaries, C.T. Studd and Alfred Buxton, who established churches in the Congo. By 1919, with the hope of spreading beyond Africa, the mission was renamed Worldwide Evangelistic Crusade, later shortened to WEC International.

During the 1920s, WEC expanded its work into Amazonia and Northern India and also established sending branches in North America and Australia. The following decades saw the development of work in numerous countries in Africa and elsewhere, with further sending offices being established in the West. In 1941, an ancillary organisation, the Christian Literature Crusade (later named CLC) was established to run bookshops and distribute

⁵² The term “Reformed” refers to a strand of conservative evangelicalism which emphasises its link to the Reformation, in particular the teaching of Calvin.

Christian literature. In 1947 WEC founded its own missionary training college in Glasgow, this was followed by a new radio work called Radio Worldwide (1961) and the establishment of an in-house printing works (1962). In 1971, they started a new work called Neighbours Worldwide which seeks to support the church in the UK as it reaches out with the Christian message (WECWeb History). WEC has continued to expand both in terms of the geographical scope of its work and in the variety of different activities that it undertakes. Today, WEC numbers around 1,800 missionaries working in 90 different countries (WECWeb About) of whom 239 come from the UK (WECReport16).

Operating Context

Mission Africa works exclusively on the African continent. Nevertheless, Mission Africa missionaries are found in a wide range of different contexts including teaching theology and working in hospitals in Nigeria, working alongside church leaders in Kenya and church planting among Muslim groups in Chad (MA Director, 00:11:07).

WEC works in a very wide variety of contexts right across the globe. (WECWeb About)

Concept of Mission

The director of Mission Africa describes their model of mission in this way: "We are engaged in holistic mission, but for us we haven't forgotten about the proclamation aspect" (MA Director 1:30:34). Samuel Bill, the founder of Mission Africa set up a sawmill and taught carpentry and his wife ran a dispensary; however, this social action has to be seen within a strong commitment to proclamation "But really from the outset - because it is a conservative, evangelical agency - the proclamation of the gospel has come first." (MA Director, 01:35:02)

WEC, too, is involved in social-action, or "compassion ministries", as they term them. However, there is a clear priority given to proclamation: "While we support compassion ministries, they must be a means to an end, they are not an end in themselves." (WEC Director, 01:24:33). WEC have identified three objectives for their work; reaching people, planting churches and mobilising. They have considered adding "compassion ministries" as a fourth objective but have rejected that idea and continue to see the various proclamation activities as primary. Despite this clear focus on proclamation, the director of WEC describes the organisation as "generalists" because

they do not focus on any particular type of work or any particular geographic or religious context (WEC Director, 00:59:23).

Lausanne Themes

Use of the Bible

Mission Africa and WEC have similar statements about the Bible in their declarations of faith.

“The supreme authority of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments and their complete sufficiency in all matters of faith and practice.” (MAWeb About).

“We believe in... the Holy Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, as originally given by God, divinely inspired, infallible, entirely trustworthy, and the supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.” (WECWeb Statement).

Equally, both directors see mission as being derived from both the Old and New Testaments.

“Mission is not a late thought in God’s plan but is part of God’s overarching purpose in creation and then his redemptive plan since the time of the fall. For me it stretches in the great theological arc that begins in Genesis 3 and culminates at the cross and beyond. I tend to think in terms of the big theological sweep of Scripture.” (MA Director, 00:32:19).

“I think my conviction would be that the biblical basis of mission is throughout the Old and New Testament, and that it is a principle where we are participating in what God is doing.” (WEC Director, 00:33:51).

However, despite this similar starting point, there are some differences in the way in which the agencies use the Bible in their publications.

The director of Mission Africa, who has a background as an Old Testament scholar suggested that the Mission Africa publications would have a higher proportion of citations from the Old Testament because of his influence. However, in practice only 14 of 32 (30%) of quotations in the Mission Africa literature were from the Old Testament, compared with 9 of 17 (53%) of Old Testament quotations from WEC. However, it should be noted that although Mission Africa quotes the Old Testament significantly less than WEC, it still has a higher proportion of OT quotes than any of the other agencies.

The majority of Scripture quotes in Mission Africa publications fall into two categories. Seventeen quotes (37%) were examples of Bible passages being used to illustrate stories or articles. For example, the top of the page on the Mission Africa website devoted to medical work has the quote “Heal

the sick who are there and tell them, 'The kingdom of God is near you'" from Luke's Gospel (MAWeb Medical). A further 16 quotes (35%) are statements of principle such as the quote from 2 Timothy 2:2⁵³ which occurs in an article setting out the need for the agency to be committed to theological education. (Dispatch Winter13 p.5)

In the WEC literature, a large majority of the quotes (12 of 17 or 71%) were devoted to calls to action, spurring people on to do something in response to the article. A diagram which sets out the steps that someone should follow if they want to work as a missionary contains information such as this: "Am I right with God and other people (Isaiah 59:1-2). We can't expect to have our prayers answered if we have not dealt with unconfessed sin or conflict with others". (Worldwide17 p.10).

Proclamation - Social Action

Mission Africa and WEC both hold to a position where proclamation and social action are legitimate features of mission work, with proclamation being the more important of the two types of activity.

WEC have a focus on proclamation illustrated by the way that their literature puts an emphasis on unreached people groups. The magazine *Worldwide* has the sub-title "The magazine for reaching the unreached", and on the back page of each edition there is a photograph with the text "being the church where there is no church". This priority for proclamation is emphasised by the fact that the WEC literature has four stories about proclamation for every one about social action and by statement such as this one:

"One third of the world does not have access to the stories of Jesus. WEC's aim is to work with God's church to see worshipping communities established among these people groups.

Our teams live alongside local people, journeying with them and sharing the good news. Ultimately, their aim is to plant vibrant churches, empowering local Christians to lead and transform their communities." (WECWeb Planting).

WEC does not become involved in social action projects for their own sake, the underlying purpose is always to proclaim the Christian message in one way or another. The WEC director acknowledged that British society has a tendency to push organisations to be more social action orientated, but he replied robustly that WEC would not travel down this route. "Primarily there

⁵³ "You have heard me teach things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Now teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others."

must be a testimony or a witness to Christ. Because otherwise, why are we doing it.” (WEC Director, 01:29:34).

That being said, maintaining a focus on proclamation is not always straightforward. The director recounted a story about a WEC school in India which teaches the Christian message as part of the curriculum. The local authorities want the school to register with the government, which would allow it to expand and have a greater social impact. However, this would also restrict its ability to teach the Christian faith. The WEC leadership is clear that they prefer to continue to focus on proclamation, even if this means that the school educates fewer children and has a somewhat precarious existence.

Mission Africa has a somewhat more confused position on this issue.

The director indicated that Mission Africa sees Proclamation as a priority: “Mission Africa are definitely committed to preaching and teaching the Bible.” (MA Director, 00:45:51) In an editorial for dispatch, he wrote the following

“A gentleman recently asked me what was unusual or different about Mission Africa. I suspect that in the years to come, if trends continue, we will be considered increasingly unusual in our passion to make the gospel known!” (Dispatch Winter15 p.3).

However, despite this emphasis on proclamation, it is only one of four activities among the agency’s charitable objectives. In the literature, stories about social action outnumber by 50% those about proclamation.

These different positions are reflected in the activities that the two agencies report in their magazines.

Mission Africa mention a number of social action projects; medical mission (including AIDS and malaria education) (Dispatch Winter16, Summer14, Spring15), child sponsorship (Spring15) and practical skills training (Summer15). The proclamation activities tend to be aimed at Christians and include: theological education (Spring16) and Christian literature distribution (Spring17). Reports on overt evangelistic activity or church planting are relatively rare (see Spring17), though many of the social action projects mentioned above include regular times of Bible study.

By way of contrast, WEC’s magazine makes very few mentions of social action projects other than Betel, a drugs rehabilitation charity which it runs (Worldwide16). However, there is a wide range of proclamation activities mentioned, these include rural and urban church planting and Bible

translation (Worldwide15, 16, 17). However, in keeping with WEC's focus on unreached people groups, the stories about proclamation tend to focus more on the group of people being reached than on the methods used to reach them.

As has been noted, both agencies have a focus on unreached people groups. They both use the Joshua project for their definition of unreached groups and both have numerous references to unreached people in their magazines.

Partnerships

Neither Mission Africa, nor WEC speak a great deal about partnerships with others. The Mission Africa director mentioned that they have good relationships with one or two other agencies on the field and that Mission Africa participates in Global Connections events in the UK (MA Director, 01:30:34). There is no mention of partnerships with other organisations in the information from WEC. However, it should be noted that WEC has spawned a number of related organisations such as CLC and Radio Worldwide and that they continue to work very closely with these.

Both Mission Africa and WEC have planted churches in countries where they work, but these churches are all independent of the parent mission now.

Summary

Mission Africa supporters are increasingly interested in social action and the agency is unable to attract people to be involved in church planting with unreached people. Thus, despite the agency's convictions to the contrary, it is pushed towards a greater emphasis on social action.

“There is a lot of pressure on us, I think, and some of the younger supporters are more orientated towards aid and development and what-not.

I suspect also that we are seeing a change that is reflected in the wider composition of the Western church; that there is less of a sense of urgency about reaching out with the gospel. More people are wanting to go and do nice deeds, like building water tanks or cuddling babies.

Again, to speak frankly, it is one of the areas where we have been least successful in attracting people. We've done much better in attracting people to theological colleges and libraries and things. There have been very few in these last 12 years who have actually wanted to go and do work with unreached people groups. The other big success story is that we don't particularly struggle to get

people to work in compassionate work, with children or in hospitals.” (MA Director, 01:12:58)

By contrast, WEC is a much bigger agency, with a national presence and no affiliation to any particular strand of the church. As such, it is more able to resist the pressures which drive Mission Africa. This issue was raised in the interview with the WEC director:

“I certainly haven’t received the pressure to do that and even if I did, I wouldn’t. ... Let’s take Wycliffe — presumably Wycliffe is not spending huge amounts of money translating the Bible into English. It’s pushing, always pushing — as long as by God’s grace it’s pushing into something new — that is our message. At the end of the day, I don’t think that mission is for everyone - that sounds awful.” (WEC Director, 01:34:29)

So, the WEC director does not feel under any particular pressure to adjust their message and believes that they would not change, even if such pressure was present. However, this is tied to a belief that mission “isn’t for everyone”, something which implies that WEC have a large support base and can afford to lose people who do not share their convictions.

Another significant difference between Mission Africa and WEC is the fact that Mission Africa remains a traditional mission agency, recruiting personnel and raising funds to support work in Africa, whereas WEC both sends and receives missionaries to and from the UK.

The two organisations share a similar conviction about the nature of the Bible, but there is a difference in the way that they apply the Bible in their publicity. Mission Africa tends to use it to support theological points, while WEC uses it to motivate and guide individuals.

As with Group 1, the two agencies in Group 2 share a number of similar convictions, but there is no clear unifying pattern in the way that these principles are developed in practice.

Groups 3 and 4

Groups 3 and 4 each consist of only one agency and so it is impossible to compare agencies within these groups. However, these two agencies will be examined against the same criteria as those in groups 1 and 2 in order to provide a basis for comparison.

Group 3

Agency Background

Charitable Objectives

International Nepal Fellowship lists two charitable objectives:

“a. To advance the Christian religion by enabling Christians to serve amongst Nepali and other Asian people”; and b. “To relieve persons who are in need by reasons of poverty, sickness or distress.” (INFReport15).

Agency History

The roots of INF go back to the mid 1930s when two British doctors sensed a call from God to work in Nepal. Unable to enter the country, they set up a clinic just inside the Indian border, where they worked until 1952. In that year, the Nepali government gave them permission to set up a clinic in Pokora and at that point the mission was formally founded. It was at the same time that it became legal for Nepalis to become Christians and an indigenous church was created in the country. Thus, the Nepali church and INF have existed in the country for the same length of time. The mission has always viewed itself as a partner of the church and there is no sense in which the church could be viewed as a product of the agency’s work (INF Director, 00:09:17).

Operating Context

It is illegal for a foreign NGO to run or direct projects in Nepal. For this reason, all of the work in the country is carried out by INF Nepal, an indigenously run and governed NGO. The role of INF UK is to provide support and resources for the work of INF Nepal (INFReport16).

Nepal is a very poor country, with many men working as migrant labourers in India and the Persian Gulf. Literacy levels are low and there is limited health care available, especially in the rural areas. From its beginnings in 1952, the church is growing rapidly and there is now a Christian presence in each of the country’s regions (INFWeb About).

Concept of Mission

The director of INF has a view of mission which is derived from Jesus’ teaching about the Kingdom of God:

“I think as evangelicals we have short-changed the Kingdom and that mission has short-changed it somewhat by linking it just to evangelism. I think it is so much more. I guess that is where I am

seeing and feeling the heart of God — of his passion for mankind — but his passion for all that he has made. How we related to each other, relate to the environment, relate to ourselves, relate to God — Jesus came to say that needs to come back to order. We see glimpses of it now ahead of the full restoration in time.” (INFDirector).

This belief that things need to “come back to order” is developed in the agency’s objectives of enabling Christians to work in Nepal and also through and the relief of poverty.

Lausanne Themes

Use of the Bible

INF’s underlying view of the Bible is similar to that of other agencies. However, in their “what we believe” section, they emphasise the importance of reading and praying through the Bible in the corporate life of the agency:

“We believe the writers of the Bible were inspired by God. Consequently, the Bible is useful for our training, equipping and transformation as we meditate on, study and apply it [2 Timothy 3:16-17]. We therefore affirm the importance of prayer, worship and reading the Bible together in our community.” (INFWeb Inspiration).

The majority of quotes (19 of 21, or 90%) from the Bible in the INF documents are taken from the New Testament. Of these citations, 18 (86%) are statements of principle, generally referring to the Bible’s call to care for the poor and disadvantaged, for example: Matthew 25:34-36,⁵⁴ and Micah 6:8⁵⁵.

Proclamation - Social Action

INF has a complex position with regard to proclamation and social action. Their charitable objectives make it clear that they aim for both the promotion of the Christian religion and the relief of poverty. This was underlined by the director’s response to a question on this theme: “As a mission, one of the clear things that we have had for a very long time is that the two are part of one single whole. You cannot separate the two out” (INFDirector).

⁵⁴ “Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world. For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.’

⁵⁵ Know, O people, the Lord has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.”

However, this should not be taken as indicating that INF is equally involved in proclamation and social action. The first of their charitable objectives reads: “To advance the Christian religion by enabling Christians to serve amongst Nepali and other Asian people” (INFReport15). The clear implication is that they seek to promote Christianity, not by preaching or evangelising, but by providing opportunities for service. Though they consider evangelism to be an important facet of mission, they do not view it as a central part of their own mandate.

“Because we have always been a health-related mission, there has always had to be that element of work. We have never planted churches and when it went into Nepal and the church was planted separately, we’ve never thought to plant churches, but to support the local church instead — who planted churches and did it very well indeed.” (INF Director, 00:48:55).

Thus, INF espouses a view which says that both social action and proclamation are a part of mission; in this they are similar to the other agencies in this study. However, in practice, they can be distinguished from the five other agencies examined in that they concentrate almost exclusively on social action.

Partnerships

INF has a close partnership with churches and other agencies working in Nepal. On an international level, they hold joint supporters’ conferences with another evangelical agency, The United Mission To Nepal (TIN227 p.11, TIN230 p.10).

Group 4

Agency Background

Charitable Objectives

OMF has two charitable objectives:

- “The advancement of the Christian faith worldwide
- The advancement of education according to Christian principles”

These are developed in a mission statement “to glorify God by serving the UK Church as a catalyst for cross-cultural mission with special focus on the peoples of East Asia” (OMFReport16).

Agency History

OMF is the oldest agency in this study: it was founded in 1865 as the China Inland Mission (CIM) by James Hudson Taylor. It was the first of the faith

missions and provided a model for the subsequent development of mission agencies (Fiedler, 1994, 9).

During its early years, CIM based its work in the interior of China, the workers adopting local styles of dress and living closely among the Chinese. In the early twentieth century, 58 CIM missionaries and 21 children were killed during the Boxer rebellion. Unlike most Western commercial and government interests, CIM refused to demand reparations for the damage suffered, when the rebellion ended (BillionsJan15 p.21). In 1949, as the Communists came to power in China, CIM decided to withdraw from the country and based themselves in Singapore, with the aim of reaching the Chinese diaspora across South-East Asia. At this point, they adopted the name of the Overseas Missionary Fellowship of the CIM, which has been shortened to OMF over the years (BillionsAug15 P.13).

Today, OMF has 1,400 missionaries from over 40 countries. An important feature of their current workforce is that a significant number of their missionaries have been recruited from SE Asian countries which once would have been regarded as “mission fields” (BillionsSept15 p.20).

Operating Context

OMF works in East Asia, from the Philippines in the South to Mongolia in the North and from Thailand in the West to Japan in the East. This is an area with a vast population of 2.15 billions which covers a variety of social and religious contexts. Some countries are majority Buddhist, others are Islamic, and China is officially atheist. The area includes nomadic herders, rain forest dwellers and people living in urban megacities (BillionsSept14). In this wide variety of contexts, it is impossible for OMF to adopt one single approach or methodology and this is reflected in their concept of mission.

Concept of Mission

In 2015, OMF adopted a new mission statement which was explained in the May-August edition of Billions. This statement says: “We share the Good News of Jesus Christ in all its fullness with East Asia’s peoples to the glory of God” (BillionsMay15 p.23). This statement defines the agency’s area of action (East Asia) and their motivation (the glory of God). The phrase “in all its fullness” indicates that OMF has a broad view of mission. As a result, OMF is involved in a wide range of activities including evangelism, theological education, literacy and education, creation care and the promotion of justice and reconciliation.

Lausanne Themes

Use of the Bible

The OMF declaration of faith makes the following statement about the Bible:

“We believe in the divine inspiration and entire trustworthiness of the Bible, its infallible teaching and supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct; and its normative value for all peoples, at all times, in all cultures.” (OMFWeb About).

The director holds a view that mission is derived both from the Old and New Testaments:

“So, a basis for mission that is articulated from Genesis to Revelation and is centred on the work of Christ and the empowerment of the Spirit and an anticipation of his return and in the meantime a realisation of the Kingdom come and our working out of the purposes of God in our context. So, when we talk about the biblical basis of mission — certainly here in the UK — we are trying not to limit ourselves to one or two from the end of the Gospels. We are trying very much to look at the whole Bible, so the Old Testament is very much relevant to mission, because the OT provides the foundation for mission in the New Testament ...” (OMF Director, 00:25:21)

However, in the OMF documents, 29 (88%) of 33 Scripture quotes were from the New Testament. There was no clear pattern to the way in which OMF uses Scripture in its publications. In ten cases, Scripture is used to illustrate the point of an article for example, quoting Paul’s gratitude to his friends in Philippi in an article about OMF’s gratitude to its financial supporters (Billions JAN 14). Ten further quotes were statements of principle, for example: “according to Matthew 28:18–20 mission involves bringing people to maturity and building communities of obedient followers of Jesus” (Billions Sept. 16). One other use of Scripture featured prominently, the call to action of which there were 8 examples such as the use of Galatians 6:9⁵⁶ in a tweet (OMFTweets May 22 2017).

Proclamation - Social Action

As noted above, OMF has a view of mission which encompasses a wide range of activities. This is reflected in their publications which have an equal balance between stories which cover social action and those which cover proclamation.

⁵⁶ “Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.”

One exception to this position is found in the OMF twitter feed. The fact that tweets are limited to 140 characters means that they were not coded as stories in the initial analysis. However, over the year' 125 of 252 tweets from the OMF account made a direct or indirect reference to proclamation. The remainder included a significant number of tweets which referred to cultural and political events in Asia as well as exhortations to a more faithful Christian life. In terms of direct references to mission, the tweets on proclamation far outnumbered others.

There is a tension in the OMF publications between the Billions magazines which present a nuanced and broad ranging view of mission and the Twitter feed which is much more focused on evangelism, through the use of the hashtag #thetaskunfinished. To what extent this is a feature of the nature of the different media and to what extent it reflects a tension within the life of the agency will be considered in the final chapter.

Partnerships

The OMF literature does not mention partnerships with other agencies in the UK, however, their board report indicates that cooperation is a high priority for them:

“OMF UK co-operates with other Christian agencies in the pursuit of its mission, both directly and through Global Connections, an inter-mission organisation which seeks to develop common understanding and approaches to key issues in Christian mission.” (OMFReport15).

Overall Comparison

Having compared the agencies within the taxonomy groups. The next stage is to examine all of the agencies, together. The aim is to explore whether there is any contrast between the actions of agencies in different groups and to discover whether there are commonalities among all of the agencies.

Agency Background

The following table presents summary information on the background of each of the agencies. The summary of the charitable objectives and the FY 2016 income are gathered from the agencies' official reports for the year 2016. The other information comes from the interview with the director and from the analysis performed earlier in this chapter. Each agency defines “missionaries” slightly differently, but these differences do not materially affect the numbers in the table.

Table 4: Summary of Agency Information

Agency	Objectives	Foundation	Context	Concept of Mission	FY 16 Income	Number of UK Missionaries
France Mission	Spread of Christian Gospel in French speaking world. Planting churches in France	1974	France	Proclamation focused. Social Action supports proclamation.	£388,997	12
Latin Link Mission	To advance mission in and from Latin America. The relief of poverty.	1991 (1840s)	Latin Mission	Holistic	£2,271,455	113
Mission Africa	Evangelism Education and literacy Medical work Compassionate work.	1887	Africa	Holistic	£683,700	13
WEC	To advance the Christian religion throughout the world.	1913	Worldwide	Proclamation focus	£3,071,000	239
INF	To advance the Christian religion by enabling Christians to serve amongst Nepalis. Relief of poverty, sickness and distress.	1952	Nepal	Holistic (though they are not actively involved in proclamation)	£1,187,717	16

Agency	Objectives	Foundation	Context	Concept of Mission	FY 16 Income	Number of UK Missionaries
OMF	Advancement of Christian faith worldwide. Advancement of education according to Christian principles.	1865	East Asia	Holistic	£7,415,174	205

It is possible to draw a tentative conclusion from this information that the younger organisations, those founded post the second world war, have a more focused approach than the older agencies.⁵⁷

France Mission Trust and INF are the two agencies which clearly fall into this category and they are the only agencies which work in a single country and with a single partner organisation. These two agencies also have a clear focus in terms of their approach to mission. France Mission is focused on proclamation whereas INF concentrates on social action.

Like France Mission, WEC has a clear focus on proclamation, but their field of action is worldwide, the broadest of any of the agencies in this study.

No attempt has been made to calculate the cost per individual by dividing the agency income by the number of missionaries. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, some agencies run costly programmes that are not heavily dependent on expatriate staff. For example, INF has approximately one third of the income of WEC, despite WEC having fifteen times more missionaries. This is because INF runs clinics and is involved in disaster relief projects most of which are staffed by Nepalis, rather than expats. Secondly, missionary stipends tend to be determined by the actual cost of living in a situation, rather than by seniority, qualifications or job role. This means that missionaries living in, say, Paris are likely to cost more to the agency than colleagues working in rural Senegal. Drawing conclusions about missionary costs and support levels would involve a level of analysis which lies outside of the scope of this project.

Use of the Bible

The following table looks at the way in which the agencies use Scripture in their publications. The various quotations were coded according to the way in which the Bible was used. Where more than 30% of the quotes fell into a particular category they were entered on the table.

⁵⁷ Although Latin Link emerged in 1991, it was as a merger between two much older agencies and so it is considered as one of the older agencies.

Table 5: Agency Use of the Bible

Agency	Personal Experience	Foundational Beliefs	Tangential Relationship	Illustration	God's Activity	Statement of Principle	Call to Action
France Mission Trust						X	X
Latin Link				X		X	
Mission Africa				X		X	
WEC							X
INF						X	
OMF				X		X	

It is clear that the majority of uses of Scripture fell into one of three of the categories. These were defined in the coding system as follows:

- Illustration: Using a Scripture passage to illustrate the subject of the story or article. There needs to be some obvious connection.
- Statement of Principle: Using Scripture as a statement of a missiological principle which is worked out in practice.
- Call to Action: Using Scripture passages in order to call the readership to actually do something.

The following are examples of the categories:

- "For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the LORD, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future'" (Jeremiah 29:11). Was used to introduce a short article about the way in which a missionary's life had taken a number of unexpected turns. (FMTWeb Appeal)
- A statement of principle: "Jesus' Great Commission in Matthew 28:16–20 has traditionally been held as the prime justification for mission. This means that mission is about proclaiming the good news of Christ. However, we sometimes forget that at the centre of Jesus' commission is a call to make disciples who will obey his commands." (BillionsSept16 p.14)
- A call to action comes from Worldwide 2017 (WEC) Which says that potential missionaries should put God's concerns ahead of their own and that, if they do, God will provide for their needs. This exhortation is based on Matthew 6:33 (seek first the Kingdom of God...) (Worldwide17 p.11).

There are two initial conclusions which can be drawn from this Table 5. The first is that the majority of agencies use Scripture as the basis for the principles upon which they build their work. The second is that the two agencies with a clear focus on proclamation are the ones which are most likely to use Scripture to give a call to action.

Proclamation - Social Action

Table 6: Proclamation - Social Action

Agency	Director's Position	Charitable Objectives/Mission Statement	Contents of Documents	Summary Position
France Mission Trust	Focus on proclamation, with social action as a support.	Clear focus on proclamation.	The stories and articles all have a focus on proclamation.	Proclamation Focus
Latin Link	Suggested both a focus on proclamation and an integrated approach.	Integrated or holistic approach.	There is a balance between proclamation and social action, but overall there are more stories and articles which focus on social action than proclamation.	Integrated Approach
Mission Africa	A clear focus on proclamation.	Charitable objectives which cover both proclamation and social action.	Majority of stories and articles focus on social action.	Integrated Approach

Agency	Director's Position	Charitable Objectives/Mission Statement	Contents of Documents	Summary Position
WEC	Clear focus on proclamation	Focus on proclamation	The majority of stories and articles focus on proclamation.	Proclamation Focus
INF	Sees a need for both proclamation and social action, but the agency has a focus on the latter.	Sees a need for both, but the agency has a focus on social action.	A clear agency focus on social action.	Social Action Focus
OMF	Adopts an integrated approach	Places an equal priority on social action and proclamation	The agency publications reflect a concern for both proclamation and social action. However, the Twitter feed stands out because of its focus on unreached people.	Integrated Approach

Range of Social Action Activities

The various mission activities that the agencies mention in their publications are listed in Table 7.

These activities were the ones mentioned in the agencies' magazines and websites. It could well be that they are involved in a wider range than this, though they did not refer to them during the time frame under review. A number of observations can be made from this table.

- The two agencies which focus on proclamation, FMT and WEC, are the two agencies with the narrowest range of activities.
- The two agencies which use the term mission of God, INF and OMF, have the broadest range of activities.
- The position of Mission Africa is somewhat ambiguous. As discussed above, the agency describes itself as having a proclamation focus, whereas in fact the balance of the literature suggests that it has a more integrated approach. However, in terms of the breadth of social action activities, Mission Africa is much more akin to the agencies with a proclamation focus.

Table 7: Agency Range of Social Action Activities

	France Mission Trust	Latin Link	Mission Africa	WEC	INF	OMF
Justice		X			X	X
Response to exploitation/trafficking		X			X	
Micro loans					X	
Women's empowerment			X		X	
Crisis response			X		X	X
Relief of poverty		X	X		X	X
Arts	X	X		X		X
Creation care		X				X
Prison ministry		X				X
Student ministry	X	X				X
Response to sex tourism		X				X
Theological education			X			X
Response to persecution						X
Response to refugees	X			X		X
Fair trade	X				X	
Work with addicts		X		X	X	X
Medical work			X		X	X
Literacy					X	X
Totals	4	9	5	3	10	14

Issues Related To Missionaries

All of the agencies in this study have long-term missionaries on their staff and also provide opportunities for people to be involved in their work for shorter periods. In their publicity, some of the agencies outline their rationale for having long-term missionaries from overseas working around the world. Table 8 summarises this information.

Table 8: Issues Related to Missionaries in Agency Publications

Agency	Short-Term Opportunities	Discussion of the rationale expat missionaries	Facilitates Mission to the UK
France Mission Trust	Opportunities for language students studying in France for a year.	No	No
Latin Link	An integrated approach to short-term and long-term membership.	No	Yes
Mission Africa	A focus on summer teams.	No	No
WEC	A wide variety of options.	Yes	Yes
INF	A focus on vision trips for people to visit the work in Nepal.	Yes	No
OMF	A wide variety of options.	Yes	No ⁵⁸

⁵⁸ In the course of the study, this position evolved. In a tweet dated March 2018, Peter Rowan, the

In the experience of the author, the leadership of mission agencies views the promotion of short-term mission opportunities as an essential component of recruiting career missionaries. Because of local restrictions and their relationships with in-country organisations, France Mission Trust and INF are less interested in recruiting long-term missionaries than the other agencies. This is reflected in the fact that their short-term offerings are more limited than those provided by the other agencies.

In recent years, with the growth of the world church, the place of Western missionaries has been questioned in some evangelical circles (see for example (Borthwick, 2012) and (Engel and Dyrness, 2000)). Three of the agencies, WEC (Worldwide17 p.15), INF (TIN226 p.13, TIN231 p.15) and OMF (Billions Jan15 p.11,12, Billions Sept16 p.11) discuss this issue in their publicity materials.⁵⁹ They each, in different ways support the continual involvement of Western missionaries but concede that their role needs to change as the church changes.

Two of the agencies, Latin Link and WEC have responded to changes in the world church by starting to sponsor missionaries from other parts of the world to come to work in the UK.

Issues Related to the Host Country

This table records the extent to which the agencies discuss the situation in their host countries.

Table 9: Issues Related to the Host Country in Agency Publications

Agency	History and culture	Government and politics	National Christian workers	Articles written by national Christians
France Mission Trust	X	X	X	
Latin Link		X		

director of OMF sought advice as to the best way to engage in reverse mission (Rowan, 2018).

⁵⁹ The issue of the place of Western missionaries in the world church was raised as long ago as 1972 in the IMC (Geevarghese, 2010, 10).

Agency	History and culture	Government and politics	National Christian workers	Articles written by national Christians
Mission Africa		X	X	
WEC		X		
INF		X	X	X
OMF	X	X	X	X

All of the agencies mentioned issues relating to the government or political situations where they work. However, the agencies which only work in one country (France Mission Trust and INF) were able to give a much deeper level of coverage compared to the other agencies. France Mission Trust published a series of articles on French history and culture, and OMF gave significant coverage to Asian history and culture during the celebration of their 150th anniversary.

All of the agencies publish articles which describe the lives of people in the countries in which they work, however, these articles are almost invariably written by Western missionaries or journalists. INF and OMF include a small proportion of articles written by local people.

Issues related to supporters

In their publications, all of the agencies provide opportunities for supporters to be involved in their work, whether through financial donations, supporting them in prayer or by joining in the agency in a long, or short-term capacity.

All UK charities are required to provide an annual report which is available to the public on the charity commission website. However, only France Mission Trust, Latin Link and OMF take the additional step of including their full financial report in the agency magazines.

Organisational Culture

The analysis so far has looked at what is and what is not contained in the various interviews and documents that have been examined. In terms of the Schein model of organisational culture mentioned in chapter 3 these are artefacts. This section probes more deeply and analyses the underlying beliefs and values which give rise to the behaviours which have been

observed. These underlying beliefs and values fall into two types: espoused beliefs and underlying assumptions. Espoused beliefs are those things that the members of an organisation say about the organisation; these consciously held beliefs give rise to some of the artefacts. At a deeper level are the underlying assumptions, things which are so key to the organisation that they are taken for granted and not always overtly expressed. Underlying assumptions give rise to artefacts which cannot be explained on the basis of espoused values alone.

It is possible to distinguish between espoused values and underlying assumptions by the extent to which they give rise to consistent expression in terms of artefacts. Underlying assumptions, being more deeply rooted in the organisation, are likely to give rise to more consistent observable behaviour than espoused values (Schein, 1992, 32).

There are two parts to this analysis of organisational culture. The first examines the organisations which used the terms the mission of God and unreached peoples. The aim of this first stage is to identify whether the agencies hold these concepts as espoused beliefs or underlying assumptions. It is impractical to assess the extent to which the absence of a factor is a belief or value, so not all of the agencies will be included in this section. The second strand to the analysis will consider all of the agencies with the aim of identifying the values which emerge from reflection on their publications.

It should be noted that all of the organisations share a number of underlying assumptions related to the nature of evangelical Christianity and mission. While these assumptions are extremely important to the agencies and contribute greatly to their existence and actions, they are not strictly relevant to this study and so will not be investigated.

Unreached People Groups

Three of the agencies in this study (Mission Africa, WEC and OMF) use the term “unreached people groups” and related concepts. This section explores the way in which these ideas reflect organisational culture.

Mission Africa

The Mission Africa website states: “Mission Africa remains committed to pioneering evangelism among people yet to be reached with the gospel” (MAWeb About), indicating a commitment to the unreached people group concept. Other pages on the website reinforce this, for example (MAWeb Burkina; MAWeb Chad) and (MA Nigeria). Unreached people groups are

occasionally referred to in Dispatch, the Mission Africa magazine. Two editions have graphics indicating the number of unreached people groups in each of the countries where the agency works (DispatchSpring14, DispatchSpring16). However, there are many articles where there is no reference either to evangelism or to the concept of unreached people groups.

The website page on short-term teams (MAWeb Short-term) asks the following question: "Do you have the vision to bring the Good News of Jesus to some of the world's largest unreached people groups?". However, in the Dispatch magazine advertisements for short-term teams, unreached people groups are rarely mentioned. For example, the Spring 17 edition (Dispatch Spring17 p.19) advertises for teams to be involved in HIV work, football coaching camps, and children's work with churches in two different countries. In the same edition (Dispatch Spring17 p. 20, 21) the agency recruits for long-term workers to be involved in theological education, medical work, support for vulnerable women and literature ministry. In none of these cases is there any reference to unreached people. These advertisements are typical of those in examined Dispatch.

Regarding recruitment, the Director of Mission Africa, said the following:

"We advertise specifically for people to reach out. We indicate some of the unreached people groups that we are trying to talk to. Again, to speak frankly, it is one of the areas where we have been least successful in attracting people. We've done much better in attracting people to theological colleges and libraries and things. There have been very few in these last 12 years who have actually wanted to go and do work with unreached people groups. The other big success story is that we don't particularly struggle to get people to work in compassionate work; with children or in hospitals." (MA Director, 01:12:58).

From the Mission Africa literature, it seems that recruitment for work amongst unreached people groups is, at best, tangential, while they are very overt about recruiting for compassionate work. There is not enough evidence to discern whether the relative success in recruiting for compassionate roles and the prominence of these roles in Mission Africa advertising are cause or effect.

However, there is little consistency in the way that Mission Africa talks about unreached people groups. This would indicate that this focus is an espoused belief, rather than an underlying assumption.

WEC

As has been noted, the language of unreached people groups is all-pervading in the WEC literature. This is illustrated by the fact that their magazine, *Worldwide*, has the subtitle “The magazine for reaching the unreached”. Stories of missionaries in the field, for example (WECWeb Malcom) and advertisements for new recruits (*Worldwide* 17 p.27) make references to the unreached.

This consistency indicates that reaching unreached people groups is an underlying assumption for WEC.

OMF

OMF has a publicity campaign reflected in the hashtag #thetaskunfinished which focuses on unreached people groups. This is most obvious from the agency’s twitter feed which makes extensive use of the hashtag. There are also references to this campaign in 2016 and 2017 editions of the agency magazine, *Billions*. However, prior to 2016, there are no references to the specific campaign and relatively few to the concept of unreached people groups.

OMF’s vision statement makes an indirect reference to the concept of unreached peoples but places it within a more complex framework which includes the development of local churches. “Through God’s grace we aim to see an indigenous, biblical church-planting movement in each people group of East Asia, evangelising their own people and reaching out in mission to other peoples.” (OMFReport16)

OMF places an emphasis on the development and growth of the Asian church and invests significant resources in training and equipping Asian Christians. In addition, OMF is engaged in a broad range of activities including evangelism, education and creation care. In this context, working with unreached people groups is a means to a broader end, rather than an end in itself.

The current #taskunfinished publicity campaign which focuses on unreached people groups represents one strand of OMF’s activity, but this is far from the entirety of their work. The fact that unreached people groups were rarely mentioned in pre-2016 publicity shows that reaching them is an espoused value rather than an underlying assumption.

The Mission of God

Two of the agencies in the study use the terms “mission of God” or “*missio Dei*”. The following section explores the way in which these terms reflect organisational culture in these agencies.

Expected Artefacts

In order to understand the relevance of the concept of the mission of God to an organisation’s culture, it is necessary to examine the artefacts that would be produced by the agency in response to this concept. Unlike in the case of unreached people groups, there is no clear mapping from the cultural concept to artefacts.

The Cape Town Commitment is based on an approach to mission rooted in the mission of God. A distinctive of the CTC is a broad approach to mission which encompasses a range of activities including evangelism, church planting, various forms of social action, advocacy and creation care. A similar approach is taken by Wright in his book “The Mission of God’s People”, which seeks to outline a practical expression of the mission of God (Wright, 2010).

Wrogemann points out that if we view mission as being primarily God’s work, rather than something that Christians engage in, then partnership, collaboration and a lack of competitiveness are natural outworkings of this (Wrogemann, 2018, 94).

Given this, it is expected that agencies which have the mission of God as part of their underlying culture would be expected to demonstrate a wide variety of activities and a significant degree of partnership. The extent to which these expressions are consistent will indicate the degree to which the mission of God is embedded in the agency culture.

INF

It has already been noted that INF views both evangelism and social action as being important. However, the agency has never been involved in evangelistic work as this is carried out by its partner, the Nepali national church. INF is, however involved in a wide range of social action activities. INF also hold joint supporters’ conferences with another agency, the United Mission to Nepal.

INF consistently shows a positive approach to partnerships and a lack of competition with regard to the church and to other agencies. It is also involved in a wide range of activities. This consistency would indicate that

the mission of God is an underlying assumption for the agency, rather than an espoused value. According to Schein, underlying assumptions are not always articulated within an organisation and this could account for the fact that the mission of God is not mentioned in INF documents.

OMF

As with INF, OMF is engaged in a wide range of mission activities and is involved in a significant number of partnerships, particularly with local churches. The #thetaskunfinished campaign places an emphasis on evangelism among unreached people groups, however across the breadth of the OMF literature, it is clear that evangelism is only one component in a broad spectrum of different activities.

The consistent way in which the range of different activities and partnerships are represented in the OMF literature is an indication that the mission of God is an underlying assumption in the OMF organisational culture.

History and Organisational Culture

For both INF and OMF, the mission of God is an underlying assumption in their organisational culture. Likewise, WEC has unreached people groups as an underlying assumption. For Mission Africa and OMF unreached people groups are an espoused value.

Of these four agencies, INF is the youngest, having been founded in 1952, WEC, founded in 1913, is the next youngest while, Mission Africa and OMF originated in the 1800s. This means that all of the agencies were founded before the Willingen conference where the modern use of *missio Dei*/the mission of God originated and well before the 1974 Lausanne Conference and the upsurge in emphasis on unreached people groups.

There is no evidence in the literature that the corporate culture of these organisations has changed significantly since their foundation. This means that these two issues were part of the corporate culture of the agencies before they were identified as significant theological issues. In these cases, it seems that the articulation of theological concepts has provided a vocabulary for ideas which were already embedded within these organisations, though, perhaps, not articulated as such.

Summary of Agency Organisational Culture

It is beyond the scope of this study to develop a detailed analysis of the organisational culture of each of the agencies. However, using the methodology from the previous sections and including the conclusions

drawn in them, it is possible to form Table 10 which illustrates some of the espoused beliefs and underlying assumptions of the agencies.

Table 10: Agency Organisational Culture

Agency	Espoused Beliefs	Underlying Assumptions
France Mission Church	Social action as a support to evangelism	The importance of church planting Work in France
Latin Link	A priority for proclamation	Holistic mission Mission to and from Latin America
Mission Africa	Unreached people groups	Holistic mission A focus on Africa
WEC	A creative approach to evangelism	Unreached people groups A priority for evangelism
INF		The mission of God A focus on Nepal
OMF	Unreached people groups	The mission of God A focus on East Asia

WEC is the only organisation which holds a focus on unreached people groups as an underlying assumption. This is reflected in the fact that WEC has a clear focus on proclamation and sees social action as a support to this focus. Mission Africa and OMF, in comparison, both have a focus on unreached people groups as an espoused belief. This is reflected in the fact that though they both repeatedly refer to the importance of evangelism in their publications, the overall pattern of their activities reveals a deeper held value for a broad, more inclusive approach to mission. Though Latin Link does not use the language of unreached people groups (which would not fit with their context in Latin America), their organisational culture resembles that of Mission Africa and OMF in that they have an espoused belief in the

importance of proclamation, but this is tempered by a deeper belief in holistic mission.

Summary

In chapter 4, the six agencies were assigned to four different groups on the basis of the agencies' position with regard to the mission of God and unreached people groups. In this chapter, the agencies which were assigned to the same group were compared across a variety of factors to assess the how similar they were. Following this, all of the agencies in the sample were compared to see what similarities existed between agencies which were assigned to different groups.

A number of conclusions can be drawn from this analysis.

- Being in the same group did not mean that agencies would have a similar approach across a range of issues.
- Two agencies sharing a similar classification may express a similar conviction in different ways depending on the extent to which it is embedded in the organisational culture. WEC and Mission Africa both have a focus on "unreached people groups". However, for WEC this is an underlying assumption which impacts the whole of their activities, while for Mission Africa it is an espoused belief and does not find expression across all of their work.
- Two agencies which are classified differently in the taxonomy may nevertheless show some similarities. Both Latin Link and OMF have an integrated approach to proclamation and social action, and both are involved in a wide range of social action projects. Despite this, they occupy diametrically opposite positions in the taxonomy, with Latin Link holding neither to "unreached people groups" or the "mission of God", while OMF holds to both.
- The implication of this is that the particular theological issues which were chosen as the basis of the taxonomy do not generally have a significant impact on the choices made by agencies. An exception to this statement is the way in which WEC's focus on unreached people groups permeates the whole of the agency's activities.
- This, in turn, implies that agencies base the decisions they make on factors which have not been examined in this study.

- The taxonomy which was developed in this study served its primary purpose of providing a tool to allow the comparison of agency beliefs and practices, though is not a useful way of classifying mission agencies.

Chapter 7

Conclusions and Recommendations

Introduction

This study has explored the theology and actions of evangelical mission agencies by focusing on three research questions.

- What are the possible elements of a taxonomy of evangelical mission theology?

Working with documents from the Lausanne movement, four possible elements of the taxonomy were identified: whether agencies work with unreached people groups, the relationship between proclamation and social action, the use of the term the mission of God, and the use of a missional hermeneutic. In practice, only unreached people groups and the mission of God proved essential to the taxonomy.

- How do mission agencies self-identify in terms of the elements of this taxonomy?

Using information from interviews with the agency directors, confirmed by an analysis of agency publications the six agencies studied were assigned to four different groups.

- What do the strategic and communications decisions made by the agencies and their alignment with the taxonomy reveal about the agencies?

The initial comparison and contrast of the agencies within their groups and across the groups revealed that the assignment of an agency to a particular group in the taxonomy had very little impact on other aspects of the agencies' actions.

This concluding chapter explores further what can be learned from the study of the mission agencies. The chapter consists of four sections. The first briefly considers Michael Stroope's characteristics of the mission movement, the second section examines the way in which agencies are equipped to respond to the crisis in mission which was introduced in chapter 1, the third explores the relevance of this thesis for the study of mission theology and the final section looks at future work which could be developed from this study.

The Evangelical Mission Movement

In chapter 2, Michael Stroope's characteristics of the evangelical mission movement were introduced (Stroope, 2017, 236 ff.). Although this wasn't the focus of this study, it is appropriate at this point to describe briefly the extent to which the findings in this project agree with Stroope's observations.

Reference to the Bible: All of the agencies in this study regarded the Bible as the basis for both their beliefs and actions, although the way in which this was expressed varied between the organisations.

Exemplary Figures: In most cases, the agency directors retold the foundation of their agency by referring to significant founding figures. This was particularly true for the older agencies in the study. Although most missionary publications are produced by individual agencies, with the aim of promoting their own work and garnering support, a degree of unity across the movement is provided with the focus on exemplary people. It is not unusual for an agency to quote an appropriate saying which was made by the founder of another agency in their publicity. For example, on July 17 2017 the OMF twitter feed quoted, CT Studd, the founder of WEC saying "Christ wants not nibblers of the possible but grabbers of the impossible" (OMF UK).

Historic Figures: there was very little evidence in the study of reference to historic figures of the sort which Stroope says is characteristic of the mission movement.

Publications: All of the agencies in the study publish their own magazine, though websites and social media are rapidly taking the place of print, not least on the grounds of cost. The advent of Facebook, blogging and Twitter also means that individual missionaries can tell their own stories without the intermediary of an agency, church or publisher.

Low Entry Threshold: All of the agencies set out to make it easy for people to support their work through prayer, financial giving or going as missionaries. This "low entry threshold" is actually essential to the survival of the agencies.

Missionary Conferences: Most of the agencies in this study organise their own conferences to promote their work, but the large multi-agency conferences that Stroope mentions would seem to be a feature of life in the United States, but it is less clear that they are important in Europe, and especially in the UK, today.

Creating Coherence Through Exclusion: Other than all of the agencies having an evangelical basis of faith, there was little evidence that this is a significant issue for the agencies in the study.

Pithy Sayings: As mentioned above, pithy sayings from mission leaders are a feature of the agencies in this study. The advent of Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and Pinterest have provided a new medium for spreading these quotes. Placed against an attractive background, such as a sunset, the quotes are widely shared on a variety of social media platforms extending their reach to a new generation.

Agencies and the Crisis in Mission

Chapter 1 discussed the development of evangelical mission agencies as structures which exist alongside churches in order to promote mission around the world. The same chapter also noted that a number of writers have suggested that there is a crisis in mission owing to both demographic and theological factors and the chapter also gave some initial suggestions as to the way in which agencies have responded to the crisis. This section looks at the contemporary situation as mission agencies enter into what Andrew Walls terms the “old age of the missionary movement” (Walls, 1996, 255) and considers the way in which the issues discussed in this study may play a role in helping agencies to navigate the crisis in mission.

Demographic Issues and the Crisis in Mission

The following quote from David Smith, which was used in chapter 1, serves to introduce the demographic aspects of the crisis facing mission agencies.

Most of the frustrations and dilemmas facing traditional missionary organisations and their supporters today arise from the fact that modern mission agencies came into existence in order to facilitate mission at frontiers far away in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The institutions and structures of mission designed to operate at these frontiers have remained in place at a time when the geographical, cultural and social location of mission has moved elsewhere ... agencies and institutions that once did pioneering work at the cutting edges of Christian mission have too often been left facing in the wrong direction as the battle has moved on. (Smith, 2003, 10,11).

At the same time that the church has grown in the Global South, there has been a parallel recession in Christianity in the traditional heartlands of evangelicalism, including the UK. Thus, agencies are faced with a double problem, a shrinking constituency at home and an evolving mission situation around the world. Any response to this issue will be, to some extent,

constrained by the way in which agencies are structures which places limits on the freedom of action of the UK-based organisations.

Implications of UK demographics

In chapter 1, it was shown that alongside the decline in the Christian church in the UK, there is a parallel increase in the number of mission agencies. This is not a sustainable situation. If they are to be viable in the long term, agencies will need to take steps which go beyond the competition and low level of cooperation which exist today. Either they will have to compete ruthlessly in order to gain a significant advantage over other agencies, or they will need to find a way to work together and so make significant savings. This problem is illustrated by the fact that Mission Africa has been unable to take up an invitation to work with an unreached people group in Kenya because of a lack of suitable personnel to carry out the work.

Competition

Agencies do not overtly compete with one another; for example, none of the agency publications denigrate or criticise other organisations in any way. However, the agencies can only continue to exist for as long as they can attract both financial support and personnel who are willing to work with them at home and around the world. In order to attract support, they have to have a mechanism in place both to inform their current supporters and to extend their constituency. However, all of the agencies are seeking to raise support and extend their constituency within a relatively restricted pool; amongst evangelical Christians. This means that while they may not overtly compete with one another, they are, in practice, in competition. Because of this, agencies invest significant financial and creative resources in developing communications strategies which will help them to extend their reach. Paul Hildreth reports that a number of agencies have recently made strenuous efforts to improve their communications strategies (Hildreth, 2012, 5). Traditionally, agencies have communicated with their supporters through magazines and other print media. However, with the advent of online communication and social media other options have become available to agencies for communication. The table below illustrates the way in which the agencies in this study have engaged with a variety of communication channels. This is not a comprehensive audit of the communications methods used by the agencies; but it does illustrate the extent to which they have adopted social media and online communication.

Current Agency Publications⁶⁰

Table 11: Agency Publications

	France Mission Trust	Latin Link	Mission Africa	WEC	INF	OMF
Magazine/editions p.a.	3	2	3	1	2	3
Facebook Page	Active	Active	Active	Active		Active
Facebook Page Likes	234	2,119	2,108	1,883		957
Twitter Account	X ⁶¹	X	X	X	X	X
Twitter Followers	211	937	341	605	191	633
Instagram		X	X	X		
Podcast		X				
Video	On website	Vimeo	YouTube	YouTube & Vimeo		On website & Vimeo

All of the agencies produce magazines, have traditional websites, and all have a social media presence. However, the agencies differ greatly in the extent to which they are active on other social media platforms. From publicly available information, it is not possible to calculate how much agencies are spending on publicity of one form or another or to assess how cost-effective it is. What is evident, is that measured by the number of Twitter followers, or Facebook page likes, none of the agencies seems to be attracting a significant following on social media.⁶² Nor is there any obvious correlation between the size of the agency, the number of missionaries, the frequency with which they produce a magazine or their activity on social

⁶⁰ The social media statistics are for March 21 2018.

⁶¹ France Mission Trust does not have an organisational Twitter account, but the director uses a personal account to Tweet on behalf of the agency.

⁶² By comparison, John Bagg, the director of WEC, has 1,818 followers for his personal Twitter account, significantly more than for any of the agencies. Peter Rowan of OMF has 400 Twitter followers, which is more than half of the agencies in the study.

media. This is illustrated by the case of Latin Link, which has the greatest reach in terms of its Facebook and Twitter profile but is significantly smaller than both OMF and WEC in terms of the number of missionaries and financial income. This would seem to indicate that social-media, at least as it is being used currently, is not an effective way for agencies to reach a new public. A hypothesis, which cannot be proved within the bounds of this study, is that agencies extend their reach through personal contacts. People are attracted to support an agency either through contact with existing supporters, with a church who happens to support the agency, or through a relationship with a missionary from the agency.

The implication of this is that print and online media are ineffective tools in terms of agencies competing against each other. Personal contacts and relationships may be much more important than publications in helping an agency to extend its support base. The larger agencies, those with the most missionaries and the largest number of regional representatives, would have an inbuilt advantage over the smaller agencies. This could explain why the two larger agencies, OMF and WEC, continue to attract more support than Mission Africa and Latin Link, despite these two agencies having bigger social media profiles.

Cooperation

Agencies cooperate informally by providing advice and support as and when it is required. On a formal level, agencies tend to cooperate by organising tours and meetings where a number of agencies are present to promote themselves. This is cost effective in that it allows agencies to share the cost of renting a venue for the meeting; it is also likely to attract more people than an event hosted by a single agency. In addition, some churches, organisations or venues refuse to host events that only feature one agency. Vehicles for this sort of cooperation include the annual GoFest meeting (GoFest, 2018) and the South West Agencies Network (SWAN, 2015).

As discussed earlier, the two smaller agencies in the study, France Mission Trust and INF seem more prone to partnership with other agencies in the UK. Both have held joint conferences with similar agencies and are prepared to mention their “competitors” in their magazines. It could be that these smaller, more focused, agencies feel that they have more to gain from cooperation than some of the larger, more diverse, organisations.

The concept of the mission of God or *missio Dei* is relevant to this discussion. If it is accepted that mission is first and foremost God’s work and not the responsibility of human organisations such as churches or mission

agencies, then cooperation and partnership are theological necessities. There are possible advantages for all agencies in finding ways to cooperate, but it might be expected that the agencies who hold to the mission of God might put extra effort into finding ways to work together.⁶³ Viewed from the standpoint of the mission of God, it is the work that the agencies do in proclamation and social action, rather than their administrative structures which is important. It would seem important that agencies should seek to understand each other's activities so that they can work together to ensure that the most important strategies are able to carry on as resources become more stretched. There are a number of steps which could be taken to increase cooperation and reduce competition. As has been mentioned, agencies do organise joint exhibitions and publicity tours. This principle could be extended to other forms of publicity such as print and online media.⁶⁴ This would have the advantage of sharing costs and increasing the reach of the social media outreach which is currently somewhat limited. More importantly, by combining their publicity, agencies would be demonstrating that the work of God's mission is more important than their individual structures. Another possible strategy would be for agencies which adopt similar approaches to mission to seek active cooperation. For example, those with a focus on unreached people groups could ensure that they focus on different groups, so that there is no competition or unnecessary duplication of effort.⁶⁵

In the situation where agency numbers are increasing and support decreasing, it may be that the only way to preserve the work of some agencies is for them to merge. It has already been mentioned that Latin Link is the product of a 1991 merger between the Evangelical Union of South America and Regions Beyond Missionary Union. However, the questions of theology and organisational culture which have been addressed in this study are relevant to any potential merger. Andrew Johnson mentioned that the two organisations which merged to form Latin Link had very strong cultures and as a result it is still possible, over twenty years later, to identify to which original agency the various Latin Link projects and activities belonged. If

⁶³ This being said, it is notable that of the two agencies most obviously willing to cooperate with others, France Mission Trust and INF, only INF actually uses the term mission of God.

⁶⁴ In practical terms, the ability of agencies to produce joint publicity materials would be limited by their willingness to forgo their individual branding in order to achieve a broader impact. Data protection legislation restricts the ability of agencies to share mailing lists and contact details; any joint publicity project would need to take this into account.

⁶⁵ This suggestion is an expansion of the historical comity agreements by which different agencies have focused on particular regions of a country in order to avoid competing and appearing to be in conflict (Corwin, 2000).

agencies are to merge successfully, they will need to invest significant time in understanding each other's underlying beliefs and organisational cultures. Some of the issues raised in this study could be used to inform this process.

Worldwide Christian Demographics

Just as the decline of the church in the UK poses a problem for agencies, so does the rapid growth and development of the Christian faith in what were once considered "mission fields".

Agencies in this study have responded to this challenge in a number of ways. Rather than have a broad focus on a particular geographical region or country, where there might be a significant number of Christians today, Mission Africa, OMF and WEC now concentrate their work on unreached people groups. This narrowing of their focus provides a venue for the evangelistic work of the agencies at a time when many of the places that they might once have worked are now essentially Christian. Some agencies have widened their portfolio of actions to include a range of activities such as creation care and working for justice and reconciliation. This broadening of activities is based on the agencies' understanding of the nature of mission, but it has the added advantage of providing opportunities for them to continue to work in areas which are mainly Christian. The significance of these two approaches — focusing on unreached people groups and broadening the concept of mission — were discussed in the previous section. The directors of France Mission Trust and INF both suggested in their interviews that their agencies were placing less of a focus on recruiting missionaries and that they were looking to support the work in France and Nepal through more fundraising and supporting local Christians.

Another way in which agencies have responded to the change in demographics of the church is by sponsoring missionaries from other parts of the world coming to the UK.⁶⁶ Both Latin Link and WEC have adopted this approach, and during this study, OMF revealed that they were considering the idea. The way in which the agencies conceptualise missionaries coming

⁶⁶ There is a growing literature on the subject of what is sometimes referred to as "reverse mission" with notable contributions by the African missiologists Jehu Hanciles (Hanciles, 2008) and Harvey Kwiyani (Kwiyani, 2014). However, these works tend to focus on mission as a result of migration, rather than on agencies sending missionaries to the UK. Israel Olofinjana of the Centre for Missionaries from the Majority World (Centre for Missionaries from the Majority World, 2017) has edited a book of stories detailing the experiences of Christian workers from around the world who have come to the UK to work as missionaries (Olofinjana, 2013). The various stories show that missionaries coming to the UK face the same struggles with adapting to a new culture that missionaries from the UK have typically faced. In addition, they have had to deal with a degree of prejudice and racism which is somewhat shocking.

to the UK reflects their pre-existing focus. Latin Link brings Latin missionaries to the UK to work for British churches in a similar fashion to their model of church partnership in Latin America. OMF and WEC, with their focus on unreached people groups facilitate incoming missionaries who will work with “unreached” minorities in the UK. This is captured in statement below about WEC’s neighbours worldwide programme.

“Neighbours Worldwide is committed to seeing Christ known, loved and worshipped by unreached ethnic groups in the UK. The team works alongside existing churches to meet the specific needs of the communities in which they work. This includes discipleship activities, evangelism, literature production and training in cross-cultural evangelism.” (WEC UK, 2018).

There is a case to be made for missionaries coming to work in the UK, especially in evangelistic and pastoral roles. However, it is evident that these missionaries will, themselves, need pastoral and organisational support in the same way that British missionaries working internationally do. This support role could be fulfilled by existing British agencies who have extensive experience in this area. Equally, it is possible that indigenous agencies in other countries will start to take a lead in sending missionaries to the UK and the rest of Europe (Thomas, 2007).

The ways in which agencies have responded to the changes in the world church mirror their pre-existing strategies and convictions. France Mission Trust and INF have shifted the balance within their existing model of recruitment and fund-raising to favour the latter, Latin Link has repurposed its model of church partnerships to promote mission to the UK, OMF has built on its dual focus of having a wide variety of mission activities and a consideration of unreached people groups, and WEC has used its focus on unreached people groups to give it relevance worldwide and in the UK. There is no evidence in the agency literature of any of the organisations adopting strategies or approaches which are radically different from their established way of working. There are a number of possible reasons for this:

1. The agency leadership are unaware of the changes in the world church that pose a threat to them.
2. The agency leadership are aware of the changes, but do not consider them relevant to their organisation.
3. The agency leadership are aware of the changes, but consider that the actions they have taken and the strategies that they have adopted are adequate to deal with it.

4. For the reasons discussed below the agency leadership have not been able to give adequate time to reviewing their context and thinking through principled, long-term responses to it.

The fourth reason could well be an underlying cause for any of the others. Without further research it is impossible to say which of these issues is relevant to the various agencies.

The Limitations on Agency Freedom

Mission agencies are not completely free agents. They exist within a network of relationships and a legislative framework which, to some extent, constrains their actions.

National/International

The purpose of mission agencies is ultimately to act as a link between Christians in the UK and work which is being done in other parts of the world. This means that all of the agencies have, to a greater or lesser extent, an international dimension to their structure.

France Mission Trust was founded in the UK to support the French organisation France Mission and so must take the needs and requirements of the parent organisation into consideration in its decision making. Mission Africa is a UK based charity which works in partnership with churches, theological colleges and other institutions in a number of African countries. It needs to ensure that its policies and procedures are acceptable to these partners. The other agencies in the study were all founded in the UK, but now form part of international families of organisations which, in different ways, set policies and procedures which the UK based agencies have to respect.

Charity Governance

The six agencies that form the basis of this research are all registered as charities and are subject to a range of laws which cover the way in which charities function. In England and Wales⁶⁷, charities are overseen by a government body, The Charity Commission, which advises and regulates the way in which charities operate within their legal framework⁶⁸.

⁶⁷ Mission Africa has its primary registration in Northern Ireland and is subject to a slightly different legislative and regulatory framework from the one under which the other agencies operate. However, for the purposes of this broad discussion, the fine differences between the two regimes can be ignored.

⁶⁸ Charity law can have a direct impact on the work of mission agencies, for example there are a number of requirements and restrictions imposed on charities that transfer money overseas, which

All charities have the same basic structure. A board of trustees provides governance and direction for the charity, a leadership provides day-to-day management under the direction of the trustees, and staff carry out the work of the organisation. Depending on the size of the charity, there may be some overlap between these functions and there may also be a number of volunteers carrying out staff roles on a part-time or temporary basis.

The role of the trustees is key in determining the way in which a charity functions.

“Trustees have overall control of a charity and are responsible for making sure it’s doing what it was set up to do.

... trustees are the people who lead the charity and decide how it is run. Being a trustee means making decisions that will impact on people’s lives.

... Trustees use their skills and experience to support their charities, helping them achieve their aims.” (Charity Commission, 2013)

Trustees are expected to carry out six basic duties in running a charity:

- “1. Ensure your charity is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit.
2. Comply with your charity’s governing document and the law.
3. Act in your charity’s best interests.
4. Manage your charity’s resources responsibly.
5. Act with reasonable care and skill.
6. Ensure your charity is accountable.” (Charity Commission, 2013).

In practice, these duties involve a significant amount of monitoring and reporting on activities. The trustees need to be aware of what the charity is doing and have to ensure that it is complying with relevant laws. They must submit a comprehensive, annual report on their activities and finances and keep track of any risks that the charity faces and ensure that appropriate mitigation strategies are in place. This monitoring and reporting becomes more complex when the charity is involved in work overseas, potentially in hazardous situations.

The complexity of the legal and financial issues that trustees must deal with and the priority that they must give to this work mean that they will very often

is the case for all of the agencies in this study (Charity Commission, 2014). These restrictions mean that a UK-based mission agency may not be able to provide finance for a project that it wished to support on the grounds that to do so would infringe charity regulations.

pay special attention to recruiting board members from a legal, financial or business background.

In the experience of the author, both as the CEO of a mission agency and as someone who has advised a number of agency boards these two factors — the responsibilities of the trustees and the composition of trustee boards — have an impact on the way in which agencies approach theological issues, such as those which form the basis of this study. Three trends can be identified.

Firstly, the time required to address the requirements of governance and compliance issues means that trustee boards, who generally do not meet frequently, do not have adequate opportunity to engage in missiological or theological reflection. This is demonstrated by the results of this study.

The second trend is that boards often lack the experience, expertise or desire to interact with material such as the Lausanne documents. This is captured by a quote from one of the directors in the study:

“Interviewer: ‘Have you ever, as a leadership, or with the board, worked through any missiological texts?’

Respondent: ‘No. There is no point obfuscating that matter. The truth is no. I think the board, there are a couple of them who would be professionally theologically trained, but by and large they are not deeply interested in academic theology or missiology. They tend to be mostly interested in the pragmatic issue of keeping the mission between the hedges and keeping to charities regulation and things like that. We have worked our way through all that kind of stuff together, but in terms of dealing with missiological documents, the frank answer is no. They leave that sort of thing to me, to make comments or recommendations appropriately.’” (MA Director, 00:16:31).

The third trend is a combination of the other two; the limited time available and the pressing need to address and regulatory issues combined with the interests and skills of board create a culture in which the compliance and business issues are given ever greater prominence because this is the ground where the board is most comfortable.

Martin Lee, the former director of Global Connections highlighted the problem that current patterns of charity governance pose for agencies in a 2016 blog post.

“The Charity Commission seems to be putting increasing burdens on trustees in the areas of compliance, financial accounting, risk assessment, policies of an ever-expanding nature – and I could go on. Sadly, it means that this can often dominate meetings and take up disproportionate amounts of time.

... However perhaps the most important role, often neglected, is thinking about the future. When was the last time your Board set aside substantive time to think about questions such as the changing external environment, what the future might bring, whether to merge or close, or just getting fresh perspectives? Too often an organisation just uses internal sources of information and focuses its discussions on the current or planned activities. Regularly asking people from outside to talk about trends and their experiences, even if they are competitors, is vital if a Board is really doing its job well.” (Lee, 2016a).

Reframing Lee’s comments in terms of the interdisciplinary approach to missiological reflection described in chapter 3, agency boards are not seeking input from theology or the social sciences and their access to mission history is based purely on the experience of their own agency.

Mission Scholar Rollin Grams argues that agencies face pressures to ensure their continuing existence by recruiting more missionaries and bringing in finance, and that because of this, they have lost a sense of their own purpose and need to return to reflecting on the theology of mission as described in the Bible.

“The mission agency is struggling in its home office to fund the operation, and its leaders are glad to get new recruits who will have to pay 13% operational funds. There may be other benefits to the agency or its key members, as new recruits contribute some of their support to the overall work of the mission. The mission agency needs to keep accepting missionaries to fund its operations and replace missionaries who have left the mission. The mission agency, furthermore, functions more like an employment placement agency, helping to place workers who come with their own pay in overseas jobs. This is not necessarily all that bad, as long as the overseas ‘job’ has a decent ministry, but the point is that the mission agency probably does not have a clear understanding of its own mission beyond placing people overseas. The mission agency needs to understand how it relates to the mission of God as it is laid out in Scripture and then ask itself how it is accomplishing this mission.” (Grams, 2013).

Implications

The mission agencies in this study are not independent organisations free to act in whatever way they choose. They all form part of a network of international relationships which must be respected in any decisions that the agency chooses to make. As charities, they are also subject to a variety of regulations which both take time and restrict their action in some domains. Additionally, they all have to ensure that their supporting constituencies are happy with the directions that they take.

This means that British agencies must make decisions regarding their future in dialogue with their international partners and their British supporters, and with regard to the regulatory regime under which they function. It is possible that some of the suggestions for cooperation made in the previous section would be impractical in the face of these constraints. For example, a British agency which is a branch of an international group may not be in a position where it could merge or even share publicity materials with another British organisation, even if that were thought to be theologically or pragmatically desirable.

Theological Issues and the Crisis in Mission

In chapter 1, the crisis in mission was shown to have a number of theological components. These include the need for Western mission agencies to engage with emerging theologies from the Global South and the importance for internationally based missiological reflection as a new paradigm for mission develops and emerges. This section examines the ability of the agencies in this study to engage with these issues.

All of the agency directors interviewed in the study had read at least portions of the 2010 Cape Town Commitment, however, only two of the six had read the 1974 Cape Town Commitment. Equally, as far as the directors were aware, none of the agency boards or leadership teams had engaged with either document. Two of the directors had distributed copies of the Cape Town Commitment to their board and leadership team, but there was no mechanism for people to engage with the contents of the documents in a corporate reflective fashion. One director remarked that he was not sure that the board members had even read the document.

Interestingly, though the boards of the British agencies which were the objects of this study did not reflect on the Lausanne documents, the international arms of two of them had, to some extent, engaged with them. The director of OMF reported that the international executive council of OMF had spent time reflecting on the Cape Town Commitment (OMF Director, 00:19:31), while the director of France Mission Trust remarked that he had heard the Lausanne documents being referred to during meetings of their French parent organisation (FMT Director, 00:18:13).

However, although the leadership teams and boards of the agencies did not actually engage with the Lausanne documents, they have given some time to engage with missiological issues.

The board of OMF have scheduled time on their agenda to interact with papers which were prepared on particular missiological topics by the director or other staff members. They also have a policy of ensuring that there are a number of theologians on the board who are capable of processing these sorts of issues. However, the director indicated that this sort of reflection was not a regular feature of the board's activities.

The board of France Mission Trust have worked through a book which looks at the relationship between mission agencies and churches (Knell, 2015). This book is written at a popular level, but it does have content from a variety of domains, including mission history and theology, and could serve as the basis of a process of missiological reflection.

Other agencies have engaged with these issues in a variety of ways. The boards of INF and Mission Africa each spent time reflecting on presentations based on a paper looking at the future of British mission agencies (Arthur, 2017). The board of WEC has spent time examining an internal 'strategy framework'. However, the resources that these times of reflection were based on covered mission history and practice but had limited input from the other domains of missiology - the social sciences and crucially theology.

Another indication of the extent to which British agencies reflect missiologically on their activities comes from Paul Hildreth's study of agencies which was commissioned by Global Connections (Hildreth, 2012).

Hildreth conducted 35 interviews with church and agency leaders examining the way in which mission is being carried out from the UK to the rest of the world. The interviews highlighted the challenges faced by agencies today, including the shift in the centre of gravity of the church, difficulties in funding mission agencies and the increase in urbanisation. He concluded:

"As a result, the world of mission agencies is changing. Not only do they have to respond to the relative decline in UK church numbers, but the constituency of churches that historically supported them faithfully are diversifying their approach to global mission. They are also facing competition from development and poverty relief agencies as well as churches and individuals doing their own thing." (Hildreth, 2012, 4).

Hildreth's study indicates that mission agencies are aware of the need to change the way in which they work. However, the changes which are being adopted are at a pragmatic, managerial level and show no engagement with theological themes. Those who were prepared to 'challenge the model' were not doing so in a way which resulted in any practical outcomes.

There was no indication in Hildreth's study that any of the agencies that he looked at were engaged in any regular missiological or theological reflection in response to the crisis that they believed they were facing. This statement needs to be balanced by the observation that Hildreth's own academic background lies in the social sciences, and it is possible that he did not address missiological or theological issues in his interviews (Hildreth, 2012, 5-7).

The current study reveals that none of the agencies examined have in place a regular process of missiological reflection which builds on mission history and practice, the social sciences and (most importantly) theology in order to understand and respond to the various issues that agencies are facing. This observation is supported by Paul Hildreth's study of agency responses to change. There are two related reasons, which are essentially pragmatic, why this state of affairs exists. The first is the pressures and constraints which are placed on mission agencies (see the section on charity governance, above), and the second is the apparent disconnect between the leadership of agencies and the discipline of theology.

Jerusalem and Athens

In⁶⁹ chapters 2 and 4, the importance of the Lausanne Covenant to the evangelical view of mission was discussed. According to Goheen the Lausanne Covenant played "an authoritative role in defining the evangelical tradition of mission for almost four decades" (Goheen, 2014, 169), while Neff said it was "the defining theological document for mission and evangelism, (Neff, 2010, 36). Historian, Brian Stanley says that the Lausanne Covenant has become "normative" for evangelicals (Stanley, 2013b, 533).

However, of the six directors interviewed in this study only two had read the Lausanne Covenant in its entirety, and one other had read parts of it. Four of the directors had read all of the Cape Town Commitment, with the other two having read portions. While board or leadership team members may have been aware of the Lausanne documents, in no case had the agency board or leadership worked through them in any systematic fashion or used them to shape agency policies or actions.

Despite the importance that scholars and writers place on the Lausanne Covenant, it appears that it is having little direct impact on British mission

⁶⁹ The title of this section comes from a quote by the Church Father Tertullian: "What is there in common between Athens and Jerusalem? Between the Academy and the church?" (quoted in McGrath, 2001, 7).

agencies. It could be argued that there is no need for people to read the Lausanne Covenant itself because the ideas contained therein are now generally accepted within the evangelical mission community. However, this argument is countered by the breadth of views on proclamation versus social action which were expressed by the six directors. This is one of the defining issues to emerge from the Lausanne 1974 congress, but there is no overall consensus amongst the agencies on the issue, making it difficult to argue that the conclusions of the congress are generally accepted.

It is too early to draw conclusions on the impact of the 2010 Cape Town Commitment. However, as chapter 2 noted the leaders of the Lausanne Movement said the following: “Its prophetic call to work and to pray will, we hope, draw churches, missional agencies, seminaries, Christians in the workplace, and student fellowships on campus to embrace it and to find their part in its outworking” (Brown and Birdsall, 2012, xii).

However, not all of the agency directors who took part in this study had read the Commitment in its entirety and none of the agency leaderships had worked through it or reflected on it. From this, it seems unlikely that mission agencies will “embrace” the Cape Town Commitment or “find their part in its outworking”.

Those who produced, promote and write about the Lausanne documents appear to accord them far more importance than do the leaders of British mission agencies. The way in which the agencies rarely refer to the mission of God or use a missional hermeneutic, despite their prominence in mission writing is another example of the divide between the theologians, academics and writers on one hand and the practitioners on the other.⁷⁰

⁷⁰ It is important to note that the sample of agencies in this study is small, and ideally further work, using a larger sample, needs to be carried out to confirm these findings. However, in the absence of a larger study, the conclusions in this section can be tentatively accepted for three reasons. Firstly, though the sample of agencies is small, it covers a broad variety of agencies of different ages and backgrounds and modes of operation. Secondly, and anecdotally, these results confirm the lived experience of the author. Two examples will serve to illustrate this. Recently a lecturer in mission remarked to the author that he had understood from the literature that the dichotomy between social action and proclamation had been dealt with at Lausanne in 1974, but when he talked to mission agency leaders he realised that for them it was still a live issue. In a similar vein, a professor of mission theology expressed surprise that the author of this study had given a positive review of a book published in 2016. As far as the professor was concerned, the book was out of date because the majority of the issues that it dealt with were no longer current in academic theology. However, the author’s view was that from the point of view of mission practitioners, the book addressed issues which were very current. Thirdly, over the last decade, three forums which existed in order to provide a link for interaction between mission scholars and practitioners (Global Connections Thinking Mission Forum, The British and Irish Association for Mission Studies and the Wisdom in Mission forum run by the Cambridge Centre for Christianity Worldwide) have disbanded owing to lack of support.

There are a number of reasons why this disconnect exists. The first is the regulatory and administrative burden placed on agency leadership as mentioned above earlier in this chapter. Agency leaders face a number of constraints that mean that they are not able to stay current with advances in mission thinking, even if they wished to. This is exacerbated by the tension between reflection and pragmatism within evangelicalism which was noted in chapter 2. With limited time available for their work, agency leaders and boards are more likely to address issues which have a concrete outcome, rather than give time to a reflective process which might, at first, seem rather abstract.

However, another, and more fundamental, issue needs to be explored, the extent to which agency leaders are equipped to engage with the sorts of theological issues that we have been considering.

Of the six directors interviewed, two were appointed to their roles from outside of the mission world and have done no formal theological or mission studies. Two others came into leadership roles after early careers in mission but had received little by way of theological training, and two others had done extensive formal studies up to the doctoral level.

The fact that the majority of the directors in this study do not have advanced qualifications in mission studies or theology indicates that the trustee boards concerned do not consider such studies to be a pre-requisite for the role of agency director. Payne said that mission practitioners need to be “excellent theologians” (Payne, 2013, xvi), but this conviction does not appear to be shared by all of those appointing agency leadership.

If agency leadership are not always theologically qualified, the same observation can be made about trustee boards. It has already been noted in this chapter that boards tend to appoint trustees who have professional training in areas directly related to charity governance, such as finance and law. Most agency boards do appoint pastors or church leaders, who can address issues of the relationship between the agency and its constituency, however training as a pastor does not necessarily confer a familiarity with current mission theology. One agency, OMF, makes a conscious effort to appoint trustees who are qualified to address theological concerns, and it is notable that they are one of the agencies whose director has a PhD in theology. When neither the board, nor the director has a background in theological or missiological studies, it is understandable that theological or missiological reflection do not form a regular part of the agency leadership’s life. In such a situation, there are limited options available to the agency to

receive the necessary input to form the basis for adequate reflection. In addition, it is possible that the board and leadership will be unaware of their lack of expertise in these areas and will continue to appoint others from similar backgrounds in a self-reinforcing cycle.

The boards of Mission Africa and OMF effectively delegate theological reflection to their directors, albeit in very different fashions. In the case of OMF, the board asks the director Peter Rowan to draw up discussion papers for them to read. Paul Baillie of Mission Africa says that the board “leave that stuff up to me”. In neither case does the board spend significant time in missiological or theological reflection, even though they might be equipped to do so.

Agencies and the World Church

With regard to the way in which agencies can and should interact with the world Church, three issues can be highlighted.

1. They need to understand accurately the way in which world Christianity is evolving, so that they can reshape their structures and activities in an appropriate manner (Ma, 2006, 103).
2. They need to be able to understand the way in which theology is developing world-wide, so that they can adapt their own thinking and decision making in the light of the new insights coming from the Global South.
3. They need to play a part in the process of developing new global models for mission. Their history and experience give them a unique place in this process; however, they must engage as equal partners, relinquishing whatever power and influence they may feel that they possess.

With regard to the first point, agencies are well positioned to receive information about the changes in world Christianity through their own missionaries and other contacts. However, the extent to which agency boards and leadership teams receive reports which go beyond simple recounting of missionary activity and which explore the issues which lie behind those reports is unclear. From the earlier discussion, it seems unlikely that agency leadership teams invest significant time in exploring and reflecting on these issues in any depth.⁷¹ Equally, there is a suggestion that

⁷¹ A possible exception to this statement would be OMF who have a history of publishing missiological and theological reflection in their magazine *Billions* and in their *Mission Round Table* journal. However, it is not clear that the contents of these publications form the basis for board and

agencies are making decisions which affect partners in other parts of the world without reference to them (Kang et al., 2011, 52).

This study has demonstrated that agency leadership and boards generally are not in a position to reflect on theological issues emerging from their own context. Given the constraints that they exist under, it is difficult to see how they can learn from the growth, experiences and reflections of the church in the Global South.

With regard to the third issue, playing a part in the process of developing global models for mission: agencies undoubtedly have experienced staff who are able to engage in this sort of dialogue. However, given the limitations on board and leadership theological reflection, these staff members would, in all likelihood, be effectively acting independently. The board and agency leadership in the UK would generally not be in a position to brief them or to receive detailed feedback from the discussions.

Summary

British mission agencies are living through a period of great change and if they are to meet the challenges that these changes bring they will need to adapt in the way that they approach and understand their work. Given the nature of mission work, changes that agencies make should ideally emerge from a process of missiological reflection which includes insights from mission history, the social sciences and theology (as discussed in chapter 3).

However, there is little evidence in this study that agencies are involved in a reflective process leading to changed practice. Those changes which agencies have made tend to be relatively restricted in nature and lie within the agencies' traditional field of action, what Paul Hildreth calls operating within the model (Hildreth, 2012). Furthermore, the fact that mission agencies are charities and operate within a network of international relationships places limits on their ability to change and adapt to circumstances. In addition, the majority of agencies seem ill-adapted to engage in missiological reflection. A number of agencies had appointed directors with a limited background in theology or experience in mission work. Mission agency boards, partly because of the pressures placed on them by the requirements of charity law, tend to appoint board members with professional and business backgrounds rather than theologians or missiologists. This, combined with the time pressure that boards find

themselves under owing to the requirements of charity governance, means that governing boards have limited time or capacity to engage in missiological reflection. This lack of reflection accounts for the fact that for the most part, agencies are responding to the issues facing them by a series of pragmatic fixes which do not address the deeper, underlying questions. This lack of theological or missiological reflection also helps to explain why the theological issues raised in the taxonomy have limited impact on the actual practices of the agencies. However, it also raises a broader question about the capacity of agencies to address adequately the issues they face and ultimately about their long-term viability in a rapidly changing context.

The Relevance of this Study to a Theological Understanding of Mission

This study considered four issues of mission theology; proclamation-social action, unreached people groups, the mission of God and a missional hermeneutic. The approach of the study was to use these issues as a tool to examine mission agency behaviour, rather than to explore the theological concepts themselves. This section reverses the earlier pattern, taking each of the questions in turn in order to reflect on the theological significance of the way in which the agencies respond to them and to suggest future avenues for research.

Proclamation - Social Action

The relative priorities of proclamation and social action in evangelical mission theology were introduced in chapter 4. Despite the Lausanne Covenant bringing the two together as expressions of mission, there continues to be a number of divergent views on this topic. Some authors do not consider social action to be a legitimate aspect of mission, while others would view the two as of equal importance. This breadth of opinion was not apparent in this study as all of the agency directors considered social-action as part of mission. That being said, there were a variety of views, from suggesting that proclamation is primary and social action simply a support for it, to considering both to be equally important.

In all cases, the directors appeared to have given some thought to this issue and were able to explain their positions as the following selection of quotes illustrates. The first two illustrate a more holistic approach, while the third one gives priority to proclamation.

“I think that our evangelism ultimately has to have social consequences and lead to social action, and that our social action

and social engagement has to ultimately involve evangelism. I think the two should be seen as one.” (OMF Director, 00:59:55).

“For me, moving towards this — what I call — holistic mission is moving towards a more biblical view of mission and particularly what Jesus did and how he demonstrated mission. Looking at Jesus— and we would do a lot of this as well - he did actually care for people’s physical needs and he often did that before he sorted out their spiritual needs.” (LL Director, 00:50:33).

“... we have these three objectives: reaching people, planting churches, mobilising — for a long time the international leadership grappled with whether we should have a fourth, which is compassion ministries. Anytime that has been grappled with, we have always concluded “no”. While we support compassion ministries, they must be a means to an end.” (WEC Director, 01:24:33).

However, though the directors were clear in their understanding of how they see the relationship between proclamation and social-action, the same clarity was not always apparent in the agency publications. In some cases, the documents indicated that in practice the agency operated with a different set of priorities from those expressed by the director. More significantly, for the most part, the documents did not explore the linkage between social-action and proclamation. The agency websites and magazines told stories about social action and proclamation, but there was rarely any text which indicated how, if at all, the two were related. To some extent, the different agency positions are reflected in the amount of space given to stories concerning proclamation and social action. However, in the absence of significant explanation of the agency positions, it is possible that a casual reader of the agency publications would not discern that different agencies hold to different positions on this issue. Agencies describe their work in their publications, but they rarely take time to explain why they do what they do and how the various factors interact. In as much as they describe their activities without seeking to show how they integrate, agencies are tacitly accepting and not challenging the distinction between the two. Richardson argues that addressing the duality between proclamation and social action, “rooted in Enlightenment polarities”, is one of the key tasks of mission today (Richardson, 2013, 134). It would seem that, in their public presentations, agencies are not, at this point, addressing this issue.

A further issue which was raised in chapter 4 and also mentioned in the director interviews is the question of whether agencies are being pushed by their supporting constituencies towards a stronger focus on social action. This can only be determined by a more detailed study of this question, featuring a larger number of agencies.

Unreached People Groups

Three of the agencies in this study work with unreached people groups, while the others do not share this focus. The three agencies who do not work with unreached people groups (France Mission Trust, INF and Latin Link) are based in areas where there is limited access to such groups or are in partnership with churches who do not have this focus. That being said, the directors of each of these agencies insisted that the groups of people that they were reaching were marginalised in some fashion, even if they did not fit the accepted definition of being unreached. However, these agencies do not mention unreached people groups in their publicity, not even to explain why they do not work with them.

As was discussed in chapter 4, there is considerable time and energy being devoted to defining unreached people groups and promoting mission work amongst them. In this context, it would be advantageous if those groups who do not work with unreached people groups could give a thought through defence of their approach. Chapter 4 cited a number of academic critiques of the unreached people group approach. These would be complemented by positive statements from agencies who have chosen, for whatever reason, not to make unreached people groups a priority.

It might be expected that focusing on unreached people groups might result in an agency placing less stress on social action. This would seem to be the case for WEC, which had the strongest focus on evangelism in the study and was engaged in the smallest range of social action projects. However, OMF also have a focus on unreached people groups, but they are also involved in a wider range of social action activities than any of the agencies in this study. A deeper study involving just these two agencies could throw more light on the way in which these two factors — a focus on unreached people groups and the proclamation-social action dichotomy — interact in practice.

The Mission of God

The mission of God is not a concept which is widely used by the agencies in this study. When asked about it all of the directors were able to give a rough definition of the concept. However, only two of the six agencies use the term mission of God (or *missio Dei*). Given that the concept of the mission of God broadens out the understanding of mission to include a wide range of activities, it may be significant that the two agencies which use the term (INF and OMF) are also the two agencies with the broadest range of social action projects. That being said, Latin Link which does not generally use the term

the mission of God has almost as broad a range of activities as INF, so it is difficult to draw hard and fast conclusions about this. It is also important to note that unlike OMF, INF is not directly involved in any proclamation type activities. Although both agencies use the term the mission of God and have a broad range of social activities, the rest of their portfolio of actions is very different.

The fact that a majority of the mission practitioners studied do not talk about the mission of God needs to be viewed in the light of the following views from missiologist Scott Sunquist and others:

“If any consensus has developed about mission during the past century, it is that Christian mission is rooted in the mission of God (*missio Dei*) rather than in a particular task (planting churches) or a particular goal (making converts)” (Sunquist, 2013, 156). Kim and Balia make a similar point, suggesting that missiology has shifted its focus from ecclesiology and soteriology to prioritise reflection on the trinitarian *missio Dei* (Balia and Kim, 2010, 23). Bosch says: “The recognition that mission is God’s mission represents a crucial breakthrough in respect of the preceding centuries. It is inconceivable that we could again revert to a narrow ecclesiocentric view of mission” (Bosch, 1991, 393).

While a number of scholars insist that mission should be viewed through the lens of the mission of God, it would seem that practitioners do not necessarily agree with this. Furthermore, a number of the agencies define their work in terms of church planting and evangelism, the very parameters that Sunquist rejects. What Bosch says is ‘inconceivable’ appears to be the reality for many mission practitioners in the UK.

From a theological perspective, it would be interesting to explore why some agencies have not adopted the concept of the mission God. In particular, it would be valuable to understand whether agencies have not taken this approach for principled theological reasons, or simply because they are not particularly aware of it. If the former, it would be useful to explore the reasons why these agencies have rejected this approach.

A Missional Hermeneutic

Turning to the question of a missional hermeneutic and the mission agencies; The Cape Town Commitment presupposes a missional hermeneutic and numerous writers and academics have recently suggested that this is an appropriate way to understand the Bible’s teaching on

mission. This reflects a growing and developing literature on the subject emerging from the academy (see the discussion in (Davy, 2014, 23-37).

However, of the six directors interviewed, only two were aware of the term missional hermeneutic and only one of those was able to define it in a satisfactory fashion.

As with the mission of God, there is little evidence of the agencies in this study adopting a missional hermeneutic reading of the Bible to support their work. Once again, it would be useful to explore in more detail whether this is a general trend across a wider range of mission agencies, and also to understand the reasons why agencies have not adopted an approach which is widespread in the literature.

Conclusions on Theology

Two themes emerge from this study regarding the theological understanding of mission held by mission agencies. The first is the lack of awareness of some agencies with regard to what are regarded as important areas of mission theology by mission scholars and writers, and the second is the way in which the espousal of a particular theological position by an agency often seems to have a limited effect on the way that it acts.

As highlighted above, the majority of the agency directors were unaware of the term missional hermeneutic, despite the fact that it is commonly used in the literature. Although all of the directors had encountered the term mission of God or *missio Dei*, not all of the leaders could define the term and only two of the agencies actually make use of it.

It was noted that there is a possible correlation between using the term the mission of God and having a broad range of social actions. However, there was another agency which did not use the term, but which also had a wide range of activities. In addition, overall, there was very little similarity between the way that the two organisations that use the term mission of God (INF and OMF) function. Examining two of the larger missions which focus on unreached people groups, OMF and WEC, there appears to be very little in common between the overall activities of the agencies apart from this one area. OMF take a more holistic approach to mission and are involved in a wider range of activities than WEC, who place proclamation firmly at the centre of all they do.

There are a number of factors which could account for why the agency leaders were aware of some of the terms used in the taxonomy, and why

agencies which held similar positions on some of the issues acted in very different ways.

The first factor to mention is the lack of theological and missiological reflection within agencies, which has already been highlighted. In a context where theological and missiological reflection are not highly valued and in which mission agency directors have a lot of calls on their time, it is not surprising that some agency directors are not up-to-date with some current issues in mission theology.

The second factor is the disconnect which seems to exist between mission practitioners and the academy. At various points during this study it has been noted that issues which authors and academics consider to be important are not necessarily viewed with equal importance by mission practitioners and agency leaders.

A possibility is that issues identified as the basis for the taxonomy were not as important to mission practice as first thought. The four factors at the base of the taxonomy were identified as being the most important issues emerging from the Lausanne Covenant and the Cape Town Commitment on the basis of the subsequent literature and discussion. However, as mentioned above, if there is a disconnect between agencies and the academy (and, by extension, agencies and the Lausanne Movement) then it is possible that these factors which appear as important in the literature may be of little relevance to the agencies. This question needs further exploration.

Future Work

This study has examined the theology and practices of a sample of British evangelical mission agencies. At various points in the concluding two chapters, suggestions have been made regarding research which could be undertaken in order to advance the work done in this study. These suggestions are listed below:

- Explore the utility of other potential taxonomies of mission agencies.
- Examine the extent to which pressure from their supporting constituencies is pushing agencies towards involvement in social action as opposed to proclamation.
- An in-depth study of OMF and WEC, comparing their differing approaches to social action, in view of their common approach to unreached people groups.

- Explore why agencies have not adopted the mission of God and a missional hermeneutic as a basis for their approach to mission.
- Explore the extent to which agencies — their leadership and boards — are equipped and have the capacity to engage in depth with the changes in the world church.
- The question of the importance of the issues in the taxonomy to mission agencies needs to be examined in more depth. If these four factors are not important, which questions would be more relevant to them?

In deciding which are the most profitable avenues for future research, the disconnect between the academy and mission agencies is an important factor. It is in the nature of mission theologians, and scholars to research and publish within their area of specialisation. Equally, mission agencies produce a great deal of material which describes what it is they do and encourages people to support them. However, there is much less information available on what it is that agencies believe and how this is influenced by and, in turn, influences the work of scholars. The current study has contributed to understanding of the beliefs of agencies, but there is a significant amount of work which remains to be done. In particular, three aspects warrant further exploration.

1. The current study could be extended by examining the six agencies in more depth. In particular, the beliefs and practices of the agency boards could be explored through interviews and, if permission were forthcoming, by examining board minutes. In this study, suppositions have been made about the way in which boards function on the basis of statements by the agency directors, extrapolation from documents and personal experience. These suppositions involve generalisations and lack both the nuance and rigour which could be achieved by direct research. The importance of the boards in determining the future direction of the agencies, and the questions raised above about their ability to interact with the pressing issues of our time make this a vital area of research.
2. While there is a good case to be made for deepening the research by examining the six agencies in more detail, in particular looking at their boards, there is also the concern that the sample size is rather small. Looking at a larger sample of agencies and seeking to understand their underlying views of mission would give a more representative picture of the situation in the UK. The current study was limited to

agencies that actually send long-term missionaries and avoided consideration of grant-making and short-term only organisations. It would be impractical to interview the directors of a hundred or more agencies; however, it would be possible to examine the annual reports of a large number of agencies and to compare and contrast their positions on a number of issues.

3. An area which was discussed in chapter 1, but which did not form part of the research is the question of newer church streams which are becoming involved in world mission, but without directly involving mission agencies. For the most part, these groups are of a Pentecostal or Charismatic nature and occupy the roles normally taken by denominations in the UK and mission agencies abroad. Given the importance of the newer denominations in the UK, this is an area which deserves further attention.

A Taxonomy for Agencies

The title of this thesis is: The Interaction Between the Mission Theology and the Practices and Publicity of Six British Evangelical Mission Agencies.

Three questions were used as the basis for the study.

- What are the elements of a taxonomy of evangelical mission theology?
- How do mission agencies self-identify in terms of the elements of the taxonomy?
- What do the strategic and communications decisions made by the agencies reveal about their alignment with the taxonomy.

The purpose of developing a taxonomy was not to produce a definitive classification of mission agencies, but to create a tool for comparing and contrasting agency actions on the basis of their theology. The three research questions are discussed below.

Elements of a taxonomy

In chapter 2, the Lausanne movement was identified as a particularly important influence on evangelical mission thinking. Two documents, the 1974 Lausanne Covenant and the 2010 Cape Town Commitment were selected as snapshots, representing the evolution of thinking within the Lausanne movement over a period of almost forty years.

From these two documents, four specific issues were identified from the literature as being particularly important and these were used as the basis for the taxonomy.

- Unreached people groups.
- Proclamation versus social action.
- The Mission of God.
- The biblical basis of mission.

Agency identification with the taxonomy

In chapter 3, the process for choosing a sample of agencies for the study was outlined.

The directors of each of the agencies were interviewed, focusing on the four areas of the taxonomy; this was discussed in chapter 4. For two of the areas, Unreached People Groups and the Mission of God, it was relatively simple to align the agency against the taxonomy as the directors were able to give clear answers as to whether the terms were used within the agency.

It was more difficult to discuss alignment with regard to a missional hermeneutic as most of the directors were unaware of the term. Equally, the complexity of the question of proclamation and social action meant that it was difficult to align the agencies against this value, though their responses on this area were useful in later analysis.

On the basis of the two values which did give a simple binary answer, it was possible to develop a taxonomy of four groups and to distribute the agencies into the groups on the basis of the answers given by their directors.

Table 12: Summary of the Taxonomy

Group	Unreached People Groups	Mission of God	Agencies
1	No	No	France Mission Trust Latin Link
2	Yes	No	Mission Africa WEC
3	No	Yes	INF

Group	Unreached People Groups	Mission of God	Agencies
4	Yes	Yes	OMF

With a few minor qualifications, an examination of the agencies' literature confirmed their position in the taxonomy.

Agency alignment with the taxonomy

In chapter 5, the agency literature was studied and coded for a range of activities and issues. However, for agencies which were placed in the same group in the taxonomy, there was no clear alignment with regard to the issues and activities that were examined. Equally, there were no obvious differences between the agencies in different groups.

The conclusion of this research is that it is possible to develop a taxonomy of mission theology based on the Lausanne documents and that agencies can be aligned against the taxonomy on the basis of how the directors describe the agencies' views and that this alignment can be confirmed from the agency literature. However, it is also evident that position of any particular agency within the alignment has little impact across a wide range of issues. That is to say that the theological issues identified as being important from the Lausanne documents and the agencies' position on these issues appear not to have a consistent impact on the strategic and communications issues made by the agencies.

Alternative Taxonomies

One of the aims of this study was to develop a taxonomy of mission agencies which could be used as an analytical tool to investigate the way in which the beliefs held by the agencies had an impact on their practices and publicity. The taxonomy which was developed, based on theological issues emerging from the Lausanne movement, did not demonstrate any clear links between these issues and the decisions that agencies make about their activities.

This raises questions as to the possible alternative bases for the classification of mission agencies, how they might be applied and what might be learned from them. Under the rubric of future research, this section briefly explores the basis, practicality and value of alternative methods of classifying agencies.

Taxonomies Emerging From the Study

As was noted earlier, the age of the agency may have an impact on the way in which it functions. The two younger agencies in this study (France Mission Trust and INF) were focused on a single country, had a clear focus with regard to proclamation and social action and were not particularly aiming to recruit significant numbers of missionaries. The opposite tended to be true of the older agencies.

Given that the number of agencies in the UK continues to increase (Arthur, 2017, 7), this may be an issue which warrants further examination. There is anecdotal evidence that many of the new agencies which are being established have a narrow remit, for example Acorn Camps (Acorn Camps, 2018) which was founded in 2001 focuses on running evangelistic, English language camps for Hungarian teenagers. This contrasts dramatically with the geographic range and activities of the older agencies in this study.

Working with the Global Connections list of agencies and following the links to agency websites, it would be possible to develop a database which listed all of the agencies, the regions where they work and the activities which they are involved in. From this it would be relatively simple, though time consuming, to identify any trends regarding agency age and activity.

One factor which would need to be taken into account in any study of this nature is the size of the various agencies. Acorn Camps, mentioned above, has a staff of seven people split between the UK and Hungary and in 2016 their publicly reported income was £47,522 (Charity Commission, 2018a). This compares with OMF's 205 UK missionaries and an income of over seven million pounds. It is possible that though there is a large number of new agencies, collectively they have significantly less impact than some individual older ones.

Another possible basis for a taxonomy which emerged from the study was the contrast between proclamation focused and social action focused agencies.

Proclamation Focus: France Mission Trust, WEC.

Social Action Focus: INF.

Integrated Approach: Latin Link, Mission Africa, OMF.

A taxonomy of this form could be expanded to cover all of the agencies in the Global Connections list. It would be possible to classify many, if not most agencies from a brief reading of their self-descriptions and their charitable

objectives. However, as was noted in chapter 5 when looking at Mission Africa, it is sometimes necessary to dig a little deeper in order to ascertain whether the agency focus actually matches with some of the ways in which it describes itself.

With that caveat in mind, it would be relatively easy to produce a list of mission agencies according to their focus on proclamation or social action, indeed, it would even be possible to note which agencies were involved in which sort of social action: education, medical, etc. However, the utility of such an analysis is questionable. It may be of interest for possible mission supporters who would like to identify an agency that aligned with their personal interests. However, without cross-referencing the agencies' orientation against some other factor such as age or size it would not reveal more than could be ascertained from a cursory examination of agency websites.

Structural Taxonomies

From the discussion of mission agency structures in the previous chapter, it would be possible to define a taxonomy of agencies based on their internal structures and/or international partnerships. One approach would be to classify agencies according to whether they were part of a larger international structure. In this study, INF, Latin Link, OMF and WEC were the UK branches of international organisations, while France Mission Trust and Mission Africa only existed as UK organisations. This classification could provide useful information about the autonomy of the UK agencies, but would be of limited use otherwise. In this study, the four agencies which form part of an international network were also the largest agencies measured in terms of income. Without further research, it cannot be definitively stated that this correlation is more than coincidence. However, it does seem possible that the internationally based agencies could be better placed through economies of scale and use of resources to raise funds and support in the UK. Equally, the reverse could be true and those agencies which had grown in the UK could then spread out to have a more international presence.

Another possible structurally-based taxonomy could be elaborated on the basis of the relationship between the agency and the church in the country in which it works. Both France Mission Trust and INF have close links with a particular denomination, while the other agencies have links with a number of church bodies. However, this picture is confused by the fact that both France Mission Trust and INF only work in one country, whereas the other

agencies all work in a variety of places. The other agencies may have links with a single denomination in one country, while they link to another group or perhaps multiple groups in a different setting. The way in which agencies work with churches in their host countries could be an informative study, but it would be a complex undertaking, given the wide number of contexts in which many agencies work.

Faith Missions

In chapter 1, the concept of faith missions was introduced. These are agencies which are interdenominational, and which are modelled in some way after the China Inland Mission (OMF) (Cox, 2009, 184; Fiedler, 1994, 1; Hutchison and Wolffe, 2012, 128). One of the historic features of faith missions is that they do not pay salaries to their workers, who are required to raise their own financial support. Though in reality, this practice is being modified over time as agencies find themselves having to pay salaries for certain home-based, administrative roles.

Using publicly available information, it would be possible to classify agencies as to whether they were interdenominational and whether or not they pay salaries to their workers. Without some more definite criteria, it would be difficult to ascertain the extent to which the agencies are modelled after the China Inland Mission.

This sort of analysis would make it possible to classify agencies as to how closely they adhered to the pattern of faith missions. It is not immediately obvious what value such a classification would have on its own. However, combined with the information that would emerge looking at the age and focus of the agencies mentioned in the previous section, this could provide information regarding trends in agency structure and function over time.

The model by which missionaries receive their financial support is one which would merit further exploration. Paul Hildreth made this statement about missionary support:

“Direct financial giving to mission agencies has declined considerably, with ‘pooled funding’ for mission partners no longer an option for most. BMS and the Presbyterian Church of Ireland are exceptions to the rule. There has been an almost comprehensive switch to an ‘individual support’ model, with agencies helping their mission partners to raise funds and taking a proportion (often 10 or 12.5%) towards their own operational costs.” (Hildreth, 2012).

The implication of Hildreth’s research is that some agencies which once paid salaries to missionaries are moving towards a model where missionaries

need to raise their own support, in other words they are moving close to the position of the faith missions. If Hildreth's original data were available, it would be possible to revisit those agencies that he interviewed in 2011 to see to what extent they have changed and to track any changes in support patterns.

Confessional Taxonomies

Another possible taxonomy of evangelical mission agencies is based on confessional affiliation. As was noted in chapter 1, evangelicalism is not a denomination, but a movement which is found across all of the Protestant confessions. As a result, there are a number of mission agencies which have denominational roots. The Baptist Missionary Society is affiliated to the Baptist Union in the UK and CMS (formally the Church Mission Society) is a community of the Anglican church. A number of other agencies have emerged from denominational structures. However, a taxonomy purely based on denominational affiliation would be of limited use for two reasons. Firstly, the majority of agencies, including all of those in this study are interdenominational. These agencies may have good formal or informal links with a number of denominations, but they are not denominational structures *per se*. Secondly, those agencies which are denominational will sometimes take missionaries from outside of their own confession. For a number of years, the author was involved in training CMS recruits in language and culture learning acquisition prior to them heading off on overseas assignments. During this time, a significant proportion of the students were from denominations other than Anglicanism. Working for an evangelical agency in their preferred place of service was more important to these students than denominational identity.

However, there are other identifiable differences within evangelicalism which could conceivably be used as the basis of a taxonomy. In an unpublished paper, Bryan Knell of Global Connections identified seven subsets or tribes within evangelicalism. These are:

- Conservative/Traditional.
- Conservative/Contemporary.
- Pentecostal.
- Charismatic/denominational.
- Charismatic/New Church.
- Open/Denominational.

- Open/Non-denominational (Knell, 2008, 2).

Warner divides English evangelicalism into two broad groupings: conservative-evangelicals who stress the crucicentric and Biblicist aspects of Bebbington's definition of evangelicalism (see chapter 1) and entrepreneurial-evangelicals who stress the conversionist and activist poles (Warner, 2007). Warner's conservative-evangelicals would align broadly with Knell's first two categories and the entrepreneurial-evangelicals with the five others.

However, while it is possible to divide evangelicalism in this fashion, the same categories do not work as well for mission agencies. By their nature, agencies do not limit themselves to one strand of evangelicalism or another. They seek to develop a supporting constituency and to recruit missionaries from across the evangelical spectrum. In the current study, the one possible exception to this is Mission Africa; in his interview, the director made the following statement:

“Though we are officially interdenominational — our basis of faith is quite vague, it is quite short, it is clearly evangelical — the practical fact of the matter is that most people who are involved in Mission Africa have come from a reformed background. Certainly, the leadership and the council have been overwhelmingly reformed, from one reformed denomination or another.” (MA Director, 00:13:15)

Thus, although Mission Africa is an interdenominational mission it attracts its leadership from reformed, or conservative denominations. This would tend to suggest that though the agency is officially broadly based, in practice it fits within Warner's conservative-evangelical category. However, on the basis of this study none of the other agencies investigated could be aligned with either one of Warner's groups, much less with the more specific categories suggested by Knell.

It might be possible to develop a tool which allows agencies to be classed according to the degree to which they identify with Warner's two groups. However, this would inevitably involve interviewing staff from all of the agencies which would be a time-consuming undertaking. However, it is not immediately obvious what the benefits of a study such as this would be.

The Missional Conversation

In a 2011 book, Van Gelder and Zscheile examined the phenomenon of what is often termed the missional (or emerging) church (Van Gelder and Zscheile, 2011). The term missional came into vogue with the publication of an influential work edited by Darryl Guder (Guder, 1998) and broadly refers

to churches who view their primary purpose as being missional, that is reaching out with the gospel to those outside of their fellowship. Van Gelder and Zscheile indicate, that since Guder's publication, the word missional has become widely used, but that there is no clear agreement as to its meaning (Van Gelder and Zscheile, 2011, 2).

In chapter 3 of their book (Van Gelder and Zscheile, 2011, 67-98) attempt to "map the missional conversation", that is they seek to describe the ways in which the term missional is used. Building on the metaphor of a tree, they suggest that missional has four branches each of which has a number of sub-branches.

The various branches are distinguished according to the extent to which authors believe that mission is based on human agency or whether it emerges from God's agency and can be discerned in human choices and activities.

"The dividing line between branches revolves around the extent to which one starts with the *mission of the church* and the extent to which one starts with the *mission of God*; when starting with the mission of God, it also has to do with how robust the trinitarian theology is... The key question is: how do we understand God's presence in the world, in general, and in the midst of the church in particular?" (Van Gelder and Zscheile, 2011, 69).

For each of the branches and their sub-branches Van Gelder and Zscheile give a brief description, list authors and works which fit into the particular category and in some cases, they give a short critique.

Though it was not designed for this purpose, this classification could possibly be used as a taxonomy for mission agencies. The fine distinctions between the various sub-branches would not be helpful, but the four major branches could provide a useful analytical tool. The four branches are listed below, together with a brief description of their salient features.

Branch One: Discovering.⁷² This branch represents those who adopt a more traditional view of mission, seeing it in terms of 'fulfilling the Great Commission'

Branch Two: Utilizing. This branch includes those who "utilize the framework of God's agency as a sending God as the key to understanding the role of human agency", They see an importance in the church being called to

⁷² The titles given to the branches refer to the way in which they interact with Guder's book *Missional Church* (Guder, 1998). Were this model to be developed in the future, the group descriptions would need to be reframed in a way which is more appropriate to the situation of mission agencies.

participate in the mission of the triune God and see the church as having a responsibility to engage in the world (Van Gelder and Zscheile, 2011, 76).

Branch Three: Engaging. This group tends to focus on exploring what the implications of missional church are in practical terms, rather than concentrating on the theological aspects.

Branch Four: Extending. This group is typified by writers who seek to build on the biblical and theological framework underlying the missional church book.

Initially, it appears that all six agencies chosen in this study could be allocated to the first Branch, Discovering. However, though OMF's focus on "thetaskunfinished" seems to place it firmly in Branch One, some of the articles in the Billions magazine, for example, Peter Rowan's piece entitled "150 Years On, Are We Still Needed?" (Billions Jan 2015 p24) indicates a willingness to explore both the purpose and the theological rationale for the agency which would place OMF in Branch Three. Given that the agencies in this study were chosen because they had certain traits in common (see chapter 3), it is not entirely surprising that they group together to some extent. However, if the sample were widened, it is possible that more agencies would be identified which fit into Branches Two to Four.

The disadvantage of using this typology for mission agencies lies in the fact that it wasn't designed for that purpose and would need to be modified to some extent if it were to prove useful. It would also take considerable work to assign accurately a significant number of agencies to a framework like this. That being said, there is a number of possible advantages to this approach. The first is that it is built around the analysis of a significant body of literature which both brings a degree of rigour and allows the analysis of the agencies to be compared to other Christian contexts. Another advantage is that this approach is based on theological innovation. Given the concerns raised earlier in this chapter about the lack of theological reflection taking place within agencies, a tool which would allow the tracking and development of theological reflection across a number of agencies over a period of time would be a useful instrument. Such a tool would make it possible to analyse the way in which agencies are responding theologically to the challenges that they face.

Taxonomy Conclusion

It would be relatively straightforward to come up with a system that allowed mission agencies to be classified into different groups. This could be done

according to their activities, structure, or on the basis of their history and financial system. However, beyond providing a convenient way of talking about agencies, this sort of classification would not add greatly to our understanding of them. A taxonomy which combined some of these elements — for example, agency activities and history — could be very informative about the background and development of agencies over time. However, it would give very little information about the way in which agencies are innovating in order to face the future.

The most useful taxonomy would be one based on the approach used in the missional conversation but adapted for the specific realities of mission agencies. Rather than starting with Guder's Missional Church, it may be possible to perform a similar analysis based on a current text which is more useful to the analysis of mission agencies, such as the Cape Town Commitment. The literature which refers to the Cape Town Commitment could be analysed and classified according to the ways in which it interacts with, accepts and challenges the source. This could then be used to develop a classification of reactions to the Cape Town Commitment in the way that Van Gelder and Zscheile developed their analysis of the missional conversation. This would be a lengthy process, but it would provide a framework for analysing changes in the way that agencies think about missiological issues. At the very least, an analysis of this sort would confirm or refute the observations of this study which suggest that in the main, agencies do not reflect on missiological or theological issues.

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List of Abbreviations

AIM	Africa Inland Mission
ACN	Asai Chhimekee Nepal
BMS	Baptist Missionary Society
CAFOD	Catholic Agency for Overseas Development
CRESR	Consultation on the Relationship between Evangelism and Social Responsibility
CIM	China Inland Mission (see OMF)
CMS	Church Mission Society
CTC	Cape Town Commitment
CWME	Commission on World Mission and Evangelism
EA	Evangelical Missionary Alliance
EUSA	Evangelical Union of South America
FMT	France Mission Trust
GC	Global Connections
IMC	International Missionary Council
IMF	International Missionary Fellowship
INF	International Nepal Fellowship
LC	Lausanne Covenant
LCWE	Lausanne Committee for World Evangelism
LL	Latin Link
MA	Mission Africa
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NT	New Testament
OT	Old Testament
NTM	New Tribes Mission
OMF	Pseudo Acronym (formerly Overseas Missionary Fellowship)
RBMU	Regions Beyond Missionary Union
SPCK	Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge
SPG	Society for the Promotion of the Gospel

UPG..... Unreached People Group
WCC..... World Council of Churches
WEA World Evangelical Alliance
WEC Pseudo Acronym (formerly Worldwide Evangelization for Christ)
WEF World Evangelical Fellowship

Appendices

Appendix I

Interview Protocol

All of the questions in this protocol should be asked during the interview. However, it may be appropriate to change the wording or the order of the questions in order to encourage the interviewee to speak. Additional and follow up questions should be used as appropriate.

Personal Information

What is your name?

What is the agency that you work for?

How long have you worked for them?

What other roles have you had in the agency?

Tell me about your journey in mission, particularly about the people, events and situations which have shaped your thinking about the nature of mission.

Could you tell me something about the story of your agency and the influences that have shaped its approach to mission?

Church and Mission

What would you say should be the relationship between local churches and denominations and mission agencies in general?

How would you say that your agency relates to churches in the UK?

How about to churches "on the field"?

Could you tell me a story about how this is worked out in practice?

Lausanne Documents

Have you read the Lausanne Manifesto and the Cape Town Commitment?

Have your leadership or board ever studied the Lausanne Covenant or Cape Town Commitment together?

Have your board or leadership team worked through other missiological texts together?

Mission Values

In this section, I am interested in the way that your agency looks at some specific issues of mission theology and thought. Please try and answer on behalf of your agency rather than giving your personal position if that is possible.

Missional Hermeneutics

Tell me about the way in which your agency uses the Bible to shape its mission and values?

Tell me a story about how you have turned to the Bible for direction in a particular situation?

If I asked some of your agency staff to describe the Biblical basis of mission, what answer do you think they would give me?

Tell me about any passages which you would highlight as being particularly important to you?

How would you compare your use of the Old and New Testaments in defining your agency's work?

How is your approach to Scripture reflected in what your agency does both at home and around the world?

Are you aware of the term "missional hermeneutic" and if so, how would you define it?

Mission of God

What do you personally understand by the terms mission of God or *missio Dei*?

Please, describe how these terms are used within your agency

In what ways could reflecting on the mission of God have an impact on what your agency does?

With regard to thinking about the *missio Dei*, how would you compare your agency's thinking to others?

How is your approach to the mission of God reflected in what your agency does both at home and around the world?

Unreached People

What does the term “unreached people group” mean to you?

Describe how the term, or something like it, is used in your agency.

In what ways has a consideration of unreached people had an impact on what your agency does?

What sort of process do you use to identify which people groups are unreached?

Can you describe to me the process by which you decide where new missionaries should serve, or where you would start a new project?

Thinking about unreached peoples, how would you describe your agency’s thinking with regard to others?

In practical terms, in what way does your view of unreached people impact what your agency does at home and around the world?

Proclamation and Social Action

How do you see the relationship between social action and evangelism as part of mission?

How is this relationship worked out within your agency? Are there any tensions?

What are the reasons for your agency taking this position?

Can you tell me a story about how you see this relationship being worked out in the life of your agency?

In practical terms, how do your views on social action and evangelism impact what your agency does at home and around the world.

Close

A “catch all”, is there anything else question.

Appendix II: Information Coding System

The following is a list of the codes used within MAXQDA when analysing the director interview transcripts and the agency documents. The top level codes are in bold type.

Table 13: Coding System Used in Analysis

Code	Description
Missiological/theological reflection	Evidence that the agency is or is not involved in missiological or theological reflection
Across Agency Issues	Codes for themes which were added to the system as the analysis proceeded and which emerged as the contrast and comparison of the groups was undertaken.
Short Term Programmes	Evidence of the agencies' attitude to short-term mission programmes
Theological Education	Evidence that the agency is involved in theological education
Discuss the Place of Expats	Discussion of the role of expat missionaries in agency publications
History and Culture	Discussion of the history and culture of the host countries in agency publications
Talk About Government	Discussion of the host governments in agency publications
National Christian Workers	Articles written by national Christian workers in agency publications

Code	Description
Full Financial Report	A full annual financial report in the agency magazine
Recruitment	Overt recruitment for the agency in publications
Prayer	Requests for prayer in agency publications
Fundraising	Fundraising appeals in agency publications
Readers' Letters	Readers' letters section in agency publications
Group Analysis	Codes which are used for comparing and contrasting the groups.
Straplines	Codes which indicate an agency's self description or strapline.
Definition of Mission	Statements which seek to define the nature of mission.
Partnership	Code reflecting the way in which agencies partner together.
Flagged	Code for things which are flagged as being essential to follow up. This could be combined with any other code.
Schein	Top level code for Schein's organisational culture
Deeper Level	Evidence of issues that go deeper than the basic Schein description
Basic Underlying Assumptions	Evidence of the agency's basic underlying assumptions
Espoused Beliefs and Values	Evidence of the espoused beliefs and values of the agency
Proclamation Social Action	Top level code for proclamation and social action
Stories - Both	Stories that have aspects of both social action and proclamation
Stories - Social Action	Stories about social action
Stories - Proclamation	Stories about proclamation

Code	Description
Practice - Both	In practice, the agency prioritises both
Practice - Social Action	In practice, the agency prioritises social action
Practice - Proclamation	In practice, the agency prioritises proclamation
Position - Both	An assertion that proclamation and social action have equal priority
Position - Social Action Priority	The agency asserts that social action is a priority
Position - Proclamation Priority	The agency asserts that proclamation (evangelism, church planting etc) is a priority
UPGs	Top level code for unreached people groups
UPG - Criticism	Criticism of the concept of UPGs
UPG - Strategy	The agency's strategy is shaped by the concept of unreached people groups
UPG - Source	The source for the agency's UPG definition
UPG - Alternative	The agency produces a different definition of unreached people group to those commonly used.
UPG - Don't Use	The agency does not use the term unreached people groups
UPG - Use	The agency uses the concept of unreached people groups
Church	Top level code for church
Church Field - Influence	Evidence that the agency is shaped in some way by the church on the field
Church field	Relationship between the agency and the church on the field

Code	Description
Church UK - Influence	The agency is shaped in some way by its relationship to churches in the UK
Church - UK	Agency and church relations in the UK
Mission of God	Top level code for the mission of God
Mission of God - No	Concrete evidence that the term mission of God is not used extensively within the agency.
Mission of God - Communication	The use of the term mission of God in the way that the organisation talks about its work
Mission of God - Strategy	Use of the term or concept of the mission of God in forming organisational strategy
Mission of God - Explanation	An explanation or definition of the term mission of God.
Bible	Top level code for the Bible
Personal Experience	Using Scripture to illustrate personal experience or feelings.
Foundational Beliefs	Using Scripture to illustrate the agency's underlying beliefs and statement of faith.
Tangential Relationship	Using a Scripture passage in a way that is tangential to the story or to the original passage in context. This is close to illustration, but a bit more removed from the story.
Illustration	Using a Scripture passage to illustrate the subject of the story or article. There needs to be some obvious connection.

Code	Description
God's Activity	Using Scripture to illustrate God at work today — generally making some equivalence with his work in Scripture
Statement of Principle	Using Scripture as a statement of a missiological principle which is worked out in practice.
Call to Action	Using Scripture passages in order to call the readership to actually do something
Scripture Quotes in Publications	Quoting the Bible in publications
The Bible in Decisions	Use of the Bible in decision making and strategy formation
Whole Bible	Ref to the use of the whole Bible
NT	Use of the New Testament
OT	Use of the Old Testament
Missional Hermeneutic	References to a missional hermeneutic
Lausanne	Top level code for Lausanne
Lausanne - Agency	Responses to the agency's engagement with the Lausanne documents
Lausanne - Director	Responses to the director's awareness of the Lausanne movement and documents
Stories	Top level code for stories told by the agency
Stories - Culture	Stories which focus on local traditions or cultures
Stories Local People	Stories about local people, churches, etc.
Stories - Missionaries	Stories about agency missionaries

Code	Description
Agency	Top level code for the agency information
Reflection - No	The agency shows evidence of no theological or missiological reflection by the British leadership
Reflection - Yes	The agency shows evidence of theological or missiological reflection by the British leadership
Pragmatic Driver	The agency shows evidence of having been driven by pragmatic considerations
Theology Driver - Yes	The agency shows evidence of being driven by theological convictions
Agency History	References to the history of the agency
Director	Top level code for personal information about the director
Director - Conflict	Evidence that the director has concerns about agency policy or direction
Director - Influences	The things which influenced the director in their mission journey
Director - Mission Experience	The director's experience (or otherwise) of mission agencies.
Director - Personal Story	The director's personal history

Appendix III: Agency Documents

The following are the documents (interview transcripts, magazines, web pages, reports and twitter feeds) which were analysed during the course of the study. Not all of these documents are cited to in the text, but those that are are referred to by the abbreviations given below.

France Mission Trust

Director Interview

Paul Cooke 17/03/2017 FMT Director

Magazines

Table 14: France Mission Trust Magazines

Name	Date	Pages	Abbreviation
<i>Action Missionaire</i> 128	Summer 2013	16	AM128
<i>Action Missionaire</i> 129	Autumn 2013	16	AM129
<i>Action Missionaire</i> 130	Spring 2014	16	AM130
<i>Action Missionaire</i> 131	Summer 2014	16	AM131
<i>Action Missionaire</i> 132	Autumn 2014	16	AM132
<i>Action Missionaire</i> 133	Spring 2015	16	AM133

<i>Action Missionaire</i> 134	Summer 2015	16	AM134
<i>Action Missionaire</i> 135	Autumn 2015	16	AM135
<i>Action Missionaire</i> 136	Spring 2016	16	AM136
<i>Action Missionaire</i> 137	Summer 2016	16	AM137
<i>Action Missionaire</i> 138	Autumn 2016	16	AM138
<i>Action Missionaire</i> 139	Spring 2017	16	AM139
<i>Action Missionaire</i> 140	Summer 2017	16	AM140

Website Pages

Table 15: France Mission Trust Web Pages

Name	URL	Date Accessed	Abbreviation
Home	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/1-Welcome.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb Home
Background Info	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/2-Background%20info.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb Background
Church Planting	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/3-Church-planting.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb Planting

Name	URL	Date Accessed	Abbreviation
Supporting Church Growth	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/4-Supporting%20church%20growth.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb Growth
Developing New Leaders	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/5-Training%20new%20leaders.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb Developing
Collaboration	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/6-Collaboration.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb Collaboration
Who's who in France	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/7-Who%27s%20who%3F.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb Who
Map of Churches	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/8-Map%20of%20churches.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb Map
Confession de foi	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/9-Statement%20of%20faith.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb Confession
National Council of French Evangelicals	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/10-CNEF.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb National
Publications in French	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/11-Publications%20in%20French.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb French

Name	URL	Date Accessed	Abbreviation
Vision	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/12-Vision.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb Vision
France Mission in the UK	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/47-France%20Mission%20in%20the%20UK.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb UK
Who's Who in the UK	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/13-Who%27s%20who%3F.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb WhoUK
Statement of Faith	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/14-Statement%20of%20faith.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb Statement
Publications in English	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/16-Publications%20in%20English.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb English
Policies	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/50-Policies.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb Policies
Join our Mailing List	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/19-Join%20mailing%20list.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb Mailing
Events	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/17-Events.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb Events

Name	URL	Date Accessed	Abbreviation
France Days	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/42-France%20Days.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb Days
English Magazine	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/20-English%20magazine.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb Magazine
Monthly Updates	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/21-Monthly%20updates.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb Monthly
Appeal Projects	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/22-Appeal%20projects.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb Appeal
UK Missionaries	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/23-UK%20missionaries.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb Missionaries
Prayer Groups	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/24-Prayer%20groups.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb Prayer
Extra Prayer Info	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/44-Extra%20prayer%20info.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb ExtraPrayer

Name	URL	Date Accessed	Abbreviation
Short Term Opportunities	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/25-Short-term%20opportunities.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb STO
Year Abroad	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/26-Year%20abroad.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb Abroad
Long Term Service	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/27-Long-term%20service.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb Long
Find a French Church	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/45-Find%20a%20French%20church.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb Church
Donate	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/28-Donate.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb Donate
Annual Accounts	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/32-Annual%20accounts.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb Accounts
Leave a Legacy	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/34-Leave%20a%20legacy.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb Legacy
Church Twinning	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/35-General%20information.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb Twinning

Name	URL	Date Accessed	Abbreviation
Video	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/37-Video.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb Video
Audio Recordings and Powerpoints	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/38-Audio%20recordings.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb Audio
Useful Sites	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/39-Useful%20sites.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb Useful
Books and DVDs	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/40-Books%20%26%20DVDs.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb Books
Images	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/49-Images.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb Images
Latest News	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/43-Latest%20news.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb News
Contacts Us	http://www.france-mission.com/fmtrust/web/page/contact_us.html	01/08/2017	FMTWeb Contact

Twitter Feed

02/08/2016-02/08/2017<https://twitter.com/PaulFmtrust> 02/08/2017 FMT Twitter

Charity Commission Reports

Table 16: France Mission Trust Charity Reports

Date	URL	Date Accessed	Abbreviation
2013	http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Accounts/Ends79/0000267979_AC_20131231_E_C.PDF	02/08/2017	FMTRReport13
2014	http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Accounts/Ends79/0000267979_AC_20141231_E_C.pdf	02/08/2017	FMTRReport14
2015	http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Accounts/Ends79/0000267979_AC_20151231_E_C.pdf	02/08/2017	FMTRReport15
2016	http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Accounts/Ends79/0000267979_AC_20161231_E_C.pdf	02/08/2017	FMTRReport16

INF

Director Interview

John Reynolds 05/04/2017 INF Director

Magazines

Table 17: INF Magazines

Name	Date	Pages	Abbreviation
Today In Nepal 226	March 2014	20	TIN226
Today in Nepal 227	September 2014	20	TIN227

Today in Nepal 228	March 2015	20	TIN228
Today in Nepal 229	September 2015	20	TIN229
Today in Nepal 230	March 2016	20	TIN230
Today in Nepal 231	September 2016	20	TIN231
Today in Nepal 232	March 2017	20	TIN232

Website Pages

Table 18: INF Web Pages

Name	URL	Date Accessed	Abbreviation
Home	http://inf.org.uk/	01/08/2017	INFWeb Home
Our Work	http://inf.org.uk/our-work/	01/08/2017	INFWeb Work
Serve in Nepal	http://inf.org.uk/serve-in-nepal-with-inf/	01/08/2017	INFWeb Serve
Fundraising 2	http://inf.org.uk/give/fundraising-inf-2/	01/08/2017	INFWeb Fundraising2
Legacy	http://inf.org.uk/give/legacy-inmem/	01/08/2017	INFWeb Legacy
Pray	http://inf.org.uk/pray/	01/08/2017	INFWeb Pray
Inspiration for You	http://inf.org.uk/pray/inspiration-for-you/	01/08/2017	INFWeb Inspiration
Events	http://inf.org.uk/events/	01/08/2017	INFWeb Events
Give	http://inf.org.uk/give/	01/08/2017	INFWeb Glve

Name	URL	Date Accessed	Abbreviation
Gifts	http://inf.org.uk/gifts/	01/08/2017	INFWeb Gifts
Sponsor Staff	http://inf.org.uk/sponsor-mission-personnel-in-nepal/	01/08/2017	INFWeb Sponsor
Legacy 2	http://inf.org.uk/give/legacy/	01/08/2017	INFWeb Legacy2
In Memoriam	http://inf.org.uk/give/in-mem/	01/08/2017	INFWeb Memoriam
Tributes	http://inf.org.uk/give/tributes/	01/08/2017	INFWeb Tributes
News from Nepal	http://inf.org.uk/news-from-nepal/	01/08/2017	INFWeb News
Why Nepal	http://inf.org.uk/why-nepal/	01/08/2017	INFWeb Why
Vision	http://inf.org.uk/our-inspiration/#vision	01/08/2017	INFWeb Vision
Inspiration	http://inf.org.uk/our-inspiration/	01/08/2017	INFWeb Inspiration
Our People	http://inf.org.uk/about-us/#ourpeople	01/08/2017	INFWeb People
Download	http://inf.org.uk/about-us/#download	01/08/2017	INFWeb Download
UK Staff	http://inf.org.uk/about-us/inf-uk-staff-board/	01/08/2017	INFWeb Staff
Contact Us	http://inf.org.uk/contact-us/	01/08/2017	INFWeb Contact
Donate Now	http://inf.org.uk/give/donate-now/	01/08/2017	INFWeb Donate
Camps	http://inf.org.uk/camps/	01/08/2017	INFWeb Camps

Name	URL	Date Accessed	Abbreviation
Green Pastures Hospital	http://inf.org.uk/newsitems/opening-green-pastures-hospital/	01/08/2017	INFWeb Hospital
Landslides Hit Pokhara	http://inf.org.uk/newsitems/landslides-hit-pokhara/	01/08/2017	INFWeb Landslides
Women in Nepal	http://inf.org.uk/prayerpoint/women-in-nepal/	01/08/2017	INFWeb Women
Privacy Policy	http://inf.org.uk/privacy-policy/	01/08/2017	INFWeb Privacy
Cookie Policy	http://inf.org.uk/cookie-policy/	01/08/2017	INFWeb Cookies
Opportunities with INF	http://inf.org.uk/opportunities-with-inf/	01/08/2017	INFWeb Opportunities
Our Impact 2	http://inf.org.uk/our-impact-2/	01/08/2017	INFWeb Impact2
Communications Preference	http://inf.org.uk/communications-preference/	01/08/2017	INFWeb Communications

Twitter Feed

INF did not have an active Twitter account during the time of this study.

Charity Commission Reports

Table 19: INF Charity Reports

Date	URL	Date Accessed	Abbreviation
2013	http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Accounts/Ends78/0001047178_AC_20130630_E_C.pdf	02/08/2017	INFReport13
2014	http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Accounts/Ends78/0001047178_AC_20140630_E_C.pdf	02/08/2017	INFReport14
2015	http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Accounts/Ends78/0001047178_AC_20150630_E_C.pdf	02/08/2017	INFReport15
2016	http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Accounts/Ends78/0001047178_AC_20160630_E_C.pdf	02/08/2017	INFReport16

Latin Link

Director Interview

Andrew Johnson 27/03/2017 LL Director

Magazines

Table 20: Latin Link Magazines

Name	Date	Pages	Abbreviation
Latin File	Spring 2013	20	LF Spring13
Latin File	Autumn 2013	20	LF Autumn13
Latin File	Spring 2014	20	LF Spring14

Name	Date	Pages	Abbreviation
Latin File	Autumn 2014	20	LF Autumn14
Latin File	Spring 2015	20	LF Spring15
Latin File	Autumn 2015	20	LF Autumn15
Latin File	Spring 2016	20	LF Spring16
Latin File	Autumn 2016	20	LF Autumn16

Website Pages

Table 21: Latin Link Web Pages

Name	URL	Date Accessed	Abbreviation
What We Do	https://www.latinlink.org.uk/who-we-are/what-we-do	01/08/2017	LLWeb WhatWeDo
Basis of Faith	https://www.latinlink.org.uk/who-we-are/what-we-believe	01/08/2017	LLWeb Basis
Who We Work With	https://www.latinlink.org.uk/who-we-are/who-we-work	01/08/2017	LLWeb WorkWith
Our History	https://www.latinlink.org.uk/who-we-are/history	01/08/2017	LLWeb History
Home	https://www.latinlink.org.uk/	01/08/2017	LLWeb Home
Who We Are	https://www.latinlink.org.uk/who-we-are	01/08/2017	LLWeb Who
Where We Work	https://www.latinlink.org.uk/where-we-work	01/08/2017	LLWeb Where

Name	URL	Date Accessed	Abbreviation
What Can I Do	https://www.latinlink.org.uk/what-can-i-do	01/08/2017	LLWeb What
News	https://www.latinlink.org.uk/news	01/08/2017	LLWeb News
How Can I Give	https://www.latinlink.org.uk/how-can-i-give	01/08/2017	LLWeb Give
How To Give	https://www.latinlink.org.uk/how-can-i-give/donate?frequency=single&currency=GBP&country=GB&restriction=Unrestricted	01/08/2017	LLWeb Give2
Transforming Through the Local Church	https://www.latinlink.org.uk/news/transforming-through-local-church	01/08/2017	LLWeb Transforming
Current Teams	https://www.latinlink.org.uk/what-can-i-do/step-teams/current-teams	01/08/2017	LLWeb Teams
Camp Leader	https://www.latinlink.org.uk/what-can-i-do/opportunities/costa-rica/camp-leader-lider-de-ministerio-de-campamento	01/08/2017	LLWeb Camps
Step Teams	https://www.latinlink.org.uk/what-can-i-do/step-teams	01/08/2017	LLWeb Step
On Location Again	https://www.latinlink.org.uk/news/latin-link-location-again	01/08/2017	LLWeb Location
Providing Theological Education	https://www.latinlink.org.uk/news/providing-theological-education	01/08/2017	LLWeb TheologicalEd
Children's worker	https://www.latinlink.org.uk/what-can-i-do/opportunities/costa-rica/childrens-worker-trabajador-con-ni%C3%B1os-0	01/08/2017	LLWeb Children

Name	URL	Date Accessed	Abbreviation
Support Worker	https://www.latinlink.org.uk/what-can-i-do/opportunities/costa-rica/support-worker-trabajador-social	01/08/2017	LLWeb Support
Opportunities	https://www.latinlink.org.uk/what-can-i-do/opportunities	01/08/2017	LLWeb Opportunities
Latin Nights	https://www.latinlink.org.uk/how-can-i-give/appeals/latin-nights	01/08/2017	LLWeb Nights
Be a Supporter	https://www.latinlink.org.uk/what-can-i-do/be-supporter	01/08/2017	LLWeb Supporter
Stride Individual Placements	https://www.latinlink.org.uk/what-can-i-do/stride-individual-placements	01/08/2017	LLWeb Stride
Resources	https://www.latinlink.org.uk/what-can-i-do/be-supporter/resources	01/08/2017	LLWeb Resources
Latin Link Films	https://www.latinlink.org.uk/what-can-i-do/be-supporter/resources/latin-link-films	01/08/2017	LLWeb Films
Terms and Conditions	https://www.latinlink.org.uk/terms-and-conditions	01/08/2017	LLWeb Conditions
Privacy Policy	https://www.latinlink.org.uk/privacy	01/08/2017	LLWeb Policy
Accessibility	https://www.latinlink.org.uk/accessibility	01/08/2017	LLWeb Accesibility

Twitter Feed

13/07/2016/13/07/2017https://twitter.com/Latin_Link 13/07/2017 LL Twitter

Charity Commission Reports

Table 22: Latin Link Charity Reports

Date	URL	Date Accessed	Abbreviation
2013	http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Accounts/Ends26/0001020826_AC_20130331_E_C.pdf	02/08/2017	LLReport13
2014	http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Accounts/Ends26/0001020826_AC_20140331_E_C.pdf	02/08/2017	LLReport14
2015	http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Accounts/Ends26/0001020826_AC_20150331_E_C.pdf	02/08/2017	LLReport15
2016	http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Accounts/Ends26/0001020826_AC_20160331_E_C.pdf	02/08/2017	LLReport16

Mission Africa

Director Interview

Paul Baillie 08/03/2017

MA Director

Magazines

Table 23: Mission Africa Magazines

Name	Date	Pages	Abbreviation
Dispatch	Winter 2013	24	Dispatch Winter13
Dispatch	Spring 2014	24	Dispatch Spring14
Dispatch	Summer 2014	24	Dispatch Summer14

Name	Date	Pages	Abbreviation
Dispatch	Spring 2015	24	Dispatch Spring15
Dispatch	Summer 2015	24	Dispatch Summer15
Dispatch	Autumn 2015	24	Dispatch Autumn15
Dispatch	Spring 2016	24	Dispatch Spring 16
Dispatch	Summer 2016	24	Dispatch Summer16
Dispatch	Autumn 2016	24	Dispatch Autumn16
Dispatch	Spring 2017	24	Dispatch Spring 17
Dispatch	Summer 2017	24	Dispatch Summer17

Website Pages

Table 24: Mission Africa Web Pages

Name	URL	Date Accessed	Abbreviation
Home Page	http://www.missionafrica.org.uk/	31/07/2017	MAWeb Home
Evangelism	http://www.missionafrica.org.uk/what-we-do/evangelism	31/07/2017	MAWeb Evangelism
Medical	http://www.missionafrica.org.uk/what-we-do/medical	31/07/2017	MAWeb Medical
Training	http://www.missionafrica.org.uk/what-we-do/training	31/07/2017	MAWeb Training
Compassion	http://www.missionafrica.org.uk/what-we-do/compassion	31/07/2017	MAWeb Compassion
Nigeria	http://www.missionafrica.org.uk/where-we-work/nigeria	31/07/2017	MAWeb Nigeria
Burkina Faso	http://www.missionafrica.org.uk/where-we-work/burkina-faso	31/07/2017	MAWeb Burkina

Name	URL	Date Accessed	Abbreviation
Chad	http://www.missionafrica.org.uk/where-we-work/chad	31/07/2017	MAWeb Chad
Kenya	http://www.missionafrica.org.uk/where-we-work/kenya	31/07/2017	MAWeb Kenya
Long-Term	http://www.missionafrica.org.uk/ways-to-serve/long-term	31/07/2017	MAWeb Long-term
Short-Term	http://www.missionafrica.org.uk/ways-to-serve/short-term	31/07/2017	MAWeb Short-term
Teams	http://www.missionafrica.org.uk/ways-to-serve/teams	31/07/2017	MAWeb Teams
Medical Electives	http://www.missionafrica.org.uk/ways-to-serve/medical-electives	31/07/2017	MAWeb Electives
Volunteer at Home	http://www.missionafrica.org.uk/ways-to-serve/volunteer-at-home	31/07/2017	MAWeb Volunteer
Fundraise	http://www.missionafrica.org.uk/ways-to-serve/fundraise	31/07/2017	MAWeb Fundraise
About Us	http://www.missionafrica.org.uk/about	31/07/2017	MAWeb About
Contact	http://www.missionafrica.org.uk/contact	31/07/2017	MAWeb Contact
Missionaries	http://www.missionafrica.org.uk/missionaries	31/07/2017	MAWeb Missionaries
Ministries	http://www.missionafrica.org.uk/ministries	31/07/2017	MAWeb Ministries
Opportunities	http://www.missionafrica.org.uk/opportunities	31/07/2017	MAWeb Opportunities
News and Events	http://www.missionafrica.org.uk/news-and-events	31/07/2017	MAWeb News
Prayer	http://www.missionafrica.org.uk/prayer	31/07/2017	MAWeb Prayer
Give	http://www.missionafrica.org.uk/give	31/07/2017	MAWeb Give

Name	URL	Date Accessed	Abbreviation
Prayer #pm	http://www.missionafrica.org.uk/prayer#pm	31/07/2017	MAWeb PrayerPM
bricc	http://www.missionafrica.org.uk/ministries/bricc	31/07/2017	MAWeb bricc
Godwin	http://www.missionafrica.org.uk/missionaries/gail-godwin-ekanem	31/07/2017	MAWeb Godwin
Ibia	http://www.missionafrica.org.uk/missionaries/samantha-ibia	31/07/2017	MAWeb Ibia
Njukulla	http://www.missionafrica.org.uk/missionaries/lynsey-njukullah	31/07/2017	MAWeb Njukullah
Medical Care	http://www.missionafrica.org.uk/opportunities/medical-care	31/07/2017	MAWeb Care
Literature Ministry	http://www.missionafrica.org.uk/opportunities/literature-ministry	31/07/2017	MAWeb Literature
You Came to Visit Me	http://www.missionafrica.org.uk/articles/2017/you-came-to-visit-me	31/07/2017	MAWeb Visit
Home from home assignment	http://www.missionafrica.org.uk/articles/2017/home-for-home-assignment	31/07/2017	MAWeb Assignment
Ways to serve	http://www.missionafrica.org.uk/ways-to-serve	31/07/2017	MAWeb Ways

Twitter Feed

31 July 2016-31 July 2017

https://twitter.com/mission_africa 31 July 2017

MATweets

Charity Commission Reports

Table 25: Mission Africa Charity Reports

Date	URL	Date Accessed	Abbreviation
2015	http://www.charitycommissionni.org.uk/charity-details/?regid=102150&subid=0	31/07/2017	MAReport15
2016	http://www.charitycommissionni.org.uk/charity-details/?regid=102150&subid=0	31/07/2017	MAReport16

OMF

Director Interview

Peter Rowan 29/03/2017

OMF Director

Magazines

Table 26: OMF Magazines

Name	Date	Pages	Abbreviation
Billions	Jan-April 2014	28	Billions Jan14
Billions	Sept-Dec 2014	28	Billions Sept14
Billions	Jan-April 2015	28	Billions Jan15
Billions	May-Aug 2015	28	Billions May15
Billions	Sept-Dec 2015	28	Billions Sept15

Name	Date	Pages	Abbreviation
Billions	Jan-April 2016	28	Billions Jan16
Billions	May-Aug 2016	28	Billions May16
Billions	Sept-Dec 2016	28	Billions Sept16
Billions	Jan-April 2017	28	Billions Jan17
Billions	May-Aug 2017	28	Billions May17
Billions	Sept-Dec 2017	28	Billions Sept17

Website Pages

Table 27: OMF Web Pages

Name	URL	Date Accessed	Abbreviation
Home	https://omf.org/uk	01/08/2017	OMFWeb Home
Pray	https://omf.org/uk/pray/	01/08/2017	OMFWeb Pray
Long-Term	https://omf.org/uk/get-involved/join-us-long-term/	01/08/2017	OMFWeb Long-Term
Short-Term	https://omf.org/uk/get-involved/serveasia/	01/08/2017	OMFWeb Short-Term
Bridge Asia	https://omf.org/uk/get-involved/bridge-asia/	01/08/2017	OMFWeb Bridge
Interns	https://omf.org/uk/get-involved/interns/	01/08/2017	OMFWeb Interns

Name	URL	Date Accessed	Abbreviation
Giving	https://omf.org/uk/get-involved/giving/	01/08/2017	OMFWeb Giving
Projects	https://omf.org/uk/projects/	01/08/2017	OMFWeb Projects
Local Jobs	https://omf.org/uk/get-involved/local-jobs/	01/08/2017	OMFWeb Local
Events	https://omf.org/uk/events/	01/08/2017	OMFWeb Events
Billions	http://billions.omf.org/	01/08/2017	OMFWeb Billions
Videos	http://billions.omf.org/	01/08/2017	OMFWeb Videos
Wallpapers	https://omf.org/uk/wallpapers/	01/08/2017	OMFWeb Wallpapers
Conference Audio	https://omf.org/uk/2015/03/12/audio-from-mission-accomplished-national-conference-2015/	01/08/2017	OMFWeb Audio
Resources	https://omf.org/uk/resources/	01/08/2017	OMFWeb Resources
UK Shop	https://ukshop.omf.org/	01/08/2017	OMFWeb Shop
News and Stories	https://omf.org/uk/newsandstories/	01/08/2017	OMFWeb News
Contact	https://omf.org/uk/about/contact/	01/08/2017	OMFWeb Contact
Customer Service Charter	https://omf.org/uk/customer-service-charter/	01/08/2017	OMFWeb Charter
Going	https://omf.org/uk/get-involved/serveasia/going/	01/08/2017	OMFWeb Going

Name	URL	Date Accessed	Abbreviation
Join Us Long Term	https://omf.org/uk/get-involved/join-us-long-term/	01/08/2017	OMFWeb Join
Get Involved	https://omf.org/uk/get-involved/	01/08/2017	OMFWeb Involved
Serve Asia	https://omf.org/uk/get-involved/serveasia/	01/08/2017	OMFWeb Serve
Missionary Identity 3	https://omf.org/uk/2017/07/27/wheres-home-missionary-identity-part-3/	01/08/2017	OMFWeb Identity3
Missionary Identity 2	https://omf.org/uk/2017/07/27/identity-crisis-missionary-identity-part-2/	01/08/2017	OMFWeb Identity2
Missionary Identity 1	https://omf.org/uk/2017/07/27/youre-missionary-identity-part-1/	01/08/2017	OMFWeb Identity1
I don't want to speak English	https://omf.org/uk/2017/07/21/dont-want-speak-english-display-gospel/	01/08/2017	OMFWeb English
About OMF	https://omf.org/uk/about/	01/08/2017	OMFWeb About

Twitter Feed

28/07/2016-28/07/3017https://twitter.com/omf_uk

28/07/2017 OMF Tweets

Charity Commission Reports

Table 28: OMF Charity Reports

Date	URL	Date Accessed	Abbreviation
2013	http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Accounts/Ends73/0001123973_AC_20161231_E_C.pdf	28/07/2017	OMFReport13
2014	http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Accounts/Ends73/0001123973_AC_20161231_E_C.pdf	28/07/2017	OMFReport14
2015	http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Accounts/Ends73/0001123973_AC_20161231_E_C.pdf	28/07/2017	OMFReport15
2016	http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Accounts/Ends73/0001123973_AC_20161231_E_C.pdf	28/07/2017	OMFReport16

WEC

Director Interview

John Bagg 22/03/2017 WEC Director

Magazines

Table 29: WEC Magazines

Name	Date	Pages	Abbreviation
Worldwide	2015	28	Worldwide 15
Worldwide	2016	28	Worldwide 16
Worldwide	2017	28	Worldwide 17

Website Pages

Table 30: WEC Web Pages

Name	URL	Date Accessed	Abbreviation
Front Page	https://wec-uk.org/	31/07/2017	WECWeb Home
Giving To WEC	https://wec-uk.org/about/donate	31/07/2017	WECWeb Giving
Mission Opportunities	https://wec-uk.org/mission-opportunities	31/07/2017	WECWeb Opportunities
Stories: Malcolm	https://wec-uk.org/stories/malcolm	31/07/2017	WECWeb Malcolm
Roll On The Summer	https://wec-uk.org/stories/roll-on-the-summer	31/07/2017	WECWeb Summer
Operation World Conference	https://wec-uk.org/events/operation-world-conference	31/07/2017	WECWeb Conference
Going the Extra Mile	https://wec-uk.org/stories/extra-mile	31/07/2017	WECWeb Mile
Training for Refugee Ministry	https://wec-uk.org/news/doorstep	31/07/2017	WECWeb Refugee
A Prophecy Fulfilled	https://wec-uk.org/opinion/a-prophecy-fulfilled	31/07/2017	WECWeb Prophecy

Name	URL	Date Accessed	Abbreviation
Compassion Ministries	https://wec-uk.org/stories/trek-compassion-ministries	31/07/2017	WECWeb Compassion
Do You Love Me	https://wec-uk.org/opinion/do-you-love-me	31/07/2017	WECWeb Love
Charben	https://wec-uk.org/stories/charben	31/07/2017	WECWeb Charben
Tom	https://wec-uk.org/stories/tom	31/07/2017	WECWeb Tom
About	https://wec-uk.org/about	31/07/2017	WECWeb About
History	https://wec-uk.org/about/history	31/07/2017	WECWeb History
Our Team	https://wec-uk.org/about/team	31/07/2017	WECWeb Team
FAQs	https://wec-uk.org/about/faqs	31/07/2017	WECWeb FAQ
Donate	https://wec-uk.org/about/donate	31/07/2017	WECWeb Donate
Connections	https://wec-uk.org/connections	31/07/2017	WECWeb Connections
Mission and Me: London	https://wec-uk.org/events/mission-me-london-1	31/07/2017	WECWeb London
Working with TCKs	https://wec-uk.org/events/working-with-third-culture-kids	31/07/2017	WECWeb TCK
WEC Camps	https://wec-uk.org/events/wec-camps	31/07/2017	WECWeb Camps

Name	URL	Date Accessed	Abbreviation
An Inconvenient Truth	https://wec-uk.org/opinion/missions-an-inconvenient-truth	31/07/2017	WECWeb Truth
Here Comes the Sun	https://wec-uk.org/opinion/here-comes-the-sun	31/07/2017	WECWeb Sun
Life stirs in the UK Church	https://wec-uk.org/opinion/life-stirs-in-the-uk-church	31/07/2017	WECWeb Church
The Silence	https://wec-uk.org/opinion/the-silence	31/07/2017	WECWeb Silence
Don't Always read the Label	https://wec-uk.org/opinion/dont-always-read-the-label	31/07/2017	WEC Label
Chrexit	https://wec-uk.org/opinion/chrexit	31/07/2017	WEC Chrexit
Maximum Impact	https://wec-uk.org/opinion/maximum-impact	31/07/2017	WECWeb Impact
Radical Reorganisation	https://wec-uk.org/opinion/wec-radical	31/07/2017	WECWeb Reorganisation
Arts Release	https://wec-uk.org/stories/artsrelease	31/07/2017	WECWeb Release
Betel	https://wec-uk.org/stories/betel	31/07/2017	WECWeb Betel

Name	URL	Date Accessed	Abbreviation
Children at Risk	https://wec-uk.org/stories/children-at-risk	31/07/2017	WECWeb Risk
Church Planting	https://wec-uk.org/stories/church-planting	31/07/2017	WECWeb Planting
Friendship Evangelism	https://wec-uk.org/stories/friendship-evangelism	31/07/2017	WECWeb Friendship
Mission and Me	https://wec-uk.org/stories/mission-me	31/07/2017	WECWeb Mission
WEC Stories	https://wec-uk.org/stories/neighbours-worldwide	31/07/2017	WECWeb Stories
Prayer	https://wec-uk.org/stories/prayer	31/07/2017	WECWeb Prayer
Radio Worldwide	https://wec-uk.org/stories/radio-worldwide	31/07/2017	WECWeb Worldwide
Schools	https://wec-uk.org/stories/schools	31/07/2017	WECWeb Schools
Trek	https://wec-uk.org/stories/trek	31/07/2017	WECWeb Trek
Teaching English	https://wec-uk.org/stories/teaching-english	31/07/2017	WECWeb English

Name	URL	Date Accessed	Abbreviation
Youth and Children	https://wec-uk.org/stories/youth-and-children	31/07/2017	WEC WebYouth

Twitter Feed

At the time of the study, WEC did not have an agency Twitter feed.

Charity Commission Reports

Table 31: WEC Charity Reports

Date	URL	Date Accessed	Abbreviation
2013	http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Accounts/Ends05/0000237005_AC_20130331_E_C.pdf	31/07/2017	WECReport13
2014	http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Accounts/Ends05/0000237005_AC_20140331_E_C.pdf	31/07/2017	WECReport14
2015	http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Accounts/Ends05/0000237005_AC_20150331_E_C.pdf	31/07/2017	WECReport15
2016	http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Accounts/Ends05/0000237005_AC_20160331_E_C.pdf	31/07/2017	WECReport16

Documents Not Included In the Analysis

The following webpage was cited in the text, but as it was not directly linked from the WEC home page, it was not included in the analysis of the agency documents.

Table 32: WEC Non Analysed Page

Page Title	URL	Date Accessed	Abbreviation
WEC Statement of Faith	http://www.wecinternational.org/who-is-wec/statement-of-faith.php	31/07/2017	WECWeb Statement

Appendix IV Information Sent to The Agencies

Generic Document

Introduction

By way of introduction, my name is Eddie Arthur and I am a career missionary with Wycliffe Bible Translators. In my thirty plus years with Wycliffe, I have worked in translation, academic training and leadership, including a time as CEO of Wycliffe in the UK. I have also served as director of Strategic Initiatives for Global Connections. Since 2015, I have been engaged in studying for a PhD which looks at the theology and practices of a sample of British evangelical mission agencies. This report, which is based on my research, is produced primarily for leadership of the agencies that the research focused on. However, as this document is generic and does not contain any information specific to any particular agency, it may be of interest to a wider public.⁷³ It is fair to say that none of the statements in this report will apply to every agency, but it is hoped that there is something which will help all agency leadership teams and boards as they navigate this increasingly complex world.

This is a long document and I know from personal experience that agency leadership teams and boards (especially boards) rarely have time to interact with papers of this length. However, I make no apology for presenting you with such a long document. Without wishing to sound alarmist, I believe that mission agencies in the UK are facing a significant crisis caused by massive demographic shifts in the world church. The highly regarded mission scholar David Smith sums up this crisis in these words:

“... agencies and institutions that once did pioneering work at the cutting edges of the Christian mission have too often been left facing in the wrong direction as the battle has moved on. In this situation they face a stark choice: either they engage in a radical re-formation, repositioning themselves to respond to the quite new challenges of the twenty-first century, or they are doomed to rapid and rather sad decline and extinction.” (Smith, 2003, 11).

If agencies are to undergo the sort of re-formation that Smith suggests is necessary, they will need to engage in a reflective process which engages

⁷³ Each of the agencies involved in the research will receive an additional document which includes information specific to their situation.

with information from a variety of sources, rather than simply adopting pragmatic, short-term solutions. This document seeks to provide background information on the situation for mission agencies and an overview of some current concerns in mission theology. It is hoped that this will help agencies to reflect on their own situation and to develop solutions which fit their individual contexts. However, for those without time to read a document of this length, or who want to go straight to concrete action, there are a number of generic suggestions for action in the last section.

The document has three sections. The first gives a brief overview of the history of mission agencies and examines some of the contemporary challenges that they face and their capacity to address them. The second section considers some aspects of current mission theology and the capacity of agencies to engage in theological reflection. The final section includes a number of suggestions for concrete steps that agencies could follow in order to navigate the crisis that they are facing.

There is an extensive bibliography at the end of this document for anyone who wants to follow up on the issues raised. I also blog on these sorts of questions at www.kouya.net

An Introduction to Mission Agencies

The History and Structure of Agencies

The first permanent British missionary organisations were the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge (SPCK, founded in 1698) and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG, founded in 1701). These were primarily established in order to meet the pastoral and ecclesiastic needs of the British colonial population in the newly established colonies, rather than as evangelistic organisations reaching out to native populations (Cox, 2009, 49).

In 1792, William Carey published *An Enquiry into the Obligation of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens* (Carey, 1792) which outlined the case for world mission and proposed the creation of a voluntary missionary society based on the commercial societies that had been established to encourage trade with the new colonies (Walls, 1996, 246; Stanley, 2003, 41). Inspired by the voyages of Captain Cook, it was not the first apology for mission work to be published in the UK, but it proved to be the most influential (Noll, 2004, 218).

Inspired by Carey, The Baptist Missionary Society (BMS) was formed in 1792, and he and his family sailed to India as the society's first missionaries

in 1793. Following the foundation of the BMS a number of other missionary societies were established including the London Missionary Society in 1795, The Scottish Missionary Society and the Glasgow Missionary Society were founded in 1796, with others in their wake (Goheen, 2014, 149; Latourette, 1954, 1033; Tennent, 2010, 262). These societies were all based on the model of the voluntary societies which had come into being in various areas of commerce and culture in Great Britain during the early 1700s. A board of patrons, drawn from the appropriate denomination, oversaw the work of the society and was responsible for raising funds to support the work (Noll, 2004, 137; Bebbington, 2005, 174). This basic structure whereby mission societies are supervised by a board has remained unchanged until today. That being said, there are a number of ways in which mission societies have changed over the years that need to be briefly discussed.

The first significant change in the way that agencies function occurred with the formation of the China Inland Mission (today known as OMF) by James Hudson Taylor in 1865. The CIM eschewed traditional fund-raising techniques and missionaries were not paid a salary, but were expected to look to divine providence for their income (Stanley, 2003, 43). In this, the CIM was the first of what are often termed “faith missions” which comprise the majority of missionary organisations today (Fiedler, 1994, 1). The CIM was neither a denominational, nor interdenominational society; it was non-denominational, with no formal links to existing Church structures. Its focus was geographical, rather than ecclesiological. In another change from accepted practice, women were accepted as missionaries in their own right, not simply as assistants or the wives of missionaries (Fiedler, 1994, 292). Prior to the formation of the CIM, mission societies had their roots in church denominations, with many societies requiring their missionaries to be ordained (Cox, 2009, 85; Walls, 1996, 168). These new strategies allowed the CIM to grow rapidly, and by 1905 it was referred to as an octopus, with more than 800 missionaries working throughout China (Wigram, 2007, 1). Today, the majority of mission agencies are non-denominational and many of them still operate broadly according to the faith principle whereby missionaries have to raise their own personal support rather than receiving a stipend or salary.

A second way of looking at changes in mission agencies is proposed by missiologist Ralph Winter⁷⁴. He divides the modern missionary age into

⁷⁴ Winter’s ideas have gained wide currency in the evangelical Church owing to their inclusion in the widely used textbook *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement* (Winter and Hawthorne,

three eras (Winter, 1992). The first era is typified by William Carey and his contemporaries, who directed their attention to the newly colonised coastal areas of . Winter's second era arose as the continental interiors were opened up and a new group of mission agencies came into being who concentrated on reaching the people living in the remote hinterlands. The first of these was the CIM which was followed by a number of other faith missions focusing on the inland areas including African Inland Mission (1895) and Sudan Interior Mission (1898) (Fiedler, 1994, 481). Winter's third era required access to hazardous and isolated areas such as jungles, mountains and deserts and represented mission to 'unreached peoples'. A number of new agencies came into being at this time, these include New Tribes Mission and Wycliffe Bible Translators. In addition to these missions who were focused on reaching people in hard to access places, specialist agencies were founded in order to provide transport and communications for the missionaries in isolated situations. The Missionary Aviation Fellowship was founded in 1945.

A third view of change is proposed by Bryan Knell (Knell, 2003). He notes that what were once termed mission(ary) societies now tend to be called mission(ary) agencies. In Knell's view, this change in terminology reflects a basic change in the function of the organisations. The term missionary society reflects their original conception as groups of people, missionaries, with a similar vocations, who were banded together for mutual support. The modern use of the term agencies indicates that the organisations are more focused on particular tasks, rather than on the mutual support of the missionaries

It is also important to note that the majority of mission agencies in the UK now function as charities. The boards of patrons who supervise the work of the agency have morphed into trustee boards who have responsibility under charity law for the good governance of the organisation. The implications of this will be developed below.

Mission agencies are involved in the cross-cultural diffusion of Christianity, which, according to Andrew Walls, is essential to the future of the faith. Christianity continually renews itself as it finds its home in new contexts and cultures. (Walls, 1996, xvi, xvii). However, this diffusion is not dependant on "any one instrument" (Walls, 1996, 258). Mission agencies arose at a particular time in world and church history and against a particular economic

1992). His analysis is restricted to Protestant mission work.

and political background. In a different time and in a different situation, other structures or methods might be called for and we should not assume that agencies, as we know them, will have an indefinite future.

The Current Environment for Agencies

Evangelical missions developed at a time when it was possible to conceive of the world as being divided between a Christian West and the non-Christian rest. The distinction between the worlds was clear and mission could be distinguished from other forms of Christian service because it involved travelling out of the Christian world into the non-Christian one.

Over the last fifty years the religious profile of the world has changed dramatically; what Andrew Walls calls the Christian centre of gravity (Walls, 2002, 31) has shifted from the West to Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Philip Jenkins describes this change:

“Already today, the largest Christian communities on the planet are to be found in Africa and Latin America. If we want to visualize a "typical" contemporary Christian, we should think of a woman living in a village in Nigeria or in a Brazilian favela.” (Jenkins, 2002, 2).

Comparing trends in Uganda and the United Kingdom gives an indication of the process which is underway. Christianity only took root in Uganda around 150 years ago yet today 75% of the population would describe themselves as Christian (Jenkins: 91). By contrast, in 2005 a Manchester University study showed that only 50% of British Christian parents succeeded in passing on their faith to their children,⁷⁵ while a report by Peter Brierly suggests that the membership of Christian denominations in the UK will fall to under 5% by 2040, compared with just under 10% in 2005.⁷⁶

Sanneh sums up the cumulative effect of these two trends:

“By 1985 there were over 16,500 conversions a day (in Africa), yielding an annual rate of over 6 million. In the same period some 4,300 people were leaving the Church on a daily basis in Europe and North America.” (Sanneh, 2003, 15).

The different experiences of the Church in the West and elsewhere have led to a change in the profile of Christians around the world. In 1800, well over 90% of Christians lived in Europe and North America, whereas in 1990 over

⁷⁵ Daily Telegraph: 17 August 2005

⁷⁶ Daily Telegraph: 3 September 2005

60% lived in Africa, South America, Asia and the Pacific, with that proportion increasing each year (Walls, 2002, 31).

Evangelical mission agencies who were founded to take the gospel to Asia and Africa now live in a context where there is often a higher proportion of Christians on the 'mission fields' than in the traditional sending countries.

Contemporary Challenges for Agencies

UK Demographics

Over the period from 1970 to 2000, while church attendance declined significantly, the number of mission agencies increased from 56 to 100. Over the same period, there was also a decrease in interest in overseas mission among British Christians (Arthur, 2017). This presents an extremely challenging situation for agencies, who find themselves competing for support with a growing number of other organisations at the same time as their pool of potential supporters both shrinks and becomes less interested in their work. It is clear that in the long term, this situation is not sustainable, and the likelihood is that in the short to medium term, some agencies will find themselves unable to continue because of a lack of support.

Churches on a Mission

Another factor which has an impact on mission agencies in the UK is the way in which increasing number of churches and denominations are engaging in mission without the intermediary of mission agencies (Hildreth, 2012; Ward, 1999). Sometimes this simply involves a partnership with a project, church or diocese in another part of the world, while in some cases churches are directly involved in church planting across the globe (see for example (Devenish, 2005)).

Whether churches are directly involved in overseas mission without the intermediary of mission agencies because of theological convictions or simply out of convenience, the impact is that agencies are losing a segment of their potential support.

Focus on Development

We have noted that the Church has grown enormously in recent decades across the globe. However, the growth in the world population more or less matches the growth in the Church, such that the number of Christians as a percentage of the world population has hardly changed.⁷⁷ The need for

⁷⁷ <http://www.pewforum.org/2011/12/19/global-christianity-exec/>

evangelistic mission to reach people who have no opportunity to hear about Jesus is as crucial as it ever was.

Despite this, in the UK at least, there is concern that churches and mission agencies are losing their focus on evangelistic mission. In 1974, the Lausanne Covenant helped evangelicals to recapture the importance of social action as an integral part of mission work (Stott, 1997). However, in the intervening years, the pendulum appears to have swung in the other direction to such an extent that evangelistic proclamation is being sidelined by concerns for climate change, the relief of poverty and justice (Hildreth, 2012). In September 2015, Martin Lee of Global Connections wrote: "The evangelical church has lost its desire to help people come to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, happy with just social action and doing good" (Lee, 2015).

If this supposition is true, then this poses another threat to the future of agencies whose principle focus is on evangelistic work.

Agency Responses to the Challenges

In his 2012 report for Global Connections, Paul Hildreth suggested that the ways in which agencies are responding to their current set of challenges can be broken down into two broad categories (Hildreth, 2012).

Operating Within The Model: Some agencies, in particular the larger ones who are less threatened by the current situation, are responding by improving their managerial processes, making their communications and fund-raising sharper and adapting their funding models to meet current challenges. These tweaks are well intentioned and often demonstrate good stewardship. However, they do not reflect the extent to which the operating environment has changed for mission agencies and are unlikely to be successful long-term.

Reforming The Model: Finding new ways to deploy staff and resources in order to reflect more accurately the situation in the world today. Hildreth suggests that it is mainly the small and medium sized agencies, those with a degree of flexibility, that are adopting these sorts of approaches. Examples would include redeploying experienced missionaries from overseas fields to reach diaspora communities at home, facilitating the deployment of missionaries from other countries coming to the UK and acting as consultancies for churches wanting to be directly involved in mission.

It is not entirely clear where Hildreth draws the line between larger and smaller mission agencies. In my study, four of the six agencies examined were adopting some of the approaches that he refers to as reforming the

model and this included the two largest in the study. However, it should be noted that even when agencies are involved in reforming the model, they still operate generally within their broad area of expertise and experience. For example, agencies who had a long experience of sending missionaries in one direction, from the UK to other countries have extended their operation to include sending missionaries from overseas to the UK. None of the agencies in Hildreth's study or mine have adopted an approach or strategy that is radically different from what they were doing previously.

However, a number of mission scholars have suggested that the changes we are seeing in the world today are so profound that a completely new model of mission is required, one that will involve more radical transformation. The next section explores this concept.

Do Agencies Have the Capacity for Major Change?

As already mentioned, the majority of mission agencies are charities, governed by a board of trustees. The role of the trustees is key in determining the way in which a charity functions.

“Trustees have overall control of a charity and are responsible for making sure it's doing what it was set up to do.

... trustees are the people who lead the charity and decide how it is run. Being a trustee means making decisions that will impact on people's lives.

... Trustees use their skills and experience to support their charities, helping them achieve their aims.” (Charity Commission, 2013).

Trustees are expected to carry out six basic duties in running a charity:

- “1. Ensure your charity is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit.
2. Comply with your charity's governing document and the law.
3. Act in your charity's best interests.
4. Manage your charity's resources responsibly.
5. Act with reasonable care and skill.
6. Ensure your charity is accountable.” (Charity Commission, 2013).

In practice, these duties involve a significant amount of monitoring and reporting on activities. The trustees need to be aware of what the charity is doing and have to ensure that it is complying with relevant laws. They must submit a comprehensive, annual report on their activities and finances and keep track of any risks that the charity faces and ensure that appropriate

mitigation strategies are in place. This monitoring and reporting becomes more complex when the charity is involved in work overseas, potentially in hazardous situations.

The complexity of the legal and financial issues that trustees must deal with and the priority that they must give to this work means that they will very often pay special attention to recruiting board members from a legal, financial or business background. These factors combine to impact the way in which trustees interact with theological and missiological issues. Three trends can be identified.

1. The time required to address the requirements of governance and compliance issues means that trustee boards, who generally do not meet frequently, do not have adequate time to engage in missiological or theological reflection.
2. Boards often lack the experience, expertise or desire to interact with material missiological or theological materials.
3. The limited time available and the pressing need to address and regulatory issues combined with the interests and skills of the board creates a culture in which the compliance and business issues are given ever greater prominence because this is the ground where the board is most comfortable.

Martin Lee, the former director of Global Connections highlighted the problem that current patterns of charity governance pose for agencies in a 2016 blog post.

“The Charity Commission seems to be putting increasing burdens on trustees in the areas of compliance, financial accounting, risk assessment, policies of an ever-expanding nature – and I could go on. Sadly, it means that this can often dominate meetings and take up disproportionate amounts of time.

... However perhaps the most important role, often neglected, is thinking about the future. When was the last time your Board set aside substantive time to think about questions such as the changing external environment, what the future might bring, whether to merge or close, or just getting fresh perspectives? Too often an organisation just uses internal sources of information and focuses its discussions on the current or planned activities. Regularly asking people from outside to talk about trends and their experiences, even if they are competitors, is vital if a Board is really doing its job well.” (Lee, 2016).

Mission Scholar Rollin Grams highlights one way in which this lack of vision for the future can play out.

“The mission agency is struggling in its home office to fund the operation, and its leaders are glad to get new recruits who will have to pay 13% operational funds. There may be other benefits to the agency or its key members as new recruits contribute some of their support to the overall work of the mission. The mission agency needs to keep accepting missionaries to fund its operations and replace missionaries who have left the mission. The mission agency, furthermore, functions more like an employment placement agency, helping to place workers who come with their own pay in overseas jobs. This is not necessarily all that bad, as long as the overseas ‘job’ has a decent ministry, but the point is that the mission agency probably does not have a clear understanding of its own mission beyond placing people overseas. The mission agency needs to understand how it relates to the mission of God as it is laid out in Scripture and then ask itself how it is accomplishing this mission.” (Grams, 2013).

Agencies and Mission Theology

The central point of my research was to investigate the way in which mission agencies interacted with four key issues in mission theology. The first two issues, the relationship between social action and proclamation and the concept of unreached people groups were key themes from the 1974 Lausanne Congress. The second two, the *missio Dei* (Mission of God) and the use of a missional hermeneutic were derived from the 2010 Lausanne gathering in Cape Town.

These are all issues where our understanding is evolving and where there is not universal agreement amongst evangelicals. This means that it is perfectly legitimate for agencies to take up different positions on each of these issues. For example, some agencies focus on proclamation and see social action as a support to their evangelistic work, while others take a holistic position which sees both as equally important.

In the study, six agency directors were interviewed with a focus on the four issues. A range of documents from each agency were then studied to see to what extent their discussion of the four issues reflected what the directors had said were the agencies’ positions. The broad results of the study revealed the following.

- As might be expected, the different agencies adopted differing positions with relation to the four issues under examination.
- There was a consistency between the directors’ description of the agencies’ position on the four issues and the way in which those issues were presented in the agency magazines, reports and Twitter feeds.
- The majority of the agencies had not interacted with the Lausanne

documents and had a limited awareness of newer aspects of mission theology, such as those highlighted at Cape Town.

- There was no clear correlation between the positions adopted by the agencies with regard to the theological themes and their actions across a range of issues. Indeed, agencies with similar theological positions might act in different ways, while agencies with differing positions on these issues could have very similar practices.

The four issues which were chosen for investigation are important ones that have the capacity to reshape the way that mission is envisaged, and they will be discussed below. Before that, however, it is necessary to explore the question of whether there is a disconnect between mission writers and theologians on one hand and the agencies on the other.

Is There a Disconnect?

According to missiologist Michael Goheen the Lausanne commitment has played “an authoritative role in defining the evangelical tradition of mission for almost four decades” (Goheen, 2014, 169), while Neff said that the Lausanne Covenant was “the defining theological document for mission and evangelism (Neff, 2010, 36). Historian, Brian Stanley says that the Lausanne Covenant has become “normative” for evangelicals (Stanley, 2013b, 533). It is too soon to judge the impact of the 2010 Cape Town Commitment; however, when it was released, the leaders of the Lausanne Movement said the following: “Its prophetic call to work and to pray will, we hope, draw churches, missional agencies, seminaries, Christians in the workplace, and student fellowships on campus to embrace it and to find their part in its outworking” (Brown and Birdsall, 2012, xii).

However, in my study, it became apparent that British mission agencies and their leadership have not, in the main, engaged with either the Lausanne Covenant or its follow up, the Cape Town Commitment. It would seem that those who produced, promote and write about the Lausanne documents accord them far more importance than do the leaders of British mission agencies. This gives the impression that, to some extent, there is a disconnect between mission writers and academics on one hand, and mission agencies and practitioners on the other. This was further reinforced during my study, when it emerged that the majority of mission agencies do not work with the concepts of “*missio Dei*” or a “missional hermeneutic”, ideas which are very prevalent in mission literature and in the newer generation of mission text books.

There are a number of reasons why this disconnect exists. The first is the regulatory and administrative burden placed on agency leadership as mentioned above. Agency leaders face a number of constraints that mean that they are not able to stay current with advances in mission thinking, even if they wished to. This is exacerbated by the evangelical tendency towards pragmatism which is a feature of agency life. With limited time available for their work, agency leaders and boards are more likely to address issues which have a concrete outcome, rather than give time to a reflective process which might, at first, seem rather abstract.

There is a further question as to the extent to which agency leadership and boards are qualified to interact with current mission thinking and to explore its implications for the life of their agency. Payne said that mission practitioners need to be 'excellent theologians', (Payne, 2013, xvi). In the real world, it is impossible for agency directors and boards to be qualified in every area that they have to deal with, however, they do need to ensure that they have access to suitably qualified people to guide their reflections. It is not clear that this is a universal value across the agency sector.

Unreached People Groups

During the Lausanne Congress, the American missiologist Ralph Winter presented a paper entitled 'The Highest Priority: Cross-Cultural Evangelism' (Winter, 1975). Winter's central thesis was that although there are Christians in most countries of the world, the missionary task was far from finished because there were many people unreached by the Christian message because of cultural or social boundaries. He cited the example of the Church of South India, which represents only 5 of the more than 100 castes in the region. According to Winter, "it would be much more difficult — it is in fact another kind of evangelism — for this church to make great gains within the 95 other social classes, which make up the vast bulk of the population" (Winter, 1975, 214).

Winter went on to define three distinct forms of evangelism: E1 is evangelising people from your own cultural background, E2 is evangelising those from a related language and culture, while E3 evangelism involves people from a completely different linguistic or cultural background. According to Winter, 97% of the world's unevangelised population could only be reached by E3 evangelism and current mission strategy was not taking this into account.

The implications of Winter's paper were twofold. Firstly, he demonstrated that the remaining missionary task was far more extensive than people had believed. Secondly, by focusing on people groups, Winter developed criteria by which it would be possible to identify those who had been reached by the Christian message and so give a strategic focus to missionary activity.

Today there are three lists of Unreached People Groups which are widely used in the mission world; each has a slightly different philosophy and hence identifies different numbers of unreached groups (Datema, 2016, 61). The World Christian Database based at Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary defines unreached groups as being less than 50% evangelised which led to the identification of 4,129 different groups in 2015 (Seminary). The International Missions' Board of the Southern Baptists Church considers groups that are less than 2% evangelical, of which they say there are 6,792 (November 2016) as being unreached (Board)]. The third group, the Joshua Project, identifies 6,571 UPGs, which are groups that are less than 2% evangelical and less than 5% Christian adherent (November 2016) (Joshua Project, 2016).

In recent years, a further component has been added to the concept of UPGs, the notion of being 'unengaged'. These are groups that are not only unreached according to one of the definitions, but where there is also no active Christian witness (Datema, 2016, 61).

However, although the concept of UPGs has been influential in shaping the strategy and vocabulary of evangelical missions, it is not without its critics.

At one level, it is relatively easy to criticise the lists of unreached people groups. Identifying every socio-linguistic group in the world and then determining the extent to which each group has been evangelised is an extremely difficult undertaking; illustrated by the fact that there are three different lists of UPGs. However, if the lists are not accurate, then any strategy built on them must also be questionable.

Concern has also been expressed that by focusing evangelistic efforts on distinct people groups, missionaries could contribute to inter-ethnic conflict in Africa or help to maintain the inequalities of the caste system in India (Scott, 1981, 61).

In 1991, Samuel Escobar wrote a sustained criticism of frontier missions, which he termed "managerial missiology" (Escobar, 1991). According to Escobar, this managerial approach prioritises mission activities which can be quantified, such as radio broadcasts, while devaluing things such as poverty

alleviation which do not contribute directly to the measurable objective of church growth. This approach is highly unsatisfactory in the developing world, where social action is as important as evangelism (Escobar, 1991, 11). His second criticism was that managerial missiology has a pragmatic approach to evangelism which de-emphasises theology and focuses on method. "Tough questions are not asked because they cannot be reduced to a linear management by objectives process." This pragmatic approach, with its focus on speed has no place for mystery, for suffering or for the slow theological development which are typically part of cross-cultural mission (Escobar, 1991, 11-12).

In a situation where churches are growing around the world and agencies are losing some of their rationale for existing, focusing on Unreached People Groups can help provide strategic direction, though this should not be done in an uncritical fashion. However, we should not lose sight of the fact that there are many groups where there is little gospel witness, despite the fact that they are not generally classed as "unreached". A clear example would be many communities in post-Christian Europe.

Proclamation - Social Action

Historically, evangelical mission societies would combine proclamation of the Christian message with social action such as providing medical care and starting schools. However, at the start of the twentieth century, a shift, sometimes called the "Great Reversal", took place within evangelicalism that reduced the evangelical view of mission to the verbal proclamation of the gospel (Bebbington, 1989, 213). Goheen identifies three reasons for this move: premillennialism, individualism and a reaction to the social gospel. Premillennialism is an approach to eschatology which sees little value in the present created order which is considered little more than a stepping stone to eternity. Individualism meant that sin was seen purely in individual and personal terms, not as a societal phenomenon which needed to be addressed. The social gospel emphasised the social dimension of salvation and downplayed the relationship between the individual and God (Chester, 1993, 104; Goheen, 2014, 229). A turning point came in the middle of the century when fundamentalists or new evangelicals began to challenge their community to take the social dimension of their faith seriously. A key point in this process was the publication of 'The Uneasy Conscience of Fundamentalism' by prominent evangelical theologian Carl Henry in 1947 (Henry, 1947). Henry argued that the gospel affects all of life and so he called upon fundamentalists to work out the social implications of their faith.

Over the following years, evangelicals began to take more of an interest in social action, this is demonstrated in the UK by the founding of the evangelical relief and development agency, Tear Fund in 1968 (Stanley, 2013a, 184). However, there was no agreement in the relative importance of social action and proclamation. At the 1966 Berlin Conference, Carl Henry wanted to see social action included in the agenda, but Howard Pew of Sun Oil, who partly funded the congress insisted that nothing should distract from the focus on evangelism and so social action was not included on the agenda (Chester, 1993, 402; Stanley, 2013a, 70). However, by 1974, the organisers of the Lausanne Congress had begun to develop a wider understanding of mission, one which included aspects of social action⁷⁸ (Dahle et al., 2014, 4; Yates, 1996, 202). Because of this, Billy Graham expressed a wish that the Congress would clarify the relationship between evangelism and social action (Graham, 1975, 34).

The key texts relating to evangelism and social action are found in sections 4, 5 and 6 of the Lausanne Covenant. Section 4 defines evangelism as “the proclamation of the historical, biblical Christ as Saviour and Lord, with a view to persuading people to come to him personally and so be reconciled to God.” (LC 4).

Section 5 sets out the distinction between evangelism and social action.

“Although reconciliation with other people is not reconciliation with God, nor is social action evangelism, nor is political liberation salvation, nevertheless we affirm that evangelism and socio-political involvement are both part of our Christian duty. For both are necessary expressions of our doctrines of God and man, our love for our neighbour and our obedience to Jesus Christ.” (LC5).

And section 6 looks at the relative priority of the two.

“In the Church’s mission of sacrificial service evangelism is primary.” (LC6).

This formulation assigns an importance to Christian social action, but it indicates clearly that evangelism is the primary aspect of mission.

In the years since Lausanne, there has been an ongoing and active debate about the relative roles of proclamation and social action. The 2010 Cape Town Commitment shifts the balance towards social action, as compared with the earlier Lausanne document. It mentions a wide range of social actions which are considered to be legitimate aspects of mission. In addition,

⁷⁸ John Stott admitted that his position on the importance of social action developed between the Berlin Congress and Lausanne (Stott and Wright, 2016, 22).

in distinction from the Lausanne Covenant and the CRESR statement, the CTC does not insist that evangelism should be considered as primary. This primacy of evangelism was restated in section four of the Manila Manifesto which states “Evangelism is primary because our chief concern is with the gospel” (Stott, 1997, 236. Christopher Wright, the editor of the Cape Town Commitment, suggests that rather than talking about the primacy of evangelism, it is preferable to talk about the centrality of the gospel, from which both evangelism and social action flow Wright, 2016, #845@50).

Today, there is a number of writers who suggest that the concept of a distinction between evangelism and social action is misplaced. Scott Sunquist says that the distinction is derived from Enlightenment thinking, rather than from Scripture (Sunquist, 2013, 1808), while Tennent argues that Luke’s Gospel demonstrates that we cannot distinguish between the two (Tennent, 2010, 142). Brent Myers, president of World Vision, says that the question of the relationship between social action and evangelism is “the wrong question” because it is impossible to distinguish between them (Myers, 2012, 269).

However, there are those who continue to argue that the distinction is real and that social action is either secondary to evangelism or that it shouldn’t be considered as a legitimate part of mission at all (DeYoung and Gilbert, 2011, 3485; Ott, 2016, xviv). At the other extreme, Martin Lee of Global Connections has expressed the concern that some mission agencies are focusing on social action to the exclusion of proclamation (Lee, 2014). There was also some evidence in my research that the leadership of some agencies feel pressured by their supporting constituencies to put more emphasis on social action than they are comfortable with.

The extent to which there continue to be differences on this question is illustrated by a recent survey of evangelical mission mobilisers and missionary candidates. Some respondents did not regard social action as an aspect of mission, while others had no interest in being involved in evangelism (Matenga and Gold, 2016, 34 ff.).

Evangelicals have differing convictions about the relative place of social action and proclamation within the mission of the Church, and differing positions taken by agencies reflect this. That being said, on reading the agency documents, there was sometimes a confusion as to the position occupied on this issue by particular agencies.

- Given that this is an area of legitimate disagreement between evangelicals, agencies should respect the choice that others make

and should refrain from negative comments about the way in which other agencies strike this balance.

- Agencies should make their choices about the relationship between social action and proclamation on a principled rather than a pragmatic basis. They need to think through what the Bible has to say on the issue and come to the conclusions which they believe are right for their agency and then stick to them.
- Agencies should communicate their position on this issue clearly to their supporters. This can be done both by having theoretical articles which explain the agency position and through the balance of the stories told in magazines and on social media.
- There is anecdotal evidence that it is easier to recruit people (especially short-termers) and to raise finance for social action projects than it is for proclamation. If this were followed to its ultimate conclusion, it could change the profile of an agency completely. Within a generation, a proclamation focused agency could find itself, unwittingly, to have become a social action focused one. This is a legitimate transformation to make, but it should occur for principled reasons, not by accident.

The Mission of God

Historically, mission has been understood in various ways. It has been considered as saving people from eternal damnation, sharing the benefits of Christendom with the wider world, or as the extension of the church into new territories⁷⁹. However, in 1991, David Bosch wrote: “During the past half a century or so there has been a subtle but nevertheless decisive shift toward understanding mission as *God’s mission*” (Bosch, 1991, 389). This concept, and the Latin phrase associated with it, *missio Dei*, first came to prominence at the IMC conference in Willingen in 1952 (Bosch, 1991, 390).

Skreslett explains *missio Dei* in these terms: “Mission is seen, not as something begun by any human organisation, but as an eternal reality rooted in God’s sending of the Son and the procession of the Spirit from the Godhead” (Skreslet, 2012, 32). In this view, mission is derived from the nature and actions of the triune God, rather than the activities of the church.

There are diverging opinions regarding the interpretation of the *missio Dei*, and some question the usefulness of its formulation altogether (Skreslet, 2012, 32). However, as Bosch points out: “The recognition that mission is God’s mission represent a crucial breakthrough in respect of the preceding

⁷⁹ David Bosch suggests that the history of the church can be divided into six eras, each of which has a distinct understanding of mission (Bosch, 1991, 182).

centuries. It is inconceivable that we could again revert to a narrow, ecclesiocentric view of mission” (Bosch, 1991, 393).

Perhaps because the concept emerged from ecumenical circles, Evangelicals have been slow to adopt the concept of the *missio Dei*. According to Tennent, they rejected what they saw as the secularisation of the gospel and an undue focus on social and political involvement, while failing to appreciate the benefits of a *missio Dei* approach which undergirded this focus (Tennent, 2010, 58). However, in 1976, Robert Recker, Professor of Missions at the evangelical Calvin Seminary, produced a paper which synthesised reformed-evangelical theology and a *missio Dei* focus, while rejecting outright the Hoekenkijk, world-centric approach (Recker, 1976). By 1991, Bosch was able to write that “many evangelicals” had accepted a *missio Dei* view (Bosch, 1991, 390,1).

Today, a *missio Dei* focus is broadly accepted within evangelical missiology (Keum, 2014, 398; Stetzer, 2016, 93). This is illustrated by the publication of three recent missiology text books, each of which uses the *missio Dei* as its basic framework (Flemming, 2013; Goheen, 2014; Tennent, 2010). On a pragmatic level, Wycliffe Global Alliance has developed a philosophy of Bible translation which frames their work as participation in the mission of God (Wycliffe Global Alliance, 2013).

Tennent expresses this evangelical view of *missio Dei* in this way:

“Mission is first and foremost about God and His redemptive purposes and initiatives in the world, quite apart from any actions or tasks or strategies or initiatives the church may undertake. To put it plainly, mission is far more about God and who He is than about us and what we do.” (Tennent, 2010, 54,5).

The language of *missio Dei* runs through the Cape Town Commitment.

“... the one eternal, living God who governs all things according to his sovereign will and for his saving purpose. In the unity of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, God alone is the Creator, Ruler, Judge and Saviour of the world.” (CTC 2).

Chris Wright, the editor of the Cape Town Commitment expresses it this way:

“When the Cape Town Commitment comes to define the mission to which we are committed, it begins by presenting a summary of the mission of God himself.” (Wright, 2016, 37).

The first part of the Cape Town Commitment, the Confession of Faith, includes 15 references to the mission of God and the final segment is

entitled “We Love the Mission of God”. Here, mission is an activity of God, in which the Church is called to participate.

Wright adds another aspect to the notion of God having a mission.

“So, the ‘mission of God’ has come to refer not merely to the God who sent and sends, but to the God who has an overarching purpose for his whole creation and is constantly ‘on mission’ to accomplish it.” (Wright, 2016, 37).

The notion of the mission of God, or the *missio Dei* may, at first glance appear to be a rather impractical, theoretical way of looking at mission. However, taking the concept seriously could cause agencies to rethink a number of aspects of their work. For example, in a 2018 blog post, I wrote the following:

“It changes how we do recruitment. Rather than calling (guilt-tripping) people to come and do a task which wouldn’t get done without them, we would be inviting people to join with what God is doing around the world. We can be certain that Christ is building his church and that God is reconciling all things to himself in Christ, and it is an amazing privilege that God allows people like us to be involved as part of this process. We would also give much more prominence to the communities which God has placed people in. Rather than recruiting individuals and then working out how to get their church and other supporters on board, agencies would help churches to identify, train and send their members.” (Arthur, 2018).

Kirk Franklin has written a short book describing the root and branch transformation that occurred in the Wycliffe Global Alliance (formally Wycliffe International) when they started to look at the impact of the *missio Dei* on the work of Wycliffe (Franklin, 2017).

Again, not all evangelicals accept the concept of the *missio Dei* and it is perfectly legitimate for agencies not to work with this idea. However, the implications for the practice of mission and the way that we talk about our work and go about raising support are so profound, that it behoves agencies at least to investigate the concept and to consider whether it is something that they should be using to shape their work.

Missional Hermeneutic

Traditionally, evangelicals have derived their view of mission from a few passages in the New Testament, particularly the “Great Commission” passages at the ends of the Gospels and in the first chapter of Acts. However, more recently scholars such as Christopher Wright have suggested that we should ground our understanding of mission in the whole

narrative of the Bible. He suggests that when we take a “whole-story-of-the-Bible” view of mission, then our view of the Bible itself is transformed. “But not only do we arrive at a more fully *biblical theology of mission*, we also gain a more *missional understanding of the Bible* itself.” (Wright, 2016, 39). Thus, “Mission is not just one of a list of things the Bible happens to talk about, only a bit more urgently than some. Mission is, in the much-abused phrase, ‘what it is all about’” (Wright, 2006, 22).

This approach to reading the Bible is termed a missional hermeneutic, which the biblical scholar Richard Bauckham describes as: “a way reading the bible for which mission is the hermeneutical key... a way of reading the whole of Scripture with mission as its central interest and goal” (Bauckham). The Cape Town Commitment’s view of a missional hermeneutic is developed in section 6: “We love God’s Word”;

“The Bible tells the universal story of creation, fall, redemption in history, and new creation. This overarching narrative provides our coherent biblical worldview and shapes our theology . At the centre of this story are the climactic saving events of the cross and resurrection of Christ which constitute the heart of the gospel. It is this story (in the Old and New Testaments) that tells us who we are, what we are here for, and where we are going. This story of God’s mission defines our identity, drives our mission, and assures us the ending is in God’s hands.” (Wright, 2006, 22).

In practical terms, a missional hermeneutic means that our view of mission is coloured by the whole Bible. The Old Testament prophets’ condemnations of corruption and their calls for justice inform our thinking alongside the New Testament commands to make disciples.

This approach adopted by the Cape Town Commitment is not universally accepted amongst evangelicals. Shortly after the 2010 Cape Town meeting, the influential author, Kevin DeYoung co-authored a popular book which takes issue with the concept of the missional hermeneutic and which insists that the biblical basis for mission is only found in the “Great Commission” passages at the ends of the Gospels and in the first chapter of Acts (DeYoung and Gilbert, 2011).

Though not all evangelicals accept that a missional hermeneutic is the best way to approach Scripture, there is a strong body of opinion that recommends it. This is something that agencies should be aware of and consider in their deliberations on the future.

General Recommendations

On the basis of both the literature and my research into agencies, I am making a number of recommendations to agencies in addition to those that have been mentioned above.

Short-Term Steps

Some short-term measures that agencies could adopt in order to address the issues raised in this document include the following:

- In practice, agencies tend to cooperate well on the field and also in the UK at events such as GoFest and university tours. However, in a situation where there is an increasing number of agencies and significant anecdotal evidence that church leaders are frustrated by the mixed messages they receive from agencies, there is a need for deeper cooperation. For example, agencies focusing on unreached people groups could agree between themselves which groups they would concentrate on. This would both decrease competition and provide the opportunity for an attractive publicity campaign.
- During my research, it was clear that agency directors had a good understanding of the way in which different parts of the work of their agencies interacted; particularly social action and proclamation. However, this interaction was less clear in a number of agency publications. It would be helpful if agencies were to write articles showing how their work integrates, in addition to telling stories about individual activities.

Longer-Term Steps.

These longer-term guidelines are broadly aimed at agency trustee boards, though they could equally be applied to leadership teams. Boards have a difficult role; as groups of volunteers meeting infrequently, they have to deal with an increasingly complex regulatory framework and this leaves little time for reflection on missiological and theological topics. Indeed, such reflection may seem a waste of time to a board with no background in this area and who have a range of pressing issues to engage with. However, if agencies are to play a role in a mission world which has changed dramatically over the last fifty years and in which Westerners are now simply one part of a polycentric reality, agencies will have to give significant energy into rethinking their role and their place in what God is doing. That being said, it is undoubtedly the case that some agencies — particularly the larger ones with committed constituencies — could carry on without major change for a significant time. However, while they may continue to recruit candidates and

raise funds in the UK, they would have decreasing relevance to the overall work of mission around the world.

- Boards could actively recruit new members from immigrant or diaspora communities in the UK as well as those with backgrounds in mission theology and reflection. They should also ensure that time is allocated in every meeting to ensure that these members give input into discussions.
- One day a year should be set aside for reflecting on a missiological or theological theme. Ideally, this would involve input from someone outside of the agency in order to give the board a broader perspective on the world of mission.
- As well as sending board members on trips to visit the agency's work overseas, they could ensure that they get information from the wider mission world by, for example, attending World Evangelical Alliance Mission Commission conferences.
- Boards could agree together to read a modern textbook on mission (for example (Goheen, 2014), and to spend a brief time each meeting discussing a chapter together.
- In order to increase the amount of outside input and to promote understanding and cooperation between agencies, boards could appoint experienced staff members from other agencies as trustees.
- In a situation where there is an increasing number of agencies, boards could actively consider merging with other, similar, agencies.

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Agency Reports

France Mission Trust

Introduction

My research focused on six mission agencies all of whom are members of Global Connections and who send missionaries from the UK to other parts of the world. Of the agencies in the study, France Mission Trust are the smallest both in terms of income and number of missionaries serving abroad. They are also one of only two agencies in the study which focuses its work on a single country.

The comments below are based on an interview with the director of France Mission Trust and an extended study of the agency magazines and website. It is possible that my remarks are inaccurate at points or that they do not reflect the agency's own view of itself. Nevertheless, I would encourage the agency leadership to take these observations seriously, as they do reflect the impression that an outsider who is well-disposed to the organisation has gained through interaction with it.

Observations

The following observations were made about France Mission Trust during the course of my research:

- The fact that the agency is focused on church planting in a single country gives a very thrust focus to its activity which is reflected in the agency publications.
- Compared with majority of other agencies in the study, France Mission Trust has a clear position with regard to proclamation and social action. The agency focuses on church planting and sees social action as a support to this work.
- In comparison to the other agencies in the study, France Mission Trust pays significant attention to explaining the biblical and missiological rationale for its work, with regular articles in its magazine covering this topic.
- Equally, France Mission Trust gives more information on the culture, politics and religious situation in its target country than do other agencies. However, this is possible because of the focus of the agency on one country. Those organisations working in multiple countries would not be able to give this sort of depth of coverage.
- France Mission Trust has a positive attitude to other groups. This is reflected in the proposed merger with Vision France and also in the way that the agency website has links to other organisations who might be viewed as potential competitors. *Action Missionnaire* 139 has

a reference to a short-term worker who was moving on to spend a time with another agency in a different part of the world. There is no parallel mention in the other agency's publication that this person had ever worked for France Mission Trust.

- The *Action Missionnaire* magazine gives information about the work of France Mission Trust and also provides a framework for people to pray about the work of the agency.

Recommendations

France Mission Trust has a clear niche in the mission world, supporting the work of *France Mission*, a French-based church fellowship. This gives a clarity to France Mission Trust's communications and decision making which makes it easy for supporters to understand what the agency is doing and why. There seems to be no reason to suggest that the agency should expand its scope of action outside of this niche, which serves it well. As a result, I have no specific recommendations to make to France Mission Trust beyond those contained in the document addressed to all agencies.

INF

Introduction

My research focused on six mission agencies all of whom are members of Global Connections and who send missionaries from the UK to other parts of the world. Of these, INF was the third smallest in terms of the number of missionaries and charitable income. It was one of two agencies which concentrated on a single country. INF has a clear focus on social action (medical work, relief of poverty etc.) and has a clear partnership with the church in Nepal.

The comments below are based on an interview with the director of INF and an extended study of the agency magazines and website. It is possible that my remarks are inaccurate at points or that they do not reflect the agency's own view of itself. Nevertheless, I would encourage the agency leadership to take these observations seriously, as they do reflect the impression that an outsider who is well-disposed to the organisation has gained through interaction with it.

Observations

The following observations were made about INF during the course of my research:

- Unlike the majority of other agencies in the study, INF work in one country; in addition, they are not directly involved in proclamation, church planting or evangelism. This gives them a very clear focus which is reflected in all of their communications.
- INF is the only agency in this study which is not involved in proclamation activities. However, this should not be taken to indicate that they do not see this as an important aspect of mission; it is simply that they do not consider it to be their role in Nepal. In that context, it is the Nepalese church which carries out evangelism, church planting etc., while INF concentrates on social action.
- INF has close partnerships with the church in Nepal and also works closely with other mission agencies in the UK, including hosting joint conferences with United Mission to Nepal.
- The INF Twitter account only posted once in a calendar year.
- The British director of INF, John Reynolds, demonstrated a sophisticated and nuanced understanding of mission during our interview. However, the INF website and magazine focus on telling stories about the work of the mission and its impact and do not explore the underlying reasons why the agency does what it does.

Recommendations

Towards the end of this study, the director of INF, John Reynolds, contacted me to say that the agency was about to engage in a major restructuring of its work in the UK. As those changes are actually in process at the moment, it would be unwise to make specific suggestions to the agency beyond those contained in the general recommendations.

Latin Link

Introduction

My research focused on six mission agencies all of whom are members of Global Connections and who send missionaries from the UK to other parts of the world. Latin Link was the third largest of the organisations I studied, both in terms of financial income and number of missionaries. Latin Link has a focus on “Latin Mission”, that is mission to and from Latin America and espouses a holistic approach to integrating proclamation and social action.

The comments below are based on an interview with the director of Latin Link and an extended study of the agency magazines and website. It is possible that my remarks are inaccurate at points or that they do not reflect the agency’s own view of itself. Nevertheless, I would encourage the agency leadership to take these observations seriously, as they do reflect the impression that an outsider who is well-disposed to the organisation has gained through interaction with it.

Observations

The following observations were made about Latin Link during the course of my research:

- Unlike some of the other agencies in the study, Latin Link includes a regular financial report in their magazine. Their annual trustees’ report is also attractively produced and accessible to the casual reader, not just the specialist. This indicates that Latin Link takes communicating with its supporting constituency about the health of the mission very seriously.
- Of all of the agencies in the study, Latin Link was the least likely to refer to Scripture in its publications.
- Partnerships with churches and other agencies are clearly very important to Latin Link within Latin America. There is, however, less evidence of similar partnerships in the UK. In one example, a student did a six-month placement with another mission in the study before going on to work with Latin Link for another six months. The other mission made a positive mention that this person was going to Latin Link, but there was no reciprocal notice when they were mentioned in the Latin Link magazine.
- Latin Link operates on the principle of holistic or integral mission, integrating proclamation of the Gospel with social action of various kinds. The nature of holistic mission is spelt out from time to time in the magazine and also in the trustees’ reports. However, in the individual stories recounted in the magazine and online only a minority refer to proclamation in one way or another. There appears

to be a bias towards telling stories that focus on social action. To what extent this is a reflection of the actual balance of the work of the mission or a choice made in communicating the work cannot be determined from the data available.

Recommendations

In addition to the recommendations included in the general document, I would hope that Latin Link might consider the following suggestions which refer primarily to the way in which it communicates its work in the UK.

- Latin Link works quite closely with other agencies through Global Connections, GoFest and other structures. It would be good to highlight this more in the agency's publications to demonstrate that Latin Link is not "going it alone".
- While it is not necessary to include a proof text with every story or article on the web or in the magazines, it would be good to refer to the Bible more frequently. In particular, it would be good to see a higher proportion of articles outlining the Biblical rationale both for Latin Link's mission in general and for some of the specific activities that are reported on.
- Related to the point above, it would be helpful to make the links between the evangelistic and social action activities of the mission more overt.

Mission Africa

Introduction

My research focused on six mission agencies all of whom are members of Global Connections and who send missionaries from the UK to other parts of the world. Of the agencies studied, Mission Africa was the fifth largest both in terms of number of missionaries and financial income.

The comments below are based on an interview with the director of Mission Africa and an extended study of the agency magazines and website. It is possible that my remarks are inaccurate at points or that they do not reflect the agency's own view of itself. Nevertheless, I would encourage the agency leadership to take these observations seriously, as they do reflect the impression that an outsider who is well-disposed to the organisation has gained through interaction with it.

Observations

The following observations were made about Mission Africa during the course of my research:

- The Mission Africa magazine, Dispatch takes time both to describe the work that the agency does and to provide a theological and biblical background to that work.
- Of all of the agencies in the study, Mission Africa has the strongest links to a specific part of the United Kingdom (in this case, Northern Ireland) and to a particular segment of the evangelical movement (the broad Reformed movement).
- Mission Africa works in four African countries: Burkina Faso, Chad, Nigeria and Kenya. There appears to be little to link these nations, two of which are anglophone and two francophone, one in East Africa, two in Central Africa and one in the West.
- Both in its magazine editorials and in the interview with the director, Mission Africa places a great stress on the importance of the proclamation of the gospel and on evangelising unreached people groups.
- However, proclamation and evangelism is only one of the four charitable objectives of Mission Africa.
- The majority of stories in the Dispatch magazine and on the Mission Africa website are actually about social action in one form or another, not evangelism. The director commented that even when they are involved in social action, Mission Africa missionaries are involved in leading Bible studies and such like; however, this is not immediately obvious from the agency materials.

- The director mentioned that in recent years, Mission Africa has found it easier to recruit missionaries to be involved in social action rather than evangelistic work; to what extent there is a cause and effect linkage between this phenomenon and the fact that the majority of stories in the agency magazine refer to social action cannot be determined by this study.

Recommendations

To this observer, Mission Africa comes across as being confused about its identity. The agency expresses a strong belief in the priority of evangelistic work among unreached peoples, but this is not matched either by its charitable objectives or the way in which the agency projects itself through its magazine and website. At the same time, the breadth of activities in which Mission Africa missionaries are involved and the lack of obvious connection between the countries in which they work seems to point to the absence of a coherent strategy or a strong Mission Identity. It would appear that Mission Africa exists primarily to allow its workers to fulfil their own goals, rather than for them to work towards the goals of the agency.

As a relatively small mission with a definite geographical and ecclesiastic niche, it could be that Mission Africa has no need to clarify its identity any further. However, the following suggestions may be useful.

- The contents of the Dispatch magazine and the Mission Africa website could be adjusted to give more prominence to the work of evangelism so as to reflect the agency's stated position.
- Alternatively, the agency could broaden its stated position to focus more on social action so as to reflect the contents of its publicity and (presumably) the reality on the field.
- Over time, Mission Africa could focus its work more tightly on a smaller number of countries and to a narrower range of activities, becoming specialists rather than generalists.

OMF

Introduction

My research focused on six mission agencies all of whom are members of Global Connections and who send missionaries from the UK to other parts of the world. OMF has the largest reported income of the agencies in the study and the second greatest number of missionaries.

The comments below are based on an interview with the director of OMF and an extended study of the agency magazines and website. It is possible that my remarks are inaccurate at points or that they do not reflect the agency's own view of itself. Nevertheless, I would encourage the agency leadership to take these observations seriously, as they do reflect the impression that an outsider who is well-disposed to the organisation has gained through interaction with it.

Observations

The following observations were made about OMF during the course of my research:

- OMF is involved in a wider range of social action activities than any other agency in the study.
- OMF's communications are generally of a high standard and demonstrate a commitment to explaining the background to their work.
 1. They include a wide range of background materials on the countries where OMF works.
 2. They give information on the history and evolution of the agency over time.
 3. There are a number of articles explaining aspects of mission theology.
 4. They are willing to question both the *raison d'être* of the agency and the role of expat missionaries.
 5. Unlike the majority of the agencies in this study, OMF includes articles written by Christians in the countries where they work and not just articles by and about missionaries.
- OMF has a publicity campaign focused on unreached people groups which makes extensive use of the hashtag #thetaskunfinished on social media. The directness of this campaign contrasts with the nuanced nature of most of OMF's communications.

Recommendations

Apart from the recommendations contained in the general document, I would suggest that OMF should look to integrate its social media use of the hashtag #thetaskunfinished more closely with the rest of its communications.

WEC

Introduction

My research focused on six mission agencies all of whom are members of Global Connections and who send missionaries from the UK to other parts of the world. Of these agencies, WEC has the largest number of missionaries and the second highest reported income. It is also the only agency in the study with a world-wide scope.

The comments below are based on an interview with the director of WEC and an extended study of the agency magazines and website. It is possible that my remarks are inaccurate at points or that they do not reflect the agency's own view of itself. Nevertheless, I would encourage the agency leadership to take these observations seriously, as they do reflect the impression that an outsider who is well-disposed to the organisation has gained through interaction with it.

Observations

The following observations were made about WEC during the course of my research:

- In this study, WEC are uniquely focused on unreached people groups. Because of this, it lays a strong emphasis on proclaiming the gospel and see social action as a support to proclamation, not an activity in its own right. Of all of the agencies in the study, WEC is involved in the narrowest range of social activity projects.
- The WEC materials are very pragmatically focused and do not give much background information on why the agency does what it does. The Bible is used overwhelmingly as a call to action, encouraging people to do things, rather than as an underpinning to the work.

Recommendations

In addition to the remarks made in the general document for mission agencies, I would suggest that the following are some recommendations that WEC might consider:

- In a world where mission is changing, it might be useful to spend more time explaining why WEC does what it does rather than apparently assuming that potential supporters are aware of their rationale for mission.
- There is anecdotal evidence from other agencies that talking about social action activities can attract support. It might be possible for WEC to highlight some of the social action work it is involved in without losing its focus on unreached people groups.