A critique of the ecclesiology, missiology and sociology of the Mission-shaped Church report

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This dissertation is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration except where specifically indicated in the text.

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Abstract

This thesis explores the Church of England report *Mission-Shaped Church (MSC)* and its subsequent secondary and synodical legislation. It traces the missiology, ecclesiology and sociology of the initial report and their subsequently developed over the last seven years. The thesis ascertains how well this missiology and ecclesiology reflects or adapts traditional and contemporary Anglican missiology and ecclesiology represented in official reports of the Church of England over the last two hundred years as well as in its missionary work in England. Chapter one will survey the report itself and all subsequent secondary literature and legislation, identifying their sources and tracing the contours of their theology and sociology. Chapter two places these findings into historic relief, ascertaining that they are novel in the life of the Church of England; that *MSC* deduces its own sources; and is alien in its methodology and recommendations compared to the existing theological corpus of the church. Chapter three examines the work of William Temple as a counter ecclesiology and missiology to *MSC*. The 'Temple method' of bringing any, and all, social issues into dialogue with the existing Anglican tradition, and his emphasis on the sacramental and catholic life of the church, are representative of historic Anglican approaches to missiology and ecclesiology. Chapter four will use the sociology of Zygmunt Bauman as an experimental basis to help the Church of England understand its contemporary context. His work illustrates that the ideology of consumerism is the major missiological challenge the church faces today, one that *MSC* failed to critically engage with, and actually succumbed to, in its missiological method, which results in a deficient and under-resources ecclesiology. The conclusion will correct these failings and shortcomings by bringing the ecclesiology presented in the third chapter into critical dialogue with the sociology of chapter four. We will argue that a comprehensive ecclesiology and missiology, that has a sacramental and catholic focus – represented by Temple, and other numerous official reports – when brought to bear on the social reality of Bauman's 'liquid modernity', yields a much richer understanding of the impetus of the gospel in contemporary England. Such a theology combats the anthropology of consumption through its emphasis on sacramental participation, and critiques the exclusion of the stranger and the strange by emphasising a catholic vision of inclusion and mutuality.

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Introduction

The former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, in his first presidential address to Synod said that the Church of England was "at a watershed moment in its life and history" and needed to develop a "mixed economy" of church life if it were to minister effectively to each context to which it was called.[1] Williams then instructed a commission to explore how the Church of England might missiologically respond to the institutional and numerical decline it had experienced in the last fifty years, as well as respond to the perceived plausibility crisis it was suffering in contemporary culture.[2] In 2004, the commission issued its findings in the *Mission Shaped Church Report* (hereafter *MSC*).[3] The report itself sought to provide a legal – alongside the new *Pastoral Measure* – and theological framework for what it called 'Fresh Expressions' of church. The report has proved to be one of the most influential produced in the last twenty years. It has provoked wide-ranging discussions about the nature of the Church and its missionary calling. In this discussion particular attention has been given to the ecclesiological status of these 'Fresh Expressions' of church. A critical examination of this report will form the basis of this thesis.

MSC's publication in 2004 can be seen as a watershed in the history of the life of the Church of England. Not only has it sold in excess of 30,000 copies (official reports rarely sell more than a few thousand), it also set in motion a reconfiguring of the ecclesiology of the Church of England in a way arguably not seen since the Reformation. The report has three basic arguments: first, as a result of significant shifts within English culture and social structure, the structures and practices of the Church of England are increasingly alien to the majority of the population with which it is seeking to share the gospel. Second, within the life of the Church of England new communities of faith have been springing up that offer alternative ecclesial models; these new communities have emerged in this new context and offer insights into how the Church might begin to communicate the gospel in a way that people can understand. These communities of faith – which the report now wished to name as 'churches' in their own right – had previously existed on the edges of the mainstream life of the Church of England, yet they were pioneering 'new ways' of being Church in today's postmodern society. These churches were missionary in their focus and

[1] Williams 2003.

[2] Sedgewick 2005.

[3] The Archbishop's Council 2004 (hereafter *MSC*). Jointly published with the Methodist Church.

provided radical new ways to understand the ordering and mission of the Church in the world. Third, there is a need to relate these new models to the Anglican tradition – both ecclesiologically and missiologically – so that the Church may better understand its new context and mission, and make appropriate changes to its understanding of both in light of these new communities.

The report led to two major legislative measures passing through Synod and Parliament. One was to allow for an entirely new type of church, a 'fresh expression', to be established through a Bishop's Mission Order. The other was to designate an entirely new type of ordained ministry within the life of the Church, that of pioneer ministry.[4] These measures fulfilled the strategy outlined in *MSC*. Alongside these legal measures, an official Fresh Expressions team was set up in late 2004, headed by the then Archbishop's Missioner Stephen Croft. This team helped to disseminate *MSC's* vision across the breadth of the Church of England and has resulted in over eight thousand Fresh Expressions of church and the training of hundreds of lay pioneer leaders through a national course, alongside over 150 pioneer minister ordinands.[5]

Recent surveys also indicate that there is great potential for the continued growth of Fresh Expressions. Croft notes that during a survey of every parish in the country (carried out by the Church of England in 2006) over half responded that since the year 2000 they either had started, or were planning to start, a fresh expression of church.[6] Similarly, the Methodist Church, who jointly produced the report, carried out a survey of ministers seeking to move onto a new appointment, and a third mentioned – quite unprompted – that they wished to engage with Fresh Expressions of church in their next appointment.[7] The Church of England survey also asked how many people belonged to these new Fresh Expressions of church, discounting those who were already in contact with the church. The total resulting number was 220,000, half of which were children and young people. Even when taking into account the possibility of over-counting, it is clear that these Fresh Expressions make a significant and very visible contribution to the 1.7 million people of all ages who attend a Church of England service at least once a month. Official Church of England figures for 2010 released in 2012 showed that adult monthly attendance at Fresh Expressions of

[4] This vision of pioneer ministry has also been embraced by theological colleges such as Cranmer Hall, Durham, St John's, Nottingham, and Ridley Hall, Cambridge, each of which has developed a special pioneer ministry course.
[5] See http://www.freshexpressions.org.uk/news/profoundimpact
[6] Barley 2008: 168.
[7] Croft 2009: 38.

church stood at around 30,000 people, or just under 2% of the total number of adults attending church each month.[8]

It is clear that *MSC* has had a huge influence on both the Church of England's ecclesiology and its missiology and has led to the creation of a significant number of new churches. Given this, it is surprising that very little critical attention has been paid to the missiological or ecclesiological basis for the report, the report itself, and the secondary literature subsequently published.[9] This thesis will attend to this need by critically examining *MSC,* identifying its methodological sources and assessing whether its analysis and recommendations are justified. The former head of the Fresh Expressions core team, Stephen Croft, argues that Fresh Expressions of church are a continuation and development of the missiological insights reawakened by the Oxford Movement. He contends that both take the incarnation as the pattern and type of Christian mission, where the model of the Father sending the Son into the world serves as the inspiration to begin new communities of faith. For the Oxford Movement this meant working in some of the poorest regions in the rapidly growing cities in England; for *MSC* this means beginning Fresh Expressions of church in those cultures that feel alienated by the current practices and structures of the existing church.[10] Croft essentially argues that the recommendations of *MSC* have developed in continuity with existing Anglican thought and practices.

This thesis will assess whether this is so in three particular areas: ecclesiology, missiology and sociology. I will argue that ecclesiologically the report is not representative of the historic theological traditions of the Church of England. These traditions would have provided it with a far more robust ecclesiological framework. The lack of a developed ecclesiology causes *MSC's* missiology to become a mirror of the culture(s) it is part of: its ecclesiological model becomes overly consumerist, and individualistic, driven by the report's missiological premise that context must be the primary consideration in determining what 'form' of 'church' should emerge. The sociology of the report places too much emphasis on radical cultural change, a view it erroneously reads into Bauman's work. Yet Bauman's work actually rejects such a change, a view shared by other key critical social theorists such as Beck, Giddens and Habermas. *MSC's* sociology is also theoretically underdeveloped, drawing primarily

[8] Church of England 2012.
[9] Hull 2005, Davison 2010, Tilby, 2008.
[10] Croft 2009: 43.

from Bauman's early work, but still missing the over-riding critical emphasis in his work towards the cultures of modernity and postmodernity. This compounds the difficulty *MSC* has in developing a critical analysis of contemporary culture, whether this takes a theological or sociological form. This results in an ecclesiology and missiology that is alien to the existing Church of England body of work, as represented in official reports of Synod and ecumenical dialogues, as well as in the historical practices of the Church over the last two centuries. *MSC* is not something developmental within the life of the Church, but something more novel. It is part of a more general pattern of contextually driven ecclesiology that is taking place across several different continents largely within the congregationalist and free churches. Though the method of contextual theology that it employs is one that fails to regard existing traditional theological structures within the Church of England.

Structurally, the thesis will be made up of four chapters. Chapter one will focus on a detailed exposition of *MSC* and the subsequent secondary literature and synodical legislation. The chapter will clarify the background that gave rise to the report and seek to ascertain the various sources and methodologies it employs. We shall then explore its reception, including how the Church of England has acted upon its recommendations. This will lead us to briefly explore the legislative responses to the report, including Ordained and Lay Pioneer Ministry and Bishop's Mission Orders. Secondary literature will also be examined, particularly that published under the Fresh Expressions or Mission Shaped Church 'banner'. We shall also briefly explore the manner in which the report has been received in various other parts of the Anglican Communion and in other denominations. Throughout we shall attempt as generous a reading as possible, leaving critical comments to a minimum, but paying attention to potential areas of difficulty. This chapter will demonstrate that the report differs significantly from the existing ecclesiology and missiology of the Church of England, as contained within her Canons, synodical reports and liturgy. Various areas of the report's ecclesiology, missiology and sociology are questionable, and potentially inadequate. The critical response to *MSC* will also be shown to be underdeveloped or methodologically flawed. There is still a need for a sustained critical response to *MSC* and it is to this task that this thesis turns in its final three chapters.

Chapter two will begin by tracing the genealogy of *MSC*, seeking to clarify its underlying methodology as well as to articulate the context within which the report arose (both its social and theological context). This will involve tracing the emergence

of contextual theology from the nineteenth century onwards. It will be demonstrated that *MSC's* primary sources for its missiology are the contextual missiologies of Newbigin, Bosch and Bevans, each of which develops from the work of earlier missionaries such as Venn and Taylor. This section will show that the Church of England has a considerable body of work that has reflected on its own cultural context, and a considerable history of creative missionary activity in England. This body of work has grown significantly in the latter part of the twentieth century in the literature emerging from ecumenical dialogues. This documentation represents a sustained reflection on ecclesiology, as well as critical thinking on missiology. The Church of England's understanding of its mission will also be shown to be comprehensive in its scope: the totality its social, political and economic context is continually brought into critical dialogue with the gospel throughout this period. This thesis will argue that these writings and this experience are important, and constitute a sustained and developing understanding of the Church of England's vocation in its own context. That *MSC* chooses to ignore it, or is unaware of it, leaves the report's ecclesiological and missiological recommendations at odds with these existing understandings and practices, sharing little continuity with this rich history. *MSC* is cut adrift from resources that would have given more theological depth to its argument.

Chapter three will specifically address the ecclesiological deficit within *MSC*. Given that the previous chapter identified a strong existing ecclesiology that has been developed and nuanced considerably in the last two centuries, this chapter will turn to a leading figure within that time period – William Temple – whose work (both written and practical) addressed some of the same concerns as *MSC*. Temple's work discussed the Church's role and vocation in the world at a time when many in the Church of England felt that it was increasingly irrelevant to the needs of contemporary society. He addressed this perceived need by drawing upon the existing rich history and tradition of the Church. We shall demonstrate that Temple's work held together the threads of ecclesiology, missiology and the Christian tradition, and offered a more robust account of the role of the Church in the world. His theology was comprehensive in scope, seeing the whole realm of social reality as its proper focus. His theory of the sacramental universe led his theology to emphasise the importance of materiality and the Church's social context, and it is this emphasis that led to his own engagement with, and desire to understand, his own social context.

Temple's theology will be shown to represent a more adequate basis for a contemporary ecclesiology and missiology than *MSC's*.

Chapter four will address *MSC's* sociology. After examining more closely the sources of the report, and demonstrating that *MSC* presents a theoretically underdeveloped social analysis, we shall analyse the sociological work of Zygmunt Bauman. We will show that Bauman's work illustrates some of the deficiencies of *MSC*, notably its assumption that sociology assumes radical form of social postmodernity, whereas many sociologists (like Bauman) have actually rejected this idea and instead developed theories that attempt to do justice to the complexities of social modernity. Bauman presents a more compelling and insightful description of our own social context through his theory of solid and liquid modernity. We will argue that the manner in which he fleshes out this theory using the ideology of consumption, globalisation, technology, the stranger and utopianism, provides a social description that is more robust than *MSC's* and also helps to show how some of *MSC's* ecclesiology is actually captive to various strands of consumer ideology. Bauman's work provides a genuinely insightful basis of the Church of England's social context, and in the same manner in which Temple's emphasises the importance of the material and cultural. His theory enables the church to engage critically with, and upon, its present social and cultural conditions in an informed manner.

The conclusion will rehearse the main arguments that the thesis has already established, the main thrust of those being that the ecclesiology, missiology and sociology of *MSC* is underdeveloped, principally because the report does not draw upon the existing body of work the Church of England already possesses. The report's significantly undertheorised sociology, coupled with its deficient ecclesiology, leads it to suggest and develop missiological strategies that are at odds with this work, and to succumb to some of the excesses of consumerism we identified through Bauman's work. The focus of this final section will be an attempt to correct the failings and shortcomings identified in *MSC,* by bringing the ecclesiology presented in the third chapter in critical dialogue with the sociology of the chapter four. We will argue that the comprehensive ecclesiology represented by Temple, when brought to bear on the social reality of our present context, yields a much richer dialogue with, and response to, our contemporary culture. This response contends that the social, political and economic aspects of contemporary life are illuminated and renewed by the gospel and by participation in the sacramental life of the Church. We shall argue that sacramental

participation brings about a wholly different anthropology than that of the dominant ideology of consumption, and a renewed understanding of Catholicity is a potentially rich basis for engaging with Bauman's work on the stranger and the outcast.

Finally, it is important to be clear about the boundaries of this thesis. *MSC* and the secondary literature that emerges from the report are its central focus. The work of Temple and Bauman are used only in response to deficiencies identified in *MSC*; their bodies of work will only be explored thoroughly with regard to the questions the report raises. This thesis is not an attempt to reconstruct *MSC* thoroughly in light of these criticisms, nor is it an attempt to construct a critical ecclesiology or missiology for our present context from the existing Anglican tradition we have identified. However, the thesis will not shy away from attempting, in outline, to suggest what the general features of that ecclesiology and missiology might be, using the work of Temple in critical dialogue with Bauman. It is hoped that future work will develop these thoughts more systematically.

Chapter One
Rereading the Mission-shaped Church Report

MSC was originally commissioned as a follow up report to *Breaking New Ground* (BNG). *Breaking New Ground* furthered the Church of England's emphasis on mission since the 'decade of evangelism' in the 1990s through church planting.[11] The report sought to provide good practice for this method, whilst relating it to traditional Anglican ecclesiology.[12] It outlined the missionary imperative to "reach out with locally accessible centres of Christian worship, witness and service."[13] It highlighted that present day parochial structures were insufficient to accommodate emerging forms of ecclesial life because networks were now the predominant communities where people felt loyalty rather than a geographic location. This had occurred because of the radical changes in society in the mid-late twentieth century during the advent of social postmodernity, Churches were needed that reached out to these networks, "whether they be churches for the deaf, student congregations, African, Afro-Caribbean [or] Asian congregations."[14] The Church needed to find new ways of accommodating new styles of church in the same territory.[15] It argued that "Church is a group of people drawn from a particular network or culture", and that church plants were intended to serve an identifiable group, culture or neighbourhood.[16] The group that produced *MSC* was commissioned to review *BNG* in the light of developments within the church planting movement, and missiological and ecclesiological developments within the life of the Church of England – particularly those that were on the margins of the mainstream life of the Church. The working group was also to be a joint Anglican-Methodist commission and project. The task of overseeing this report was given to the Mission, Evangelism and Renewal in England (MERE) sub-committee of the Board of Mission. MERE set up a working group that comprised partly its own members and partly others with expertise and insight in the relevant areas. The working group was chaired by the Bishop of Maidstone, Rt Revd Graham Cray and also included: Revd Moira Astin, Board of Mission, Ven Lyle Dennen, Archdeacon of Hackney, Revd Graham Horsley, Methodist Secretary for Evangelism

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[11] Best defined as the process of beginning a new congregation, which typically occurs in an existing parish structure.
[12] Mission Committee of the Church of England 1994.
[13] Ibid: 1.
[14] Ibid: §1.7
[15] Ibid: §1.9.
[16] Ibid: §2.1 and §2.4.

and Church Planting, Revd George Lings, Church Army Sheffield Centre, Canon Chris Neal, Director of Evangelisation, Oxford Diocese, Canon Mavis Wilson, Guildford Diocesan Missioner, John Clark, Revd Damian Feeney and Canon Robert Freeman (Secretary).[17]

The working group met nine times between May 2002 and June 2003 and decided to expand its remit to include a more thorough exploration of the cultural context the Church of England operated in, noting that "[t]he post-modern context is accepted as the given and has [resulted in] mobility, fragmentation, connectivity, materialism/ consumerism."[18] The group sought to explore models of church beyond those outlined by *BNG*, wishing to relate these to the cultural fragmentation they observed, yet seeking to root the ecclesiology of the report within an Anglican framework.[19] They also sought to demonstrate how the Anglican tradition related to these new models of church and how existing legal frameworks (parochial, liturgical, ministerial) needed to be adapted in order to allow for these ecclesial developments.[20] The report was written and published in February 2004 in time to be received and debated by General Synod in the same month.

The report is divided into eight chapters and has a logical argumentative structure. Beginning with an outline of the changing cultural context in England, it then relates this to the original context of *BNG,* and seeks to demonstrate that those ten years have represented a sea-change in mission activity. It then affirms the basic premise of *BNG* – that church planting is an activity the Church of England should be engaged in – but modifies the original understanding of what these churches look like and what planting means. It then gives examples of twelve new forms of church (what it calls Fresh Expressions) that have emerged out of various cultural contexts before going on to discuss how they, and the very concept of Fresh Expressions of church, relate to Anglican theology and ecclesiology in particular. Chapter six outlines some methodological starting points for churches to consider if they wish to start a fresh expression and chapter seven explores the need for existing legal frameworks to be adapted in order to allow for the development of these Fresh Expressions across the Church of England. Given that this report is the primary text that this thesis will critique, we will now explore the text in a systematic manner attempting to give a

[17] Appendix 2001.
[18] Appendix 2002b.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Appendix 2002c.

generous account of its assertions and findings whilst also taking note of potential criticisms and contradictions that will form the basis for the rest of this thesis.

The introduction of the report states that *MSC* will explore the variety of new forms of mission-centered churches that were emerging in the life of the Church of England in the years since *BNG* was published, and that it will review these 'Fresh Expressions of church' in light of received Anglican ecclesiology and missiology.[21] In it Cray argues that, "*Breaking New Ground* saw Church planting as 'a supplementary strategy that enhances the essential thrust of the parish principle'. The most significant recommendation of this report is that this is no longer adequate."[22] The nature of community had changed. No single strategy will suffice to fulfill the Anglican incarnational principle in Britain today.[23] *MSC* sees the parochial system as remaining essential but no longer adequate on its own. A 'mixed economy' of parish and network churches is necessary, because culture in England has changed radically in the last twenty or thirty years: communities are now multi-layered, neighborhoods have permeable boundaries, network society is everywhere, there is increased mobility and electronic communications technology has changed the nature of both relationships and community.[24] The report goes on to state (in more detail) that the changing nature of our cultural context requires a *new* contextualisation of the Gospel within British society, and that contextual theology provides the principles and method necessary for crossing these new cultural barriers.[25]

Chapter one of *MSC* outlines the cultural shifts that have taken place in the last twenty years, beginning with the premise that "[i]t is important for us to see what our culture now looks like, so we can see the possible shape, or shapes, of church to which God is calling us."[26] The report goes on to detail housing changes, employment changes (including the vast increase in women's employment), the increase in mobility and divorce and changes in family life, the increase in free time and the pervasive influence of television and the internet.[27] All of these changes have resulted in a highly fragmented society, driven by consumerism and best described as a network society – there has been a shift from a culture around what we produce to one shaped

[21] *MSC* 2004: ix.
[22] Ibid: ix.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Ibid: xi.
[25] Ibid: xii.
[26] Ibid: 1.
[27] Ibid: 2-3.

by what we consume, from progress to choice.[28] Within these few pages there is a notable reliance upon the early work of Bauman (through secondary literature); chapter four of this thesis will explore his work.[29] The report notes that research done at the Henley Centre further illustrates the emergence of a network based culture and shows that the most significant things people had in common were hobbies and interests, family and work colleagues. Bottom of the list were residence in same area and neighbours.[30] Yet the report does state that the relationship between network and neighbourhood is complex. Networks cannot just be seen to replace neighbourhoods, or supplanting geographical parishes, both must co-exist. The chapter goes on to suggest that the Church of England has traditionally operated on a 'come to us basis', and suggests that this can no longer work in a post-Christendom context. Rather, what is needed are expressions of church that communicate with post-Christian people, they allow the Church to continue to engage in mission with, and beyond, its own culture, rather than simply converting them to the culture of the Church and thus alienating people from their original culture.[31] This chapter lays the groundwork for what follows, which advocates a radical discontinuity between the culture that the Church of England both emerged from and presently occupies and the culture(s) it now finds itself in. This cultural discontinuity suggests that there should be an ecclesial discontinuity between the present ordering and practices of the church and the emerging ordering and practices of the church within these new cultures.

This emphasis aligns the report with those who argue for social postmodernism.[3] This basic premise is vitally important for the thesis of *MSC* as it allows the report to suggest that extreme social changes occurring in Britain require parallel and radical shifts in the ecclesiology of the Church in order to adequately address these new needs and this new context(s). In chapter four we will go on to explore whether such a thesis holds true or whether the counter thesis offered by Bauman is more compelling. It is also important to flag up at this point the lack of theological reflection on these cultural changes in the report; it simply states them as 'facts' and does not explore the ideological assumptions that may lie behind such observations. *MSC* could be said to afford cultural change a neutral status: whether this is a sensible and coherent theological strategy will be explored in chapter three, where we will ask whether an

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[28] Ibid: 2-4 and 9.

[29] Smith 1999, Gabriel 1995, Moynagh 2001. Each is reliant on Bauman 1991a, 1993, 1995, 1997.

[30] *MSC* 2004: 5.

[31] Ibid: 10.

[32] Heaphy, 2007: chapters three and four.

ethic based on consumption, or an anthropology increasingly dominated by network and communications technology can be seen as contiguous with the Kingdom of God or as part of its antithesis. We will ask how they relate to the idea of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church and whether the lack of theological reasoning diminishes the ability of the report to relate to the historical Christian tradition and cause it to advocate changes that are actually complicit with ideologies that conflict with historic Anglican ecclesiology.

Chapter two explores what has changed in church planting since *BNG*, suggesting that as a network society becomes more prevalent cross-boundary church planting becomes less relevant. There has therefore been a move to non-boundary network planting.[33] There has also been an explosion of diversity within current church plants (discussed more fully in chapter four), but six common themes have emerged in these Fresh Expressions: first, church derives its self understanding from the *missio Dei* – the ongoing mission of God in the world. Second, the Trinity models diversity as well as unity; third, creation reveals God's affirmation of diversity; therefore, fourth, mission to a diverse world legitimately requires a diverse church.[34] This means that fifth, Catholicity should not be interpreted as monochrome oneness. Sixth, this process can be seen in the election and incarnation of God in Christ Jesus, where God dares to be culturally specific within diverse contexts.[35] It is significant that questions regarding the role of the Christian tradition do not figure in these common themes. The hermeneutical method is based solely on the contemporary context and the horizon of the various Biblical texts. This approach shares much in common with Charismatic congregationalist approaches such as those of Forster, Murray-Williams, Bartley and Virgo, as well as echoing certain aspects of Allen's work.[36]

The report also notes a growing awareness among those who are involved in church planting that they should not simply clone the existing church model from which they are coming. Rather they need to be attentive to the host culture if the church is to 'take root' and grow, it is also necessary for these Fresh Expressions to come to maturity themselves rather than be unduly influenced by the planting church; they should not be seen as an 'interesting experiment' or a 'mission project', although it is

[33] *MSC* 2004: 20.

[34] Ibid: 21.

[35] Ibid: 21-22.

[36] Forster 2001, Murray-Williams 2005, Bartley 2005, Virgo 1985 and 2005. For an academic treatment see chapters one and two in Clifton 2009.

also suggested in *BNG* that church plants might be a way to bring people back into 'proper' church.[37] The position is different in *MSC*: "part of the paradigm shift since *BNG* is the discovery that Fresh Expressions of church are not only legitimate expressions of church, but they may be more legitimate because they attend more closely to the mission task, and they are more deeply engaged in the local context, and follow more attentively the pattern of the incarnation."[38] The report also states that practitioners have found that they need to talk of "sowing the seeds of the Gospel and seeing what results … these responses shape the form of Christian community" as such it is essential that "ecclesiology [becomes] a subsection of the doctrine of mission" rather than the other way round.[39] The report follows the same line of thinking seen in Bosch and Newbigin, ecclesiology is subsumed to missiology, thereby (at least in this report) avoiding the need to wrestle with how the contemporary practices of the Church, such as eucharist, baptism, the lectionary and church calendar and seasons, relate to these shifts within contemporary culture.[40] Even though the report later on reiterates the need to do this (see chapter six) at no point does it outline a method for doing this or attempt to do it (except, as we shall see, in purely legal terms in chapter five).

Chapter three explores how church planting is still relevant to the life and mission of the Church of England today, since it "exists to be a Church for the nation ... a statement of its mission purpose." [41] Yet the report argues that there are gaps in our present parish system where vast numbers of people are excluded from church. To be Anglican is to desire to be rooted in communities and to be accessible to those communities (however those communities define themselves). The report echoes Resolution 44 from the 1988 Lambeth conference in advocating a shift to a dynamic missionary emphasis and acknowledges, as that report did, that this presents a challenge to diocesan and local church structures and patterns of worship and ministry (issues that will be explored more fully in chapter eight of the report).[4] Within this chapter there is no discussion of the theological understanding of a parochial vision for church organisation as context continues to take priority.

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[37] *MSC* 2004: 22.
[38] Ibid: 23.
[39] Ibid: 24.
[40] We will explore their work in relation to *MSC* in chapter two.
[41] Ibid: 35.
[42] Ibid: 36.

Chapter four then outlines examples of these Fresh Expressions of church, noting some general themes: they do not often meet on a Sunday; they relate primarily to a network of people rather than a deanery or Diocese; they are increasingly post-denominational, with members coming in from a wide variety of denominations and only feeling a loose connection to the Church of England.[43] It then explores each of the examples it has given in more detail. These are as follows:

i) Alt.worship: these communities have existed since the 1980s, and are significantly populated by people who have departed from existing forms of church. They are the most vocal in their repudiation of existing traditional church structures.[44] These communities "seek to be responsive to post-modern culture ... engage with post-modern instincts in the preference for a multi-media approach [to worship] ... and work in a way which is diffuse not focused, created locally not remotely, operates contextually rather than institutionally, makes use of the symbolic and the subversive rather than the didactic, and is open-ended in style."[45]

ii) Base ecclesial communities (BEC): BECs strongly identify with people at the margins or edges of society, and emerged alongside the Liberation theology that emerged in Latin America in the last few decades. These communities attempt to discern the voice of God for them and their community through three different stages: first, attentiveness to the daily reality of local life, second, listening to the shared life of the Christian community, and third, reflection upon both these things in the light of the Bible. The hermeneutic of the community is one of radical social change, and the Bible is very much interpreted in this manner.[46]

iii) Café church: this new form of church seeks to engage with café culture, and they reflect in their characteristic a similar ambience and feel. Gatherings occur round small tables, drinks and nibbles are available, people interact rather than spectate, the venue is often a pub or existing café, worship tends to be more informal, more like 'table fellowship'. The mission style these communities adopt is relational, and they narrow the gap between mission courses like Alpha and parochial church meetings.[47]

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[43] Ibid: 44.
[44] Ibid: 45-47.
[45] Lings 2001.
[46] *MSC* 2004: 47-49.
[47] Ibid: 50-52.

iv) Cell church: cell church has been hugely influential as a model in Asia and Latin America amongst protestant churches, and seeks to emphasise a 'two-winged' approach to church that emphasises both small and large expressions of Christian community. Common to all cell churches is the idea that the small group is truly church. Cell churches are made up of several small groups (called cells), which are church in and of themselves, they are a microcosm of church, they allow every member to be involved in ministry and to attend to the needs of their locality more effectively (or network if the cells are network based). These cells tend to focus on four things: 'worship, word, community and mission'. These cells then meet together in a larger gathering made up of all the local area cells. There is little clarity in these communities around issues like the sacraments, ordained leadership and deeper connection to the wider church beyond the area celebrations.[48]

v) Churches arising out of community initiatives: this type of church often emerges in urban areas where the proportion of non-churched people is highest. Mission in these areas often takes place through engaging with local community needs, allowing them to set the agenda for what issues need to be addressed. Often this involves work with young people, those who are unemployed and those who are retired. Sometimes these groups can develop into a church, as the levels of trust between those involved and the church members grow and more Christian elements are incorporated into meetings. Rather than attempt to bring these fledgling churches back into the main church, they are allowed to develop into a church themselves.[49]

vi) Network-focused churches: these seek to create a church centered around peoples' network interests, such as leisure interests, music preference, or disability (such as the deaf community). They interpret their mission as reaching people in their network, so meeting times, structure and activities will be dictated by this group rather than any traditional framework. They normally seek relationships to the wider diocese and often have steering groups made up of people drawn from local parishes. They see their form of church as complementing local parish ministry.[50]

vii) School-based and school linked congregations: these churches typically develop out of after school groups, which grow and begin to minister to both the parents and even grandparents as well as the schoolchildren. They may or may not be eucharistic,

[48] Ibid: 52-56.
[49] Ibid: 57-64.
[50] Ibid: 65-67.

and allow people who are otherwise too busy to take part in a Christian community by meeting at a more convenient time. They are often more relaxed and informal in style.[51]

viii) Seeker church: these communities scrutinize their existing worship and teaching and seek to make it more accessible to people with little background in Christian worship, preaching often addresses everyday life issues, and the contemporary arts, music and drama are often used to enable people to connect to the Christian message through a variety of styles and senses. The variety and make-up of these will be tailored to the local context. More traditional church services may take place at a different time of the week or month.[52]

Several questions emerge out of this chapter. First, the question must be asked about how much these communities shape the theological agenda and outcomes of the report itself rather than being a basis for reflection. The report itself is peppered with other stories from Fresh Expressions, which are boxed separately alongside the text. Yet, they are rarely commented on. We must ask whether these are normative accounts, simply illustrative, or intended for some other purpose. Within practical theology or congregational studies these stories would form the basis for a critical dialogue between the practices and doctrine of the church. In *MSC* they appear to simply be seen as ideal types of church and are not subject to this dialectical approach. Second, it is also very clear that each of these churches is almost totally contextually driven in their practices and structure. How therefore do they relate to the present ecclesiological polity of the Church of England? It is also difficult to define exactly on what basis each of these groupings are named as a 'church'. The chapter appears to state that the goal of the missionary (or the planting community) is simply to share the Gospel and see what emerges from that sharing and name these communities as churches. We could ask, how does this understanding relate to the ecclesiology defined in the Canons of the Church of England,[53] the Lambeth Quadrilateral passed as resolution 11 at the 1888 Lambeth Conference[54], as well as in the ecclesiology present within many of the ARCIC I and II[55] and the Anglican-Orthodox Joint

[51] Ibid: 67-69.

[52] Ibid: 69-71.

[53] For instance A3 (the use of the book of Common Prayer), B1 (conformity of worship), B2 (approved forms of service), B5 and B5A (authorizing worship for experimental use for a set period or rime), B15 (the importance of Holy Communion), B18 (preaching to occur in every parish church), B27 (the need for confirmation and classes to prepare for this), and C15 (the Declaration of Assent).

[54] See parts b and c especially.

[55] Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission 1986, 1991, 1993.

Doctrinal Discussions?[56] How does it relate to the history of Anglican ecclesiology offered by Avis,[57] or the more evangelically focused Anglican ecclesiologies, such as Bradshaw's,[58] or other Anglican scholars such as Williams?[59] Does *MSC,* in advocating the need for the Church to become plural in its own life in order to be able to 'reach' the whole of an increasingly plural British society, fail to discern how a plurality of 'types' or 'expressions' of churches might belong to each other? Williams warns that such a move makes the Christian vision harder if not impossible to articulate.[60] Many of these groups appear to have emerged from within other Christian traditions (BECs, cell church, seeker church), clearly there is little wrong with learning from other traditions, but how do they relate to the differing theological frameworks and ecclesial models of the Church of England? Each of these questions will be addressed more fully in chapters two and three of this thesis.

In chapter five the report presents a theology for a missionary church, by suggesting that "any theology of the church must ultimately be rooted in the being and acts of God: the church is first and foremost the people of God, brought into being by God, bound to God, for the glory of God".[61] It sees the root of such a theology in Jesus Christ, who saw mission in terms of the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom is a divine activity whereas the church is made up of human community, so sometimes the Kingdom agenda and values are often more radical than church readily allows: the Kingdom of God is always on the move and the church is often catching up.[62] Yet, the Church is the fruit of God's mission and the community through whom he acts for the world's redemption and the essence or DNA of the church is to be a missionary community. "There is Church because there is mission not visa versa … [So] the spirit of Christ, by which God, through his church, is drawing all humanity to its fulfillment in the Kingdom of God."[63] *MSC* goes on to say, "[h[ence conversion ought not to involve the transfer of individuals from their native culture to the culture of the church, so much as the conversion of their culture in order that it might enrich the cultural life of the church."[64] A truly incarnational church is one that imitates,

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[56] Anglican-Orthodox Joint Doctrinal Discussions 1976: section VI, 1984: section I and 2008: sections VI and IX.
[57] Avis 2008.
[58] Bradshaw 1990.
[59] Williams 2000: 2.
[60] Williams 1995: 19.
[61] *MSC* 2004: 84.
[62] Ibid: 84.
[63] Ibid: 85.
[64] Ibid: 87.

through the Spirit, both Christ's loving identification with his culture and his costly counter-cultural stance within it. This incarnational theology is patterned in Paul's ministry – become likewise in order to win people for Christ.[65] "The church is most true to itself when it gives itself up, in its cultural form, to be re-formed among those who do not know God's Son. In each new context the Church must die to live."[66] The scriptures, particularly the New Testament, are a gift from God and are to be guarded as the only foundation of the Church.[67] In this chapter the report makes much more explicit its radical New Testament hermeneutic that simply bypasses the role of the Christian and Anglican tradition in this interpretive process. Elements of the missiologists Bosch and Allen appear to be influential here, influences we will fully explore in chapter two. Both advocated a return to the scriptures as the primary location of the resources needed to undertake mission in this 'new paradigm.' Yet such an approach is rather alien to traditional Anglican method, which has always seen a role in this process for the tradition, even though this role might have been emphasised more by some than others, it has nevertheless always been present.[68]

The report then attempts to link the above theology to existing Anglican ecclesiology and missiology, but only by redefining that theology. It begins by quoting from *Eucharistic Presidency*,[69]

> the Spirit enables fidelity to and continuity with the apostolic faith but constantly actualises and particularises this tradition afresh in the present, so that the truth of Christ is brought alive for ever in new situations with which the church engages in its missionary calling. This is integral to the Spirit's eschatological ministry – to carry the church forward in mission, anticipating here and now in ever-fresh ways the Father's final eschatological desire.[70]

MSC argues that the Church of England has failed in this process because it has not drawn on inculturation/contextualisation theory as much as it could and should. It

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[65] Ibid: 88.

[66] Ibid: 89.

[67] Ibid: 81.

[68] The work of Richard Hooker is of particular relevance, for although he insisted on the primacy of scripture in debating all matters of doctrine, he did acknowledge that this was not possible without using the Christian tradition and reasoning. Hooker 2008: Book III, section, 8, line 11ff. and book III, section 11, line 16ff.; 1.263.8-13 and Harrison 2008: 316.

[69] *House of Bishops,* 1997: A Church of England report that examines the argument that only presbyters should preside at the eucharist; it also outlines the Trinitarian nature of the Church and existing ministerial patterns in light of this.

[70] *MSC* 2004: 90.

should understand that mission is often cross-cultural.[71] It links the Church of England's failure over this task with the decline in church attendance numbers, which are indicative of its health, since the Church has a divine mandate to reproduce. God intends the Church to be fruitful and multiply. Although they do not argue "that it is the natural condition for every local church to be growing. But we do argue that it is the normative condition for the national church in normal times if it keeps the faith and keeps up with culture."[72]

The report then reinterprets the four classic marks of the church, as One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic. *MSC* argues that oneness does not suggest being monochrome, it suggests a rich diversity of church communities in differing cultures. It is not that traditional parochial ministry must die out but rather that "Fresh Expressions of church and more traditional forms of church should live in interdependence, in *perichoresis*."[73] Holiness, according to the report, calls for the Church of England to be "willing to die to its own culture in order to live for God in another."[74] The report goes on, "Catholicity therefore suggests that the church has the capacity to embrace diverse ways of believing and worshipping, and that this diversity comes about through the 'incarnation' of Christian truth in many different cultural forms which it both critiques and affirms. The Catholicity of the Church is actually a mandate for cultural hospitality."[75] For

> [t]he agenda of the local church must always be to include rather than exclude. Unconsciously churches reject large tracts of humanity by failing to make provision for them to find a 'space' which they can occupy without automatically denying their culture, music, way of speech, or capacity to handle texts and concepts.[76]

Being Apostolic is interepreted as an orientation to the future, as well as being faithful to Christ in the here and now, not just about being faithful to an authorised past. It is being faithful to the way in which the Christian tradition has interpreted the call of Christ to make disciples of all peoples.[77] Though as we have seen this concern is not really taken seriously.

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[71] Ibid: 91.
[72] Ibid: 91.
[73] Ibid: 96.
[74] Ibid: 97.
[75] Ibid: 97.
[76] Ibid: 97.
[77] Ibid: 98.

Several questions emerge out of this chapter. First, the question must be asked again about how much the communities it describes are shaping the theological agenda and outcomes of the report itself rather than being a basis for reflection. It is significant to ask how they relate themselves to the Church of England's historic ecclesiology? This is especially important given that some of them have emerged in direct reaction against it (the alt.worship model for instance). It remains to be asked how such an account of *MSC* marries with the understanding of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church as understood by the Church of England historically that we referenced earlier.[78] It also appears to differ from the standard academic accounts of Anglican ecclesiology we also referenced earlier.[79] It is also unclear how *MSC,* in advocating the need for the Church to become plural in its own life in order to be able to 'reach' the whole of an increasingly plural English society, understands how a plurality of 'types' or 'expressions' of churches might belong to each other.

The report then relates its own understanding of the Church to some of the classic Anglican ecclesiological documents. It suggests that the two understandings are very close together, and that at the heart of being an Anglican is something akin to the *MSC* commitment to mission and its own ecclesiological understanding. It quotes with approval the Declaration of Assent, which states that the Church must "proclaim afresh the Gospel to each generation."[80] *MSC* suggests that a mission initiative or fresh expression that does not have an authorised practice of baptism and the celebration of the eucharist is not yet a church as Anglicans understand it, since the eucharist lies at the heart of Christian life and Fresh Expressions must celebrate it if they are to endure.[81] It also states that Fresh Expressions must be in communion with the local Bishop, as to have a license is both a practical and theological necessity, and that it is important that all Anglican churches remember their common links and common history, and to understand the relational links that convey authority and responsibility in the structuring of each national church.[82] However, the language here appears to see the need for churches to practice baptism and eucharist, or the need to be in communion with the local Bishop, as merely legal requirements, as something to be observed rather than something that expresses a theological conviction. Indeed it

[78] See footnotes 39-42.

[79] See footnotes 43-45.

[80] *MSC* 2004: 100.

[81] This would appear to contradict what the report asserts in chapter four when it names the Fresh Expressions it has been exploring as church.

[82] *MSC* 2004: 102.

would seem that *MSC* appears to understand the wisdom of past and present Church polity to be *constraining* the present rather than *informing* it. *MSC* does acknowledge the need, at some point, for Fresh Expressions of Church to celebrate the eucharist, but it does not see the eucharist as fundamental to the life of the local church. We shall explore in chapter three how such a view accords with the views expressed in the theology of William Temple. Central to that enquiry will be whether *MSC*'s view actually robs Fresh Expressions of church of the central resource for becoming human in the way Christ calls – where lives are rooted in the possibilities of the life of Christ received through eucharistic participation.

Reading *MSC* also raises the question as to whether the ecclesiology of the report represents a capitulation to the logic of the capitalist market. It seems to understand salvation as a marketable product, which given the postmodern fragmentation of society into many fraternities, means that it needs to be marketed in specific ways to specific communities. How then does such an account relate to the Church being a vision of a peaceable society, a truly Catholic body where all are welcome and where members are reconciled to each other through Christ not their own personal interests. This thesis will ask whether *MSC* has a limited soteriological vision, where salvation is little more than a 'banknote to be redeemed', where people's social interactions, practices and interrelations do not matter. Does *MSC* place too high an emphasis on cultural 'relevance' over fidelity to the gospel and the cost of discipleship? These important questions will be addressed in chapters three and four.

Chapter six of *MSC* discusses some of the methodologies that are necessary to start a fresh expression of church, as well as addressing some perceived criticisms. One method the report advocates, drawing from Bishop Nazir-Ali, is double listening.[8] This involves listening to both the culture where the church might be established and to the inherited tradition of the gospel and the Church. This should be taken as the starting point for the form the church might take. As *MSC* argues, "mission precedes the shape of the church that will be the result, when the seeds of the Gospel roots in the mission culture."[84] Since context should shape the church, addressing whom the church is for (drawing on the models already outlined in chapter four) is key to this process. It is therefore ideal that this should result in many different forms of church, which serve to increase choice for those who are not drawn to existing church

[83] Nazir-Ali 2001.
[84] *MSC*, 2004: 105-6.

structures or traditions.[85] This raises the question as to how far this method could legitimately be taken and whether the sheer numbers of local churches it might produce make the present structures unworkable. Would dioceses, for instance, be able to function as they do now, and how could the Bishop possibly remain a figure of unity in relation with every local church? Borrowing Frei's metaphors, these reports raise serious questions about whether the Church's tradition could 'stretch' to accommodate these recommendations or whether it will 'break' in trying to doing so.[8][6] This also appears to contradict the previous section, where a vital part of the process of contextualisation was listening to the tradition. Nowhere does the report expand upon how to do this, or give an example of this process at work. Much of the report could be said to miss this aspect out altogether and even here there is a quick reassertion that it is context that shapes the church. As an example the report states that "[g]ood news to the poor is only good news as it allows them to form their own communities of faith."[87] This statement presents at best a rather uncritical development of the principal that context should shape the church, but at worst it simply shows the report to be so contextually driven that even its own 'Kingdom of God'-centered ecclesiology can be cut adrift given the right context. The report also fails to see how much this drive to create churches for each and every context merely replicates the consumeristic nature of culture that it outlined in chapter one. In chapter four we will explore whether a more critical approach to some of the aspects of consumer culture could have led it to re-think this strategy. The report does indeed address concern that this approach is merely perpetuating the Homogenous Unit Principle, as advocated by McGavran in the 1950s. The report does not refute this, but instead argues that a recent sociological study shows that when two cultures join together one tends to dominate rather than the two co-existing in a positive way, though it does acknowledge that it is good for them over time to seek "gradual cultural diversity, expressed in interdependence between groups unlike one another."[8] Secular reasoning in the guise of sociology again overrides a legitimate ecclesiological concern.

The report acknowledges that its suggestions mean that the existing legal framework in which churches operate is not sufficient and needs to be adapted in order to allow

[85] Ibid: 109.
[86] Frei 1986: 117-152.
[87] *MSC* 2004: 110.
[88] Ibid: 110.

for these Fresh Expressions. The form of ministry that would need to take place in these Fresh Expressions raises significant questions about the present suitability of ordained candidates. The identification, training and deployment of ordained ministers would need to be changed in order to accommodate this new type of ministry.[89] These questions are then addressed in the final chapter. This chapter argues that existing legislation makes it very difficult for present Fresh Expressions to be recognised as a church in their own right, but it notes that changes to the 1983 Pastoral Measure could enable churches based more around networks to gain legal status as a church as a 'Bishop's Order' (though this language would change to 'Bishop's Mission Order' in the final measure).[90] It also suggests that urgent attention be given to the identification and training of leaders with proven experience in helping to start mission-centered forms of church, suggesting that in the same way that potential theological educators are identified in the selection process, potential pioneering leaders should also be identified and placed on specific pathways of training that would involve the study of contextual theology.[91] Both of these recommendations would make it into synodical law within a few years of the report being published.

MSC raises important questions as to whether it has subverted traditional received Anglican theology and ecclesiology to its own missiological agenda. This thesis will explore whether *MSC* has far more in common with some congregationalist and charismatic protestant ecclesiologies than any associated with Anglicanism. We shall seek to demonstrate that in placing little value on the Anglican tradition as supplying the resources for what it envisages as a new missionary task, and in cutting itself off from those resources the report lacks the tools to have a more critical approach to its handling of sociological material. This thesis will demonstrate that an approach rooted more deliberately in the Anglican tradition would have helped the report to see cultural developments as being far from neutral. This calls into question one of the central theses of the report – that each and every culture needs its own type of church. We will also explore concerns over its sociological description: has society really changed so much in the last fifty years – or is it still indelibly modern? Each of these questions will be explored in the next chapters three and four, where we will critically appraise the ecclesiology of the report, using the ecclesiology of William Temple, and

[89] Ibid: 123.
[90] Ibid: 129-131.
[91] Ibid: 134-5.

examine the sociology of the report using Bauman's work as a theoretical basis. In the next chapter we will also explore whether *MSC* really advocates anything new in theological terms. In other words, does it simply advance the arguments made by Bosch, who argues that a new missiological task is faced by the church due to the radically changes occuring in Western culture? Does *MSC* merely repeat the contextual theological models outlined by Bevans and Newbigin, with their reliance upon the work of the early missiologists Taylor and Allen? How does the report relate to the shifting attitude towards mission in England reflected in the Church of England's history?

It also appears that the methodology and form of theology that *MSC* takes throughout is that of practical theology. *MSC* takes pastoral experience relayed through the Fresh Expressions stories as its contemporary experience, and this then forms the context for the critical development of its basic theological understanding. This methodology reflects Campbell's definition of practical theology, that it is "concerned with the study of specific social structures and individual initiatives within which God's continuing work of renewal and restitution becomes manifest".[92] It also reflects the definition offered by Pattison and Woodward: "practical theology is a place where religious belief, tradition and practice meets contemporary experiences, questions and actions and conducts a dialogue that is mutually enriching, intellectually critical, and practically transformative".[93] However, as Campbell goes on to note, practical theology can suffer from being fragmentary and poorly systematised, since it rarely gives a complete account of itself. Indeed, Campbell admits that the most practical theology can offer are "concrete proposals for the restructuring of the church's life".[94] These proposals, in his case, must then become subject of fresh theological reflection and critique rather than being taken as normative or orthodox. Without this crucial interaction between the insights of practical theology and the theological discourse(s) of the Christian tradition practical theology can appear too alien and reactive. *MSC* itself suffers from this problem: it lacks self-criticism of the selected ecclesial narratives and it has little sense of historical perspective. We shall attempt to address this deficiency in chapter two where we shall explore *MSC* in light of the Church of England's attitude towards mission in its own context in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

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[92] Campbell 2000: 84.
[93] Pattison 1990: 867.
[94] Campbell 2000: 85.

Practical theology could be said to exhibit a strategy of control in its overemphasis on context. Questions regarding the role of traditional theology easily fall outside of this emphasis and can thus be negated and silenced. If the focus is on particular people, in this particular context, at this particular time, then other possible avenues of exploration can be closed off. The suggestion of an ongoing debate between the context and the historical tradition appears to be only a fiction. It is also arguable whether the discipline of practical theology is based on the false premise that other forms of theological discourse are not practical. One possible reason that *MSC* takes the form of practical theology, as Ballard suggests, could be the rapid introduction of practical theology courses into Anglican training seminaries in England in the 1970s.[95] He notes that these training programs suggested that a paradigm change must occur within church practice with the advent of postmodernity and suggested that practical theology provided the methodological model that could help the church refashion itself and its practices in line with this new context.[96] It is therefore not surprising that some twenty years later a major Anglican report should be couched in the language and method of practical theology and that it suffers from some of the deficiencies that Campbell has articulated. Yet this is clearly a complex process, as Rahner succinctly expressed it: "[t]he very fact that there is such an enormous number of particular questions facing the Church today in theory and in practice involves a danger of not being able to see the wood from the trees, that the interested parties and experts in a single question will be blind to the Church's task as a whole, in which alone that particular task can be properly mastered."[97] It is also important to remember that this is an official Church of England report, not an academic piece of theology, and so it is unrealistic to think that a report designed to appeal to a popular audience (though one well educated) – the clergy – could in such shorter space addressed these concerns fully.

We will now move on to consider how the report was received, both nationally and internationally, before assessing its developments including the setting up of a dedicated Fresh Expressions national team, as well as several legal provisions that were passed through synod that directly relate to *MSC*.

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[95] Ballard 1996: 2.

[96] *MSC* 2004: chapter eleven.

[97] Rahner 1974: 135.

The post-Mission-shaped Church landscape

Since the report, two measures have been passed by Synod that form part of the legal framework that enables exceptional Fresh Expressions of church to be created within Dioceses and to make provision for ministers to work within Fresh Expressions. The *Dioceses, Pastoral and Mission Measure 2007* was warmly approved by General Synod and accepted by Parliament in 2008.[98] Within the measure is a section on 'Bishops Mission Orders' (BMO), which enables new church communities to be legally established in consultation with the Bishop. These can work across existing parish boundaries as well as with ecumenical partners. This measure is complimented by a House of Bishop's 'Code of Practice'[99] that gives guidance on the appropriate ways of going about this. The BMO may contain special provision for public worship but attention needs still to be paid to the relevant requirements of canon law and the authorised liturgy. The guidelines note however that Canon B4 permits the bishop to approve forms of service for use on occasions for which no other provision exists, and that Canon B5 allows 'a minister having the cure of souls' (which would include a minister overseeing a fresh expression) to permit the use of forms of service which he or she considers suitable on such occasions. These 'occasions' would include the mission contexts in which Fresh Expressions typically operate. This is an important source of flexibility for pioneers. It allows worship to be tailored to the culture of those involved. However, these forms of service should be consistent with the essential doctrines of the Church of England, involving a creative dialogue between the mission context and the traditions of the church.[100] A second recommendation of *MSC* was the development of a new category of ordained ministry, pioneer ministry. In 2006, the House of Bishops approved the *Guidelines for the identification, training and deployment of Ordained Pioneer Ministers.*[101] These guidelines added a new selection criteria for those seeking ordained ministry; this new criterion would allow people to be selected as potential pioneer ministers, their training would incorporate a particular focus on contextual theology, new courses would need to be developed to accommodate this, and placements would have a particular focus on mission. Upon ordination, pioneer minister curacies would be split evenly between traditional ministry and working with an existing Fresh Expressions, it was hoped that pioneer

[98] Church of England 2011c.
[99]Church of England 2011a.
[100] Ibid: section four.
[101] Church of England 2011a: section eight.

ministers would be able to take up first posts that have a particular or exclusive fresh expression focus.[102] Dioceses were encouraged to actively promote Fresh Expressions of church and to create stipendary posts particularly for this type of ministry.[103]

Following the publication of *MSC* the Fresh Expressions team commissioned several authors to apply the mission-shaped premise to other forms of church ministry, and since 2006 five of these books have been published. Whereas it is not necessary to repeat what these say in any great detail, it is useful to summarise the main thrust of each of the books arguments, noting both how they repeat both the argument and method of *MSC* and how they develop it.

Mission-shaped children considers the implication of *MSC* for ministry with children.[104] Its begins by tracing how the local church has provided for children over the last century, focusing particularly on the rapid growth, and now terminal decline, of the Sunday school movement. Withers suggests that *MSC* offers a rare chance to re-imagine what children's work is and what it can become. She contends that there are many current places where children meet together to discuss and explore the Christian faith. These gatherings should be recognised as church in their own right, rather than subsumed under the general heading of children's work with the expectation that at some point these children will join in with the main church service.[105] Examples of these gatherings include Christian RE lessons, Christian acts of worship in school, Cub Scouts, a lunchtime club such as 'Kidz Klubs' as well as a mother and toddler group.[106] She suggests that there are several hallmarks of children being church including that "church will happen at almost any place any and any time" and that "it will have almost any format".[107] However, one must ask how such a viewpoint is complicit with even the most basic Anglican statements about the nature of the Church. There is again a desperate desire to name the things that people (in this case children) attend as church without any regard for defining what church is with some reference to the Anglican tradition, a tradition that the book claims to represent. She goes on to suggest that there are 249,000 children between the ages of five and ten who attend 'non-worship' activities at a church which includes a short act of prayer or worship and argues that these can and should be thought about as

[102] Ibid: section nine.
[103] Ibid: section nine and twelve.
[104] Withers 2006.
[105] Ibid: 13.
[106] Ibid: 30.
[107] Ibid: 38.

church.[108] Following on from the trend set in *MSC* the book also contains dozens of indented stories that further reinforce the context-driven approach to theological reflection.

Mission-shaped youth follows much the same format as the above, examining approaches to youthwork in the past 25 years, before exploring how youth culture has changed pace far more rapidly than has the Church of England's approach to youthwork. The book, like *MSC,* suggests that this rapid cultural change calls for a radical rethink in the Church of England's approach to young people.[109] The book laments the one-size-fits-all approach that has often been taken and instead suggests that, "work with young people is unique, because it develops according to the needs of a particular context, and more importantly, the young people in it."[110] They suggest a shift from seeing youth work either as precursor to young people becoming involved in 'proper' church or as something that is an evangelistic opportunity for the church. Instead, the church needs to think about how meetings of young people together can be seen as being church in and of themselves. Again the book illustrates this in chapters four through to seven using stories from projects that are attempting to do just this, highlighting the diversity of youth culture and the need for a very diverse understanding of both the structure, form and practices that a fresh expression of church made up of young people may take. Chris Russell, vicar of St Laurence, Reading, summarises this analysis in the last chapter describing four 'pivots' around which 'youth-mission-shaped church' grows: the importance of worship, of fostering a sense of community, belonging, and creating a community of disciples seeking to follow Jesus in their everyday life.[111]

Mission-shaped spirituality attempts to develop the idea that the 'calling' of the church, and of every Christian, is the call to mission, which has largely been forgotten in the Church of England: in the first chapter Susan Hope suggests a recover of "Apostolic spirituality … which is the call to bear witness to the Christ".[112] She talks about learning to see the needs of the local community through contemplation which leads to "apostolic action", yet that action is not predetermined by some "Gospel package", we need to listen to the culture. To illustrate this she suggests a re-reading of Jesus

[108] Ibid: 60.
[109] Sudworth 2007: chapters one and two.
[110] Ibid: xiv.
[111] Ibid: chapter eight.
[112] Hope 2006: 13.

command to travel light, which for her becomes the command to forgo any attempt to identify the final 'shape' of the church that may result from mission activity. This "is the refusal to engage in a kind of cultural imperialism, the refusal to impose a vision of how church life and worship should be expressed".[113] Following *MSC,* she sees Vincent Donovan's approach with the Masai as paradigmatic. In chapters six and seven she explores how both Apostolic leadership and prayer should be mission and 'other' centered. In chapter eight she talks about public story-telling as a possible vehicle for testifying to the truth of the risen Christ, arguing that stories can "be told with confidence because they are non-coercive and have their own inner integrity".[1] She concludes by suggesting that "what the Church of England could do with more than anything else is an adventure"; in its present form the church is "boring", yet what Christ calls us to is "[a]n adventure where the risks are real and the stakes are high. A big adventure, where there's no going back and where the outcome are not predetermined".[115]

Mission-shaped Parish attempts to relate the Church of England's traditional practices to the changing context the church finds itself in (as outlined in *MSC*) by way of exploring how some of the suggestions in *MSC* might apply in a parish and cathedral context.[116] Paul Bayes suggests that many traditional parish churches should not be seeking to turn themselves into a nightclub or café church, but rather seek to pay more attention to their existing community and its current practices and how these can be shaped to have a more mission focus.[117] Bayes, speaking about Charles Lowder, links the catholic focus on the eucharist to having a mission focus. The focus on the incarnation and the real presence of Christ in the elements, brought into the midst of the slums of the east end of London the glory and presence of God, to heal and deliver. He questions the lack of sacramental theology in *MSC* and suggests that the Oxford movement provides a wealth of material that elucidates a catholic minded missiology that had the potential to address this failing.[118] He then discerns how the missionary church values outlined in *MSC* can cause the congregation to subtly rather than 'frantically' change in light of their own resources combined with renewed attempt to match those resources to the needs of the local community. He suggests

[113] Ibid: 45.
[114] Ibid: 82.
[115] Ibid: 108.
[116] Bayes 2006.
[117] Bayes 2006: 9.
[118] Bayes 2006: 14-25.

that this approach shares much in common with the Declaration of Assent, in that it marries together the traditional practices of the church and the desire to "proclaim afresh the Gospel in each generation."[119] Sledge then applies this same method with regard to the main Sunday act of worship in a parish, suggesting that the focus should not be on creating something new, but rather renewing what already takes place, marrying the "liturgical resources of the past with the human resources of the present."[120] This can be as simple as involving more of the congregation in the liturgical elements of the services, everyone gathering round the altar during the eucharistic prayers, or making more of the flexible structure of *Common Worship* to incorporate more creative and contextually sensitive musical and performative elements, contrasting organising worship with the performance of jazz, echoing Ford's earlier work.[121] *Common Worship* can provide the central theme (the rubrics) but it also allows for a great deal of richly divergent improvisation, it is this improvisation that he encourages local parish churches to think about.[122] Both Bayes and Sledge then expand this thesis to include baptisms, weddings and funerals, before several chapters outline in more practical detail how this process has worked in both parish and cathedral contexts.[123]

Mission-shaped and rural continues the methodology begun in the other books in the series, firstly outlining and repeating the emphasis in *MSC* of the need for mission to become an integral and indeed central part of church life and practice.[124] Secondly, Gaze charts the shifts that have taken place within the rural societies in England, noting that although most of *MSC* focuses on the rapid cultural change taking place within urban locations within England, rural locations have also undergone a different but equally as stark cultural change. She charts these changes using the examples of the decline of agriculture, the increase in tourism, the population shift to the countryside from the urban, the increase in social capital, as well as observing changes that are also noted in *MSC:* greater mobility, employment changes, weakening concept of the neighbourhood and the increasing power of network communities.[125] This, as in *MSC* and the other texts we have examined briefly, then leads to another section that suggests that due to these rapid cultural changes there also needs to be a greater

[119] Bayes 2006: 14-25.
[120] Bayes 2006: 46.
[121] Ford 2004.
[122] Bayes 2006: 33, 41 and 43.
[123] Bayes 2006: chapters four to ten.
[124] Gaze 2006: chapter one.
[125] Ibid: chapter two.

flexibility in rural church communities to adapt their practices and structures in order to connect with this emerging culture.[126] Chapter four and five simply restate *MSC*'s overview of some of the types of Fresh Expressions that are emerging and then goes on to justify how these can be understood as legitimate forms of church. Chapter six suggests that the lack of resources in most rural parishes means that there will be a need for these parishes in particular to undergo a "pruning of the vine", echoing *MSC*'s language "dying to live". She suggests that major shifts may need to take place in clergy focus, from the maintenance of several small communities of increasingly aged members to more time spent nurturing and developing Fresh Expressions of rural church. She also suggests that money presently spent on the upkeep of church buildings should be used more usefully elsewhere on mission projects in the local community, and that congregations should look into alternative uses for church buildings: the existing church community needs to be flexible when it comes to the use of church space and property in order for mission focused activities to be able to grow and develop.

Each of these books share the same methodological framework as *MSC*: first, the assumption that a cultural shift has taken place within Western culture which in turn means that the church must rethink both its missiology and its ecclesiology; second, ecclesiology is always shaped by context – missiology leads to ecclesiology; third, the theological discourse used by these books seldom seeks to refer to the Anglican tradition. In short, it is clear that these books widen the focus of *MSC* by applying it to contexts that were overlooked in the original report, but they do very little to develop its theological method.

A recently published book edited by Stephen Croft articulates what Fresh Expressions might (and do) look like in the Anglo-Catholic tradition, a tradition that Croft notes has probably been the most reserved about Fresh Expressions.[127] Much of the book is made up of stories of Anglo-Catholic Fresh Expressions and it advocates no new arguments or theological developments of the *MSC* thesis. It is also notable that prominent church thinkers from the USA have contributed to several chapters. Both Tickle and McLaren are figureheads of movements similar to Fresh Expressions of church, and their inclusion within this work cements the considerable overlap in thinking.

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[126] Ibid: chapter three.
[127] Croft 2009b.

The Fresh Expressions team has also issued a series of shorter booklets that they encourage parishes to work through either together as a whole or as a PCC. They include one that provides a working model for carrying out a 'mission audit' for your church to enable it to become more mission-centered (this echoes many of the points in Bayes chapter on 'mission values' described above).[128] Several deal with how to start a fresh expression of church and one gives a beginner's guide to Bishops' Mission Orders. In each of them they refer back to both *MSC* as well as to the above more specific guides. Overall the series reinforces the thinking within *MSC* and contains very little that is new or developmental in theological method or thought.

A series of courses has also been developed which are aimed at equipping local churches to think more about how they might start a fresh expression. One course, entitled 'Mission-shaped Intro', is aimed at being taught by a local leader using existing handouts and slideshow presentations which are provided by Fresh Expressions, and is taught over six sessions which take place once a week over a whole day.[129] The course material replicates the *MSC* report as well a drawing on the above series of books, and can be specifically adapted using material from these books to suit the context. At present over 10,000 people have attended these courses and they are taught in over twenty-two different locations across England. A more in depth course entitled 'Mission-shaped Ministry', taught regionally across the course of a year, aims to develop in more detail leaders and teams of leaders for pioneer ministry in a fresh expression.[130] The Church of England and the Methodist Church, as well as the Church Mission Society, jointly sponsor the courses.

There has also been considerable attention given to the report by other members of the Anglican Communion. In Australia, the Episcopal Church established a Fresh Expressions Australia group in 2006, following the publication of their own report, *Building the Mission-shaped church in Australia.* Wycliffe Hall, Toronto, established Fresh Expressions Canada in 2008, working with other agencies, and the Episcopal Church in the USA is also exploring setting up a Pioneer form of Ministry, modeled after that in the UK with the Diocese of Washington already experimenting with this form of training in 2008. Outside the Anglican Communion, the EKD (The Evangelical Church in Germany) has also officially adopted the language of Fresh

[128] Fresh Expressions 2006.
[129] Fresh Expressions 2012a.
[130] Fresh Expressions 2012b.

Expressions and hopes to develop a fully mixed economy of church over the next fifteen years. The Dutch Reformed Church and the Church of Scotland have both also adopted similar language and are also exploring ordained Pioneer ministry.[131] The United Reformed Church has also welcomed the report and has sought to develop its own mission-shaped ministry course. The Revd. Roberta Rominger, URC general secretary said: "We want to attract those who don't come to church, by offering something new and different alongside more traditional forms of worship. The Fresh Expressions initiative is a real opportunity for Christians of all persuasions to join together in mission and to share the Christian good news at a key moment in the life of our nation."[132]

The emphasis on contextual method and the theological framework that *MSC* suggests is not isolated, and can been seen as part of a growing trend within churches in North America, Europe, South Africa and Australia, often collectively called the 'emerging church'. This diverse movement also shares many of the traits of Fresh Expressions. Bolger and Gibbs carried out an influential study of over one hundred emerging churches in the UK and USA in 2005 and on the basis of this research chose to define the emerging church as "communities that practice the way of Jesus within postmodern cultures" and "that take culture, specifically postmodern culture, seriously".[133] They go on to say that "[t]aking postmodernity seriously requires that all church practices come into question".[134] Emerging churches sees ecclesial structures and practices as culturally conditioned and therefore they need to be re-imagined for this new postmodern context. They also look primarily to the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles in order to understand the church and its mission, and attempt to redefine leadership in a similar way to that of pioneer ministry.[135] Other people writing in different contexts on the emerging church have also made similar points.[1] It is also clear that the vast majority of these communities have emerged out of an evangelical theological context and there are no examples of Roman Catholic or Orthodox communities. However, Pope John Paul II did issue a call for a new type of evangelisation in 1983, "look to the future with commitment to a New Evangelisation,

[131] Croft 2009a: 37.
[132] Fresh Expressions 2012c.
[133] Bolger 2007: 43 -44.
[134] Ibid: 34.
[135] Ibid: 94-110 see also chapter ten.
[136] Taylor 2007.

one that is new in its ardour, new in its methods, and new in its means of expression."[137]

The Critical Reception of the Report, Secondary Legislation and Associated Literature

General Synod welcomed the publication of the report. The majority of speeches were fully in favour of the report's recommendations; only a few made critical remarks. Mrs. Anne Williams spoke against the report, suggesting that "[t]here is no doubt that we need to explore new ways of being church, seeking always to find ways of reaching the unchurched, but not at the expense of traditional models, whatever they may be".[1] Ven. Richard Blackburn argued that, "the thought that a mission-shaped Church should be 'going to church with other people who are like us' seems a pretty dismal prospect to me".[139] He did not develop this criticism any further, and instead stressed the need for a stronger episcopacy. The Rt. Rev. Peter Price suggested that "[t]here is a need for some fresh theological thinking. I do not think that this report by and large gives it, but I think it is out there. Some fresh thinking about ecclesiology needs to be done".[140] With these criticisms in mind Synod went on to

> welcome the report *Mission-shaped Church* as a contribution to reflection and action about a 'mixed economy church' and commend it to dioceses, deaneries and parishes for study and discussion; … to invite dioceses to take account of the report's proposals in the development of their diocesan mission strategies; … to ask the Mission and Public Affairs Council to consider and take forward the recommendations and report back to General Synod in the next quinquennium.[141]

The Methodist Church also welcomed the report as part of its 'Our Calling' process, and passed a resolution at its annual conference in 2004 affirming Fresh Expressions as one of its five priority areas.

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[137] Paul II 1983 and 2001.
[138] General Synod 2004: 138.
[139] Ibid: 140.
[140] Ibid: 142.
[141] Ibid: 158.

Immediately following the publication of the report Professor John Hull wrote a short critical response, *Mission-Shaped Church: A theological response.* His main criticisms concerned confusing the role of the Church too closely with the Kingdom of God, which, he argued, meant that the potential role other faiths may play in the Kingdom of God was eradicated.[142] He was critical of the proposal to set up churches for poor people, saying that, "the misuse of one of the most prophetic insights of contemporary theology, the preferential option of God for the poor, is almost cynical in its nonchalance."[143] He suggested that the report should have developed a critical appraisal of the culture it described, providing a counter-imagination to that of consumer culture. He argued that the report failed to consider that along with structural differences in inculturation there may also necessarily be theological differences, such as inclusion and exclusion in a society based around the ability to consume.[144]

Bishop Graham James also offered a short critical analysis of *MSC* in a 2005 address.[145] Though he welcomed the report, particularly the manner in which the Fresh Expressions described engaged with 'postmodern' culture, he was also wary of the lack of critical analysis of some of the more difficult aspects of consumer culture. In particular the way in which it excluded those who could not afford to consume and the reduction of the church to a particular subcultural group or interest, which diminished the ability of the gospel to reconcile. He also highlighted that because *MSC* had a sociological determined understanding of the gospel – where it was understood as something simply to be communicated – this tended to ignore the manner in which the gospel might be alien to us and address us in a manner we could not fully fathom.[146]

Bishop Lindsay Urwin also offered a short critical paper in which he reflected upon the role of sacramental ministry in *Fresh Expressions*.[147] He argued that sacraments are a pure gift from God, something that Christ does with and through his people. As such they are the essential things in Christian life, and it is the duty of every church to offer them, as they form its identity and life and guarantee its faithfulness. Because the New Testament witnesses to the centrality of the eucharist in particular very early

[142] Hull 2006: 1-6.
[143] Ibid: 15.
[144] Ibid: 19 and 27.
[145] James 2005.
[146] Ibid.
[147] Urwin 2008: 29-41.

on in the life of the church and the emphasis in the early church tradition continues this pattern, *Fresh Expressions* that do not celebrate the eucharist fail to adhere to the witness of scripture and tradition. For Urwin the eucharist is the foretaste of the heavenly kingdom where all are equal before God and where barriers of race, gender and class are overcome.[148] Therefore because the eucharist bears witness to a different kind of materialism he sees it offering a radically different view of reality than that of the predominant western culture. This culture increasingly disposes of the material, encourages people to replace things every year or two, but the Christian faith, because of the incarnation – celebrated and encountered in the eucharist – encourages us to reverence matter, because for our sake God became material. The sacraments are signs of the material world, conveying the presence of God, and signs of the material world being charged with the grandeur of God. Therefore, for Urwin, any church which does not have the eucharist at its heart diminishes the possibility of re-narrating people away from the destructive tendencies within our own culture towards our material world and also our acceptance of each other.

Urwin's concerns about the nature of the local church were also articulated by Williams in a short article on the future of the parish system. He argues that, "The model of a group of worshippers in every 'natural' community in a country, trying to let that community know what kind of God it worships and what, as a result, is possible for human beings, is a model that expresses eloquently some of the ways in which taking responsibility for passing on what has been received can happen."[149] For Williams, the parish model expresses loyalty and availability, expressing God's accessibility. A church which is for a particular culture or subculture looses out on the positive tensions of diversity, nationality and language, it looses a dimension of what the Body of Christ actually is, and what the local church is called to be. Churches that fail to speak in this way are less rooted, less material and suggest that the Church cannot cope with difference and is threatened by diversity, they fail to show that the church is not just another tribe or self-interest group, that the church is of an entirely different order.[150] Williams argues that the substance of the Church's life is "the lived encounter with Jesus in the company of unexpected and unchosen others."[151]

[148] Urwin 2008: 31.
[149] Williams 2010: 53.
[150] Williams 2010: 55.
[151] Williams 2010: 57.

The above criticisms are made only in passing and are largely undeveloped. The only significant critical engagement with *MSC* is found in the work of Davison and Milbank. They published a popular level critical examination of *MSC* in early 2011. *For the Parish* is a robust attempt to defend the centrality of the parish against its perceived diminishment in *MSC.*[152] Given this, it is important to give the work due consideration in order to consider the way in which this thesis will build on, differ from, and also critique this work.

In chapter one they argue that *MSC* is premised on a false methodology that separated form from content. *MSC* failed to take seriously the manner in which the values, beliefs, convictions and meanings – i.e. the contents of belief – of the church are expressed in the form of its worship. *MSC* suggested that the essence of the church exists apart from these practices, structures and disciplines, hence they can be repackaged in any number of different ways without any sense of loss.[153] Using the work of Balthasar, particularly his exploration of aesthetics in *The Glory of the Lord,* they argue Christologically that form and content are inseparable because in Christ "all the elements of his life and person come together in his *form.* His person, actions and preaching are inseparable from this whole, as are his divinity and humanity."[1] They then turn to Wittgenstein and Lindbeck to argue that Christian identity is formed and matures communally through the practice of certain actions, the actions and practices matter because faith is embodied in them. This is why the form the church takes is important, it expresses her beliefs. *Fresh Expressions* by separating form from content undervalues the way in which these practices shape and nurture Christian belief. Essentially *MSC* is too intellectualist because it reduces faith to a set of ideas to be disseminated rather bound up with practices, relationships and forms of life.

In chapter two Davison and Milbank argue that *MSC* has great difficulty understanding how the historic practices of the church mediate Christ.[155] That it is the communal history of the Church that have mediated Christ to the world, extending the logic of the incarnation. Human language, culture and practices participate in redeeming activity of God, in the church they are a means to encounter

[152] Davison 2011.
[153] Ibid: chapter one.
[154] Ibid: 8.
[155] Ibid: chapter two.

God's grace and are not incidental to, or in competition with, that grace. They argue that *MSC* denies the possibility of mediation and instead sees such a view as competing, where the church is denied any mediating role at all in God's mission. Such a denial is also a denial of the pattern of salvation that Jesus himself enacts, whereby he draws people *into* his work to become *partakers* of it, members of his body.[156]

Linked into the views expressed in chapter two they then, in chapter three, argue that *MSC* does not take seriously that the church *is* the body of Christ, "inseparable from who Christ is and what Christ does."[157] In *MSC* the church is not the main outworking of salvation it is extraneous to salvation, the historic church can be ignored, its practices put to one side, for salvation does not have an ecclesial dimension it is God's work alone. This is a direct result of *MSC's* lack of a theology of mediation. The Church is seen in a starkly utilitarian fashion in *MSC,* once a person is 'brought before' God it simply fades into the background, as though its practices were irrelevant to the ongoing discipleship of the believer.[158] The reports emphasis on mission, and its construal of mission as something that can be separated out from the life of the church continue to misunderstand the co-operative nature of Christian life and the reality of the Church as Christ's body.

In chapter four they go on to argue that *MSC* simply replicates the worst forms of individualism already present in modernity, and they offer St Paul's account of the diverse yet unified body of Christ as a counterpoint to this.[159] They suggest that by placing choice as the central ecclesial category *MSC* also represents "a flight away from the mixed community of the parish ... towards segregation [where] the network of consumer choice is privileged over the parish as the site of difference and reconciliation."[160] Contrasting the approach *MSC* advocated to the vision of the life of the Church expressed in Paul's letter to the Ephesians, where Christ, and implicitly the church, is described as place where dividing walls are broken down. They state that although *MSC* recognises that the final state of the church will be a fully united and reconciled humanity it is happy to keep this state deferred rather than seeing it as an

[156] Ibid: 38-40.
[157] Ibid: 48.
[158] Ibid: 55-58.
[159] Ibid: chapter three.
[160] Ibid: 2 and chapter four.

essential element of the Church's identity and vocation. The authors trace this willingness to defer to the report's individualism which only sees salvation as matter of individual change rather than corporate or cosmic change.[161] They suggest that the idea of a 'mixed economy' paradoxically leads to a less mixed church because these congregations of like-minded people never encounter one another.[162] They critically discuss HUP and are particularly critical of its reliance upon sociological data that suggests that it is simply not possible for diverse groups of people to meet together without one dominating the other. Such a view prefaces empirical sociology over theology resulting in a capitulation to the logic of consumerism.[163] Seeing consumer culture in such a neutral way also limits the reports soteriology where the conversion of the believer is seen as a singular event rather than a lifetimes process in community with other believers where every sphere of life, whether political, social or economic, is capable of being redeemed.[164]

In chapter five the authors critique the report's quest for novelty and pastiche that they perceive undergirds the ecclesiology of *MSC,* which results in a "frail and atomized subjectivity".[165] This emerges from its misunderstanding of the connection between form and content and its low view of mediation. F*resh expressions* are encouraged to be determined by their context. They argue that such an ecclesiology shares little in common with inherited Anglican ecclesiology and is broadly similar to the Anabaptist ecclesiology of Stuart Murray-Williams (whom *MSC* quotes favourably on this issue). They note that although the report suggests that *Fresh Expressions* should bear a family likeness to other Anglican churches the report nowhere actually fulfils this requirement in its description of worship within *Fresh Expressions*.[166] Choice is the central category of ecclesial life in the report, the tradition, the practices and habits that have formed and dictated Anglican ecclesial life are surplus rather than treated as a gift due to the priority given to the present cultural context and concerns. Drawing from the work of Saussure the authors argue that the current vogue for pastiche allows *Fresh Expressions* to pick and choose elements from traditional Christian worship but by doing so ignores that these practices are only

[161] Ibid: 70-72.
[162] Ibid: 73.
[163] Ibid: 78-81.
[164] Ibid: 85-92.
[165] Ibid: 3 and chapter five.
[166] Ibid: 93-99.

meaningful within the original liturgical tradition as a whole not isolated from it.[1] They sum up their critiques by stating that the report "celebrates so many of the mistakes of postmodernity: fragmentation, consumer culture, the primacy of choice, the slow triumph of the virtual and the eclipse of the local and particular."[168]

In the remaining chapters they go on to mount a defence of the parish. Reasserting their view of the church's and believers role as mediators of the good news. Bringing back together mission and the church, by describing the mission possibility it provides in its mediatory role as the body of Christ. This is best seen in its liturgical practices centred on the eucharist, where gesture, movement and the use of space, re-narrate communities away from an anthropology based on excessive individualism and consumerism to an anthropology based on Christian virtue embedded in a local community.[169] They assert that it is only through attentiveness and participation in the liturgy that we can realise the gift of the liturgy and its timeless ability to re-narrate believers and communities towards the profound description of communal life centred on the eucharistic encounter with Christ. At times these last chapters (as well as occasionally in earlier chapters) idealise parochial life and are overly sentimental, romantic and bombastic even if they flesh out in more detail the vision of the Church articulated in early chapters. Though the work clearly resides in the tenor of the polemical it has provided the only significantly fleshed out critique of *MSC* to date.

Conclusion

Over the course of this chapter we have examined *MSC* and the accompanying synodical legislation in detail as well as other secondary literature. As we noted in the introduction, and as has become clear in this examination, the report and the subsequently accepted legislation have led to the most significant ecclesiological and missiological shifts in the Church of England since the Reformation. The parish is no longer seen as the primary organizing principle for worship and mission in the Church's life: its central place has been legally dismantled with the *Pastoral Measure*

[167] Ibid: 105-109.
[168] Ibid: 118.
[169] Ibid: chapters six to nine.

Act.[170] The emergence of pioneer ministry as a recognised and legitimate form of ordained ministry provides an alternative to the parish priest as the organising point of worship and mission. Both of these are the legal indications of the ecclesiological shift brought about in the wake of *MSC*. The statistics in the introduction also gave further weight to the growing influence of Fresh Expressions of church: there are now over five thousand registered Fresh Expressions across the country, one hundred and fifty ordinands training for pioneer ministry, and over fifty percent of parishes are planning to start a fresh expression. The contemporary impact of *MSC* is already vast and there is clear potential for further growth.

However, throughout the analysis of *MSC* and its secondary literature it has become clear that certain aspects of the report's ecclesiology and sociology are questionable and potentially inadequate. First, we noted how *MSC* does not place itself within any historical framework. It does not suggest that it is in continuity with any prior Anglican missiological reasoning. It does not refer to any Church of England reports on mission or mission strategy except *Breaking New Ground* (which *MSC* was initially updating). There is a lack of historical, theological or missiological context and the report largely occupies an ahistorical position. Second, *MSC* has an ambiguous attitude towards, and scant treatment of, traditional Anglican ecclesiology, particularly its sacramental quality. We have noted that the report's use of practical theology as a dominant discourse has compounded this difficulty. Linked to this is a further deficiency that follows from the report's lack of theological reasoning. In advocating a context-based ecclesiology, the report lacks a critical cultural hermeneutic: it treats contemporary culture(s) as neutral or even positive, leading it to make recommendations that missiologists would call syncretistic. Third, it is surprising given the report's focus on contextual theology that it does not draw more deeply upon Anglican incarnational theology, which not only would have enlivened its contextual theology but would also have enabled *MSC* to reflect more critically on the manner in which Anglican ecclesiology has been strongly influenced by incarnational

[170] Of course, it must be recognised that the parochial system has not always been central to the life of the church in England, given that it only came into existence in the way it is understood now in the early twelfth century. Nevertheless, the parish system has been for the last eight hundred years the principal means by which the Church has witnessed, enabled people to participate in worship, and provided pastoral care for everyone in the nation. There are of course alternatives such as cathedrals, Royal peculiars, minsters, and chaplaincy, but these are complementary to the parish. It is also important to note that it is not seen as an essential aspect of Anglican identity as many member churches are not organised on the parish principle. There are also now multiple benefices, and team ministries but these are modifications of the parish model rather than anything entirely new. See Pounds 2000 and Jones 2000. Jones notes that Gratian's collections of church canons in 1140, the *Decretum*, helped to refine the concept of the parish and largely conforms to how we would understand it today. Burkhill 2012.

theology, which, in turn, is reflected in its commitment (hitherto) to the parish system.[171] Fourth, *MSC* makes rather casual use of sociological material, much of which is quite clearly dated, and also of little depth. Though the report does draw upon the work of Bauman there are major questions about whether the position it takes is representative of his sociology as a whole. A fuller engagement with Bauman's work could have resulted in a richer description of the Church of England's present context.

Given these failings in the original report, failings which are not addressed in the subsequent secondary literature, it is surprising to find that critical responses to the report have been so unforthcoming. Only Bayes, in the official secondary literature, and even then only in passing, develops *MSC's* ecclesiology in a more sacramental direction. Hull's response does highlight some of the problems outlined above but his work does not develop a significant response to them. It is the same with James, Urwin and Williams. Jones does draw attention to the lack of critical analysis of the sociological material the report presents. Urwin and Williams – like Bayes – only outline the way in which a more sacramentally-centred ecclesiology provides an important corrective to the ecclesiology of *MSC.* Such an ecclesiology offers a different view of the material world and a richer account of the diversity of the Body of Christ.

Only Alison Milbank and Andrew Davison's joint work has mounted a sustained critical examination of *MSC.* Their focus on mediation, the link between form and content, their criticisms of *MSC*'s adoption of consumer culture, choice and individualism, as well as their defense of the sacramental practices of the local church, each overlap with the criticisms this thesis will go on to make. However, although their work attempts to be an Anglican rebuff to *MSC,* it actually suffers from the same deficiencies as *MSC.* Its own critical sources are drawn from outside of the very tradition it seeks to represent. It ignores, or is unaware of, previous reports on mission and ecclesiology published by the Church of England and its ecclesial sources remain primarily Roman Catholic. Whilst this does not necessarily invalidate the criticisms it makes, it does rather replicate the charge it proffers against *MSC* – that it is not Anglican enough. The authors do not demonstrate that *MSC* is insufficiently Anglican because they themselves do not engage with Anglican literature that would have enabled them to give a better account of Anglican missiology and ecclesiology.

[171] See for instance Avis 2008 chapters 3, 5 and 6.

Though they stress the importance of incarnational theology for ecclesiology, alongside the Church's essential sacramental character, as well as the importance of understanding the Church as the Body of Christ, their theological basis for such claims stems from an adoption of official Roman Catholic theology, as well as continental philosophy, even though the Anglican tradition has a wealth of material (official and otherwise) on these very subjects. Nor do they flesh out the relationship between sociology and theology in anything but outline. It is not clear whether sociology can help mediate the manner in which the Church is called to embody and proclaim the good news or whether it is simply secular reasoning that offers no real insights to the life and mission of the Church today. Although their work concludes by suggesting that *Fresh Expressions* could potentially be mission communities, after such developed and sustained criticism of *MSC* it is very difficult to imagine on what basis the authors could see this happening and in what way. The gulf they have drawn between their own ecclesiology and missiology and that of *MSC's* appears too great to cross in anything but sentiment.

It is clear that the critical response to, and analysis of, the report is still insufficient. Although the major areas of contestation with *MSC* have been identified all but one of the critical responses are underdeveloped and the one significant response to *MSC* suffers from the same methodological problems as *MSC*. Given the status and significant effects of the report in the life of the Church of England and elsewhere, and given that these critical failings of *MSC* are not minor but actually stand at its very heart, in the theological method it employs, this thesis will seek to address each of the problems outlined in turn. Key to this thesis is demonstrating that the sources and methodology of *MSC* are largely alien to the Anglican tradition and history it attempts to represent. *MSC* does not so much modify or develop existing understandings of Church order, ecclesiology and missiology as redefine them using its own sources. It is *this* discontinuity which the existing body of critical literature fails to stress. In order to construct an alternative contemporary ecclesiology to that offered by *MSC* it is necessary to show it is in continuity with this tradition and history, even though it seeks to develop it.

The first step before going onto construct a more adequate Anglican contemporary ecclesiology will be to demonstrate clearly the sources of *MSC* itself. Chapter two will therefore trace the genealogy of the report exploring the emergence of contextual theologies in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, suggesting that the basis of the

report lies in largely congregationalist adaptations of these theologies. In parallel to this we will ascertain the Church of England's developing ecclesiology and missiology in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, discerning whether *MSC* can be seen to be in continuity with these theologies or as something altogether novel. We will argue that it is this discontinuity that has cut *MSC* adrift from an ecclesial vision(s) that could have deepened its understanding of the role of the Church in the world, and the way in which incarnational theology alongside sacramental practices enable the Church to be most fully the Body of Christ, with all the anthropological, sociological, political and economic significance that carries.

Chapter three will then go onto explore this Anglican emphasis on sacramentalism and the incarnational theology by critically revisiting the ecclesiology of William Temple, which will be deployed as a counterpoint to the ecclesiology of *MSC.* The incarnational and sacramental emphases of Temple's ecclesiology will then lead directly into an account of the church's current reciprocal relations to the culture in which it is situated. Chapter four will therefore turn to the work of Bauman, examining how a more detailed analysis of his work enlivens the Church of England's understanding of both its context and its missionary calling.

Chapter Two

MSC's genealogy and eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth-century Anglican ecclesiology and missiology

Introduction

In chapter one I demonstrated that *MSC* does not give an account of how it relates to, or follows on from, historic accounts of the Church of England's missiology or ecclesiology. Nor does *MSC* refer to any prior missiological reports produced by the Church of England except for *Breaking New Ground*. *MSC* largely deduces its own pool of literature from which it develops its particular ecclesiological and missiological direction. This chapter will construct a genealogy of *MSC* in order to examine where its major missiological and ecclesiological influences are drawn from, in particular the potential influence of the contextual theologies of the eighteenth-and-nineteenth-century. Does *MSC* adopt contextual theology as its ecclesiological and missiological methodology? Does this lead it to uncritically assume a particularly Evangelical and free church theology of conversion and discipleship, as well as a particular emphasis that ecclesiology must be subservient to missiology (i.e. that context must always be the determining factor in the order of the Church)? We shall explore in detail the emergence of these contextual theologies, attempting to ascertain how *MSC* uses this discipline and adheres to its methodology.

To ascertain in what ways *MSC* develops the missiology and ecclesiology of the Church of England, or is something novel altogether, we shall then explore the Church of England's own missiology and ecclesiology during this same period, examining its mission practice as well as official reports up to the present time. We shall ask whether *MSC's* theology of mission, and understanding of Anglican order, is a legitimate development, or if it fails to adequately reflect upon already existing conceptions of these theologies. In particular we will ask two things: first, whether the Church of England's emphasis on the incarnation and sacramental theology allows it to give a better focus on, and more critical relationship with, material cultural and historical particularity. Second, did the missiology of the the Church of England that emerged during the eighteenth to twentieth centuries provide an adequate response to the culture(s) the Church was situated in? If so, does this missiology, represented in the Church's concern for the social, economic and political issues of the day, not

provide a better basis upon which to construct an ecclesiology and missiology today than the methodology *MSC* follows and if so how might we begin that process of reconstruction?

The beginnings of contextual theology

During the eighteenth and nineteenth century, two competing visions regarding the role of the missionary began to emerge in the host context. They were both particularly concerned with the formation and development of Christian communities (churches). Modern historian of mission, such as Ward, term these competing visions indigenisation (which emphasised the role of the missionary in passing on their own understanding of the church) and indigeneity (which emphasised the role of the converts in creating church structures and practices).[172] Ward suggests that early missionaries Henry Venn (1796-1873, Anglican, Church Missionary Society) and Rufus Anderson (1796-1880, Congregationalist, American Board) simultaneously developed a strategy of indigenisation in response to what they perceived as the dependency created by Western missionaries in the early nineteenth century, particularly in Asia.[173] They argued that 'rice' Christians were completely dependent on missionaries and loyal to the church only as long as they were receiving free food. In exchange, missionaries expected complete loyalty from the natives and resisted giving up authority and control. The system was thought to foster an unhealthy parent-child relationship between the missionaries and national believers.[174] Others, such as Anthony Norris Groves (1795-1853), advocated a radical form of indigeneity, and chose not to represent any foreign denomination or missionary society, instead promoting full co-operation between all Protestant missionaries for the encouragement of indigenous initiatives. Groves' method was hugely influential on both Roland Allen (1868-1947, Society for the Propagation of the Gospel) and James

[172] Ward 2006: Ward argues that indigenisation can be defined as the idea that: foreign missionaries create well-organised churches and then hand them over to local converts. The foreign mission is generally seen as scaffolding which must be removed once the fellowship of believers is functioning properly. Missionaries provide teaching, pastoral care, sacraments, buildings, finance and authority, and train local converts to take over these responsibilities. Thus the church becomes indigenous, self-supporting, self-propagating and self-governing. Indigeneity can be defined as the idea that: foreign missionaries do not create churches, but simply help local converts develop their own spiritual gifts and leadership abilities and gradually develop their own churches. Missionaries provide teaching and pastoral care alone. The church is thus indigenous from the start. It has always been self-supporting, self-propagating and self-governing.

[173] McLeod 2006: 84.

[174] Cox, 2006: 153ff. and 257ff. and Shenk 2006 and Anderson 2006.

Hudson Taylor (1832-1905, China Inland Mission) – who have both had a substantial impact on early twentieth-century missiology.[175]

Croft has already noted the influence of the missiologist Roland Allen's work on *MSC*.[176] Allen's work was marked by his insistence that missionary practice needed to be rooted in scripture, and he perceived there to be a discrepancy between the faith and practice of the apostolic church and that of the contemporary church of his day. As he wrote: "St. Paul, for instance, established a church when he organized converts with their own proper officers, but he did not organize a church and then later, and piece by piece, devolve an authority which at first the church did not possess."[177] He rooted his ecclesiology firmly in the New Testament, particularly the Acts of the Apostles, and drew from it four things he believed needed to be conveyed to the new believers. First, the new believers were to receive the Creed; however, this was not a formal creed, but rather a teaching of the 'simple gospel' involving a doctrine of God the Father, the Creator, Jesus, the Son, the Redeemer or Saviour, and the Holy Spirit, the indwelling source of strength.[178] Second, the new believers were to receive the 'Sacraments'. Just as Paul and the early Apostles taught their congregations about the Lord's Supper and baptism, likewise, contemporary missionaries were to teach the importance of these practices.[179] Third, Orders (that is, church ministers) were conveyed to the new believers. Since the Apostle or those closely connected to the Apostle appointed leaders over the new churches, Allen believed that missionaries should do likewise.[180] Finally, the new believers were to receive the Holy Scriptures, which were to form the basis of their theological reasoning just as it had been for Allen himself. Essential to allowing the four things to happen was what Allen called 'the ministration of the Spirit', that is the reliance of the missionary upon the power of the Holy Spirit to save, seal, protect, and guide the new congregation until the return of the Lord. It was by maintaining the 'ministration of the Spirit' that the missionary was able to avoid the practice of paternalism.[181]

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[175] Dann 2005 and 2007.
[176] Croft 2009: 41.
[177] Allen 1927: 278.
[178] Allen 1969: 87-88.
[179] Ibid: 89.
[180] Ibid: 100.
[181] Allen 1923: 30-33.

The works of Groves, Allen and Taylor directly influenced and paved the way for the emergence in the mid-twentieth century of what we now call contextual theologies. Bevans' book, *Models of Contextual Theology* provides an important overview of this missiological methodology, and charts the continuing trend towards context-driven missiology and theology during the twentieth century.[182] His work provides the missiological framework that *MSC* would inhabit. Bevans' basis for this book lies in his experiences as a missionary in the Philippines and the book begins with an assumption that "there has never been a genuine theology that was articulated in an ivory tower with no referent to or dependence on the events, the thought forms, or the culture of its particular place and time."[183] He argues that awareness of this fact has only recently begun to be appreciated by Western theologians (a point also noted by *MSC*).[184] These Western theologians, having witnessed the birth of new contextual theologies in the other parts of the world, "are becoming increasingly convinced that traditional approaches to theology, [that is, the Western theology 'imported' by missionaries in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries], do not really make sense within their own cultural patterns and thought forms".[185] Bevans concludes that, "contextualization is a new way of doing theology."[186] The fundamental insight upon which contextual theologies are formulated is, he states, twofold: firstly, the realization, on the part of indigenous people, that their theology has traditionally been dictated by the Western world; secondly, the desire, following on from this realisation, to formulate their own theologies, that is, to find their own subjecthood in their theological thinking. These contextual theologies are driven by specific economic and political situations and thus may not conform to traditional types of theology, namely Thomistic or Neo-Scholastic Roman Catholic theology, or Pannenberg and Moltmann's Hegelian dialectical theology.

In the various models of contextual theology Bevans points to several similar characteristics that distinguish contextual theologies from traditional theologies. First, they are situational and cultural theologies. It is not possible to understand any contextual theology apart from the social, political, economic, cultural and pluralistic religious history of that country. Second, they are political theologies – that is, the

[182] Bevans 1992.
[183] Ibid: 4.
[184] *MSC* 2004: xii.
[185] Ibid: 5.
[186] Ibid: 11.

suffering of the people under successive oppressive regimes has set an agenda of engagement and commitment to social, economic and political change. Third, they are narrative theologies. The primary methodology of contextual theologies is story-telling. Contextual theologies are not systematic theologies; rather, they are a recitation of events, experiences, drama and narratives. Bevans' work has been influential because it drew out the common themes shared by the increasing variety of contextual theologies (for example, black, liberation, womanist, feminist, minjungian, third-eye theologies), and also began the process of suggesting that Western theology itself could learn from this new theological method. It also articulated themes that *MSC* would replicate – the need for ecclesiology to be context driven, and the conviction that people within those given cultures should develop their own theology rather than have it dictated to them.

At the same time that Bevans published this work, the missiologist David Bosch published *Transforming Mission* which argued that the Western church needed to re-imagine Western missionary methods in light of a newly emerging cultural paradigm. *Transforming Mission* has become one of the most widely read missiological textbooks in the world, and has been hugely influential in the field of modern missiology.[187] It was also particularly influential on Leslie Newbigin's work, which also in turn influences *MSC*, a connection we shall explore later on. The most influential argument in Bosch's thesis is his concept of paradigm change in Church history, and in particular his argument that the Church is entering a new mission paradigm, therefore Christian mission must undergo a radical re-conception in the light of this transition.[188] This premise is also taken up by *MSC*.[189] Bosch suggests that paradigm theory provides the best framework for studying transitions in mission from one era to the next.[190] He follows Küng's theological use of the theory whilst also developing it by arguing that the West is entering a new historical paradigm, and that the Church needs a new understanding of mission, since its present day missiological paradigms are indelibly linked to the Enlightenment. The Church needs to remodel its

[187] Nussbaum 2008 and Saayman 1996.

[188] Bosch 1991: chapter eleven.

[189] *MSC* 2004: 1ff.

[190] Paradigm theory was made popular by the physicist Thomas Kuhn in the early 1960s. Kuhn 1962. In this work he argued that science does not grow in small gradual steps but in quick bursts, as small groups of scientists realise that something is fundamentally wrong with the paradigm everyone else in their field has accepted. These new ideas (he uses Einstein's relativity theory as an example) cause giant shifts to take place in scientific thinking in order to accommodate them, he calls these paradigm shifts. Hans Küng had already taken this theory and used it to outline six major paradigms in Christian history, each with its own theological framework and its own understanding of mission. See Küng 1988b: 67-105 and 1988a.

understanding of mission with that embodied in the life of Jesus Christ. This necessarily involves placing the stories and teachings of the New Testament at the heart of the missiological task.[191] After briefly analysing three missiological paradigms since the time of the New Testament he goes on to argue that the once dominant influence of the Enlightenment upon our age is rapidly dissipating, giving way to a new era of post-Enlightenment thought, or postmodernism.[192] He lists five areas where this shift takes place: first, the demise of reason and the emergence of experience within human rationality; second, the rejection of the mechanisation and commodification of nature and the human race; third, the shift in focus away from cause and effects (which rendered life largely meaningless) to a desire to understand the purpose of things; fourth, the demise of the modern progress myth; fifth, the rejection of the idea of 'value free' objective knowledge.[193] He goes on to state that, "in the field of religion, a paradigm shift always means both continuity and change, both faithfulness to the past and boldness to engage the future, both constancy and contingency, both tradition and transformation."[194] This means living in "creative tension" between these two apparent opposites.[195]

Bosch then proceeds to sketch out what this new mission paradigm might consist of, drawing attention to several vital components, of which three are relevant here as they are also repeated in *MSC*.[196] First, the source of mission is found in God – mission is not the activity of the Church alone, it is the joining in of the Church with God's redeeming activity in the world, the *missio Dei*.[197] Second, the goal of mission is both the announcement of the good news of Jesus Christ and his saving work for each and every person, *but,* third, this saving work must also be seen in the everyday context in which people live their lives; therefore the Church must learn to contextualise its mission activity.[198] He argues that Western theology often "simply assumed that it was supracultural and universally valid."[199] His emphasis on the need for Western theology to turn to context partially informs *Breaking New Ground* but permeates

[191] Küng 1988a: chapter one, nine and ten.
[192] Bosch 1991: 349.
[193] Ibid: 349-362.
[194] Ibid: 366.
[195] Ibid: 366.
[196] *MSC* 2004: 20ff and 85ff.
[197] Bosch 1991: 389-393.
[198] Ibid: 400-408 and 421.
[199] Ibid: 448.

MSC, forming, alongside Bevans, the basis for its mission methodology, in that it suggests that context must now become the primary foundation upon which to build the form and practices of the Church.[200]

A second important argument in Bosch's work that would later emerge in *MSC* is his insistence that ecclesiology should be secondary to missiology. He is critical of the Western church for perpetuating its own life, through the models of Christendom (there is no need for mission as everyone is assumed to be a Christian), secularism (mission is the total focus of the believer, the church is a largely irrelevant matter) and compartmentalism (mission is simply an aspect of church life reserved for some specialists). He argues that mission is *the* essential part of the Christian life – drawing on the work of both Barth and Newbigin.[201]

The work of both Bevans and Bosch was also influential on Newbigin, who was one of the first British theologians to adopt the contextual theology method in his missiology and ecclesiology. Most of Newbigin's late works quote from *Transforming Mission* (as well as earlier Bosch works) and Newbigin calls it a *summa missiologica.*[202] He and Bosch corresponded over missiological matters as they were contemporaries, and they influenced and helped develop each others work. Geoffrey Wainwright calls Newbigin one of most important missiological and theological thinkers of the twentieth century and portrays him in patristic terms as a "father of the church".[203] As a contemporary of both Bosch and Bevans, Newbigin utilises and expands their insights, whilst also exploring the consequences of such a theological reconfiguring for Western ecclesiology and culture. There is considerable overlap between Newbigin's theology and that advocated by *MSC.*

Four elements make up Newbigin's understanding of theology: scripture, the tradition of the Church (especially found in the creeds and confessions), the current issues and needs of a church in a particular culture, and the theological work of churches from other cultures.[204] These are not all equal partners; priority must be given to scripture, and for Newbigin the gospel is centered on the cross. He notes that the problem with

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[200] *MSC* 2004: 43ff, 81 and 91.

[201] Bosch 1991: 368-372.

[202] An endorsement on the back cover of the first edition.

[203] Wainwright 2000: 390-393.

[204] He also affirms the important place of the church tradition, for "the Bible can only be understood in the fellowship of the Church – and the Church means the whole company of Christ's people in all ages." Newbigin 1948: 135. Newbigin's concern for context did not bring about the eclipse of the gains of history.

a lot of contextual theology is the priority of context over all else.[205] Following Bosch, the Church is the herald of this gospel, and participates in the *missio Dei;* mission prefaces ecclesiology, for the heart of the Church is mission. Mission is therefore the *bene esse* of the Church.[206] However, for Newbigin mission was not a simple narrow category – it was as broad as life itself, involving the restoration of the whole of creation and the sending of the whole Christian community to make known the good news in all the earth. As such it involves ecological justice as much as proclamatory evangelisation.[207] Newbigin argued that within the life of the Church there should be a natural yet unbearable tension, because it is part of a society that embodies a worldview that contradicts the gospel, and yet it also finds its identity in another equally comprehensive story that it is called to embody, namely, the gospel. But how could the church live with this tension? Newbigin offered a threefold path towards faithful contextualisation. The starting point was the primacy of the gospel, the Church's ultimate commitment. Second, the gospel speaks a word of grace and a word of judgment to the culture the Church finds itself in. If you suppress God's 'yes', then the gospel will be deemed irrelevant; if you suppress God's 'no', then syncretism will prevail.[208] He lamented cases where the church exists for the sake of its members rather than for the sake of the world. For "when the church tries to order itself according to its own concerns and for the purposes of its own existence, it is untrue to its proper nature."[209] Following Bosch's argument, he too advocated a paradigm shift within the West from modernity to postmodernity, placing the Western church in a new missionary situation. Consequently it needed to 'wake up' to this new missionary calling.[210] Newbigin believed that the Western Church couldn't fulfill its missionary calling in this new paradigm because its theology, ecclesial structures, worship and churchmanship are from another cultural period. It could not communicate the good news in a way that can be understood.[211] This, he argued, is a result of the Western church being wedded to modern culture, resulting in a gospel that was severely syncretistic. For Newbigin,

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[205] Goheen 2001: 16.
[206] Newbigin 2004: 125.
[207] Newbigin 1958: 143-156.
[208] Newbigin 1978: 2.
[209] Newbigin 1977: 115.
[210] Goheen 2002: 349.
[211] Ibid: 354.

> [a]uthentic Christian thought and action begin not by attending to the aspirations of the people, not by answering the questions they are asking on their terms, not by offering solutions to the problems as the world sees them. It must begin and continue by attending to what God has done in the story of Jesus Christ. It must continue by indwelling that story so that it is our story ... and then, and this is the vital point, to attend with open hearts and minds to the real needs of people.[212]

For it is

> the responsibility of the church to declare to each generation what is the faith ... This is always a fresh task in every generation, for thought is never still. The words in which the Church states its message in one generation have changed their meaning by the time the next has grown up. No verbal statement can be produced which relieves the Church of the responsibility continually to rethink and restate its message. [It is this] re-confession that will lead her members into a full and vivid apprehension of the faith.[213]

He saw that this contextual missiological task as fourfold.[214] First was the cultural task. The Church must engage in a missiological analysis of culture, for culture is not simply Christian, or secular and neutral. He sought to demonstrate that secular culture is not neutral at all. Second was the theological task. The gospel had been reshaped by scientific rationalism and consigned to the private realm. It urgently needed to be recovered, firstly as public truth, and secondly as comprehensive in scope – that is, proclaimed as true for everyone and brought to bear on every aspect of Britain's social and cultural life. Third was the ecclesiological task. The church needed to recover its missionary nature. It had been deeply compromised by its allegiance to culture and to the state in Christendom, and by its willingness to be relegated to the private realm. The final task was epistemological: reason, in the modern period, had become the ultimate judge of truth claims; it needed dethroning, and the Church must decline to accept the ultimate beliefs of Western culture and instead both live and reason in the

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[212] Newbigin 2004: 151.

[213] Ibid: 137ff.

[214] Newbigin could be said to have developed a thesis not unlike the radical orthodoxy project, in attesting to the total centrality of Christian theological discourse as a metanarrative. He too sees the end product of the Cartesian programme as nihilism, where claims to truth are seen as nothing more than assertions of the will to dominate (*pace* Nietzche). There are only regimes of truth, as Foucault would tell us, answerable to no-one. The end product of Descartes' project of total-certainty is total skepticism. It therefore naturally follows that the Church's proclamation of the gospel is not seen as an invitation to believe what is true, but as the attempt of a failing social institution to re-assert its former power.

ultimate light of the Gospel.[215] Newbigin's missiology and ecclesiology has been hugely influential, particularly in the gospel and Culture Network in the USA (as well as the UK). *MSC* repeats many of the features of his theology, though it also succumbs to the same uncritical tendencies that he observes in some contextual theologies.[216]

Several missiological strands have become increasingly clear in the course of this (too) brief overview. First, the questions *MSC* raises are not new. Second, the work of eighteenth and nineteenth century missiologists was influential in the emergence of contextually based theologies; which in turn led Western missiologists to begin to question their own methods and assumptions and increasingly to see that these contextual theologies offered the Western church insights into its own life, calling and witness. Third, we can begin to see how, in the late twentieth century, Newbigin's work developed one of the first sophisticated and systematic attempts to relate the insights of contextual theology to what he saw, following on from Bosch, as the emerging postmodern paradigm within Britain. Fourth, we can see a trend towards subsuming ecclesiology to missiology, where the practices and structures of the church emerge from the mission activity in a particular culture rather than being defined prior to that mission. Both Bosch and Newbigin suggested that the present church structures and practices in the West were indelibly linked to modernity, and therefore needed to be totally rethought in the light of the church's new context.[217] All of these methodological points are adopted and deployed in *MSC* and contextual theology forms the basic organising principal for *MSC's* missiology and ecclesiology. Yet *MSC* misses that Newbigin in particular stresses the need to understand, and work with, the existing theological and philosophical traditions of the British context. *MSC* fails to pay adequate attention to these traditions, seeing them as essentially alien to the process of contextualisation. Given the conspicous absense of any official Anglican reports from *MSC,* or any reference to prior approaches to Anglican mission in the

[215] Newbigin 1993: 4.

[216] Murray-Williams, an author who is cited quite frequently in *MSC* was also hugely influenced by Newbigin's thesis. However, he places more emphasis than Newbigin did on the demise of Christendom. He sees this demise as creating a new, emerging paradigm, for mission, which means the church needs fresh ways to imagine mission as it renegotiates its relationship to the state and society. Central to this task is rethinking ecclesiology. Murray-Williams, like *MSC,* suggests studying some of the Fresh Expressions of church that are occurring in Britain at the moment, arguing that they provide alternative ecclesial visions that are culturally more authentic (Murray-Williams 2004)). He also emphasises that ecclesiology must be shaped by missiology not the other way round, and that cultural shifts to a more network based society mean that the church must learn to look beyond the local congregational level to becoming trans-local. Traditional models of leadership and priesthood must also be reimagined for this new context, and worship must also become more mission centred. He sees alternative worship communities offering clues as to how this might be done (Murray-Williams 2005: chapters five to seven). These emphases are also repeated in *MSC.*

[217] Notably Murray-Williams. See footnote 23.

English context, it must be stated that the report at the very least conveys that it believes the context that gave rise to the missiology and ecclesiology of the Church of England is largely irrelevant. This betrays the insights Newbigin brings to contextual theology and results in an ecclesiology and missiology that is devoid of any historical basis or historical reflection. Now we shall turn our attention to the history of mission within the Church of England and its effect upon the church's ecclesiology in order to determine whether *MSC* is something entirely novel or whether it fits into a general pattern of development within the life of the church, and if so, in what ways it does develop existing and historical attitudes.

Mission in the late-nineteenth and early twentieth century in the Church of England

There has never been a generation in which it was possible for the parish churches of England to undertake every piece of work that the Church is called to do. In modern times the church has resorted to specialised forms of ministry, and particularly since the nineteenth century the Church has given birth to a wide variety of societies, guilds and communities whose express interest is in meeting the spiritual needs of people or groups that the parochial instrument cannot address. It is important to briefly examine several of these groups to demonstrate that in some ways they prefigure the Fresh Expressions movement, giving credence to the idea that *MSC* actually builds on a long history of local and contextual mission work carried out by the Church of England, yet redefines such work in a totally novel direction and in an uncritical fashion.

Several of the more important Christian social and evangelistic movements and societies which would go on to influence the Church of England's understanding of mission were founded in the mid nineteenth century. The London City Mission was founded in 1835 by David Nasmith, and followed on from similar ventures in Glasgow and Edinburgh City Missions. Nasmith felt that the Church was unable to minister to the working classes. Who at that time numbered nearly two million in London, lived in a poverty, disease stricken state, were largely uneducated and seen as morally corrupt. Though many of the outer London churches were full those in or near the slums were not, and those from the slums seldom attended services. This led one priest to declare from his pulpit that, "the state of the people around us is simply

revolting and to our disgrace we profess to be the evangelising power of the nation, but we are dead to the miseries of the heathen masses around us."[218] It is important, however, to note that this view is now contested. Williams, drawing from oral material, alongside folklore, ephemera and autobiographies, suggests that views such as this were based on a misconception and convincingly argues against those who suggest during this period that the poor were irreligious and indifferent to the established local churches. She suggests that working-class culture in South London was actually remarkably religious, but its character, being interior, was often in contrast to that of the institutional church.[219] Nevertheless, Williams' work does highlight that such interior religion was either unable or unwilling to ally itself with regular church attendance, and emphasises the alienation the working classes felt towards both the Church of England and other established churches. In response to this perceived state of affairs Nasmith sought to recruit missionaries to work in the slums, and within twelve months forty missionaries were working full-time, and within ten years over a hundred men had been assigned to different districts and places of employment throughout London. He encouraged them to 'comb' the London streets, to find out the habits and habitations of the poor in order to understand better how to reach them with the gospel. 'Ragged schools' were founded for the poorest children with the help of Lord Shaftesbury. In order for the gospel to reach the poor City Missionaries began to divide their time between visiting their own districts and visiting the various workhouses, always attempting to speak in the local vernacular in order to make the gospel message clear. Over time, missionaries were sent to evangelise specific areas of employment including the cabmen, the firemen, the busmen and the General Post Office workers.[220] These missionaries pioneered a 'go to them' approach and confronted the spiritual and social needs of many thousands of Londoners in the process, acting in this role as forerunners to what would now be called social services. Soon after the London City Mission was founded William Booth founded the Salvation Army, and was likewise committed to preaching amongst the poor and uneducated. Booth, like Nasmith, believed that instead of standing at the door of the church saying, "why don't you come in?" Christians needed to go out and meet the world on its own terms. He felt that the mainstream churches were too middle class to be successful in bringing the gospel to the poor. So he sought out people from the

[218] Howat 2003: 4.

[219] Williams 1999.

[220] Ibid: chapters six and seven.

working classes to preach and teach recognising that such people could speak to them on their own terms. Religious words were sung to music-hall tunes; circus posters and theater announcements were copied closely; preachers copied the idiom of street vendors; and congregations were encouraged to shout out responses to the preacher, much as they would have done in the music-hall. The Salvationists also included lay female workers, who were equally empowered to preach and teach and also to distribute communion – as such, Salvationists pioneered female ministry and disrupted the then dominant masculine privilege and authority. However, established churches taught against such forms of evangelisation, arguing that music-hall tunes destroyed the reverence for the sacred and that female preachers excited the poor and particularly women to self-importance, which threatened havoc in the church and the family.[221] Other notable non-denominational organisations included the Student Christian Movement, which was established in 1892 and declared its aim to be "the evangelization of the World in this generation." It pioneered a form of ministry that would later lead to the appointment of University chaplains, and it also supplied many of the overseas missionaries for SPG and CMS.[222]

Within the Church of England, Wilson Carlile would pioneer this same form of ministry. He founded the Church Army in 1882 whilst he was a curate in Westminster with the specific aim of reaching out with the gospel to those who were morally and economically dispossessed. That is, those typically living in the slums whom he saw as being beyond the reach of the parish priest. He sought to recruit and train a disciplined body of lay workers who would assist in parish churches by going out and preaching the gospel, often accompanied by brass bands and tambourines, a trait not unlike that of the Salvation Army. He, like Nasmith and Booth, also believed that it was the testimonies and preaching of the working class rather than the professional clergy that were most effective in these areas. Having previously been a subsidiary of the Church Parochial Mission Society in 1885 the Church Army become a separate organisation within the Church of England, and at that time there were forty-five officers engaged in full time evangelisation.[223] They went on to work in over fifty-six prisons and established a series of labour homes to enable those released from prison to be rehabilitated back into society through a combination of manual labour, bible study and teaching. They also invested in 'mission vans' in order to preach

[221] Walker 2001: 8ff, 64ff and 175ff.
[222] Lloyd 1966: 173.
[223] Kitney 2012.

and teach in rural areas – and at one time up to sixty were in use across the country. The Church Army engaged in a wide range of social and evangelistic work, including working amongst immigrants and slum dwellers (for whom they built over a thousand new homes), and also overseas, including work amongst the Dalits in India and the Native Americans in the USA and Canada.[224]

Each of these organisations exploited an older Nonconformist radicalism through which they were able to express their spiritual vision and respond to their opponents. They also pioneered new forms of ministry in areas of Victorian England where parish churches had struggled to minister; some were linked to the women's movement, as well as to revivalism and holiness movements. Each of these movements also undermines some contemporary scholarship that would seek to link the emergence of the secular with the emergence of the city in the nineteenth century. McLeod notes that it is not simply a case of non-churchgoers being irreligious, nor of the working class being alienated from the local church, if one takes into serious account these missionary endeavors and sees the work of the Church continuing beyond its own front door.[225] Though the Church of England was late in developing these sorts of missions compared to other organizations, it did nevertheless engage in what we would now call context driven mission, and would continue this process in the twentieth century.

In 1910, the significant Edinburgh Mission Conference took place. Although it was mainly devoted to the work of missions overseas it did reveal, in several addresses by senior Church of England clergy, that those in the upper offices of the church were beginning to realise that England increasingly needed to be seen as a context for mission. Archbishop Davidson spoke of the apathy of the Church at home due to the emphasis on material wealth and comfort, suggesting that England was only a Christian nation in name only, and went on to talk about the great need for mission amongst the people of these Isles.[226] He argued passionately "the place of missions in the life of the Church must be the central place, and none other." He advised that it was as important for the Church at home to tell of this gospel as it was for those

[224] Ibid.
[225] McLeod 1996: particularly 107ff.
[226] Maclagan 1910: 150.
[227] Ibid: 151.

afield.[227] William Maclagan, the archbishop of York, would echo these remarks in his address on the role of Christian nations.[228]

Within a few years of this conference England was drawn into the First World War and the issues outlined by the archbishops would not be addressed until the Church of England organised a National Mission of Repentance and Hope in 1916. This was a nationwide attempt to respond to the spiritual needs of the country.[229] It involved Bishops preaching in many towns and villages, calling people to a new understanding of the gospel, both corporate and personal. Bishop Woods of Peterborough spoke of his hope that the mission would lead to a reformed Britain, but argued that this could only come through reformed dioceses, reformed parishes and reformed individuals. After the mission had finished several dioceses founded Diocesan Mission Councils to continue to promote evangelistic work.[230] The mission, however, was confused in its aims: some Evangelicals saw it as a potential vehicle for the conversion of individuals who could be brought back into the church, others, influenced by the Christian Socialist Movement saw it as an opportunity to call the nation to repentance over what it termed 'corporate sin'. William Temple attempted to suggest that both these aims were noble and Christian.[231] The effects of the mission were mixed, few people outside the church had attended special services, though many outsiders had attended open-air services. The spiritual life of the nation was deemed to have 'quickened' and priests had been emboldened with a new energy and impetus for ministry and mission in their respective parishes and dioceses. Church attendance however was unchanged, despite a slight revival in the last few months of the war. Nonetheless, the mission did lead Temple to consider afresh the role of the Church's mission in the nation in the post-war period.[232]

Temple argued that the English population knew little of the Christian faith and what was known was often muddled and incomplete. At this time there was also division within the Church, with different traditions accusing each other of misrepresenting the Christian faith. This led both archbishops in the immediate post-war period to commission five Committees to examine different areas of life of the

[228] Maclagan 1910: 272-278.
[229] Wilkinson 1978: 70.
[230] Ibid: 74.
[231] Ibid: 76-77.
[232] Ibid: 78-79.

Church and nation in the hope of creating greater consensus within the life of the church. These reports were collated and published in 1919, with a title page provocatively headed, "The Kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye and believe the gospel."[233] All five reports were conscious of the way in which the war had "brought us to the startling and vivid revelation of need and opportunity."[234] The first report went on to say that the Christian message was "out of touch with the thoughts and ideas of our time."[235] It blamed this partly on the lack of theological education amongst the clergy, and outlined a wide range of reform measures, including the teaching of the laity, the establishment of new training colleges, a revised Catechism, an examination of appropriate types of preaching, the use of the arts in church worship, more imaginative use of biblical texts in worship, reform of the teaching that occurs in Sunday schools and training for Sunday school teachers.[236] Wilkinson, writing in the late seventies noted that nearly sixty years on many of these issues "are still familiar topics for debate and attempted action."[237] The second Committee on 'The Worship of the Church' suggested that the forms of the worship in the Church of England alienated many people, and that the Prayer Book and lectionary needed radical reform. There was an appeal for "bold and wide experimentation … for we shall be unable to go back to merely the old pre-war grooves."[238] The third Committee on 'The Evangelistic Work of the Church' suggested that the decline in Church attendance was unduly influenced by industrial society, which made attempts to live the 'fullness of life' practically impossible. It found that the desire to repent and strive after a life of faith was not as strong an impulse as the desire to offer service, and that for many the attraction of Jesus was as a heroic leader rather than as Saviour. It suggested seeing these impulses as a true *praeparatio evangelica,* but in suggesting what might follow on from this *praeparatio* it failed to go beyond the well-tried methods of parish missions, retreats and open-air services.[239] The fifth Committee, on 'Christianity and Industrial Problems', suggested that the Church had failed to adequately critique the industrialisation process, instead it had resorted to 'ambulance work' amongst those affected by it. It suggested that the industrial system itself was

[233] Archbishops' Committees of Inquiry 1918: 3.
[234] Ibid: 87.
[235] Ibid: 7.
[236] Wilkinson 1918: 81.
[237] Ibid: 82.
[238] Hobhouse 1951:33.
[239] Ibid: 17.

gravely defective and there was a "fundamental change [needed] in the spirit of the industrial system itself."[240] It went on to suggest serious reform of industry as a whole, and also argued that clergy should be trained in the social sciences and economics to enable them to preach and teach with authority and knowledge on these matters. It also advocated redistributing a large proportion of the national income to education, nursery schools, the provision of further education, the allotting of grants for adult education, and that the Church rapidly needed clergy from the working classes who could adequately teach and minister to their peers.[241]

These reports were each well informed, yet division in the Church would mean that many of the most serious proposals were unable to be carried out, for example, the defeat of the proposed revision of the *Prayer Book* in 1927 and 1928. The Church of England would continue to be dogged by two dominant and competing visions of its calling: the Evangelicals who focused on individual conversion and growth in holiness through personal piety carried out in the context of the local church community, and others who advocated a Christian-socialist critique of society. The report on evangelism in particular displayed a failure to move beyond a purely evangelical position in that it neglected to discuss the theological significance of 'inarticulate religion' in any depth, and did not relate its description of religious knowledge and experience to that described memorably by Owen, Sassoon and other poets – though it is important to note that these poets were not widely read until the 1960s.[242] Nor did the report discuss the meaning of salvation in a post-war society, or whether the secular had a necessary or even God-given role: it simply assumed that the secular was to be assimilated by the Church, not wrestled with. The report seemed to assume that the writers knew what the message of Christianity was, yet suggests that the Church was proclaiming it inadequately. Its response to this perceived inadequacy amounted to nothing more than the repetition of well-tried methods of evangelism rather than anything new. The lack of critical reasoning on these issues was a mistake that *MSC* would repeat.

We have only briefly surveyed a few of the important developments within this period. We could have also examined the emergence of the Sunday school movement, which began in the mid-eighteenth century and is associated with Robert Raikes, who

[240] Ibid: 2.
[241] Ibid: 98.
[242] Winter 1998.

saw the need to educate children in the slums that might otherwise descend into criminal activity. This movement was huge and by the early nineteenth century well over one million children, approximately twenty-five percent of the English child population, were attending a Sunday school.[243] We could also have explored the missionary work associated with the Tractarians or Oxford Movement. With the Tractarian emphasis on holiness, both individual and corporate, many of those educated by Pusey who were ordained ended up working in the slums, attempting to address what they saw as the acute social and evangelistic problems of the industrial working class. Priests such as Fr. Charles Lowder were at the forefront of the Church of England's ministry among the slums in the mid-nineteenth century. Through this slum work the Tractarians also become associated with the Christian Social Union, which was begun by F.D. Maurice and devoted to the study and remedying of the unjust social conditions in which many were forced to live during the nineteenth and early twentieth century.[244]

From this brief survey we have seen that over the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth century there emerged a Church rich in experimentation, *not* one that is staid and wedded to a singular view of church, ministry, and mission. The Church of England *did* attempt throughout this time to attend to the traditions and structures it had inherited, yet it also genuinely sought to relate these in new ways to the pastoral needs of the English population during this time. In contrast *MSC* addresses no such history: these, and the experiments we shall go on to examine, are conspicuously absent from the report. Instead, *MSC* suggests that there was little or no experimentation of this kind within the Church of England until the 1980s when 'church planting' began to be considered as a mission strategy. *MSC* creates a binary opposition between the 'new' missiological strategies suggested in *MSC* and the traditional way the church has undertaken mission. This serves to reinforce the report's argument that there needs to be a radical discontinuity between its agenda, and suggested missiology and ecclesiology, and the missiology and ecclesiology that the Church of England has traditionally inhabited.

[243] Ferguson 1981.

[244] For an overview of the context which gave rise to the Oxford Movement, see Nockles 1996. For an overview of the theology of the movement, see Chadwick 1992. For an overview of Fr. Charles Lowder's context, ministry and relation to Tractarian theology, see Ellsworth 1982.

> In a country like this, which has been Christian at least in name for many centuries, it had come to be supposed that every normal person was brought up in a Christian home, and therefore became a Christian as a matter of course, and so did not need to be converted to Christianity. […] it had come to be assumed, until recent times, that conversion was an unusual type of experience which did not occur, and did not need to occur, in the lives of normal and sensible Christians, such as members of the Church of England generally supposed themselves to be.[245]

That statement, from the 1945 Archbishops' Report, *Towards the Conversion of England* mirrored in many ways the response of archbishop Temple at the end of the First World War, and continued the Anglican exploration regarding the role of mission and evangelism within England. Even though the report has subsequently been largely neglected it made two emphases that are particularly influential: it recognised England as a primary mission-field in need of conversion (echoing previous reports) and it acknowledged the urgent need to mobilise the laity in the work of evangelism (as previous missions had attempted). However, it did not see any need within this process for ecclesiological change, nor did it suggest that significant cultural change was occurring or had occurred.

The worker-priest movement in the immediate post-war period of 1945 is a key example of an attempt by some in the Church of England to respond in a radical manner both to this report and to the previous reports of the National Mission. This new movement followed on from the post-war political and economic restructuring that took place within Britain, out of which emerged new social and industrial ventures, resulting in a change in cultural perspective. This movement began what it saw as parallel religious reconstruction work. For it had become obvious that the return to religion that the church had been hoping for in the post-war period had not occurred. Even though *Towards the Conversion of England* had highlighted the need to overcome the apparent gulf between the life of the church and the life of the nation, it made few practical recommendations for achieving this, and church attendance had actually begun to decline. This led one newspaper in 1946 to run the headline, "Has the Church of England had its day?"[246] However, during this time, the minds of a few

[245] The Archbishops' Council 1945: 37.
[246] Mantle 2000: 26.

in the established church did begin to think that the people of Britain might be reached after all, not by drawing them into the regular parish church services but rather by going out into the workplaces of the emerging industrial towns and cities. From groups such as the Christian Socialists and the publishers of the *Church Reformer,* as well as the Society of the Sacred Mission (SSM) there emerged a growing vision of ministry amongst the industrial poor. This new view was partly influenced by the increasingly forward role chaplains had played in the war: several had been captured at Dunkirk, others landed in Normandy and some were even dropped into Arnhem. These front-line ministries helped changed the perception of where and when ministry could take place and paved the way for attempted reform in England.[247] During the 1960s at the SSM in Kelham, Roland Walls was training boys to minister in the everyday places of ordinary people, which led some to be sent to the industrial workplaces in Sheffield. The College of the Resurrection at Mirfield also began similar experiments. Christian periodicals such as *New Frontier* and *Modern Churchmen* also began to discuss a bold new vision for ordained ministry, and in particular Bishop Hunter of Sheffield in the 1950s advocated that mission should have a specific concern for the working men and women involved in industry.[248] This was a view that dissented from the traditional parochial ecclesial vision, instead suggesting that a radical new ecclesiology was needed that was outside the parish structures (an idea parallel to that occurring in France and Germany at around the same time.).[249] Ecclesial experiments began to occur across the country, liturgies were adapted to differing contexts, lay people gained responsibilities normally reserved for ordained clergy, eucharistic services were conducted in people's houses and on different nights of the week, and parish meetings took place in public spaces to encourage wider participation. These changes, as Ecclestone argued, were driven by a perceived "lack of connection between the world of daily life and the church … the need was to live in a more imaginative way in the outside world."[250] John A. T. Robinson was one of the main theological resources for this nascent vision of the church and its ministry. As a Chaplain at Wells Theological College, he defended the principle of house churches, not as a way of getting people into a parish church but rather as a way of being church to the world. He argued that the church was an

[247] Ibid: 33ff.
[248] Ibid: 42ff.
[249] Michonneau 1959.
[250] Gorringe 1994: 79.

instrument of the Kingdom rather than the Kingdom itself; it was not God's only agent. He stated memorably, "you can have as high a doctrine of the Ministry as you like, as long as your doctrine of the Church is higher; and have a high doctrine of the Church as you like, as long as your doctrine of the Kingdom is higher."[251] His works, *On Being the Church in the World,* and the later, more contentious, *Honest to God,* were both commended by those on the frontiers of ministry and theology, particularly those who were worker-priests.[252]

A forerunner in these new forms of church life and ministry was the South London Industrial Mission, which appointed special Chaplains to industrial areas. This idea was quickly copied in the Dioceses of Birmingham, Coventry and Sheffield. By the mid-1960s there were over sixty industrial Chaplains. The most pioneering work of all was in Sheffield, where 'Ted' Wickham led a team of Chaplains under the overall leadership of Bishop Hunter.[253] Wickham instigated team visits to different factories, where each Chaplain would engage in 'snap-meetings' with workers on breaks, keeping meetings informal to ensure that passers-by could join in. These short and sharp 'snap-meetings' quickly grew into larger and more organised meetings in Wickham's (and other's) homes where questions and issues could be debated more fully. At the heart of these meetings was the eucharist, which those who attended described as the entry point to a "club for the redeemed".[254] Wickham argued that these men and women were averse to going to regular parish church meetings, having a deep mistrust of the Church, but he thought they did have a deep respect for Christianity.[255] In response Wickham published a pamphlet encouraging people to come over and 'join God's union' – the church – which many workers did. However, this 'joining' did not entail having to attend a parish church, for the Industrial Mission itself was church enough. Since it was the Mission that had rooted church in the actual work place, nothing else was deemed necessary.

Wickham's theology – drawing at times on Tillich, who argued that the church should belong to the world but be prophetic within it – was driven by his understanding that there needed to be a church that was "supplementary [and] non-parochial [in] structure": only then could the gospel make any mark on an urban industrialised

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[251] McBrien 1966: viii.
[252] Mantle 2000: 51.
[253] Ibid: 78ff.
[254] Ibid: 91.
[255] Ibid: 82ff.

society.[256] He called for a thorough retraining of the laity in order that they too might take part in this evangelistic task in their own working lives, rather than simply mimicking the churches 'come to us' attitude. He summed up his challenges explicitly in his work *Church and People.*[257] Bishop Hunter expanded Wickham's vision in a variety of schemes that operated throughout the Diocese. He also encouraged curates to develop similar ministries in their placements and negotiated for the SSM and King's College London to send ordinands to work in these industrial missions, hoping that through such a process they might seek to develop similar missions elsewhere.[258]

By 1959 the Church Assembly had, with Wickham as secretary, published *The Task of the Churches in Relation to Industry,* which seemed to vindicate all the experimentation that had gone before it. Yet this report did not develop into anything like the future Wickham envisaged. The Church of England asserted once again that the parish was to be central to its life and mission, and his hope for an industrial secretariat (whose head would have been a *de facto* non-territorial bishop) was never realised. He remained "politically and ecclesiastically unacceptable", and his elevation to the episcopacy was to "gag his effective voice in industrial mission, and his consecration … marked the ending of a brief but major chapter in the life and witness of the Church of England."[259] In the mid-to-late 1960s, the Mission was wound down, eucharists were stopped, the work of visiting the factories and shop floors changed in focus to drawing people back into church, and the 'snap-meetings' took on a more formal and liturgical character. In the 1970s, Wickham lamented that the Sheffield Mission and others like it had essentially become institutionalised and therefore prevented from having any real impact for the gospel.[260]

Even though worker priests would go on to found the Worker Church Group, their vision for ministry was received with indifference at the institutional level, and engagement with the working class remained a low priority for the Church of England, with subsequent official reports making little mention of them or their radical ministry. The majority of the clergy in the Church of England held to a received institutional ecclesiology that supported the territorial parish as the sole base for mission; very few were interested in allowing a working-class church to

[256] Ibid: 85.
[257] Wickham 1969.
[258] Mantle 2000: 86ff.
[259] Ibid: 82-86.
[260] Ibid: 87-95.

indigenously emerge, for the church already existed in the parish and did not need to exist anywhere else.[261] For all intents and purposes the worker-priest movement in England was invisible to the established church. Other reforming movements of the 1960s suffered similar fates, notable among them the Keble Conference Group and the Parish and People movement, both of which attempted (again with the support of Robinson) to radically reappraise the Church's pattern of ministry through wide-ranging reform.[262]

In 1981 a significant report on mission entitled *To a Rebellious House* was brought before General Synod. It formed one of a number of reports that led up to the 'Decade of Evangelism' in the 1990s. It was produced jointly by a number of overseas Anglican Church leaders and their Church of England equivalents and was designed to see how the Church of England could learn from mission strategy overseas, as well as to hear the reflections of their leaders on mission projects in England. The report was supposed to be a unanimous statement on their joint findings, yet there was profound disagreement about what evangelism and mission entailed and two statements were issued. The first statement (written by the overseas partners) sought to convey the urgency of the missional task facing the Church of England: it talked about the Kingdom of Heaven being at hand, and noted that at present the Church was impeded by "contemporary apathy", an "inability to express the gospel with clarity", "lack of knowledge of Scripture and inability to share it", and the predominance of clergy who were "more pastorally than evangelistically orientated".[2] In contrast the internal partners' statement came across as far less urgent, and understood mission and evangelism in far more socio-political and general terms.[2] In simple terms both of these positions echoed the differences found in the National Mission reports between an individual and social vision of the gospel.

It was this disagreement about the fundamental premise of mission and evangelism that led mission agencies to set up their own local branches in England itself – in order to carry out what they saw as the crucial task of converting England. It was CMS in particular, under the leadership of John Taylor, who during the 1960s, advocated a wholesale change in approach to mission and ecclesiology (paralleling in

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[261] Ibid: 269-272.

[262] For a fuller treatment see Hastings 2001: 532ff.

[263] Partners in Mission Consultation 1981: 33.

[264] Ibid: 34.

many ways the work of Wickham and Robinson but with a more Evangelical theology). As early as 1967, Taylor was calling for "Little Congregations", what *MSC* would now call cell churches. What, he asks,

> would the missionary church be doing in Britain, Sunday by Sunday, for the tens of thousands of people who stream in their cars to the coast or the countryside. Would it try to cajole them into postponing their trip until after midday so they could go to church first? Or coax them to the parish church at the end of their journey? Or try to legislate as few amenities as possible at their destination?[265]

Churches overseas, he said, faced with mass processions and pilgrimages of non-Christian cultures would never dream of trying to attract these people into their church buildings. Instead they would concentrate on "how to bring the witness and service of Christians to bear on the lives of that multitude in a relevant way."[266] He was of course writing before the great upsurge of the Pentecostal movement in Africa and elsewhere that did actually succeed in getting great numbers of people into church using an attractional method.[267] His vision for a new type of church was radical and ahead of its time. "These new units of Christian presence," he wrote, "are emphatically not a half-way-house through which the uncommitted will eventually be drawn into our parish churches. Nor are they an interim structure which ought to grow into new parish churches in due course." He did not see them as replacing the Cathedral or parish church, but added, "it is the little congregations which must become normative if the Church is going to respond to the world's agenda."[268] This vision, which echoes some of what Newbigin would say twenty years later, would not be taken seriously by the Church of England for nearly thirty years.

The Church of England would reflect its broad understanding of mission in the 1985 *Faith in the City* report, which contains a thorough analysis of the sociological shifts that had occurred since the end of the Second World War in cities in the UK.[269] It asserted that the Church of England in the 1980s was confronted with the consequences of unemployment, the effects of racial discrimination and of social integration. It suggested that although the way in which these issues manifested themselves economically, sociologically and physically may have varied from place to

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[265] Taylor 1967: 1.
[266] Ibid: 1.
[267] Jenkins 2002: 68ff.
[268] Ibid.
[269] Archbishops' Commission on Urban Priority Areas 1985.

place the underlying factors of powerlessness, inequality and polarization were the same.[270] The report argued that the Church had previously been slow to respond to these injustices, owing to both internal factors – its modern structures that were slow to adapt and change – and external factors – the decline and privatisation of religion in the Enlightenment era.[271] It affirmed that, "no presentation of the gospel is possible unless it relates to material, social, and economic deprivations."[272] It recommended that the Church adapt its liturgy to better suit the increasing plurality in languages, cultural metaphors and symbols in UK cities. Yet not only did the report fail to take into account the worker-priest movement of the 1950s and 1960s, which actually carried out some of the recommendations the report went on to make, it also failed to provide any examples, or concrete suggestions, as to how to go about this. It also suggested that structures in the church itself were inhibiting how effectively the church can respond to these cultural changes – an accusation made thirty years previously by the likes of Wickham and Robinson. Yet unlike their work it made no suggestions for how they might be changed or what they might be changed into.[2] *Faith in the City* was, however, one of the first official Church of England reports that explored the emerging cultural context of the late twentieth century in the UK, and echoes much of what Bosch would say. It was fraught with implications of what the Church should be doing and set up many ecclesiological questions that would only be addressed in more depth in the several subsequent reports, some of which we shall shortly examine.

From the late 1980s onwards mission become an increasingly central theme in the life of the Anglican church: the 1987 Church of England report *The Measure of Mission* attempted to address some of the concerns of *Faith in the City,* and suggested that there was general agreement that "the Church of England at various levels should be more committed to mission."[274] It went on to outline ten case studies that it thought exemplified good mission practice, and following on from this the second part of the report sought to define the overlapping characteristics of these examples, encapsulating these in its 'Ten Marks of Mission'.[275] However, it was the 1988

[270] Ibid: xiv and 24ff.
[271] Ibid: 49ff.
[272] Ibid: 51.
[273] The report did however lead to the creation of the Church Urban Fund, which has proved to be a vital resource in the Church's engagement in urban life.
[274] General Synod Board for Mission and Unity and the Partnership for World Mission 1987: iv.
[275] Ibid: 24.

Lambeth Conference that proved to be a pivotal moment, ushering in the 'Decade of Evangelism'. The official document of proceedings reveals a deep desire to move the Anglican Communion away from the attitude of 'maintenance' to one of 'mission'. For it perceived that, "[o]ur Churches are always in danger of diverting the energies and focus of their members from their essential task of mission, to an introverted pre-occupation with ecclesiastical concerns. We call our Churches and all Christians back to mission and we urge them to respond with all their heart to our Lord's commission to go out into the world in his name."[276] It was anticipated that such a radical refocusing would have a profound effect on the individual churches concerned at both a national and diocesan level.[277] Even though the experience of the 'Decade of Evangelism' was mixed this did lead to a sustained focus on local mission, and also an emphasis on church planting as a key strategy for this.[278]

As we outlined in the first chapter, *Breaking New Ground* continued to developed the Church of England's emphasis on church planting and sought to provide good practice for this method, whilst relating it to traditional Anglican ecclesiology.[279] It advocated an ecclesial vision that anticipated much of the ecclesiology and missiology of *MSC*, and continued the focus on contextual forms of theology and ecclesiology that we have seen developing within the life of the Church since the late nineteenth century. We can also begin to see the development of the idea (which *MSC* would express more fully) that context should be the defining reality for church order and practices. This contentious assertion will be critically examined in this thesis.

From this survey we can surmise several key aspects of the Church of England's attitude and understanding towards mission within its 'home' context. First, there has been an almost continual hesitation around the nature and concept of evangelism and mission in England. A radical approach was advocated by some, notably Carlile and Wickham, as well as several Anglican mission agencies (notably the CMS). Institutionally, however, the Church of England has in its own reports advocated a model of mission that, initially at least, resists such radical structural changes, or makes radical statements but did little to actually implement them. Second, there has been within the life of the church tension between the different traditions which has

[276] Anglican Consultative Council 1988: 29.
[277] Ibid: 32.
[278] In terms of evangelistic effectiveness the results are not particularly encouraging, and even though much effort was put into local church missions overall numbers continued to decline. See Brierley 2000: #693.
[279] Mission, 1994.

often paralysed the church's mission calling. During the two immediate post-war periods there was great impetus for change, yet such energy was dissipated into internal debates and any radical proposals were quickly forgotten. Third, there has always been a tension between ecclesiologies that were defined by existing Anglican practices and were centred in the parish and those that were more experimental. Until *MSC* it had always been the traditional ecclesiological models that had triumphed. Fourth, we can also see a correlation between the history of missionary thinking and the Church of England's current thinking in *MSC*. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the church witnessed a gradual shift in focus towards mission within its own context; this focus increased in the 1980s onwards, and culminated in the publication of *MSC*. It is important to recognise that one of the clear reasons why the reforming visions of the nineteenth and twentieth century did not succeed was exactly because they lacked central support. That *MSC* gained significant support institutionally allowed its recommendation not only to pass through synodical legislation but also to have a significant impact on the national life of the church.

Yet *MSC,* in suggesting that a complete missiological and ecclesiological change is needed in the Church of England because of a new postmodern context, actually ignores that the church has a long history of using contextually-based mission approaches. However these approaches have always been drawn back into more established patterns of mission and ministry that are sacramentally and incarnationally shaped (i.e. the industrial missions) or they have had to develop outside of the Church of Englands official structures (i.e. the Church Army). The Church of England has throughout this period eventually insisted on the parish as the primary expression of its mission activity, because of its understanding of the incarnation and its commitment to catholicity. This emphasis is distinct and important, and cannot be discarded as irrelevant or simply ignored for it provides the foundations for Anglican ecclesiology and missiology. As Newbigin asserted, any contextual theology *must* take into account what theology(ies) have already existed and been at work within the culture it is seeking to incarnate the gospel.

Very recent reports of the Church of England show an expansive understanding of mission rather than the narrowly constrained understanding in *MSC*. These reports further reinforce that *MSC* in deducing its own pool of literature severed itself from an existing Anglican missiological tradition. In order to place *MSC* in this wider context we will briefly survey these recent reports. They each exemplify three distinct

Anglican theological strands that undergird their missiology: first, the pattern of the incarnation, second – and directly arising from the first – the Catholicity of the Church, and third, the sacraments, particularly the believers participation in the eucharist.

The 1991 report, *Good News in Our Times,* produced by the Church of England Board of Mission, provided a robust account of the Church's Catholicity and warned against seeing the gospel as something that could simply be packaged and branded for different people in different times. It suggested that the homogenous communities that emerged from such an approach were closed to the world and to the fullness of God's redemptive and reconciling work in Christ.[280] Christ became human in order to draw all humanity into the redeeming purposes of God, and therefore the ultimate aim of the Church Catholic was to create a fellowship that embraces all ages, languages, races and cultures.[281] Homogenous gatherings fail to recognise the essential calling of the Church to be Catholic and thus fail to witness to the full reconciling power of Christ, leading the resultant communities to remain (sub)culturally bound. They fail to adequately develop the logic of the incarnation.[282]

In the wake of the Stephen Lawrence enquiry, *A Call to Act Justly* and *Present and Participating* argued that the Church needed to manifest within its own structures the rich diversity of its context.[283] To allow all to be present at the eucharistic table, and to participate fully in the life of the Church, was not only a witness to the gospel message, but also illustrated the true and lasting fellowship that we share in Christ.[2] The establishment of *koinonia* could only be based on genuine mutuality amongst diverse groups of people who give to, and receive from, one another, and in so doing more accurately exhibit 'Kingdom values' to the world. The report argued that this form of fellowship was best seen in the pattern of the incarnational life, where Jesus's gracious hospitality is offereded to all, even Judas.[285]

The 1997 report, *Eucharistic Presidency,* argued that the believer, in the eucharist, encountered a "genuine means of sharing in Christ … an authentic union with

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[280] Church of England Board of Mission 1991: 63.
[281] Ibid: 95.
[282] Ibid: 97.
[283] The Archbishops' Council 2003.
[284] Ibid: 4.
[285] Ibid: 7.

him."[286] From this encounter, the community of believers were led by the Holy Spirit to share in the ministry of Christ. This meant being offered by Christ to the world; sent out in "sacrificial obedience and witness to the world."[287] The report viewed the eucharist as an anticipatory fellowship, constituted by the Spirit, that bore the hallmarks of the fulfillment of the divine purpose for the whole of creation. Participation carried an ethical obligation to "live in the world as instruments of that promised future".[288] The 2002 report *Eucharist: Sacrament of Unity* argued that the eucharist stood "at the very heart of the life, worship, and mission of the Christian Church."[289] The report understood the eucharist as both the sacrament of unity *and* the sacrament of mission, arguing, in eschatological terms, that it offered "a foretaste of the heavenly banquet where the whole of creation is redeemed [and] sends believers forth into the world with this vision, to share it and make it manifest in their own lives, communities and nation."[290]

The focus of the above reports on incarnational theology, which leads to a Catholic vision of the life of the Church, and of all reality, as well as the eucharist as both a place of encounter with this reconciled life and a place to be empowered for mission led the Church of England to critically engage with all forms of social, political and economic life as part of its mission and calling both institutionally and also individually represented by the activity of the laity in the world. This understanding of mission is wider in scope than that envisaged by *MSC*. It sees the mission of the Church extending to every sphere of creation, which itself is a reflection of the implications of the incarnation.

In the last thirty years the Church of England has specifically attuned this focus its economic and political context, the environment, as well as the realm of education. The 1980 report, *The Church of England and Politics,* argued that the Church had a concern for the total social setting of humanity in every age, and a responsibility to relate this social reality to the Kingdom of God.[291] One of the most challenging issues facing society was the increasingly fragmentary nature of social life, and the lack of a common view of citizenship. Both limited the capacity for politics to speak about the

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[286] House of Bishops of the Church of England 1997: 34.

[287] Ibid: 35.

[288] Ibid: 36.

[289] House of Bishops of the Church of England 2001: vii. See also Doctrine Commission of the General Synod of the Church of England 1987: chapter 6.

[290] House of Bishops of the Church of England 2001: 7.

[291] Board for Social Responsibility 1981: 90.

true possibilities for human flourishing.[292] The Church was obligated to understand its political and social context, which required the resources of the sociologist, historian and the scientist if the Church was to not stand ignorant and voiceless.[293]

The 1984 report, *Perspectives on Economics,* argued that the lack of a common vision for the common good had led to "short-term and narrowly conceived policies concerned only with immediate sectional interests."[294] It argued that the motivation for economic activity must be set within the narrative of the Kingdom of God, and no longer solely be the concern of the market. It stated that an anthropology built solely upon economic well-being, and the acquisition of goods, was wholly destructive, for human dignity did not reside in those things alone.[295] People's common humanity, must be acknowledged; this would result in a common understanding of humanity's destiny, and a shared concern for the common good.[296] The local church was called to be a "community shar[ing] a responsibility for meeting the basic needs of each of its members, [where] each of its members accepts his or her own responsibility for contributing to the common good."[297]

The 2003 Doctrine Commission report, *Being Human,* also stated that money had become almost completely freed from a relationship to the value of goods, services, and human values, in the lives of human beings.[298] Human value and worth were increasingly equated with people's ability to participate in this monetary system. Money had become the fundamental measure of worth, which was a distortion of the gospel.[299] It argued that human flourishing must be bound up with being part of diverse community serving the common good not just an individual's monetary worth.[300]

Other reports were more specific in their focus. The 1990 report, *Crime, Justice and the Demands of the Gospel,* reflected theologically on prison reform.[301] It argued that the state had an obligation to pursue the hope of reformation for offenders and needed to realistic conditions to enable this. It argued that the Church should not simply sit

[292] Ibid.
[293] Ibid: 118.
[294] Industrial and Economic Affairs Committee 1984: 72.
[295] Ibid: 78.
[296] Ibid: 74.
[297] Ibid: 76.
[298] Doctrine Commission of the General Synod of the Church of England 2003: 60ff.
[299] Ibid: 64.
[300] Ibid: 68.
[301] General Synod Board for Social Responsibility 1991.

back and allow mechanistic and utilitarian views of punishment to triumph, particularly given the implicit moral, and religious questions penal policy raised about the nature of humanity, the brokenness of humans in their relationships with each other, and the possibility of repairing that brokenness.[302] It stated that defunct views of the penal code were a result of deficient interpretations of the state, where it was seen only as a broker between different social factions. This had led the state to act in a utilitarian manner, simply ensuring that everyone could survive together. The gospel speaks of the actual possibility of reconciliation and restoration between humans, God, and each other, and the flourishing of diverse communities.[303]

The Church of England has during this time developed its understanding of mission from one that was largely anthropocentric to one that now incorporates the wider environment in God's redemptive activity. In 1978, a Lambeth Conference resolution called for individuals to "review their lifestyle and use the world's resources so that the service and well-being of the whole human family come before the enjoyment of over-indulgent forms of affluence."[304] Reports subsequently published in 1986, 1990, 2001, 2004 and 2005 addressed the need for the human race to reverse its increasingly destructive effects on the planet.[305] The 1986 report, *Our Responsibility for the Living Environment,* concluded that the message of the gospel involved the development of the whole person *and* the care of the whole world.[306]

In 1998, General Synod passed a resolution that identified its educational institutions as standing at the centre of the Church's mission to the nation.[307] The 2001 report, *The Way Ahead,* argued that Church schools and colleges of higher education were uniquely equipped to provide the vital spiritual dimension to young people's lives.[3] The report denounced the increasingly utilitarian basis for education advanced by the state and argued that education was important for its own sake, because it was a "reflection of God's love for humanity."[309] It argued that the desire to educate emerged from a Christian concern for the wellbeing of the whole person and the increased quality of common life, alongside the desire to shape the direction of

[302] Ibid: 27.
[303] Ibid: 60.
[304] General Synod Board for Social Responsibility 1986: 42.
[305] General Synod Board for Social Responsibility 1990, 2000, 2001, 2004, 2005.
[306] General Synod Board for Social Responsibility 1986: 46.
[307] Church of England Board of Education 2001: xi.
[308] Ibid: 3.
[309] Ibid.

humanity's development. In offering a place where all are welcome, from whatever background or economic status, schools provided – as the parish also attempted to provide – an experience and model of God's love for all humanity.[310] Curriculums must reflect the desire to nurture the whole human person in order that they "reach their full potential as complete and individual human beings, by providing an education that stretches the mind, strengthens the body, enriches the imagination, nourishes the spirit, and encourages the will to do good and opens the heart to others"[311] becoming full participants of, and citizens in, society, with the obligation to the common good that this requires.[312]

Since the 1980s, the Church of England has also produced several reports which explicitly addressed the need to provide robust lay education in order for lay people to greater appreciate the role they are called to play in the mission of the Church. The 1999 report, *Called to New Life,* built on previous reports *All are Called* (1985), *Called to be Adult Disciples* (1987), and *Christian Education for the 21st Century*.[313] It acknowledged the manner in which individualism within modernity had produced inner fragmentation, meaning that people were increasingly unable to relate the various 'roles' they take to each other.[314] So, for instance, the 'roles' of 'work' and 'church' often remained separate.[315] The report suggested that the Church needed to educate people so that faith became a 'transworld' reality, informing all other realities. The report suggested that lay education needed to focus on different areas: economics, politics, social justice, and the arts, in order to enable people to understand the implications of the gospel for the whole of life.[316]

The 2003 report, *Formation for Ministry within a Learning Church,* argued that there was a deep need for continued learning amongst clergy and lay readers if they were to be able to properly disciple the laity in the manner *Called to New Life* recommended.[317] The report argued that through education, believers could be discipled for a variety of types of service. It encouraged the development of theological resources that addressed the development of the whole person in the hope that such

[310] Ibid: 13-14.
[311] Ibid: 74.
[312] Ibid: 49.
[313] Church of England Board of Education, 1985, 1987, 1991, 1999a, 1999b and 2007.
[314] Hull 1985.
[315] Ibid: 39ff.
[316] Ibid: 43.
[317] General Synod Board for Social Responsibility 1992: 40-46.

resources would provide a greater theological understanding of individual fulfillment in the wider context of the common good.[318]

Each of these reports develops a much broader and richer understanding of mission than that presented in *MSC*. They continue to develop a distinct Anglican understanding of mission that is deeply incarnational, Catholic and focused around the ongoing discipleship and fellowship believers experience in the sacraments. This missiological particularity emerges from Anglican ecclesiology, which, as we shall explore in the next chapter, also shares these same foci.

Conclusion

Out of this chapter emerge two initial conclusions regarding *MSC*. First, the missiology and ecclesiology of the report is neither radical nor new: it is rather a natural development of the thinking of protestant missiologists like Bosch, and particularly Newbigin, as well as reflecting the practice of Anglicans missionaries such as Carlile and Wickham (to cite but two). These in turn find their roots in the missionary practices of Norris, Allen and Taylor. *MSC* adopts the argument of Bosch that a seismic change has occurred in Western culture with the concomitant need for an equally seismic change to the Western churches missiology and ecclesiology. Second, *MSC* fails to place its ecclesiology and missiology in a historical framework, it does not draw on any prior official reports of research from the Church of England, and nor does it suggest that any prior Anglican historic practices are relevant to the contemporary concerns it outlines. Its method argues that missionary effectiveness in the post-Christendom West is not a question of renovating a canvas which still has a somewhat faded picture of Christ on it, but rather the acknowledgement that the canvas is empty, and that the picture needs to be re-painted.[319] Historic practices and reports are irrelevant to this task, and as such they need not figure in the re-narrating of the Christian gospel for the Church of England's present context.

Had *MSC* chosen to reflect upon the missionary activity that the Church of England had undertaken during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and engaged with the various reports produced on mission, it would have encountered rich experimentation,

[318] General Synod Board for Social Responsibility 2003: 3.
[319] Weston 2005.

as well as a conceptualisation of mission that is broad. It would have seen as misleading its claim that contextually-driven approaches to mission were not historically part of the Church of England's understanding of mission, for it is clear that contextual approaches to mission have characterised some of the Church of England's missionary activity over the last two hundred years. The majority of these initiatives *still* placed the eucharist and baptism at the heart of their ecclesial activity, even as they adapted ecclesial models to fit different contexts, and even though worship took place in various unusual settings for the time. We also explored how this view of the sacraments was shared by both Allen and Newbigin, and that Newbigin in particular offers an important corrective to the dangers of deploying contextual theological methods and insights into a Western context. Given the above *MSC* cannot be seen as something novel within the life of the Church of England because it shares many methodological similarities to these mission initiatives. This history provides a counter narrative to that suggested by *MSC*. Ecclesial experimentation has been part of the Church of England's missionary activity for at least the last two hundred years, and at the heart of such activity was a sacramental centered ecclesiology. Yet what has also become clear is that many of these missionary initiatives were critiqued for being too particular, for failing to reflect the Church of England's commitment to Catholicity, based on its understanding of the incarnation. Those that resisted such critique were either closed down or were forced to exist outside of the structures of the Church of England.

We also saw that the Church of England has, because of its understanding of the incarnation, a very broad understanding of its missionary calling. Reports examined from the last thirty years reflects a desire to bring the gospel to bear on an array of contemporary social, economic and political conditions. They are a testimony to the conviction that the gospel is not eclipsed by any historical circumstance and that it comprehensively speaks to all manner of things, from prison reform, to race relations, to environmental issues. They are under-valued and under-used sources of – at times – imaginative and creative theological reflection on contemporary problems facing society, and they should have formed the backdrop to *MSC*'s understanding of mission. They would have contributed to *MSC* being able to construct a broad view of mission rather than the narrow one it ended up conceptualising, where mission is confined to the sphere of individual salvation, an ironic result given the reports emphasis on context.

The above illustrates the current need for the Church of England to see the historical approaches it has already taken to missiology and ecclesiology as intrinsic to the development of those theologies within its present context. The examples we have examined are a reminder of the ways in which the Church of England has attempted to navigate cultural, social and economic change, and they illuminate the various missiological and theological resources the Church has drawn upon in this process. Even within the tradition *MSC* draws upon the missiologists Bosch, Newbigin and Allan each emphasise the need to listen to the voices of the past in order to legitimately develop contextual theology. In missing this vital aspect of contextual theological methodology *MSC* ends up being ahistorical, cut adrift from resources that would enliven its understanding of the Church's historic pattern of ministry and mission.

We have begun to outline a distinctive pattern that shapes Anglican ecclesiology and missiology; a clear focus on the incarnation, Catholicity, and sacramentalism, which cause it to be committed to each and every material and social context its finds itself in. Each of these theological *foci* are lacking from *MSC's* missiology and ecclesiology. As such it fails to reflect the Anglican tradition and is deficient because of this. In order to address these deficiencies and construct a more adequate ecclesiology and missiology this thesis will explore one person's attempt to adapt the life and mission of the Church of England to a changing context whilst retaining a deep commitment to incarnational theology and the Church's catholicity and sacramentality. William Temple tried to reshape the Church of England for an increasingly industrialised and capitalist context, he sought to combat the philosophies of utilitarianism, materialism and scientific positivism whilst also defending the orthodox teachings of the Church of England. [320] He acknowledged the need for the Church to adapt but was also attentive to the traditions and history of the Church. He adopted what could be called a Nicean logic, where the gospel embraced a different language (the language of industrialisation) and philosophical system (that of the Enlightenment), yet he also exhibited a deep commitment to the existing traditions of the church, seeing in them

[320] Temple is but one potential conversation partner amongst many: this thesis could have chosen to explore the works of Ramsay, Gore or Maurice, each of whom, like Temple, attempted to steer the Church through great periods of social change and, like Temple, was attentive to the existing traditions and history of the Church of England.

a basis to critique, and subvert society, where it fell short of, or distorted, the demands of the gospel.[321]

[321] Mirroring the manner in which the first Nicean council embraced certain aspects of Platonic philosophy and language whilst at the same time rejecting Platonic philosophical concept that saw the material world as intrinsically evil.

Chapter Three
The ecclesiology of William Temple

Introduction

This chapter will primarily address the ecclesial shortcomings of *MSC* using the ecclesiological vision of William Temple. The reason for using Temple are fourfold. First, he expressed the same concerns as *MSC* regarding the Church's role and vocation in the world at a time when the Church was seen – whether accurately or not – to be increasingly irrelevant to the needs of contemporary society. Second, Temple did not address this perceived need by positing, as *MSC* does, a radical discontinuity between the Church's theological and social past and its present context. He saw the history and tradition of the Church as necessary to its understanding of, and response to, its present context. Temple thought that the Church of England *was* capable of witnessing to the power of the Gospel in a period of enormous social change, but *only* if it took seriously its own history: that is, those disciplines, beliefs and practices that had informed, and he believed continued to inform, its life and mission. Third, Temple held together ecclesiology, missiology and the Anglican tradition, through his creative use of the doctrines of the incarnation and creation and his concept of a sacramental universe. This led his theology to offer a robust account of the role of the Church in the world.[322] Fourth, he offered a comprehensive missiological vision for the role of the Church, that is, one that has social, economic and political implications. *MSC* represents a narrowing of the Church's account of its own life in the world: the Church is essentially instrumentalist, utilitarian, privatised and individualised. In contrast, Temple saw the Church as a critical partner of the state and other social bodies. The Church's mission involved giving a critical account of the economic, social and political realities and needs of his own day.

Although Temple is regarded as "the outstanding British church leader of [the twentieth] century", his legacy is far from clear.[323] This is because those who have engaged in serious study of him have failed to pay adequate attention to the whole

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[322] By Anglican tradition I primarily mean the Scriptures, the four historic Creeds, the thirty-nine articles, and the Canons and authorised liturgy of the Church of England, and secondarily, the reports, authorised resolutions and statements and ecumenical agreements of the Church of England. Of course to this should be added, although they do not have the same authority, firstly the writings of the Church Fathers, and secondly other Christian writing that has been held to have lasting value to the life and witness of the Church in the Anglican tradition (this would include the writings of Hooker, Maurice, Gore for instance).

[323] Kent 1992: 1.

range of his output, instead focusing on his later works, and in particular his final work *Christianity and the Social Order.*[324] Even Preston, who had been hailed as the natural successor to Temple, fails in this regard, dismissing this early work, calling both *Mens Creatrix* and *Christus Veritas* "almost unreadable" whilst never referring to *Nature, Man and God*.[325] Others suggest that in order to reclaim any of Temple's key ideas one must divorce them fully from his context and totally rework them to reflect the drastic nature of change that has taken place since Temple's time.[326] It would appear that the only legacy of Temple's theological vision is the promotion of his idea of 'middle axioms' which is far from the broad theological vision that Temple's work expressed.[327] Yet this thesis demonstrate that this is a deficient view of Temple, one that arguably robs him of his greatest theological legacy.

In this chapter we will attempt to engage with the full range of Temple's output rather than narrowly focusing on one particular work. We will also assess Temple's more practical work as a priest, bishop and archbishop, which fleshed out his ecclesiology. Dackson is probably the only scholar whose research takes seriously the whole gamut of Temple's work, yet she also fails adequately to represent the importance of his concept of the sacramental universe, and she also ignores his practical work. Yet Dackson does demonstrate that Temple developed a profound and refined ecclesiology that was deeply sacramental (despite the above criticism). Kent's study examines Temple's practical work, but misses out on the theological underpinnings of this work.[328] Eucharistic participation guided Temple's practical work and led to an engagement with what he saw as the deepest challenges of his day. As we shall see, for Temple, the eucharist 'made' the Church, echoing the sentiments of the Vatican II document *Lumen Gentium*, as well as having direct theological affinity with the eucharistic *nouvelle théologie* of de Lubac and the influential work of the Orthodox theologian Afanasiev.[329] Yet Temple also developed this theme in a novel direction. He saw the Church itself as a repetition of the eucharist in the way that it made manifest the body of Christ in the world. These and other theological aspects of Temple's work are of particular importance for the Church of England today. They serve as a key corrective to the ecclesial vision offered by *MSC* regarding the nature

[324] Dackson 2006: 240.
[325]Preston 1994: 5.
[326] Dackson 2004: i.
[327] Dahaner 2010.
[328] See Dackson 2004 and Kent 1992.
[329] de Lubac 2006 and Afanasiev 2007.

and practices of the Church, and are also deeply relevant to understanding the Church's role in the world. Temple's criticisms of the excesses of the industrial era and the emerging capitalist economy will be shown to be particularly relevant for the critique this thesis offers of *MSC*. Temple offered a vision of the Church that had a very public role, socially, politically and economically, while remaining robustly theological in its concerns and basis. However, he also saw the Church as open to the judgement of the world, and also judgmental towards the life of the world. We will now give a brief overview of Temple's theological concerns, method and context before examining his philosophical and theological influences and his own ecclesiology in more detail.

From the very start of his ministry, and even before he was ordained, Temple thought that the Church of England had lost contact with large proportions of the general populace.[330] Despite this, he argued that the Church of England could still justify its establishment by changing this situation, and his work can be interpreted as trying to fulfill this goal.[331] He desired to see "a redeemed, organic, national community expressing itself religiously through the Church of England."[332] He strove to modernise the Church of England to this end in order that it might fulfill its role as the institutional Church, acting as a moral compass for the nation state whilst also embodying an ideal form of communal life.

Kent suggests that the basis for Temple's reforms was a response to the decline in both the membership of the Church of England and of its institutional power. Recent post-secularist accounts question this position.[333] Brown in particular argues that decline in Church attendance in Britain did not really begin until the 1960s and that the highpoint of Church attendance occurred in the 1920s rather than the nineteenth century.[334] Walford also comes to a similar conclusion though his research is focused specifically on London.[335] Brown is clear that there was a *perception* of decline in both numbers and influence in the early part of the twentieth century. Temple's modernisation of the Church of England sought to counter this perception of decline.[336]

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[330] Kent 1992: 37.
[331] Ibid: 37ff.
[332] Ibid.
[333] Ibid: 1 and 7.
[334] Brown 2001: 170ff.
[335] Walford 2007.
[336] Brown 2001: 29ff.

During Temple's time, the Church of England was in danger of being usurped in its role as a key education provider by new parliamentary legislation, and the new national systems of education. Kent therefore rightly argues that we can see Temple's focus on education as both an attempt to maintain the Church of England's direct involvement in education provision, and to provide the state with a robust philosophy of education that was thoroughly Christian in character. It is now clear, however, that Kent's overall interpretation represents an essentially classical secular account that has, as we have previously argued, been shown to be false. Secularisation theory, as espoused by sociologists like Wilson, has been shown to be wrong in its assertion of the declining influence religion had in nation-state building during the early twentieth century.[337] Studies such as those by Morris, Hastings and Mews reach altogether different conclusions and assert the central role religion had during this period and indeed continues to have today.[338] Though Kent's work uses decline, both numerically, and in influence, as the backdrop to Temple's work, it would be more accurate to say that Temple saw that the Church of England needed to continue to justify its position as the established church in the face of a rapidly changing context fueled by industrialisation.[339] A crucial concern for Temple was that the rapid growth of cities due to industrialisation and the crisis precipitated by the First and Second World Wars, which could have led to the marginalisation of the Church of England. Instead, he presented these eventualities as an opportunity for the Church to think more deeply about its role in the nation and to offer in its own life a vision of the Kingdom of God realised here on earth. Throughout his lifetime Temple would seek to resist what he saw as the chaos to which modern culture might potentially lead, instead he attempted to assert the role the Church of England could play in providing a basis for both common identity and coherent community. He sought to maintain the Church of England's public presence and power in two ways. First, by defending the Christian culture and heritage of England and Britain, which Temple thought was seriously under threat in the 1930s. His radio broadcasts of that time, condemning Nazism and celebrating the English character exemplify this approach. Second, by defending the idea that the Church of England expressed citizens' civil religion. Grimley, agreeing with Taylor, argues that during the nineteenth and early twentieth century being religious and being part of the national community went together.[3]

[337] Wilson 1981: chapter six.
[338] Grimley 2004: 224. Morris 2003 and 2012, Hastings 1997 and Mews 1982.
[339] Kent 1992: 1ff.
[340] Grimley 2004: 225 Taylor 2002: chapter three.

Grimley goes on to conclude that the Liberal Anglicanism, of the sort espoused by Temple, "provided a theoretical underpinning for English civil religion", in that it offered a "providentialist account of national history and destiny, an organic community, and a religiously sanctioned code of civic obligation" as well as "an antidote to class competition [whilst] also being critical of economic competition."[3] However, Temple also sought to distinguish between the State and the Church in such a way that it could be critical of the State in the name of the nation. Kent suggests that Temple was essentially reviving the original Anglican theology of the relationship between State and Church as advocated by Hooker: the Church should concentrate on the moral aspect of national life and leave the politics to Westminster. Temple, however, went further than this and refused to leave the political arena to the politicians alone.[342] Christian faith was not something private – it had political, social and economic impetus.

The difficulty of the task Temple set himself was immense. Internal rivalry between Evangelicals and Anglo-Catholics meant that the Church of England was often more engaged with its own internal social problems than those of the nation. Yet Temple's energy and vision for change ultimately resulted in a national church that evolved from one most suited to the Victorian era to one that readily engaged with some of the major social and political themes and needs of the twentieth century. The success of the Anglican church during this period meant that new forms of national community arose during the height of the Industrial Revolution, and churches were at the heart of their creation. It was only when these forms of community were called into question in the 1950s and 1960s that the Church in Britain began to experience serious decline. Grimley is correct in stating that secularisation theorists were right to see the decline in community as the key to religious decline but wrong to argue that this occurred in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century.[343] In assessing Temple's legacy it should be clear that even though he went against some of the opinion of his immediate predecessors, Archbishops Davidson and Lang, who both thought that the Church should concentrate on its internal divisions and shy away from any sort of political engagement, his theological legacy was continued. Archbishops Michael

[341] Grimley 2004: 225-6.
[342] Kent 1992: p. 2.
[343] Grimley 2004: 225.

Ramsey and Robert Runcie both developed various aspects of his ecclesiology and assured him of a prominent place in the history of Anglican reformers.[344]

Before moving on to consider Temple's ecclesiological schema and gauge how it affected his life and ministry, it is important to address two issues briefly. First, did Temple significantly modify his theology over the course of his lifetime? Second, what were the key influences upon Temple's thought?

Scholars have been divided over the way to approach Temple's *oeuvre*. The majority suggest that he significantly modified his theology over the course of his lifetime. Suggate divides his work up into particular periods, and claims that the outbreak of the Second World War caused Temple to rethink his theology from a more hopeful incarnational model to one that was more redemption-centered.[345] Preston similarly suggests that Temple's earlier work exhibits no clear influence on his later work and is largely redundant. [346]Spencer similarly argues that Temple tempered his early optimistic theology after the devastation of the First World War and during the Second World War because Temple acknowledged that Idealist philosophies no longer offered the intellectual basis for an appropriate theological response.[3] According to Spencer, Temple's early Idealism, prefaced as it was on a Hegelian idea of progress, had come to naught. There also appeared to be a continued reemergence rather than diminishment of the same sorts of evil that had constantly pervaded history.[348] Craig takes a more moderate viewpoint, dividing Temple's life into three periods of "thesis", "antithesis" and "synthesis" – labels which suggest serious development in Temple's thought.[349] Though even Craig admits that these periods are not hard divisions, but rather rough guides to the nature of Temple's developing thought, and he also acknowledges that there is greater continuity than is generally recognised.[350] This thesis shall demonstrate that none of these positions are true, and that each has an inadequate conception of Temple's work as a whole. What will become clear in this study of Temple's theology is that although his intellectual formation in the Hegelian legacy of Oxford Idealism colours his early work, in particular that of *Mens Creatrix* and *Christus Veritas,* it was never adopted in a totally

[344] Kent 1992: 2.
[345] Suggate 1994: 62.
[346] Preston 1994: 5.
[347] Spencer 2001:65.
[348] Ibid: 68.
[349] Craig 1963: 8.
[350] Ibid: 10.

unmodified manner. Temple's great stength, and originality, was the manner in which he brought together the philosophical tradition he inherited from Rugby and Oxford and combined it with a deep commitment to the doctrines of the incarnation and creation, which resulted in his theology of the sacramental universe. These elements are always discernible as the foundation of his theological works across his *oeuvre*, from his Gifford Lectures – *Nature, Man and God* – through to *Christianity and the Social Order*. Suggate, by attempting to cast Temple primarily as an ethicist fails to relate Temple's ethics to his ecclesiology and eucharistic theology that emerges in these early works. Spencer and Craig also fail to give adequate attention to Temple's early work, seeing it as unnecessary. Whereas even though Dackson suggests that his earlier work is in great continuity with his later work, particularly on the issues of Church and society, she also fails to see that the foundations of Temple's particular ecclesial vision lie in his earlier philosophical works, which underpin all else.[351]

This thesis will demonstrate the continuity in Temple's ecclesiology, and we shall draw on the whole gamut of Temple's writing in order to present a unified and full expression of his ecclesial vision. We will partially depend upon the work of Dackson, whose exploration of Temple's ecclesiology is alone in taking this approach, despite the earlier criticisms.[352] We will also attempt to hold Temple's writings and practical work together. The studies of Temple by Suggate, Craig, Preston and Spencer each fail to do this adequately. They tend to treat Temple's theological work in isolation and overlook the ways in which Temple 'fleshed out' his theology in his work throughout his lifetime and in particular the ways in which he attempted to do justice to the historical occurrences and Christian particularity of his own time. Temple's thesis, and in particular his concept of the sacramental universe, led him to assert that the particularity of his time and his context was important, and that Christian faith should be brought to bear upon it. His campaigning, speechmaking, and political work, all illustrate how he embodied this theological view. This meant that certain economic and political practices – the treatment of workers in the industrial factories for instance – were incompatible with the Christian understanding of the human person as made in the image of God.

We shall now briefly turn our attention to tracing three particular philosophical and theological influences of Temple's thought, which will help us to understand his

[351] Dackson 2004: 65ff.
[352] Dackson 2004.

ecclesiology, the work of Coleridge, the publication *Lux Mundi* and the idealism of Green. These will each show how Temple developed a critical relationship with the philosophies of his own time, and how he subjected them to theological analysis, which stands in contrast to the approach *MSC* takes, and illustrates a more adequate theological methodology.

Philosophical and Theological influences on Temple

Coleridge's philosophy emphasised a resolute determination to defend metaphysics against materialism, utilitarianism and rationalism.[353] Coleridge, like Temple, wanted to react against what he termed a 'godless revolution' whereby the mechanistic philosophies of utilitarianism, determinism and materialism were in danger of taking the place of true Christian religion, enlivened by Divine reason, as the guiding light of human means and ends.[354] He sought to distinguish between understanding and reason in order to avoid rationalism and utilitarianism and his work mediated between Kant and Plato on this point. By 'understanding', Coleridge meant that which was judged according to the senses. Reason was the creative participation of humanity in the Divine that facilitated the highest form of human culture and human flourishing.[355] Coleridge critiqued Hume's conception of reason for not being broad enough, and, stated – in what would later be seen as an Idealist position – that science alone could not produce a full account of ethics or religion, nor could it be sustained without a tacit acknowledgement of truth, which was essentially ethical and religious.[356] He rejected empiricism – reality as that which consisted of atoms and the person determined merely by pleasure and pain – and pure materialism as he saw the material as symbolic of the reality of the Divine.[357] Like Kant, he saw "man as essentially flawed and the moral life as *renewal* rather than as the *expression* of the natural man."[358] Baptism was the symbol of this renewed life and represented the joining of a spiritual community – the Church. This community is both begun and

[353] Hedley 2000: 286.
[354] Gouldstone 2005: 30.
[355] Milbank 2009: 15ff.
[356] Hedley 2000: 219.
[357] Ibid: 227.
[358] Hedley 2000: 260.

sustained by the Spirit and reflects the dwelling of God in the moral life of humanity.[359]

Coleridge also had a high view of education, drawn from Plato, emphasising the formation of character and the contribution of all citizens to the good of the state, which as bound together in love and fellowship, where all desired the good for its own sake. The state then bears the imprint of the God, who is not far off "but is at one with that creative pattern which is the source of the cosmos, and which is reflected in the beauty and order of nature, human culture, and society."[360]So, for Coleridge, Christian faith and theology underpinned all else in society. This was an anti-utilitarian view that dismissed linking education to wealth accrual or success.[361] Coleridge defended the Church as the guardian of education and culture, a position seriously questioned by both Voltaire and Gibbon during the eighteenth century, and later on by Neville who suggests that Coleridge's view of the church had no basis in reality.[362] Temple would continue and develop these themes in his own work.

Coleridge exerted a considerable philosophical and theological influence in Britain during the late-nineteenth century and although Coleridge's approach to philosophy was initially concentrated at Trinity College in Cambridge it also influenced the philosophy at Balliol College in Oxford, as well as the theology of Gore, who would become influential through the publication *Lux Mundi.* Green was also influenced by Coleridge, having been educated under Arnold at Rugby and then Jowett at Balliol, and developed the work Coleridge began by combining Platonism with German Idealism alongside a commitment to the continuing relevance of Christian theology and spirituality.[363]

Coleridge was also deeply influential in the development of the British Idealist philosophy of religion, which emerged in part to combat the Victorian 'crisis of faith'. Higher criticism, new anthropological insights into primitive religion and myths, as well as developments in the natural sciences – such as Darwin's theory of evolution – seemed each to confirm and strengthen a case for materialism. Allied to this was the Posivitist philosophy of Comte who argued that civilisation was now entering the third stage of human progress, religious superstition and elaborate speculative

[359] Ibid: 264.
[360] Hedley 2000: 285.
[361] Hedley 2000: 272.
[362] O'Brien 1997: chapters one and two and Neville 2000: 129.
[363] Plant 1984.

metaphysical musings would give way to science helping humanity to understand the underlying causes of everything.[364] Against this Idealism argued that it was possible for human reason to reach the transcendent, it attempted to offer a rational explanation of religion, without this resulting in atheism or agnosticism, and sought to secure the deeper held convictions of religious belief. This, the British Idealists hoped, would satisfy people's religious longing as well as their increasingly rational scientific thinking.[365]

Green's Idealist philosophy of religion argued that philosophy was capable of saving religion. Green's philosophy were generally Coleridgean in shape: he was keen to reject the empiricist view of the mind and the increasingly utilitarian view of ethics. In their place he suggested an ethics of self-realisation by virtue of our participation in God, "the one spiritual self-conscious being of which all that is real is the activity and expression."[366] Such a philosophy was deeply social and practical because of its conviction that the world was a "realisation of a spiritual principle ... an evolving sacrament of the spirit" where "freedom means dying to live" both of which represented the two great principles of British Idealism (they are also found in Coleridge's *Aids to Reflection)*.[367] Otter's study of British Idealism shows how Green's focus on the primacy of community life and the moral qualities of the state became an important part of the political culture in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.[368] Green argued that the state was a national community, which had a moral end or a common good and that the personality of the individual gained its fullest development through membership of that society.[369] Such sentiment appealed to the Victorians and Edwardians, because it was deemed capable of warding off the threat of social disintegration through class consciousness, and the uncertainties of a widened franchise, and the perceived diminishment of commonly held values.[3] Green was dismissive of sectionalism and defended active citizenship because through it humanity could attain to their highest selves by giving and service to the community (developing Rousseau's notion of the common good), the highest form of which was the state. He envisaged freedom in a positive fashion; as the liberation of all people to contribute equally to the common good. Such a liberation was only

[364] Mander 2011: 138ff.
[365] Mander 2011: 139.
[366] Green, 1885: 4.
[367] Hedley 2000: 288.
[368] den Otter 2004.
[369] Grimley: 42ff.
[370] Grimley: 44ff.

possible through the education of all people.[371] These themes would also pervade Temple's work, and show Green's considerable effect upon his thinking.

The basis for Green's understanding of the state, and of the the common good, lay in his embrace of Hegelian philosophy. Green, with Hegel, rejected any distinction between the phenomena and the noumena, instead arguing for the existence of an Eternal Consciousness, which is the ground of all reality and through which the whole of humanity is united. He emphasised the relationality of all things as an essential dimension of their being, without which things were nothing.[372] This Eternal Consciousness united the whole system of relations and was ontologically distinct.[3] Temple broadly accepted Green's rejection of empiricism, materialism and utlitarianism, but rejected his view of the Eternal Consciousness as being too Hegelian. Temple would also differ from Green's progressive account of history. Green, following Hegel, argued that the Eternal Consciousness (mirroring Hegel's concept of the Absolute) gradually realises itself through the community of individuals, whose consciousness's gradually becomes a vehicle for the Eternal Consciousness forming a final and complete unit.

Green's Idealism allowed Christian theology to avoid a head on collision with a scientific view of reality, through, for instance, an embrace of evolutionary theory, seen in the work of Gore and others. Green's work helped theologians see that such scientific theories contributed to theology's own self-understanding rather than undermined it. Yet Temple ultimately rejected Green's, and Idealism's underlying philosophy, which he thought was better found in orthodox Christian doctrine, specifically the incarnation and creation.[374] Temple found a theological basis for histories and humanities final end based on the doctrines of creation and incarnation, where creation was saved and reconciled to God by the Divine *Logos,* Jesus Christ, and brought into the life of the Trinity.

This Christian Idealism, alongside Temple's concept of the sacramental universe, is often subjugated in readings of Temple's work. Kent, Suggate and Dackson, ignore *Christus Veritas, Nature, Man and God,* and *Mens Creatrix,* in which this distinct theological and philosophical approach is fleshed out. Temple's particular

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[371] Grimley: 50ff.
[372] Dunham 2011: 161.
[373] Dunham 2011: 163.
[374] Mander 2011: 552.

ecclesiological concerns only make sense in the light of these initial works. For this reason Temple remains a figure who is not yet critically understood across the gamut of his oeuvre. Either his political and social work stands detached from its philosophical and theological basis or his theological work stands detached from his Christian philosophical theory and political and social work. The latter approach in particular fails to see that Temple's reception of Idealist philosophy is only through the prism of a theology that explicitly links the doctrines of incarnation and creation with a sacramental view of reality, which together undergird his whole theological project. For Temple the Idealist philosophy he imbibed from Green was not a sufficient basis for a complete understanding of reality and humanity's place within it, nor was the pluralism espoused by Temple's contemporary Figgis, which Temple, in part, saw as a corrective to some problematic aspects of Idealism.[375] In Temple's mind *both* needed supplanting with the logic of the Christian faith, in particular the event of Jesus Christ, the *Logos* of God as creator *and* redeemer.

At the end of the nineteenth century the influential *Lux Mundi* was published.[376] The book imbibed the Oxford influenced British Idealism of Green alongside the confidence in theology found in Coleridge. It was "an attempt to put the Catholic faith into its right relation to modern intellectual and moral problems."[377] The authors wrote out of a conviction that the epoch in which they lived was one of deep transformation, social upheaval and change, both intellectual and social. This change meant that there were "new needs, new points of view, new questions" which needed to be brought to bear upon the Christian faith, and theology needed to take a "new development".[378] Even though they were high-churchmen the basis for their work did not lie in just the theology of Newman or Keble but also Coleridge. Coleridge gifted these writers with the invigorating force of German Idealism to help combat empiricism and utilitarianism and offered a way of thinking that could rebut such philosophies without abandoning their Christian faith. The authors of *Lux Mundi*, like Coleridge, rejected the materialistic interpretations of Darwin and the reliance upon a mechanistic Newtonian understanding of the cosmos. They developed Coleridge's Christocentric ecclesiology by more explicitly making the incarnation the principal organising structure of their theology. Temple would also continue this same process.

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[375] Grimley 2004: 76

[376] Gore 1890.

[377] Ibid: i.

[378] Ibid: viii.

They saw evolution as part of the teleology of the cosmos, which culminated in the incarnation and whose goal was the time when Christ would be 'all in all'. In *Lux Mundi* Lock saw the Church as "the final satisfaction of the social needs of cooperation for life, knowledge and worship, a need which the complexity of the modern world ha[d] served only to accentuate."[379] Echoing Coleridge he argued that the Church was the primary place where humanity was educated into its true ends, it was the witness to the reality revealed most fully in the life of Christ and encountered in its highest ritual expression, the Eucharist.[380] Paget addressed the need for the sacraments to remain the central act of worship offered by the Church, for through them humanity understood its true nature and vocation.[381] Finally, Campion, writing on the topic of Christianity and politics, described the role of the Christian in society as purifying and consecrating, where the family, state and Church, were each places of "training for a 'perfected common life in the city of God.'"[382] Each of these essays pointed to the fundamental assumption that the Church was able to assimilate new truths in new contexts, welcoming new disciplines and perspectives, which would in turn illuminate her more fully. The authors assumed that the Church's engagement with each new age would not bring about its downfall but rather its enrichment and would show "her power of witnessing under changed conditions to the catholic capacity of her faith and life."[383] This emphasis on the importance of historical particularity and the openness of the life of the Church to this particularity were themes that Temple would assimilate into his own work, as was *Lux Mundi's* focus on the incarnation as a Christian theological response to the religious Idealism of Green.

In sum, Temple's approach was one which married Idealism with a theology that stressed the incarnation and creation, which led to his theology of the sacramentality of the very universe. Horne suggests that this is Temple's most particular contribution to theology, though as we shall see it is not an original one within Anglican theology itself.[384] He developed this theology in two of his earliest and most philosophical works, *Christus Veritas* and *Mens Creatrix*, before giving it its fullest development in *Nature, Man and God.* In these works Temple developed a sacramental relation

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[379] Reardon 1995: 328.

[380] Lock 1890: 384ff and 390ff.

[381] Paget 1890: 415ff.

[382] Reardon 1995: 328.

[383] Gore 1890: ix.

[384] Horne, B, 1993: 10

Horne, B., 'The Sacramental Use of Material Things', in Rowell, G. and Dudley, M., *The Oil of Gladness: Anointing in the Christian Tradition,* London: SPCK, 1993.

between spirit and matter and produced the most striking, and comprehensive, exposition of the sacramental principal in Anglican theology. He suggested that hope was found in the Christian faith *exactly* in its avowed material emphasis, in contrast (he suggested) to other religions. Christianity's most central doctrine of the incarnation affirmed an ultimate significance to historical processes and in the reality and importance of matter in the divine scheme.[385] Temple "regards matter as destined to be the vehicle and instrument of spirit, and spirit as fully actual as far as it controls and directs matter."[386] It was his sacramental view of the universe that gave Temple the impetus to be so involved in the social, political and economic arenas of his day. Combined together these three works represent the scaffolding for his entire theology. This thesis shall demonstrate that without them the most important component of his thinking is lost. That is the relationship between the material and the spiritual, the eternal and the historical, the freedom of God and the freedom of humanity. Suggate, Spencer and Dackson each fail to recognise that *this* is the basis of his ecclesiology, and social ethics, and it is *this* that affords him to be able to give deep significance to the particularity of history and place. We shall now rehearse the argument he lays out in these works.

The beginning of *Mens Creatrix,* as well as the first ten chapters of *Nature, Man and God,* led to the conclusion that "there is at work within and throughout the cosmic process a spirit which also transcends it."[387] Temple drew a distinction between the immanence of God revealed in the cosmos and the transcendence of God that these immanent encounters revealed. These distinctions followed a similar theological reasoning to Palamas' distinction between the Divine energies and the Divine essence. Humanity could encounter the energies of God within the created order, but not the essence of God, which remained hidden. Temple asserted that this immanent encounter with the Divine (which he terms Spirit) revealed all that is Good, fulfilled all ideals, intellectual, aesthetical and ethical and was encountered in and through the material world.[388] These immanent encounters revealed a personal transcendent deity, an immanent Reason, a *Logos.* They revealed that the order, personality and characteristics of the whole universe were an utterance of His (the Divine *Logos'*) activity, and that the whole of reality was grounded within His Ultimate Reality.

[385] Temple, 1935: 478.
[386] Temple, 1935: xxi.
[387] Temple 1924: 10ff and 1934: 277.
[388] Temple, 1934: ch. XI.

Christ, as the *Logos,* stood for the "over-ruling and unifying principle ... of the universe".[389]

Temple argued that reality must be interpreted in this spiritual manner. He introduced the idea that Value was the true reality of things. Value was the instantiation of the Good, of the Divine *Logos*. It realised itself in various forms by embodying itself in things for the purpose of the Divine Will. In describing reality in this way Temple was essentially advocating realism over nominalism. He was *against* seeing the reality of things as self-enclosed entities without instantiating anything universal beyond themselves. He was arguing that things in reality *do* instantiate something universal, Value, the instantiation of the Good, or the Divine Will. This had implications for the way in which Temple understood the reality that underpinned the eucharist in particular and sacraments in general.[390] He argued that the Value attributed to the bread and the wine of the eucharist is that of the nature of Christ. This presence was a reality, but it did not exist in the sense of material presence, nor in the sense of the substance of the bread and wine being replaced with the substance of Christ with the accidents remaining (transubstantiation in the moderate sense as defended by Aquinas). He attempted to understand the eucharist using his understanding that the Good was expressed in bread and wine, that they are given a new Value which was the indwelling of the Good, that is the reality of the nature of Christ, present in a spiritual not local sense. As such the bread and the wine became transvalued, that is they were in-dwelt with a higher value, *the* highest Value, Christ.[391]

He went on to argue that the eucharist only had meaning in its relation to the incarnation, the *Logos*, which gave humanity the fullest revelation of its true nature, not just a specific revelation in a one place. That is why at the eucharist the focus is on the universal nature of Christ – the implications of the incarnation for all times in all places.[392] The bread and wine were not just symbols or signs, they were instruments, they became 'transvalued', whereby the communicant received Christ himself, the risen, ascended and glorified Christ. Temple gently modified his language in the concluding pages of *Christus Veritas*, suggesting that a better term than 'transvalue' might be 'convalue', because the bread and wine still had the value of bread and

[389] Temple 1924: viii.
[390] Temple 1924: 13-14.
[391] Ibid: 18-19.
[392] Ibid: 239.

wine.[393] Temple argued that the eucharistic bread was the medium where the Divine Will of Christ's presence was effected. As he stated, "[a]s through the physical organism which was His Body He revealed in agony and death that utter obedience of Humanity in His Person to the Father, which is the atoning sacrifice, so through the broken Bread He shows it still and enables us to become participants therein. Thus by means of Bread and Wine, blessed and given as by Himself at the climax of His sacrifice to the sustenance of our souls."[394] In his eucharistic theology Temple developed a new terminology that allowed for the rehabilitation of older terminology (transubstantiation) within the assumptions of a philosophical framework of realism.

Temple's view shares a similarity with the Platonic emphasis on reason as the Eternal in Idealism, yet it placed the *Logos* amidst the material world in a manner which went far beyond a Platonic or Idealist conception of the *Logos* or the Eternal, and it is this that made Temple's Christianity irredeemably materialistic.[395] His understanding of the eucharist and its relation to the incarnation mark a decisive break with that tradition. Temple was also highly critical of Idealist philosophies of religion *exactly* because they left no room for the incarnation, "the idea of God which [Idealism] reaches is such as to preclude His ever doing anything in particular in any other sense than that in which He does everything in general."[396] He explicitly linked together, in the same manner in which Hooker and Andrewes did, the doctrines of creation and incarnation in his eucharistic theology.[397] For the *Logos* of God inaugurated the existence of the world, for its continual existence the world relied upon the *Logos'* immanence in the world, and that the incarnation of the *Logos* in Jesus Christ redeemed the world. [398] He acknowledged that "[c]reation and Redemption are, indeed, different; but they are different aspects of one spiritual fact, which is the activity of the Divine Will, manifesting itself in love through the Creation, and winning from the Creation an answering love."[399] For Temple, the *Logos* was the summing up of all things, the one true principle of being, uniting all things, all people and nations to himself. Christ called humanity to a dual unity, the inner unity of a complete personality and the outer unity in fellowship with God, all people, and all of

[393] Ibid: 250.
[394] Ibid: 251.
[395] Temple 1917: 317.
[396] Temple 1924: ix.
[397] See for instance the study Allchin makes. Allchin 1988: 7ff.
[398] Temple 1924: 154.
[399] Temple 1924: 155.

creation.[400] Revelation therefore became possible in all of existence, yet, Temple stressed, this did *not* lead to a mystical view of creation but rather a specific focus on the person who revealed the personality of the Divine, the perfection of humanity, and the restoration between nature, man and God – the *Logos,* Jesus Christ, the revelation of a person to persons. Christ was the focal point of *all* revelation, all preparatory revelation (such as the encounters of God with Israel, the words of the Old Testament Prophets) pointed to this one ultimate revelation and all things found fulfillment in and through this one revelation which radiated into every part of the created order.[4] For Temple, even though God was guiding humanity before Christ's incarnation, this guidance now took a decisive new turn and the power of God was now mediated through the Spirit of God who could only come *after* Christ's birth, death and resurrection had given humanity a true understanding of and insight into Divine love.[402]

The result of this is that all spiritual and religious authority gained its authority from this one revelation, and all true religious activity conformed to the good, the true and the beautiful revealed in the revelation of the *Logos,* whose essential dimension was the desire to, and engagement in, worship of the Creator, most particularly in the eucharist.[403] Evil, was for Temple, "the product of exaggerated or misdirected desire, it is to cease to be open to, and seek out, the immanent *Logos* in the created order and instead to focus on the self, to become self-centred".[404] It was the accumulation of self-centered thinking that resulted in the devastation of the world, which Temple saw in the devastation of the First and Second World Wars. For him they were the example *par excellance* of a rejection of the possibility of revelation and the assertion of humanities selfish belief and trust in only itself.[405]

Revelation led to the possibility of experiencing Divine grace in and through the natural world, but this was only possible when the self turns to focus on, and pursue, the good, the true and the beautiful.[406] Temple's theology of grace allowed him to give an account of how those outside of the Church encounter grace in a real way, and it alludes to the possibility (though undeveloped in Temple) of a generous attitude

[400] Temple 1924: 156ff.
[401] Temple, 1934: ch. XII.
[402] Temple 1917: 323.
[403] Temple, 1934: ch. XIII.
[404] Temple 1934: ch. XIII.
[405] Temple 1934: ch. XIII.
[406] Temple 1934: ch. XIV.

towards revelation being present in others faiths (and indeed those of no faith). Though Temple's Christocentric focus would allow that this could only be partial, and incomplete. For it was only in Jesus Christ, the *Logos* of God reaching out in love, acting in sheer sacrifice, and offering a sheer gift, that humanity was restored to God, and also the whole of creation.[407] For Temple the fullest experience of grace came to those who were in Christ, which is those who were baptised and partook in the eucharist, both of which constituted the means of entry into the body of Christ, and the continuation and development of that entry.[408] All of this led Temple to understand history as the place where God was revealed. History's centre point was the life, death, resurrection, ascension and glorification of Christ. It was this that made the ethical struggle of humanity worthwhile, history could not be reduced to meaninglessness, and humanity most fully participated in the redeeming activity of God in Christ as members of Christ's body.[409]

From these initial conclusions Temple now arrived at the summit of this early work, his vision of the sacramental universe, without which his views on humanity, spirit, revelation and history do not make sense. For Temple

> [t]he universe is the fundamental sacrament, and taken in its entirety (when of course it includes the Incarnation and the Atonement) is the perfect sacrament extensively; but it only becomes this, so far as our world and human history are concerned, because within it and determining its course is the Incarnation, which is the perfect sacrament intensively – the perfect expression in a moment what is also perfectly expressed in everlasting Time, the Will of God; resulting from the incarnation we find the "Spirit-bearing Body", which is not actually a perfect sacrament, because its members are not utterly surrendered to the spirit within it, but none the less lives by the Life which came fully into the world in Christ; as part of the life of this Body we find certain specific sacraments or sacramental acts.[410]

Through these sacramental acts – baptism and the eucharist – offered by the Church, Christ reached out to humanity to transform it and be unified to Christ.[411] He again rejected scientific materialism – the rejection of the possible existence of anything not

[407] Temple 1934: ch. XIV.
[408] Temple, 1934: 380f.
[409] Temple 1934: ch. XVII.
[410] Temple 1924: 234.
[411] Temple 1924: 235.

observable in material world – and again asserted that the natural world was the place in which, and by which, the personal God was encountered and revealed, basing this on his concept of Value (as previously outlined). He argued that "[i]t is to such a view that our whole course of enquiry has been leading us; and it is such a view which affords the strongest hope for the continuance in reality and power of religious practice and faith."[412] For nature was still graced from the beginning, and also despite evil and corruption, remains graced. Temple depicted a world drenched with Deity, God was not distant from the historical, but the Eternal, in the *Logos,* fulfills itself in historical expression "so that if this were abolished, it would in its own nature be other than it is."[413] Thus the historical was of eternal significance because of the *Logos.* Temple had framed the relationship between the eternal and the historical, the spiritual and the material, as a sacramental relationship. The material and historical was a sign of the eternal and spiritual, because it was instantiated with Value, there was therefore an intimate relationship and unity between the material and the spiritual. That the material and material processes truly convey spiritual meaning and power and the material world truly conveyed God's grace, "the very Love of God (which is Himself) approaching and seeking entry to the soul of man."[414]

Temple in *Nature, Man and God,* avoided the scientific rationalism of his day, which for some meant that the spiritual was totally unnecessary. He also avoided the excessive emphasis on the need to separate the spiritual from the corrupted and polluted material world. Both views left the material in a quandary, it was either cut off from God, or else irrelevant to God. Temple sought to "make human politics and economics and mak[e] effectual faith and love."[415] This work asserted "the supremacy of the freedom of God; the reality of the physical world as His creation; the vital significance of the material and temporal world to the eternal Spirit; and the spiritual issue of the process in a fellowship of the fine and time-enduring spirits in the infinite and eternal Spirit."[416]

He also outlined themes that would come to dominate the rest of his *oeuvre.* He argued that self-sacrifice lies at the heart of the Christian life, it was a response to the gift of Grace freely given by God in Christ and led to a life spent in service and in

[412] Temple, 1934: 266.
[413] Temple 1934: 480.
[414] Temple 1934: 485.
[415] Temple 1934: 486.
[416] Temple 1934: 493.

fellowship with others in mutual love which mirrored believers experience of Divine love (the opposite of his conception of evil as primarily selfishness and pride which collectively led to a focus on the interests and importance of the few over the good and importance of the many).[417] The self sought out truth, beauty, goodness or love in order to find a more perfect expression of the principle of its being than it could be, or provide for, itself. The self found these things in the immanence of God, in the sacramental universe, and most fully in the *Logos,* encountered in the eucharist, which led the self beyond self-centeredness into fellowship with, and worship of, the Divine, and then into true fellowship with one another and the whole of creation.[418] Natural theology, for Temple, when left on its own, could only lead to partial true revelation, “it ends in hunger that cannot satisfy”.[419] The most perfect expression of this fellowship was the Church, the Body of Christ, by whose sacraments, of baptism and eucharist, humanity encountered God's own self-revelation in a particular place and at a particular time.[420] Temple stated that "[i]n the Eucharist members receive His life, to unite them in each to Him, and to impel them to the fulfillment of His purpose"[4] The Church was the continuation of that Divine life here on earth and it was Christ's life that gave the Church its defining characteristics, it was a fellowship not generated by humanity but by the gift of God. For Temple "[t]he Church will only manifest the whole power of Christ when it embraces all mankind; here and now it fully manifests His Spirit only in the degree in which it is missionary."[422] He regarded the continual schisms in the Church and the life of the local church as hugely damaging to the Church’s vocation, for

> "[i]nstead of the one fellowship of all types, where each contributes and each is held in check, the types are segregated and develop their own tendencies without correction or the modifying influence the others might afford. Thus the Church loses the opportunity of manifesting before the world the spirit of fellowship; but thus also the Church is prevented from delivering its whole message in the power and sanity of perfect balance."[423]

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[417] Temple 1934: 508ff.
[418] Temple 1934: 518ff.
[419] Temple 1934: 519.
[420] Temple, 1935: xxiiff.
[421] Temple 1924: 164.
[422] Temple 1917: 334.
[423] Temple 1924: 165.

Temple argued that only if people perceive reality in the light of the incarnation do material things become charged with the promise of something more than what they were, the foundation to this understanding was the 'transvaluation' or 'convaluation' of the elements of bread and wine in the eucharist. The reception of which brought believers to encounter the Divine, the very ground of truth, love, faith and hope.

Temple's concept of the sacramental universe also gave him a particular perspective on the local fellowship of the Church. He argued that the Church sanctifies and sets apart certain spaces, not because only they were the only specific Holy spaces, but rather because they reminded humanity of the sanctity of *all* places. Similarly, the Church consecrated bread and wine, not because other food and drink, or indeed material things in general, were nothing to do with the purposes of God but rather because *all* material things spoke of the glory of God, and *all* that Christian's eat and drink should be seen to build Christians up as members of the Body of Christ. This was why the sacraments of the Church were so essential to its life, not because they were separate acts of magic, distinct from the rest of the world, but because they reminded the Church of the true meaning and purpose of all things.[424]

Temple's apprehension of the co-inherence of the creative and redemptive acts of God, that is the integration of the doctrines of creation and incarnation, resulted in a sacramental theology that refused to be pigeonholed into either. His concept of a sacramental universe or principle was also contiguous with the Anglican tradition found in Hooker. Hooker also located his sacramental theology in the doctrines of salvation *and* creation. The sacraments of baptism and the eucharist were not just instruments at the disposal of the Church to offer the faithful they were rather concrete manifestations of God's providential ordering of the universe in which the whole natural order both praised and revealed God.[425] Such a view was shared by Hooker's contemporaries Lancelot Andrewes and George Herbert, and was also emphasised in the theology of the Oxford Movement, notably by Keble, who wrote that, "the whole scheme of material things, and especially those objects in it which are consecrated by scriptural allusion, assume in their eyes a sacramental or symbolic character."[426] Temple's use of realist philosophy also enabled him to develop a sophisticated restatement of the the understanding of the presence of Christ in the

[424] Temple, 1925: 31.
[425] Hooker, book V, ch. lvi.
[426] Keble, Introduction to Hooker, *Works,* I, p. xci.

eucharist which avoided nominalism and charges of affirming the doctrine of transubstantiation.

Having examined the theological and philosophical basis for Temple's particular ecclesiology, not only in Temple's own work, but also in the sources that he developed, we are now in a position to begin to outline the resulting ecclesiology that he developed over the course of his lifetime in detail.

Temple's Ecclesiology

Temple developed what could be called a comprehensive ecclesiology, in that it had ramifications for the whole of social life and the whole of society. This stands in contrast to the ecclesiology of *MSC,* which views the church in a utilitarian manner.[4] As Dackson notes Temple developed his ecclesiology using several metaphors and descriptions to unpack his use of the word 'Church'. First, he used the Pauline image of the Church as the Body of Christ – that is the corporate Church, the Church across time and space, set in the whole world. This idea was also supplemented by two other metaphors for the Church, the Church as 'city' and the Church as 'army'.[4] Second, Temple also used the word 'Church' to refer to the reality of the institution in historic settings, most often in terms of its failures and successes. Third, Temple used the word 'Church' to refer to it in its perfection – that is that fellowship in the Holy Spirit of all humanity in God through Jesus Christ. This is the reality to which the historic Church bore witness.[429]

Before exploring these ideas in detail we need to briefly consider one of the most problematic elements of the reception of Temple's thought. Scholars of Temple have at timed reduced his ecclesiology to 'bite-size' quotes from his more popular works. Often by mis-construing a quote from *Christianity and Social Order,* where Temple said that, "[n]ine tenths of the work of the Church in the world is done by Christian people fulfilling responsibilities and performing tasks which in themselves are not part

[427] I do not mean comprehensiveness in the traditional Anglican theological sense regarding the role of the various theological traditions (Catholic, Evangelical, Middle Anglican) in its own life. Instead, I am referring to the *broadness* of Temple's thought with regard to the place and role of the Church in the world in comparison to the *narrowness* of *MSC*'s.

[428] Dackson 2004: 64.

[429] Ibid: 70ff.

of the official system of the Church at all."[430] Several Temple scholars have interpreted this to mean that the laity's activity in the world was the sum total of the Church's mission in the temporal order, leading them to suggest that Temple had no real doctrine of the influence of the institutional Church in society.[431] Both Craig and Fletcher use this as basis for their appraisal of Temple and provide scant discussion of his ecclesiology, arguing that Temple understood the church in an instrumentalist fashion, as simply empowering the individual for service in the world.[432] They suggest that Temple thought the nine-tenths of time was more important than the one-tenth of time the laity spend in Church. However, this is simply not true. For Temple the Christian society had *two* functions in the world: first, "the witness of the Church as a corporate society in its own name … that witness is to the Gospel"; second, "the Christian citizen [is] to exercise his own judgement [as to] how the principles of the Gospel may in fact be most effectively applied to the circumstances of our time."[4] Therefore it is the Church – especially the bishops and priests alongside the worshipping Church – which set the tone and direction for individual Christian action. The one-tenth defined the nine-tenths. The two could not be separated, nor could the 'lesser' be ignored. For the influence of the laity depended largely on the effective ministry of the Church.[434]

The Church as the Body of Christ

The most important understanding Temple ascribed to the Church was that it was corporately the Body of Christ. This meant that the Church was more than just individual believers gathered together.[435] As Temple argued, "[i]t is only in the Church that the power of Christ reaches the individual Christian … [whose primary duty] is the building up of the Body of Christ."[436] Temple saw the body as a living, physical, and relational body. It was the life of Christ made manifest in history by those who partook in the life of the Church, it was not just a mystical body. It witnessed to Christ by the way it spoke, not only inwardly to itself, but also outwardly,

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[430] Temple 1944: 39.
[431] Dackson 2004: 67.
[432] Ibid: 64ff.
[433] Temple 1939: 477.
[434] Temple 1942c.
[435] Temple 1913: 288.
[436] Temple 1912b: 344 and 354. Temple also re-iterated this sentiment twenty years: Temple 1931: 101-102.

as well as how it listens, in order that its speech might be appropriate.[437] Historical particularity was important. The Church must be open to each and every context it finds itself in in order to witness effectively. The life and character of the body were not conveyed by its members but rather by Christ, for "[t]he Society which Christ founded to proclaim and carry out his redeeming work does not depend for its true life and character on the men who join it; that life and character are given to it by Christ."[438] Temple also sketched out, by way of an analogy, the particular ordering of the body, and compared it to the way the spine supports the human body.[439] Christ functioned as the head of the body, and the body moved according to His will, so the structure must support and direct His actions, otherwise the body did not move, or moved in an incorrect manner. The Church did not find its unity in the outward concerns of its members, in common interests or affinities, nor even in a common outlook or set of practices but in Christ. As the Doctrine Commission of 1922 reported – which was chaired by Temple – unity "is grounded, according to both Pauline and Johannine doctrine, in the unity of God Himself."[440] The 'central nervous system' of this body was the core of Christian belief, which must be protected for the sake of the body for "heresy is more destructive than conscious sin."[441] Temple argued that "[t]he Church is not Catholic in the sense that it presents no boundaries and affirms nothing of which it must regard the denial as definite error."[442] The Church was called to bear witness to the truth concerning God and humanity, which according to Temple was supremely revealed in the Scriptures and encountered most fully in the sacraments – though also through nature, history and conscience.[4] Corporate worship therefore became an activity for the life *and* health of the body, in that it enabled members to be moulded to the will of Christ, for "[w]orship is the very breath of its life."[444] Worship was not service, nor evangelism, or witness, but what enabled these things to take place, and gave them energy (through gifts of the Spirit) and vitality.[445] Therefore the worship of the Church, along with the scriptures, creeds and doctrines needed to be protected as these make up the spine of the body. The sacraments were the characteristic acts of the Church as the fellowship of believers.

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[437] Temple 1913: 8 and 1924: 251.
[438] Temple 1913: 2.
[439] Temple 1930: 5.
[440] Commission on Christian Doctrine 1938: 106.
[441] Temple 1939: 38.
[442] Temple 1917: 25.
[443] Temple 1943c: 8.
[444] Temple 1915: 29-30.
[445] Dackson 2004: 82.

They were guarantees of the true identity of the Church, for the Church's worship was past- present- and future-orientated, for the local church was representative of the whole Church through time and space. Therefore its worship accorded with that of the whole Church. This was not to imply a rigid form of worship in all times and at all places, but it did provide a necessary guard against experimentation and novelty where such things may have lead to a loss of identity and witness.[446] Temple placed a high regard on the common citizenship of all people, and the end of all things to be reconciled to God. His stress on the common nature of the Church's worship reflected this emphasis. Common worship reflected a common history and purpose, and a shared life and understanding, in contrast to narrow sectarian concerns and individual preferences. This emphasis was most apparent during the time of the national prayer book controversy in 1928, when Temple argued that the Church of England was justified in its defense of the prayer book because only a commonly shared liturgical text embodied the ideal character of community and could reconcile different groups, who were brought together in order to hold higher, more common values and purposes in unity, which would ultimately wed them to one another.[447]

Temple believed that the ordered ministry (that is deacons, priests and bishops) were guardians of this tradition, and protected the Church's witness, alongside the Church's authorised forms and acts of worship, most especially the sacraments (as we shall see more clearly later). The structure of the early Church informed Temple's view of ordained ministry, based on the commissioning of the apostles as the "focus of government and leadership."[448] He emphasised the role of the Bishop as the "agent of Christ in His Church … [acting] for the whole Church, not just any section of it." Through the Bishop, apostolic continuity and administration of the sacraments was safeguarded not for just a few but for all faithful people. Worship, if it was to be representative of the whole church, must be duly authorised by bishops and those who they ordained in order to maintain that its true Catholic worship. Otherwise worship became disembodied and disconnected from the head, Jesus Christ, which was its source.[449] The manner in which this worship had the potential to become disembodied was clearly expressed during Temple's time as bishop of Manchester when he accepted the necessity to create the diocese of Blackburn. He argued that

[446] Ibid: 119.
[447] Grimley: 170ff.
[448] Temple 1943b.
[449] Temple 1940: 131-132.

though the bishop was guardian of the unity of the worship offered by the Church he also needed to be familiar with his area of jurisdiction, its particularity. The Bishop could not fulfill that role if, as in this case, his diocesan territory extended to cover too greater an area. A report, chaired by Temple, on dividing up several of the northern sees, made it quite clear that the role of the bishop was only effective if he was able, as Christ did, to minister to those in his care. In the case of Manchester Temple simply could not, and was not therefore able to function as an instrument of unity, nor as chief pastor, nor be guardian of the Church's historic tradition.[450]

Temple himself strove to embody this understanding of a Bishop, as Iremonger notes, in that he sought to "offer some contribution to the common stock of thought and knowledge which would help the clergy to carry their thinking further, and also to understand their bishop's own view on matters of contemporary interest or debate."[4] Though Temple emphasised the role played by ordained minsters of the Church he did not denigrate the role of the laity. The laity were an important part of the official structures of the Church in that they represent the things of God to those outside the Church and without them the purpose of the Church cannot be fulfilled.[452] As Temple said, "[t]he priest will stand for the things of God before the laity – who seek the help that a religious specialist can give them, while the laity stand for the things of God before the world – which will pay more heed to them than to the shepherds who are (incidentally) hirelings."[453]

To complement his use of the Church as the Body of Christ, Temple used the image of the Church as a City, which functioned in a similar vein to the images we see in the prophet Isaiah and John's Revelation.[454] It also further extended his idea of the body , where it acted as a listening body. As Temple wrote, "[t]he City of God … stands before us with gates wide open so that citizens of all nations may enter, but also that its citizens may ride forth to the conquest of nations, following their Captain as He goes forth to judge and make war."[455] Temple used this image of the City to refer to the Church in history. The Church was not separate from the world, but open to it, and through that interaction it seeks to make it Holy, as the Church itself is made Holy by the Holiness of Christ. The Church was not a place of refuge but rather one

[450] Report of the Committee on New Sees and Provinces 1922.
[451] Iremonger 1949: 369.
[452] Dackson 2004: 87.
[453] Temple 1939: 163.
[454] Bauckham 1998: chapter ten and Brueggemann 1998: particularly comments on chapter two of Isaiah.
[455] Temple 1944: 3.

of openness, for "if [Christ's] victory and kingdom were to be all embracing they must include Judas; the world must be welcomed into the Church if the Church is to convert and direct the world."[456] Temple saw the Church as a city a place of interaction, open to all , where this openness brought with it a certain unease about limiting its constituents to just those who are 'saved'. Temple extended this metaphor image further by suggesting that the Church was also an army, reflected in action of the city's citizens, who were called to go out into the world, following Christ, to convert it, for "[a]n army exists for the sake of the nation to which the soldiers belong."[457] Temple recognised that this image of the Church was frequently undermined by division amongst the Christian traditions as well as factionalism within his own church. Each of which rendered the Church less effective and capable. Temple's own role in helping to establish ecumenical bodies such as the World Council of Churches was his attempt to correct this.

Temple also argued that the Church was a fellowship; he deployed this image as an eschatological category, forming the standard at which the historic church must always aim. As the historic Church did this it became a sacrament of this eschatological fellowship.[458] This fellowship had developed in the Church over time, both growing and at times contracting.[459] The fellowship would only be completed when all of humankind was brought into it. Temple here was not just concerned with individuals, but rather nations and entire races – the salvation of the whole world, in all its diversity would perfect the Church, echoing Paul's language in Ephesians 4.13. Such a gathering and coming together meant overcoming the difficulties of difference, between races and nations, yet Temple recognised this as an essential quality of fellowship: "[i]f you merely get together like-minded people with the same dominant interests in life, you don't get fellowship; you get a herd, which is a very inferior thing".[460] True fellowship did not overcome difference, it did not squash diversity, but rather embraced it, for God was only truly known in this gathering together, since "only when the whole Church is the same as the whole world will the whole truth be fully known … and as long as there is any who is withholding what he alone can give, that life remains imperfect".[461] It was "a harmony of many parts, each discharging its

[456] Temple 1939: 100.
[457] Dackson 2004: 90.
[458] Dackson 2004: 92.
[459] Temple 1923: 215ff.
[460] Temple 1944b: 147-148.
[461] Temple 1912a:161-162.

own function in relation to a single life."[462] This fellowship was bound together and enlivened by the work of the Holy Spirit, which brought forth the fruit of love, joy and peace.

It was this thinking that led Temple to assert that Christian faith in England had a certain hollowness, for the nation was not marked by the Spirit's fruit. In his understanding social ills could only be corrected through a specifically Christian approach found in the power of the Holy Spirit, though he readily admitted that this "is the last source to which most of us would apply for guidance."[463] Temple again echoed the language of Revelation when he stated that the "Kingdom is to include all men of all nations, and all are to bring their own contribution to the wealth of its life."[464] This was the Church's vocation to gather all, and this is the standard it set itself. The unity that bound this fellowship was not just to be found in the structures of the Church – though they should exhibit its qualities – but most particularly in the love of God in Christ possessing believer's hearts to unite them in the same manner as the Father and the Son were "united in that perfect love of Each and for Each which is the Holy Spirit."[465] For Temple, the Church was where difference was reconciled through Christ in a way that allowed that difference to flourish. Drawing on Paul's imagery in Ephesians, he thought that the welcoming and inclusion of difference into the Church – whether this be cultural, ethnic, or political – was essential if the Church was to reflect fully the beauty of God's creation.[466] The report of the Doctrine Commission of 1922 also made the same point; "[t]he Church is of the Spirit … it is, as such universal; it transcends the boundaries of race, language, and colour … there is from henceforth but 'one body' and 'one spirit'."[467] Although *MSC* understands Catholicity to be a mandate for cultural hospitality (p. 168) the report actually argues that it is best for local churches to be essentially monocultural in their makeup. Temple's vision of the Church's Catholicity stands in rich contrast to *MSC*'s understanding. He resisted the idea that the Church could be reduced to a group of like-minded individuals. *MSC* casts aside this view in pursuit of ahistorical 'cultural relevance'. It shows little interest in the logic of the parish system, which could be seen as the logic of Catholicity itself, its self-organising principal, for only pure geography

[462] Temple 1944b: 28.
[463] Temple 1913: 171.
[464] Ibid: 144-145.
[465] Temple 1939: 319.
[466] Temple 1944b: 147.
[467] Commission on Christian Doctrine 1938: 102.

encompasses all without exception. Temple saw in the local church a fellowship bound together into the one fellowship of the Body of Christ. He stressed the need for the local to exhibit in its life a reflection of the whole, and to share a common worship, a common liturgy, that itself pointed towards, and was a witness of, this one reality, that all were reconciled to God in Christ, not by virtue of a common interest, culture or nationality, but by grace. The specific located place of the parish had a sense of time now, time past, and memory of those gone before. *MSC* represents a capitulation to the logic of capitalism because it fails to offer an account of capitalism and instead is positioned by secular reasoning. Choice is its central ecclesial category, appealing to a market driven mentality, where each local church needs to represent in its own life the variety of interests its members hold, fellowship is founded upon cultural similarity rather than the reconciling power of Christ. *MSC* misses what Temple saw, that to be Catholic was to imply intensity, richness and plenitude – each implying a unitive relationship amongst things that were diverse, represented in the Church of England's commitment to common worship.[468]

Temple's view also accorded with De Lubac's, who said, "Catholic suggests the idea of an organic whole, of a cohesion, of a firm synthesis, of a reality which is not scattered but, on the contrary, turned towards a centre which assures its unity, whatever the expanse in area of the internal differentiation might be".[469] So, far from excluding difference Catholicity demands it but not in the way *MSC* envisages, for Catholicity is not an excuse for pluralism, the local is part of the universal, its life defined not just by commonly held interests. Temple's vision of the Catholic life kept the Church from sectarianism, which the ecclesial vision of *MSC* could be accused of promoting. It is also important to note that Temple's understanding of the Church as a fellowship predated and seemed to anticipate the emergence of a theology of *Koinonia* that has become so prevalent in twentieth century thought.[470]

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[468] Dulles 1985: 167.

[469] De Lubac 1984: 173-4.

[470] Thornton 1942. For a Roman Catholic theology see Ratzinger 2000: 68-80. From a Protestant perspective see Gassmann 1994. See also International Commission for Anglican-Orthodox Theological Dialogue 2006. For a general theological overview, see Fuchs 2006.

Temple's Sacramental Theology

The second major emphasis in Temple's ecclesiology was his focus on its sacramental character. Sacramental ecclesiology has been enormously influential in twentieth century theology yet Temple's work predated much of it and the novelty of Temple's approach has not been sufficiently recognised by modern scholarship, nor has his contribution to its development been sufficiently explored.[471] He developed a sacramental theology that followed on from the Tractarian understanding of the sacramental, but with a much broader direction than the Tractarians conveyed. He saw the sacraments as both intrinsic to the Church's internal life and also essential to its vocation and life in the world. For Temple the eucharist both *made* the Church and *was* the Church. At the heart of Temple's sacramental vision was his understanding of the eucharist, and the way in which the believer participated in it. He argued that "[i]n the eucharist the believer experiences an actual fellowship with his Lord such as he does not experience from Church-membership in general."[472] In the eucharist the believer found the fellowship that the Church attempted to exhibit in its own life, which was why the "eucharistic bread as the Lord's body was, and is, more vivid than that of the Church as His Body."[473] The bread and the Church were consecrated to do the work of Christ here on earth. They were both the Body of Christ. The bread was a sign of the Church, of its calling and vocation in the world that was to be given for the redemption of the world. Because of this Temple was able to say that "[i]n truth the Church is itself the permanent sacrament; it is an organised society possessed (though not always availing itself) of a supernatural life – the life of God – which united humanity with itself in Jesus Christ."[474] Temple related the gifts of the eucharist in economic terms: they were "the perfect symbol of the economic life of man … [the] instance of God's gifts made available by human labour for the satisfaction of men's needs."[475] This made implicit what Temple would make explicit in his work as a priest, bishop and archbishop. That was, his assertion that production, consumption and finance were not absolute in themselves but were subservient to the implications of the presence of Christ in the eucharist, itself a taste of the redeemed creation to which all things were ordered. These things were therefore to be used

[471] For an introduction and overview of sacramental theology see McPartlan 1995). See also the classic work de Lubac 2006.
[472] Temple 1924: 250.
[473] Ibid.
[474] Ibid: 234.
[475] Temple 1942b: 69.

appropriately to bring about spiritual perfection (for example, the removal of extreme material poverty, and seeing citizenship as something that was based on the gift exchange and fellowship as experienced in the eucharist rather than selfish competition by individuals). The Church offered its gifts of bread and wine to God – industrial and commercial activities in symbolic form – and God gave them back as a means of nurturing so that those who partook in the eucharist became agents of His purpose.[476] As these gifts were received they could also be gifted to others for the building up of true fellowship, so that all became agents for God's purpose. The Church became a witness to the ordering of the whole cosmos, the manner in which its own life was sustained points to the manner in which all life was sustained. The gifts of bread and wine unified believers with Christ and therefore echoed the way in which all things would be united with Christ, they were the true nature of all reality, that material reality conveys, and contains within itself, the very grace of God. Without the Church, with its sacramental inner life, Temple would not have developed his understanding of the sacramental quality of the universe, a quality which in itself finds its fullest expression in the sacramental participation believers encountered with God and each other at the altar.[477] The sacraments pointed to the importance of the material and historical; that every people, in every place, could encounter the grace of God, which in turn could transform their own social, political and economic reality to conform ever more closely to the form of fellowship and life they encountered there. Yet they also pointed beyond every historical and material reality to that which bound all things and called all people together into one fellowship.

Temple's sacramental ecclesiology again contrasts with the ecclesiology of *MSC*. In *MSC* the sacraments of eucharist and baptism are treated a legal necessity if any fresh expression is to become recognised as a church. Temple would have repudiated such a view for he saw the sacraments as essential to the Church's actual existence and her witness. *MSC*'s emphasis falls the legal aspect of this requirement rather than having any theological bearing and represents a rather deficient understanding of Canon law. Canon law is not incidental to the theology of the Church but a legal commentary on it. *MSC* appears to understand the wisdom of past and present Church polity to be *constraining* the present rather than *informing* it. Temple saw the eucharist as the central organising principal of the Church: within its performance lay the very heart

[476] Ibid: 70.
[477] Temple 1924: 235.

of what it meant to be One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic. It was not an optional extra or something to be grown into: the eucharist itself contained the full drama of salvation, and as such was the starting place for thinking about what it meant to be the Church, the true peaceable society of the Kingdom of God, and therefore what it meant to be part of a fellowship that included all people in all places at all times. Even though the actual life of a Christian community could well be full of fear and division, whenever it reminded itself of what it was, in celebration of word and sacrament, it made a statement about its own and the worlds ultimate horizon.[478] *MSC*'s view that it is not initially necessary for Fresh Expressions of church to celebrate the eucharist represents the loss of *the* key sacrament where both the grace of God and the encounter of a different story and *telos* is made present publicly for all. In robbing communities of this resource, *MSC* not only disconnects them from being seen in any sense as a church, it also, in Temple's view, robs them of the central resource for becoming human in the way Christ calls, where participant's lives are rooted in the possibilities of the life of Christ, and where they may witness to a form of fellowship that emphasises self-giving rather than self-gain. To quote the 1922 Doctrine report again, "if the Church lost by neglect its sacramental character, its value as both a society and for individuals would be calamitously diminished."[479]

Temple, like *MSC,* knew that the character of the Church must be appealing and attractive, striving to disclose the Divine reality, being an icon, gracious, hospitable, compassionate and faithful, winning the world by its actions of love rather than its self-righteousness.[480] It was called to be a sacrament to the world, offering a Divine foretaste of true fellowship, being both a sign and a cause of the gift of God's love.[4] Therefore the task of the Church in the world was, for Temple, to "[p]rimarily be itself and not to do anything at all. All that it does is secondary and expressive of what it is. And first of all, its duty is to be a living reality of that thing, namely the fellowship of those who have received the power of the Holy Spirit through the revelation of the love of God in Christ. It exists to be the redeemed community which worships as redeemed."[482] This redeemed worship entailed the increase of love for others. For true worship enabled relationships to be more fully expressed in love, leading to fellowship with all people, and offering oneself in the service of God and one another. As Temple

[478] Williams 1994: 258.
[479] Commission on Christian Doctrine 1938: 138.
[480] Temple 1939: 14.
[481] Dackson 2004: 100.
[482] Temple 1944b: 13.

said, "the way to practice Christian ethics is through faith and worship … worship as the opening of the heart, the responsiveness of mind, the subjection of conscience, the receptiveness of imagination, and (by consequence of all this) the surrender of the will to the Holy Will of the Loving God revealed in Jesus Christ".[483] Worship was not a private affair, having little bearing on the social life of the world, instead it was "the consecration of all life, and when life itself, industry and commerce no less than family and friends, is the expression of worship, then we shall see a Church fully alive and the fulfillment of our social dreams."[484] Worship was therefore educative for priests as well as the laity. It formed believers desires so that they might orientate their actions in the world in a way that would conform to the Divine will.[485]

Temple's comprehensive account of the Church's mission, which flowed out of the sacramental encounter with Christ, and led believers into a renewed relationship with society, contrasts with the narrow conceptualisation of mission in *MSC*. The mission of the fellowship of the Church in society is simply not addressed. Temple offered a vision of the Church that empowered its members for witness in the world, his view of discipleship is one in which the ordained ministers of the Church resourced the rest of the body (the laity) for mission that they might effectively witness to the life of Christ. *MSC* says little about discipleship and its relationship to soteriology. Conversion is treated in a utilitarian manner rather than being seen as the beginning of the renewing work of the Holy Spirit by virtue of believers participation in the life of the Church and her sacraments. Mission, in Temple's thought, was not primarily carried out by its ordained ministers (though of course they did engage in mission) or by the gathered church but by the laity. For this reason Temple saw a great need for religious education. For it enabled "the building up of thought and character, conscious and subconscious, in the knowledge of the Love of God, so that the soul is always open to the operation of the Holy Spirit."[486] Through this education – which came from the continual immersion of the minsters of the Church in the scriptures, particularly the Gospels – the laity were able to be advocates for a different way of life. They became a corporate presence in the world, influencing social opinion and being a force for the good.[487] In contrast to *MSC,* the Church, according to Temple, was called to be a model of the Kingdom of God, whilst also being an agent – through its

[483] Temple 1936: 73-74.
[484] Temple 1942c: 8.
[485] Dackson 2004: 104.
[486] Temple 1923: 347.
[487] Dackson 2004: 107.

members – of witness to that Kingdom in all areas of life. Temple cited the key leadership of lay Christians in the abolitionist movement in nineteenth-century England as an example of this, and he exhorted Christians to use their political power, whether they consider it small or large, to be an influence on society, something he himself attempted to model, as we shall shortly explore.[488] Success, in Temple's mind, was not to be measured in the numbers of people attending Church, nor by the amount of influence Christian persons had on political institutions, but rather by the faithfulness of the Church to the truth expressed in God through Christ.

Again, the ecclesiology of *MSC* stands in stark contrast to Temple's. It represents a capitulation to the logic of the capitalist market, a misconstrual of the theological *raison d'être* of the Church's mission. Salvation becomes a marketable product which, given the fragmentation of society into many fraternities, means it needs to be marketed in specific ways. This removes from the Church the necessity of *habitus* – the sets of theological sensibilities and dispositions that have shaped and defined the Church's behaviours and practices, and which enable it to witness to the sacramental reality of the whole of creation. Temple argued that the Church needed to be charitable, offering an embodied vision of a peaceable society; the Church itself was an offering, a gift, an icon to the Divine peace. This concept has been largely lost in *MSC*, where Church has become a matter of communication not a performance of faith. The sociological vision of *MSC* is limited in comparison with Temple: salvation is seen in an individualistic manner where people come to church to be redeemed – people's social interactions, practices and interrelations would appear to matter little. The Church's task finds its basis in nominalist (there are no prior existing norms in the Church's order and worship) and voluntarist theology (that faith can be achieved by human will alone rather than a free gift of grace in God through the sacraments of baptism and eucharist), the will is prioritised as the dominant factor contra the activity of God in Christ. Whereas in Temple's ecclesiology he stressed that every person's social, economic and political relationships mattered a great deal, but they were only transformed through people's participation in the life of the Church, and the free offering of God's grace, human will alone was not enough. This transformation came through the offering of the self in worship, living for the good of others, and the nurturing of a pattern of living that re-enacted the hospitality and grace of God. In *MSC* the believer's subjective freedom is kept intact because key elements of the

[488] Temple 1934: 3.

Gospel message – needing to become slaves in order to be truly free, that in losing one's life one finds it – have been lost.

The Sacramental life of the Church: sacrifice and love

Temple also used a number of secondary images to further flesh out what he meant by describing the Church as a sacrament. They unpacked the practical dimension of the sacramental – that is the ethical requirements of such a view. The defining characteristic of which was sacrifice in love. Temple's concept of sacrifice was greatly influenced by Maurice's account. Maurice argued that sacrifice was "the doctrine of the Bible, the doctrine of the Gospel. The Bible is from first till last setting forth to us the meaning of sacrifice."[489] Although he saw the cross as the perfect expression of sacrifice he argued that it was the totality of Christ in his birth, life, death and resurrection that reveals the true nature of God and the nature and law by which God orders and governs the universe. Maurice, like Temple, refused the choice between penal substitution and exemplarism, where Christ death was either sacrificial for humanity or Christ's life was an example to be followed by believers, instead they both pursued a more comprehensive doctrine.[490] Maurice argued that humanity was called to participate in this nature and law, for Christ's death is not simply representative it is also indicative of the life to which the Body of Christ is called.[491] A life of sacrifice manifested itself in the offering of worship through participation in the eucharist and in service to others. Maurice argued that self-sacrifice was found at the heart of the eucharist and that to participate in it was to recognise that believers were called to a life of sacrifice. Maurice clearly rejecteded a materialist or utilitarian basis for morality.[492] Maurice's view was influential on Green and also the writers of *Lux Mundi,* particularly Gore, who emphasised *kenosis* and self-sacrifice as being at the heart of both the Incarnation and the Christian life.[493] Temple shared these same views and in *Christus Veritas* argued that the Incarnation represented the unveiling of the Godhead, for God was Christ-like and in God there is nothing that is un-Christ-like.[494] Temple's theology was thus very Johannine, because it stressed that in the

[489] Maurice1854: xlvi.
[490] Ramsey 1951: 68.
[491] Bradley 1995: 171.
[492] Ibid*:* 174.
[493] Gore 1896: 159-160.
[494] Temple 1924: 105f and 173f.

totality of Christ (his life, death, resurrection and ascension) we see the very revelation of God. Ramsey even suggested that the whole of Temple's theology is essentially his attempt to unpack the fullest meaning of "he that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 14.9).[495] Temple argued that "[t]he principal of sacrifice is that we choose to do or to suffer what apart from our love we should not choose to do or suffer. When love is returned this sacrifice is the most joyful thing in the world, and heaven is the life of joyful sacrifice."[496] Love characterised Temple's view of sacrifice. God's self-giving love is manifested perfectly in the Trinity and made most visible to us in the incarnation of Christ. Humanity participated in Christ's sacrifice through service and work for the Kingdom of God. Through such participation humanity reproduced – though not in an exact form – the sacrifice of Christ. This sacrifice was an attitude in one's actions, rather than the action itself, in that it sought to serve others rather than oneself. Such actions for Temple were a true expression of the self because they were authentically free actions in that they reflect Christ's sacrificial action.[497] Just as Christ's sacrificial love on the cross was expressed in a non-reciprocal way, so Christians, and the Church, offer sacrifice because they love freely not because they expect love in return. In this manner it could also be seen as having a quality of defiance and resistance, moving sacrificial love into the political and social arena.[498] As Christ died for those who both loved and did not love him (indeed may hate him and claim to be his enemies) so the Church as the Body of Christ in the world must offer itself, its resources, and its life, on behalf of those who have little or nothing. This view led Temple to engage with issues of social justice in his own time. He felt the Church and its members should become a challenge to those in power, for

> [w]hy should God's children have the full opportunity to develop their capacities in freely-chosen occupations, while others are confined to a stunted form of existence? The Christian cannot ignore a challenge in the name of justice. He must either refuse it or, accepting it, devote himself to removal of the stigma. The moral quality of the accusation brought against the economic and social order involves the Church in 'interference' on pain of betraying the trust committed to it.[499]

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[495] Ramsey 1951: 148.
[496] Temple 1939: xxix-xxx.
[497] Temple 1923: 216.
[498] Dackson 2004: 126.
[499] Temple 1944a: 37.

Temple exemplified this attitude in his own actions. He was the first bishop in the House of Lords to become a member of the Labour Party and was President of the Worker's Educational Association for sixteen years, and spoke against the Government in the House of Lords on issues such as workers' rights, working hours and working conditions.[500] He also made many notable speeches against the Nazi persecutions in 1943.[501] The Church, as the bearer of the life and personality of Christ, must attempt to express – in acts of love – that same life and personality in its relations with others, by living for others, perhaps most especially for those who were seen as the least in society, in order that it may be an "effectual sign of grace, and God's good will towards us."[502]

Temple's emphasis on sacrifice counters *MSC*'s focus on the needs of the individual and its submission to the logic of consumerism. His account offers a counter vision to the logic of the market, where the Church needs to compete with other products by making itself desirable as a consumer product, an ideology that *MSC* succumbs to. Within Temple's writings there is a clear account of the cost of Christian belief, and the need for believers to be educated so that they may be critically aware of the way in which various aspects of their lives are complicit in economic, political and social structures that are unjust. Discipleship is costly, it requires a real conversion and turning around, an embrace of a form of fellowship that was increasingly alien in Temple's time, and a commitment to a way of life based on sacrifice and service. In *MSC* conversion requires little, the life of the church replicates the conditions its context so closely so as to lose the very demands of the Gospel that Temple emphasised. *MSC* tends to treat the Church's context as neutral, structural injustices and ideological injustices are essentially hidden and never called into question. Yet, for Temple, participating in the Body of Christ and witnessing to Christ meant living a life of sacrifice modeled on that of Christ. Discipleship meant conforming ever more deeply to that vocation. We shall explore what this may mean for the Church of England's present context in greater depth in the final section.

[500] Grant: 288.
[501] Temple 1943d.
[502] Temple 1944a: 35.

The Church in Judgement

A final component of Temple's sacramental ecclesiology was the Church's call to act in judgement. Temple used judgement in a double sense; he saw it both as a faculty of the mind in apprehending a right course of action and also as an ethical category. The contemporary understanding of judgement at that time was rather negative. Making decisions about right and wrong was seen as less than charitable due to increasing social pluralism and the lack of consensus on common moral and ethical issues. Temple, however, argued that thought could not proceed without judgement and this judgement formed a basic unit of thought.[503] In his writings on this subject he drew explicitly on Old Testament imagery of God as King and Judge in order to introduce and frame this issue.[504] He argued that good thought needed good judgement, and to judge one must properly understand and see reality. A failure to judge is evidence of a lack of this, for "it is an abdication of reality (and responsibility)".[505] Participation in sacramental worship sharpened the believer's appreciation of the way God was at work in the world. It helped the believer make assessments of the world based on this knowledge, which developed the believer as a person, not just spiritually, but morally and aesthetically too. Christian faith carried with it the responsibility to represent the Gospel as truthfully as possible. As the 1922 Doctrine report argued, holiness in the Church meant that even though the Church was charged with a vocation to be present in, and to, the world there was invariably a tension and the first duty of the Church was to maintain the faith and life entrusted to it, which may have meant withdrawal from the world. Such a withdrawal was not an abandonment of the world to its own tendencies but was a means of bearing witness to the Gospel before the world.[506] It acknowledged the reality of human selfishness and greed, and the manner in which this manifested itself in the very structures of society. Yet Temple also stressed the need to focus attention back onto the life of the Church, for if the Church is to judge its first judgement must be on itself. It must ask how faithfully it presented the sacramental reality of God's intended order in its own life in its own time. It was against this reality that the reality of the world must be judged. The Church must proclaim and demonstrate the love of God in ways that were accessible to all persons

[503] Temple 1923: 52.
[504] Temple 1924: 176ff.
[505] Ibid: 208.
[506] Commission on Christian Doctrine 1938: 108.

and societies. If it fails to do so then it comes under judgment for it has failed to live the life of perfect love and to present that life to society.[507]

Temple wrote of the need to discern between false and true religion – that is religion that represents most fully this sacramental reality and that which does not. As he put it, writing around the time of Hitler's rise to power in Germany, "[r]eligion itself, when developed to real maturity, knows quite well that the first object of its condemnation is bad Religion, which is totally different from irreligion, and can be a very much worse thing."[508] This reinforced Temple's view that people's religious beliefs do indeed have a bearing on the state of the nation. For Temple, Hitler's presentation of a nationalistic folk religion suggested a profoundly evil view of both humanity and the world and was deliberately presented in order to attempt to gain political advantage. Temple argued that the standard of judgement the Church must apply is not one that can simply be reduced to a set of regulations applicable in all time and places. For its criteria to judge was found in the sacramental reality of the Divine, whose ultimate criterion was located in the joy of the resurrection: "[t]he Church of Christ is before everything else the Church of the Resurrection … and the Resurrection is the burden of [its] preaching."[509] The Church must therefore hold forth the hope of redemption and resurrection in the face of the world, showing that God's intention and desire was that of restoration rather than destruction, one of embrace rather than exclusion.[510] The Church itself must pursue this vocation by helping its members to become fully human. Temple's focus was, like Gore's and Maurice's before him, firmly set on the Incarnation. He argued that the standard of the Church was held aloft in the humanity of Christ, since the Son was judge in virtue of His humanity. Temple was keen to repudiate the idea that believers were judged by the standards of a remote and awful deity, and instead sought to assert that "we are judged by the standard of human perfection, found in Christ."[511]

Temple's account of the Church as an agent of God's judgement contrasts with *MSC*'s understanding of the role of the Church in the world: *MSC* assumes the Church's cultural context to be neutral, as such it offers a proper basis for ecclesiology. The double understanding of judgement Temple developed is a model which *MSC* lacks:

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[507] Dackson 2004: 137ff.
[508] Temple 1934: 22.
[509] Temple 1913: 245-246.
[510] Dackson 2004: 136.
[511] Temple 1939: 114.

the ability to both discern one's context and then adequately respond is absent. In omitting this, *MSC* essentially mirrors a contemporary secular, consumerist, ahistorical and atomistic philosophy in its ecclesiological model. It defines holiness as being "willing to die to its own culture in order to live for God in another" (page 97). Such as view of holiness overlooks the calling of the Church to be set apart, and is very different to how Temple understood the Church in judgement, where the Church was also to be separate from the world (in Pauline language). Had *MSC* explored this definition more closely, it might have ended up with a more critical approach to contemporary society and culture than it did. Newbigin – one of the main missiologists quoted in the report – as we previously explored, also developed a model that was similar to Temple's. He too was also critical of contextual theological methodologies that were too sociologically determined.[512] Temple, in representing the Church in critical dialogue with its context, developed an ecclesiology that enabled the Church to work with other social bodies positively and also to witness against the sinful elements within them. Both Temple and Newbigin saw the difficulties contextually based ecclesiologies, such as *MSC*'s, had in forming a critical relationship to their own culture.

Temple's ideas are consistent with the viewpoints of contemporary Anglican thinkers such as Oliver O'Donovan as articulated in *The Desire of Nations,* where the Church is a witness to the truth as expressed in Christ.[513] Like Temple, O'Donovan insists that the Church's mission is one that brings Christ to the state and to its citizens, that offers a model of citizenship and community that elicits desire within all that encounter and see it, a desire to do likewise.[514] Temple's views on judgement also enabled him to avoid some of the difficulties Idealistic theology had led to in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, when the task of the Church became too closely associated with the colonial efforts of Britain. *MSC,* in lacking this critical hermeneutic, essentially makes the same methodological mistake that people such as Fredrick Temple, Moore and Illingworth did, in associating the British Empire too closely with the purposes of God.[515]

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[512] *MSC,* even though it references Newbigin some six times (*MSC* 2004: 31, 46, 91, 94, 95 and 158), does not appear to be aware of his model.

[513] O'Donovan: 1999.

[514] Ibid: 219ff and 385ff.

[515] See Moore 1890: 96-98, Illingworth 1890: 205ff and Temple 1861: 100.

Temple's practical work

Now that we have traced the contours of Temple's ecclesiology this next section will briefly explore how he attempted to make these theological and ecclesiological imperatives manifest in his own life. His involvement in industrial disputes and national church controversies exemplified his insistence on the importance of history, the possibility of the reconciliation of all things through the *Logos,* and his vision of society as a community together working for the common good. Throughout his life he asserted his Christian Idealist views, where a common social purpose and common understanding of citizenship were deployed in order to counter narrow class and economic interest groups. Temple hoped his writings and practical action would engender a wider sense of social belonging and social obligation. This approach was exemplified in five areas of Temple's ministry: first, the Life and Liberty movement; second, the COPEC council; third, his ecumenical work, including the founding of the WCC (World Council of Churches); fourth, the Malvern conference; and finally, his work in the House of Lords.

The Life and Liberty Movement was launched in July 1917 with Temple as Chairman. It sought to reform what it termed to be the "antiquated machinery" of the Church of England by putting in place structures that would enable the church to pass its own legislation, thus avoiding the extremely tortuous and difficult parliamentary route. Thompson notes that between 1880 and 1965 the Church of England had introduced twenty-two Bills on the sale of livings, forty Bills to create new bishoprics, suffragen bishropics and archdeaconries and thirty-two Bills dealing with ritual and liturgy, of which eighty-three were dropped and only one was debated in Parliament.[516] Temple argued that "[i]f the church is to have new life, even if it is to maintain the life which it has, it must have liberty" and "if the church is to be democratic, it must be through representation, councils or Synods possessed of real power to act … Only so can we be again the Church of the people."[517] Through the work of the Life and Liberty Movement, Temple desired to make the church more democratic in its decision making processes by allowing the laity to partake in its governance through the creation of an autonomous Church Assembly. This new assembly would make political intervention possible by allowing the church to put

[516] Thompson 1970: 158.
[517] Temple 1917a.

pressure on Westminster in a way in which, at that time, it could not.[518] Temple saw a new assembly as a means of gaining the Church of England independence in its own life, enabling it to make its own decisions regarding liturgy and doctrine, and also free to change, organise and critique society as it saw fit, whereas at present it was constrained by its own administrative systems.[519] His involvement with this campaign casts light on his theological commitment to a vision of a Church that was engaged socially as well as one that sought to resource its members sacramentally through their participation in the liturgy. Again, we see in Temple's ecclesiology a breadth and depth that is missing from *MSC*. Whereas the missional focus of the Church in *MSC* lies purely in the local, whether this is a parish or a fresh expression, Temple saw the institutional aspect of Church life as indelibly linked to its mission.

In 1918, Temple led a delegation to Lambeth Palace to meet Archbishop Davidson and outline the aims of the movement. Following this the Representative Church Council drafted a scheme that was adopted by Convocations in May 1919 and *The Enabling Act* of the same year resulted in the creation of the Church Assembly. Yet Temple was concerned that his vision had only partially been fulfilled. The Assembly did not admit women, nor did its initial agendas debate the role of the church in wider society. Instead, as the *Spectator* noted, the Church Assembly was largely satisfied with the leadership and direction that was presently offered by those in episcopal government.[520]

Due to the failure of the Church Assembly to have the sort of social and political impact Temple had originally envisaged he elected to continue pressing ahead for reform through the Conference on Christian Politics, Economics and Citizenship (COPEC) which he organised in 1924. Through it he sought to guide the British churches towards political action on a wide range of issues both national and international. COPEC produced twelve reports which examined the nature of God, the role of the sexes, education, the home, the function of leisure, how to treat crime, international relations, the Christian faith and war, industry and property, politics and citizenship and the social function of the Church.[521] The conference met at a difficult time in British politics: the wartime coalition had collapsed, the Labour party had formed a minority coalition in early 1924, and the Conservative Party had reemerged

[518] Kent 1992: 47.
[519] Dackson 2004: 93ff.
[520] Kent 1992: 77ff.
[521] See COPEC Commission Reports 1924.

in opposition to what it saw as the socialism of the Labour party, suggesting that they were not radicals but rather captives to the Trade Unions. This context was not ideal for the sort of radical social transformation envisaged by the COPEC delegates.

However, the *Industry and Property* report does stand out for embodying some of Temple's radical theological vision. It spoke of the need for an alternative vision for society, a vision of equality and community rather than competition and accrual of wealth.[522] It encouraged Christians to work for the motive of service and not gain, and suggested that industry should become a cooperative effort rather than the end of one individual or group over and against another. All those who worked in industry should have a voice in its running. The report also condemned the effects industry had had on unemployment rates and the resultant poverty, which had led to a lack of education and poor health. This document extolled Temple's vision of a just society where there was a more equal distribution of wealth. The distribution of property, for example, should be to the betterment and development of both the individual owner and the whole community.

Plans to develop a movement beyond COPEC quickly petered out and the new 'spiritual factor' that the conference delegates believed Christianity could introduce into the politics of the day did not materialise. In the late 1920s it became clear that right wing politicians and industrialists were prepared to surrender little to organised labour, which in turn led to the General Strike. This was followed by a middle-class reaction to that strike and the failure of the miner's strike of 1926.[523] That the trade unions were defeated, coupled with the resignation of the Labour government in 1931, owing to the financial crisis caused by the Wall Street crash, defeated the idea that the COPEC agenda could influence either the social consensus of the day or the party in power. It became clear that the majority of people wanted social peace rather than social change, even those who were considered churchgoers.[524] Norman is critical of Temple's vision for society, suggesting that it was only to be located in the "episcopal palaces, in study groups and Conferences, in Theological Colleges and University common rooms. In 1926 the door had been opened and a very cold blast had withered the hothouse growths. The Church's passion for social criticism survived the experience, but its growth was stunted."[525] Suggate and Kent were similarly

[522] COPEC Commission Reports 1924.
[523] Kent 1992: 134.
[524] Ibid.
[525]. Norman 1976: 340ff.

critical.[526] Although these criticisms are valid, the conference further illustrates Temple's dedication to enabling people to reach their full cultural and social potential. He hoped that COPEC might help the Church exhibit these cultural and social realities in its own life, acting as a form of judgement on the unjust cultural and social realities that he perceived existed in the industrial era. The attention given to understanding the social and cultural context in which people lived and worked, and the desire Temple had for leaders in the Church to see how the Gospel and the life of the Church related to the contemporary issues of poverty, wage levels, industrialisation, and the more complex theories of the emerging capitalist politics and economics further illuminate the expansive concept Temple held of the Church's role and mission in society. In contrast *MSC* offers a much more constrained and privatised understanding of the Church, and does not offer an account of the role education, for instance, may play in discipleship in the same way that Temple does.

Temple's involvement in the nascent ecumenical movement during the 1930s helped to establish the provisionally-agreed WCC, which he saw as a potential place for the various Christian denominations to come together and give voice to concerns they had regarding current social issues in the world.[527] Temple saw the role of the WCC as an extension of his view of the role of the Church of England. It had the potential to bring a unified Christian voice to bear on the social and political needs of the world. Kent notes that many of the ideas that came out of the early meetings of the WCC can actually be traced back to the Oxford Life and Work conference held in 1937 and organised by Temple. He can thus be seen as one of the key people who contributed to the WCCs formation and early work.[528] Through it, he argued, that local and international churches could steadfastly enter into a deeper unity, which was "full of hope for the future of Christendom and through it for all mankind."[5] Though the WCC has achieved mixed success with regard to Temple's idealistic vision for it, it is clear that Temple saw the WCC and the wider ecumenical movement as part of his theological vision for a global Church that was able to speak to the social and political needs of all people. Though ecumenism is not discussed in *MSC* its understanding of mission is essentially limited to England, offering no account of how ecumenism can enhance its understanding of the Church or the Church's mission.

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[526] Suggate 1994: 146-150 and Kent 1992: 143.

[527] Although the WCC would not be officially established until 1948, over one hundred church leaders voted for its creation in 1937.

[528] Kent 1992: 144.

[529] Temple 1943: prologue.

Temple would have wished to expand this narrow view because fellowship in the Church was not complete until all were brought into the life of the Church, which meant that part of the mission of every local or national church must also include this ecumenical dimension.

The Malvern conference in 1941, organised when Temple was Archbishop of York, was an attempt to ensure that at the end of the Second World War the Church of England would be at the forefront of any social reconstruction processes. The conference further illustrated Temple's commitment to enable Christians to comprehend contemporary social and cultural ills. It was an attempt to prepare the church for whatever eventualities lay after the war and to avoid the unprepared state that the church had found itself in when similar needs had arisen at the end of the First World War. Kent notes that Malvern represented a return to the radical Anglican attitudes towards unemployment and poverty espoused before 1926. These attitudes had re-merged in response to the economic collapse of 1929-31 and the advance of Nazism and Fascism.[530] Temple drew up the Malvern statement which consisted of six propositions that he hoped would lead to a more Christian society. First, every child should find itself a member of a family housed with decency and dignity. Second, every child should have an opportunity for education up to maturity. Third, every citizen should have sufficient income to make a home and bring up his children properly. Fourth, every worker should have a voice in the conduct of the business or industry in which he works. Fifth, every citizen should have sufficient leisure — two days' rest in seven and an annual holiday with pay. Sixth, every citizen should be guaranteed freedom of worship, speech, assembly and association.[531] These themes demonstrated that Temple had not moved away from the optimism of his early theology, and was still attempting to encourage the Church to bring about radical social and political reform.[532]

Temple's continual calls for reform in the Church over the course of his lifetime and his attempts to reposition the Church as the location and trustee of national community were not an isolated effort. They were rightly seen by Kent as a mirror of the alarm many nations and institutions felt in Western Europe in the early twentieth century due to the perceived loss of agreed common values and a concomitant desire

[530] Kent 1992: 164ff.
[531] Temple 1942a.
[532] Kent 1992: 155.

to rediscover or build new ones that would once again hold society together.[5] Temple deplored what he saw as the rampant religious individualism that pervaded the West and longed for the recovery of a moral and spiritual corporate life. This life "if not the whole end of man [was] nonetheless part of his end, and therefore to be regarded in proper proportion as a true end in itself."[534] His theological vision for 'organic unity' found a political expression in the Beveridge Report which led to the founding of what would later be termed the Welfare State. Temple saw the report as an ideal way of manifesting the Divine desire for human relations in social terms. It would result in a society that would look after the health, work, education, housing, old age, and basic needs of its own citizens. He argued in a letter in 1943 that he hoped it would "show the world what is not so much the middle path between communism and individualism as a genuine expression of the sound principles lying behind each."[535] Ideas of equality and cooperation would, in his mind, triumph over the capitalist ideals of acquisitiveness and competition, as they represented the higher ideals of human life. The contrast between the views offered by Temple and the views of *MSC* are again stark. Temple's vision of the life of the national church is deeply embedded in the needs and context of the time he was living in. It came out of a desire to truly understand the philosophical ideologies that lay behind the economic and political realities of his time. Only with this understanding did Temple believe that the Church of England could witness adequately, living out its Gospel calling, which was always public, not purely private, and always communal not purely individual.

Temple from 1921 – when he was made Bishop of Manchester – also actively engaged in the work the Lords Spiritual undertook in the House of Lords regarding national constitutional law. Throughout the twenties and thirties he made speeches regarding the housing conditions of the working classes in Manchester and argued that factory workers were paid solely on the basis of the material value of the objects manufactured rather than a wage that ensured workers could live a dignified life.[536] He also feared that the rising use of technology to increase output in industrial processes might lead to mass unemployment. Temple thought that human beings were in danger of being replaced with machines and those people still involved in these industries would come

[533] Ibid: 51.
[534] Temple 1923: 330.
[535] Kent 1992: 179.
[536] Temple 1925b.

to be regarded as mere tools, marking the beginning of a new form of slavery.[5] Dackson also notes that he frequently spoke out against the increasingly speculative forms of currency exchange taking place at the London Stock Market and actively encouraged legal mechanisms to be put in place to curb such transactions.[538] As Temple himself said,

> [m]oney is in its own nature a medium of exchange, and therefore, if you use it as a commodity in the sense of trying to profit yourself by variations in its value over goods, you are destroying it for its proper social purpose; and there are some kinds of activity in that direction which I think public opinion is tending to think ought to be prohibited, as for example, speculation in foreign currencies.[539]

Temple went on to link explicitly the manipulation of the market with the manipulation of production, which in turn had devastating effects upon the wellbeing of the workers.[540] He argued that laws concerning the fair use of money and trade were necessary to protect and ensure the dignity of workers, particularly those at the low end of the economic scale. Restriction needed to be "put upon economic development by the elementary requirements of human life."[541]

He also campaigned for the raising of the school leaving age from 14 to 16 and he sought to move the education curriculum away from its utilitarian emphasis that prepared young people for work that was of economic benefit.[542] Temple suggested that education should place young people in a "social life or community in which the individual may feel that he has a real share and for which he may feel some genuine responsibility" in order "to draw out from him the latent possibilities of his nature."[5] He was very active in campaigning for religious education and daily Christian worship to be compulsory in all schools and was partially responsible for the inclusion of this requirement in the 1944 Education Act.[544] It ensured the teaching of religious education in all state schools as well as enshrining in law the need for a daily act of worship, both of which vindicated Temple's long-held view that all education needed to be religious in character.[545] Temple was railing against what he saw as an erroneous

[537] Temple 1944a: 87ff.
[538] Dackson 2004: 155ff.
[539] Temple 1944: 154.
[540] Ibid: 155ff.
[541] Temple 1927: 74.
[542] Temple 1943e.
[543] Temple 1944: 89.
[544] Grimley 2004: 204.
[545] Ibid: 204ff.

secular ordering of means and ends, something which his theology consistently repudiated.

Some Criticisms

Before examining the key ways in which Temple offered a more robust ecclesiology than *MSC* it is necessary to deal first with some of the criticisms that are made of Temple and his legacy. Within Temple's work there are several minor weaknesses that would not have been immediately apparent, or would have seemed trivial, to Temple during his own lifetime. Kent points out one of these regarding Temple's views of other religions in public life. Britain was not then the place of religious diversity it is now and that partially accounts for his more prescriptive views.[546] Today British society has embraced social pluralism, that is it seeks to allow a plurality of smaller, less cohesive (at the national level at least) world-views that sometimes seem to be largely irreconcilable with each other, of which the Christian faith is but one main player, even if historically it has been the dominant one. Kent, in his assessment of Temple's legacy, is overly critical on this point, positioning Temple in such a fashion that he seems hopelessly out of date. He misses that within Temple's work there was an account of revelation that is generous, and if developed would have allowed for a generous accommodation of other faiths, and indeed secular reasoning, even if he would still have insisted on the final revelation of Christ. There is also debate within the Church of England about whether the secular thesis of late-modernity, with its insistence on a secular basis for social and cultural plurality, is actually correct. Anglican theologians such as Milbank and Ward think the foundations of secular modernity are actually distortions of Christian theological sensibilities, and that only a thoroughgoing Christian metaphysic can provide a necessary foundation for social and cultural plurality, a view not dissimilar to Temple's.[547] Kent also ignores Temple's early work that outlined a theory of natural revelation that acted as a bridge between the language of the Church, based as it was on certain dogmatic assumptions, and the language of other social bodies, such as the State.

The second criticism that Kent makes of Temple is his lack of experience of life outside Britain. Kent suggests this leads to his theology being overly optimistic. He

[546] Kent 1992: 54.

[547] Kent 1992: 179. See chapter one in Milbank 1990.

compares Temple's optimistic theology to the theologies formed in the aftermath the traumatic events in continental Europe, such as those of Barth and Tillich, who each give less hopeful accounts of human progress. Kent argues that Temple still held to a view that was confident, paternalistic and reformist and "dreamed of re-identifying church and nation, and of making the Anglican Church in its turn the centre of a worldwide Christian unity."[548] However, Kent overstates Temple's emphasis on the place of the Anglican Church in this global Christian unity, and whilst it may be true that the influence the Church has on the state has deteriorated, it is also true that ecumenism has occupied the Church of England for much of the latter half of the twentieth century. This preoccupation has resulted in sustained dialogue with the Roman Catholics and the Orthodox Church as well as substantial agreements with the Lutheran churches of Scandinavia. Temple was also not so focused on the Incarnation that it eclipsed the need for the atonement: he very clearly – following Maurice – gives an account of human sin, both structural and individual, and the great need humanity has for redemption in and through Christ.

However, what cannot be denied is that the social, political and economic landscape of Britain has changed since Temple's time. Grimley notes that during the twentieth century British views of community, citizenship, and the common good developed in ways that take them away from Temple's conceptions. Grimley charts the evolution of the word community, suggesting that it lost its national tones in the sixties and seventies and is increasingly used to refer to local interest groups, as well as functional and racial groups that do not even need to share geographic proximity. Community now suggests limited ends, and limited views, constricted by group interests rather than anything wider, a view that emphasises the plural rather than the integrative.[5] The post-war state also emphasises material rather than moral progress, and civil rights rather than civil obligations, and welfare entitlements rather than duties, reversing the pre-war period of Temple that had emphasised moral behaviour and modest welfare.[550] The Weberian idea that social research should be value free or neutral also served to undermine any idea of a common end or aim and the theological idea of the connectedness of all areas of human endeavour – a view embraced by Temple – diminished in such a hostile environment. Temple predicted in 1942 that the medieval idea of knowledge as a unity, with Christian religion at its

[548] Kent 1992: 33.
[549] Grimly: 210.
[550] Grimly: 214.

centre, was beginning to die in the universities.[551] These changes have led to a lack of common vocabulary to maintain the attention of the public when talking about matters of public interest and pursuit and the vocabulary provided by the British Idealists is simply no longer as meaningful as it once was. The role the Church of England now plays, according to Grimley and Taylor, has also changed, it was the civil religion of the nation in the nineteenth and early twentieth century Britain. Being Christian and being part of a national community went together, and despite denominational pluralism the Church of England could express national identity in a way in which it also stood for other religious groups, and retained its hold on not its own members but on the national community as a whole.[552] Yet this does not diminish the power and theological integrity of Temple's ecclesiology and missiology even if it clearly makes it historic and in part contingent, which far from being a limitation is exactly the emphasis Temple made in his theology. That it must always seek to be incarnational and particular, though never in an uncritical way, and always seeking to bring the theology of the past into dialogue with the present.

Conclusion

We can now move on to summarise how Temple's ecclesiology is of contemporary relevance for the life and witness of the Church of England today. Alongside this we shall examine how, and whether, Temple's views accord with the formularies and ecumenical reports of the Church of England as well as contemporary Anglican scholarship.[553] This will show that Temple does not stand in theological isolation but that his work bears the hallmarks of an Anglican tradition continued to this day.

For Temple, the starting place for his ecclesiology was the Church's sacramental character, where the Good of the Divine was instantiated through the bread and wine, which had the Value of the *Logos*. His restatement of the real presence of Christ, the risen, ascended and glorified Christ, in the bread and wine through his use of a

[551] Temple, *Church Looks Forward:* 37.

[552] Taylor, *Varieities of Religion Today, ch. 3* and Grimley: 214ff.

[553] Although in the Church of England the Canons, the Thirty-Nine Articles, authorised liturgy (e.g. Common Worship, the Ordinal, the Book of Common Prayer), the publications of the Doctrine Commission, and also implicitly, some of the Acts of Synod represent the official sources of its doctrine, ecumenical reports are attempts to represent the church's doctrine in dialogue with other historic traditions. Their status can be seen as standing somewhere in between official sources of doctrine and opinion expressed by Anglican scholars. They represent a key source for Anglican theology and remain a largely unexplored body of work that contains important articulations on a variety of key doctrinal issues facing the Church today.

philosophy of moderate realism enabled him to break out from previous controversies surrounding transubstantiation. It also provided a basis from which his whole ecclesiology would develop a deep concern for the material and cultural world. He argued that the eucharist was the place where the believer most fully encountered Christ. He understood the life of the Church in a thoroughly sacramental manner; for him baptism and eucharist were not optional to the life of the Church or the makeup of the local church, but essential to it. It was through baptism that believers entered into membership of the Body of Christ, and it was through participation in the eucharist, as the central act of Christian worship, that believers were sustained and nourished in their faith through the activity of the Holy Spirit, because they truly encountered the risen, ascended and glorified Christ. It was through sacramental participation that believers were shaped and moulded into the likeness of Christ. *MSC* likewise states quite clearly that, "[a] mission initiative that does not have an authorized practice of baptism and the celebration of the Eucharist is not yet a 'church' as Anglicans understand it"; and that "[t]he Eucharist lies at the heart of Christian life ... if they [Fresh Expressions of church] are to endure, they must celebrate the Eucharist."[554] However, it fails to develop these themes, and the emphasis of the report lies in its insistence that Fresh Expressions of church be allowed to dictate their own practices according to their context. This is made clear in its lack of attentiveness to sacramental theology, which only occupies two small paragraphs in the report whereas contextual theology is discussed in great details over the course of some forty pages.[555] *MSC* fails to reconcile these two 'requirements' because it fails to see that the sacraments are essential to life of the Church – they enable the Church truly to be the Church, as Temple argued. They were the starting points for the life of the Church, not an aspirational goal. Fresh expressions of Church which meet and do not celebrate the sacraments represent a diminishment of the power of the Gospel to transform and renew the people of God, and through them to be effective witnesses and signs of the Kingdom. It is ironic that witnessing is the focus of *MSC,* and yet it misses the key place where God meets with God's people, and where they are transformed into the likeness of Christ, made present in bread and wine, and received by the whole body. This sacramental emphasis led Temple to engage with the material and historical reality of his own day. His view of the real presence of Christ in the eucharist, where the bread and wine signify *and* were

[554] *MSC* 2004: 101.

[555] Ibid: 43-84 for an account of contextual theology and 101 for a discussion of the sacraments in relation to Fresh Expressions of church.

substantiated by the highest Value, that is Christ, who was not merely representative of a figure who lived in the first century AD, but of the whole of a redeemed humanity, enabled him to argue for the importance of the created order and all material and historic things. *MSC's* view of material and historic reality is largely utilitarian, culture is an empty vessel devoid of any value, it is merely a vehicle that enables people to become Christian.

Temple's sacramental understanding of the Church is also well attested in the formularies of the Church of England and ecumenical reports of the last fifty years. Canon B14 states that the eucharist should be celebrated every Sunday and on principal feast days and Canon C15, sees the administration of the sacraments as essential to the ministry of the Church. The ARCIC report, *Growing Together in Unity and Mission,* states that, "Roman Catholics and Anglicans agree that the Eucharist is the effectual sign of *koinonia*" and that "Baptism is the sacrament of faith, through which a person embraces the faith of the Church and is embraced by it."[556] The joint Anglican-Orthodox report *Church as Communion* argues that a local church is "a gathering of the baptised brought together by the apostolic preaching, confessing the one faith, celebrating the one eucharist, and led by an apostolic ministry".[557] The Church of England report *Eucharistic Doctrine* states that,

> [t]he visible communion of Christ's body, entered through baptism, is nourished, deepened, and expressed in the eucharistic communion when believers eat and drink and receive the body and blood of Christ. When his people are gathered at the Eucharist to commemorate Christ's saving acts for our redemption, he makes present and effective among us the eternal benefits of his victory and elicits and renews his people's response of faith, thanksgiving and self-surrender.[558]

Other reports also restate these same claims.[559]

Temple's view also finds affinity with the work of Pickstock and Milbank who both share Temple's concern to defend orthodox Christian belief from secularising tendencies, including materialism and utilitarianism, though they also actively seek to

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[556] The Archbishops Council 2008: § 19 and 33.

[557] Anglican 1991: § 34.

[558] Anglican - Roman Catholic International Commission 1972: § 3 and 1986: § 15 and 24.

[559] Anglican - Roman Catholic International Commission 1986: § 16 and 1991: §18. Anglican - Roman Catholic International Commission 1986: §18, Anglican-Orthodox Joint Doctrinal Discussions 1984: section III, § 4, and Anglican Communion Office 2004: §56. Anglican-Orthodox Joint Doctrinal Discussions 1984: §17. Council for Christian Unity 1988: §VIII, Council for Christian Unity 1993: §XXVI and Anglican-Orthodox Joint Doctrinal Discussions 2010: section VI and 1984: section I part 8ff. and 2008: sections VI and IX.

refute the postmodern turn in philosophy. Their work, alongside Ward's, which forms part of the growing Radical Orthodox movement, presents a contemporary reconfiguration of some of the major themes within Temple's sacramental ecclesiology, and in particular his defence of the real presence of Christ in the eucharist.

Pickstock in *After Writing* boldly re-asserts through her incarnational theology the Christian claim to the centre stage of social possibilities. She defends the doctrine of transubstantiation, holding that the words of consecration in the eucharist, 'this is my body' "are the only words which certainly have meaning, and lend this meaning to all other words."[560] The basis for her work lies in the establishment of the human being as a liturgical subject, where worship enables the participant's subjectivity to be seen as a gift, a gift that is a repetition of the gift the subject receives in the eucharist. This eucharistic gift is corporeally instantiated in the world of time and space, which Pickstock understands to be an affirmation of the material world in all its particularity. Her understanding of sacramentality reflects an acceptance of the graced state of nature and the refusal of a contradiction between reason and revelation, echoing the positions of both de Lubac and von Balthasar, as well as Temple. She argues that from the late mediaeval work of Duns Scotus onwards there emerges a rupture between God and creatures, an "unmediable difference and proximity" that develops against Aquinas' "likeness and proximity". [561] She traces the genealogy of this rupture into modern and postmodern culture, in particular through the work of Derrida. She argues that postmodern civilisation can best be described as a Necropolis, because of its quiet unease with death. For her this represents the nihilistic heart of modernity, the desire of the self to become rid of the horror of mortal annihilation by way of rushing to embrace and anticipate it. As Pickstock argues

> in seeking only life, modernity gives life over to death, removing all traces of death only to find that life has vanished with it. And so there is a nihilistic logic to this necrophiliac gesture, this sacrificing of life to a living death so as to ensure that when death arrives to unmask life of its tinsel, he finds only the presence of absence, life reduced to the deathliness of equivalence.[562]

Her defense of transubstantiation is a corrective to the desire overcome this distance from, and this fascination with, death. She then outlines in more detail in the second

[560] Pickstock 1999: 263.
[561] Ibid: 129.
[562] Ibid: 104.

part of the book a dense theological reflection on the pre-Vatican II Roman rite. Pickstock takes us through the transformation of time and space in the ritual of the Mass, wherein "the configuration of language as simultaneously 'gift' and 'sacrifice' exalts a different and salvific formulation of the various dichotomies which have been seen to reside at the heart of immanentism: orality and writing, time and space, gift and given, subject and object, active and passive, life and death."[563] She argues, *contra* Derrida, that in the eucharist there is a true middle voice that transcends the duality of activity and passivity because Christ's sacrificial presence is "God ineffably both human and divine, active and passive."[564] Language is redeemed from its Babylonian-Derridian fragmentation – where the sign is divorced from signified, presence divorced from absence – through the words of Jesus, who, referring to the sign of the bread and wine as identical with what they signify, "is identifying with his dead body in advance of its absence or death by pointing to something outside of himself, thus claiming death as an act of giving."[565] She argues that the Derridean 'linguistic turn' can itself be 'turned around' or converted so as to restore the sign to its life-giving signified and to reweave death into the fabric of life. As the author herself shows, the perfect model for this is Christ who, having embraced death as a "gift" to humanity, is resurrected from the dead in the anagogic return to the Father. It is precisely this dying and rising up from death that the Mass celebrates. This enables the agency of the believer to be determined by the transcendental gift they receive which reconciles life and death, material and spiritual, reason and revelation.[566]

Milbank and Pickstock develop Pickstock's earlier theology in *Truth in Aquinas*. They argue that the bread and wine at the eucharist, following their controversial reading of Aquinas, provides "the greatest inexhaustibility of meaning" and provides "a basis for the possibility of 'truth'".[567] They also use this eucharistic theology to critique Derrida's account of the sign, his emphasises on the "indeterminacy and flux of meaning" which leads Derrida to a "fetishizing of presence".[568] Following de Lubac they argue that the eucharist makes, and constantly reproduces, the Church; it is not simply a isolated presence, nor merely an empty symbol, for symbols, our signs, cannot be disconnected from the real, the presence of Christ truly and fully. Like Temple,

[563] Ibid: 169.
[564] Ibid: 157.
[565] Ibid: 163.
[566] Ibid: 178.
[567] Milbank and Pickstock 2000: 89.
[568] Ibid: 92.

they stress that only through the faithful reception of the eucharist can we experience our material surroundings as the possible vehicle of the divine, for if bread and wine can now be a vehicle for the divine flesh and blood then all things material things carry within themselves further depth and significance and truth.[569] The rupture of the eucharist becomes the potential rupture of the whole of the material world to become a sacramental presence of the divine life. Like Temple, they argue that this can only make sense if the incarnation is perpetuated throughout time after Christ's ascension in the eucharist. Like Temple they understand they see the eucharist as a synthesis of Divine gift and human labour, represented by the production of the bread and wine, which also symbolises all human sociality, indeed all materiality. This leads to a Temple like affirmation of the particularity of human culture, language and materials, that all are made one in Christ, all are redeemed, now open to seeing within creation the infinite depth of the divine life. The bread and wine "help us understand the miraculous created reality of the everyday".[570] In this work they re-inforce Pickstock's earlier insistence that "[o]utside the Eucharist, it is true, as postmodern theory holds, that there is no stable signification, no anchoring reference, no fixable meaning, and so no 'truth'. This means that there is no physical thing whose nature one can ultimately trust. We have seen how the Eucharist dramatizes this condition, pushes it to an extreme, but then goes beyond it."[571] But they maintain, as Temple did, that this is not a discrete miracle it is rather a sign of promise that pulls all of human culture along with it and within it. The beginnings of trust established in taking the bread and wine is now extended and dispersed into all things, the trust in the gift of all creation, especially the ordinary and the everyday.[572]

Temple also had a particular view on the Catholicity of the Church, or its *koinonia,* which led him to reject the idea that the local church should be made up of only one particular group of people. He argued that this was a diminishing of the Gospel, and an undermining of its power to reconcile people to God through Christ. Temple offered a broader and richer conception of church life through his insistence that believers were reconciled to each other by Christ alone and not through their own interests or commonality; his thoroughly Christocentric ecclesiology enabled such a position. In contrast, the starting point of *MSC*'s ecclesiology is dictated by its cultural

[569] Ibid: 96.
[570] Ibid: 105.
[571] Ibid: 109.
[572] Ibid: 111.

analysis. It states, following on from its adoption of the HUP principal, that, "[t]he incarnation principle points to the planting of churches that are culture-specific for those being reached" and "[s]ociological study shows that, when two cultures are together in a social context, a healthy heterogeneous mixture does not result – one tends to dominate the other."[573] Therefore, the "Church has seldom effectively reached [the poor]. Good news for the poor is only truly good news when it empowers the poor or marginalized to form their own communities of faith, in which indigenous people work together for change and renewal."[574] *MSC* takes this understanding and applies it to all areas of social life, suggesting that there should be churches for mother-and-toddler groups, age-related groups, or churches based around a common social concern, or 'network' interests such as leisure interests, music preferences, and even a particular disability.[575] The uniting element within Fresh Expressions of Church are primarily found in people's interests rather than in the reconciling work of Christ. The starting point for Temple's ecclesiology was a vision of plenitude where all things were reconciled to God through Christ and all relationships were made new and whole in the light of this. *MSC* capitulates to a consumer-orientated form of ecclesial life where people go to church because they meet similar people.

Temple's understanding of the local church was also developed in contemporary ecumenical literature, where the church was understood to be Catholic "because its vocation is to unite in one eucharistic fellowship men and women of every race, culture and social condition in every generation." This Catholicity "is the fruit of the work of Christ upon the cross, destroying all barriers of division, making Jews and Gentiles one holy people, both having access to the one Father by the one Spirit (cf. Eph. 2:14-18)."[576] *Church as Communion* also states that "[a]mid all the diversity that the Catholicity intended by God implies, the Church's unity and coherence are maintained by the common confession of the one apostolic faith, a shared sacramental life, a common ministry of oversight and joint ways of reaching decisions and giving authoritative teaching."[577] Going on to say,

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[573] *MSC* 2004: 108. The Homogeneous Unit Principle (HUP) states that: 'People like to become Christians without crossing racial/linguistic/class/cultural barriers.' In other words, they prefer to remain who they are culturally while changing to being Christian. Culturally they remain the same, and tend to gather with others from the same culture who share their faith. It is this sameness that marks the group as 'homogeneous'.

[574] Ibid: 109.

[575] Ibid: 62-63.

[576] Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission 1991: § 34.

[577] Ibid: § 39.

> God intends the Church to be the re-creation in Christ Jesus of all the richness of human diversity that sin turns into division and strife (cf. Eph. 1:9,10). Insofar as this re-creation is authentically demonstrated in its life, the Church is a sign of hope to a divided world that longs for peace and harmony. It is the grace and Gospel of God that brings together this human diversity without stifling or destroying it; the Church's Catholicity expresses the depth of the wisdom of the Creator. Human beings were created by God in his love with such diversity in order that they might participate in that love by sharing with one another both what they have and what they are, thus enriching each other in their mutual communion.[578]

Other ecumenical reports make similar arguments, stating that "Communion (*koinonia*) is true life (*zóé alethine*) because it overcomes 'being-unto-death', namely individualization and separation, the opposite of communion."[579]

Temple also argued that the Church should be the first fruits of the Kingdom, exhibiting within its own life the fullness of human life. We have already seen how this meant that the local church should be inclusive of all people and that the primary experience of the Kingdom was through participation in the eucharist. Temple's ecclesiology developed out of this understanding. He conceived the Church as the Body of Christ in the world, and individual believers as representative of the Body of Christ in the world. The Church was called to witness to the Kingdom in its own life, and in its interaction with other social bodies, as were individual believers. His understanding of the specificity of the incarnation and the graced nature of creation meant that Temple articulated a broad concept of mission that saw the Church actively involved in every sphere of life, for the horizon of God's salvific activity in Christ affected every sphere of life. Mission was carried out by a thoroughly educated and Spirit led (through sacramental participation) laity; the clergy and bishops were involved in this witnessing, but the laity were the most effective means of mission. The Malvern and COPEC conferences were both attempts to bring this about. Temple, in talking about the way in which participation in the life of the Church disciples, educates, and catechises people, saw this as an essential process in the Church's attempt to renew society as a whole. In his own lifetime, Temple attempted to renew and reform areas as diverse as education, trade unionism, the post-war settlement with Germany, and the League of Nations as well as helping to create what would become

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[578] Ibid: § 35.

[579] Anglican-Orthodox Joint Doctrinal Discussions 2009: section II, § 30; Section II, § 9 and 31.

the Welfare State. Temple also provided a detailed account of the Church's relationship with society at large, drawing from a Platonic reading of the virtues and the nature of community, which complemented his explicitly theological works. The Church neither consumed society nor abandoned it. Instead it stood in critical dialogue with society and the institutions that govern society – what he would term the judging aspect of the Church's life.

In contrast, *MSC* construes mission primarily as the activity of the Church gathered. It does not offer an account of discipleship nor envisage believers being empowered for mission and witness in the social, political and economic spheres of their own lives. Nor does it unpack the Church's relationship to other social bodies, or whether and how the Church might partner other social bodies in order to effectively witness to the Kingdom. Essentially, *MSC* represents a capitulation to a privatised and individualised understanding of the Church and of the Kingdom. By implication Anglican ecclesiology is seen as something that is essentially isolated from the mandate of the Church to be the true image of the Kingdom of God in the world, witnessing to the reality of a Kingdom that affects every area of life.

Yet recent Anglican writers, such as Milbank, in *Theology and Social Theory,* have argued for a return to a more comprehensive, Temple-like, ecclesiology.[580] The work of Radical Orthodox theologians counters the secular notion that Christian religious belief (indeed all religious belief) should be confined to the private sphere having no public place. Williams also suggests that the Church attempts through its actions in the world to demonstrate and embody the way in which the infinite variety of human life and human concerns can be made welcome and at home in its own life which is the life of Christ.[581] *The Church of the Triune God* states that, "[t]he Church's mission is to open up every human situation to the possibility of transfiguration; ... [i]n this new and unique context culture, together with every other aspect of human life, is transfigured, and becomes an occasion for love towards God and love towards the image of God, the human being, as well as the entire cosmos."[582] The Porvoo statement also says:

> The Church, as communion, must be seen as instrumental to God's ultimate purpose ... the reconciliation of humankind and of all creation ... the Church is

[580] Milbank 1990 and 2009: parts two and three and Ward 2000: 1-24 and 2005: 117ff.
[581] Williams 2002: 57.
[582] Anglican, *Triune,* Section III, § 38.

> sent into the world as a sign, instrument and foretaste of a reality which comes from beyond history ... it points to the reality of the Kingdom. The Holy Spirit bestows gifts [which] are for the common good of the whole people ... [a]ll members are called to discover, the gifts they have received and to use them ... for the service of the world to which the Church is sent.[583]

However, the mission of the Church and its members in the world calls for a discerning understanding of the world, of each and every context in which the Church finds itself. To understand ones context materially and historically was a theological imperative for Temple and he developed his idea of double judgement as a means of understanding the world and discerning truth in the world. The Church needed a right understanding of its context – a cultural hermeneutic – which led to, and enabled, the Church to be critical of some aspects of the state or other social bodies. *MSC* does not develop, nor draw upon works that develop, an account of its context in such a critical fashion. On the one hand, the report does appear to be alert to some of the insidious aspects of its consumerist context when it recognises that consumerism "creates a self-indulgent society", but it then goes on to say that "[i]n one sense there is no alternative to a consumer society ... [t]hat is what we are, that is where we are and that is where we must be church and embody the Gospel."[584] It recognises that the values in such a society have "moved from 'progress' to 'choice' – the absolute right of freedom to choose [and that] choice lies at the centre of consumerism, both as its emblem and as its core value." *MSC* then, as we have stated previously, makes choice the centre of its ecclesial missiological strategy, a strategy that we have demonstrated is clearly at odds with the Anglican tradition. Ecumenical reports also stress the need for the Church to be discerning, acknowledging the imperative to bring the Gospel to each and every culture, whilst also aware of the dangers of doing so. The ARCIC report, *Life in Christ,* admits the needs to be open to the world, acknowledging that the Church should not be "an inwardly pious and self-regarding group, withdrawn from the world and its conflicts".[585] Likewise in *Salvation in the Church,* "[t]he Church is required to carry out this task in such a way that the Gospel may be heard as good news in differing ages and cultures, while at the same time seeking neither to alter its content nor minimise its demands."[586] *The Church of the Triune God* states that the

[583] Council *Porvoo,* §14.
[584] *MSC,* p. 10.
[585] Anglican, *Life*, § 15.
[586] Anglican, *Salvation*, § 27.

Church "must remain faithful to the tradition received from the apostles."[587] For "[i]n seeking to express Christology in terms of its own setting, each local church has a responsibility to the whole Church to be loyal to the Gospel. The communion (*koinonia*) of the local churches implies dialogue among them on their understanding of the Christologies of the New Testament and the Ecumenical Councils."[588] This process – the sharing of the Gospel in every age – "constitutes what is called the living Tradition, the living memory of the Church. Without this the faithful transmission of the Gospel is impossible."[589] These reports, like Temple's work, offer a much more robust view of the Church, enabling them to see the Church's need to be in continual critical dialogue with the cultures amongst which it finds itself.

It has become clear that the ecclesiology of *MSC* stands in stark contrast to the ecclesiology of Temple. Yet it is Temple's ecclesiology that is in continuity with contemporary Anglican thought and practice, the theology of Anglican ecumenical reports and the Canons of the Church of England. It was faithful to the sacramental, communal and Catholic understanding of the Church and to the Church of England's own tradition as well as the broader Christian tradition. Yet Temple sought to write a theology that was deeply contextual, taking seriously his own context over the course of his lifetime. He desired to be faithful to the faith he had inherited, yet was always open to the manner in which new philosophies, new social contexts, and new social concerns, could enliven and deepen that faith. His work can only be understood against his context, it cannot – though others have erroneously attempted this – be detached from it. Knowing his context actually enlivens his writings and his practical work vividly illustrates his theological vision. This therefore means that to respond critically to the ecclesiology of *MSC* with Temple's ecclesiological vision is also to take seriously the current context the Church of England finds itself in. For the incarnational and sacramental emphasis of Temple's ecclesiology must lead us directly into an account of the Church of England's reciprocal relations with the culture in which it is situated.

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[587] Ibid, § 29.

[588] Ibid, § 32.

[589] Anglican-Orthodox Joint Doctrinal Discussions 2009: § 27. See also Inter-Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission 1998: I.4.

Chapter Four
The sociology of *MSC*

Introduction

This chapter will focus on assessing *MSC*'s sociology, that is its description of the Church of England's contemporary context. We will examine the claims of the report, seeking to ascertain its sources and whether it accurately represents their views. Then we shall employ the work of a sociologist in order to examine whether the sociology of *MSC* is adequate and also to construct a comprehensive account of English social reality.

There is a need at this point to ascertain what sort of sociology this thesis needs to employ in order to construct a critical account of *MSC's* sociology. First is the question of whether to use a social theorist, such as Bauman, Beck, Habermas or Giddens or an empirical sociologist, such as Davie, Woodhead or Bruce. The empirical sociology of Davie, as well as Bruce and Woodhead, is based upon empirical data gathered to ascertain the continuing relevance of religion socially and to assess in what form religion is developing alongside the emerging economies of the world. Their work is not principally concerned with the various ideologies at work within the social world of the West and the manner in which individuals, institutions (including the Church), and societies are affected by these. Their work is useful in tracing the continuing significance of religious belief and the patterns and forms this belief takes as well as critically tracing the social conditions and ideologies that shape and/or direct that belief. Yet this critical focus is often underdeveloped. For example Davie's work focuses almost exclusively on religious belief itself rather than the general social conditions within which religious groups find themselves. She is interested in the patterns of religious belief, and as such she is helpful in understanding the continuing significance of religious belief in England. Even though her work touches on consumerism and its development in late-modernity, she is less interested in these social forces, their development, and the manner in which they have affected society, whereas the work of social theorist, such as Bauman, is keen to trace exactly these sorts of developments and their import on every aspect of contemporary life. So although empirical sociology would assist this thesis in tracing the continuing influence religion has in and on British society, as well as assessing the empirical merits of *MSC's* sociology, it is not a natural partner for a critical engagement with the

sociology of *MSC,* which is largely determined by a social theorist (Bauman). The social theories of Bauman, Beck, Habermas and Giddens are more capable of assessing the sociology of *MSC* (and in turn, understanding the Church of England's present context) because their work is exactly interested in the ideological forces that have, and do, shape and govern contemporary sociality, which *MSC's* sociology itself attempts to trace.

The work of Beck, Giddens and Habermas does not feature in *MSC* at all, whereas the work of Bauman does serve (in *MSC's* opinion) as one of its sociological sources. The work of Beck, Giddens and Habermas can best be summerised as being concerned with the various social processes at work within modernity. Habermas' is concerned with the influence of social and political systems on the life-world of actors (the 'background' environment of competences, practices, and attitudes representable in terms of one's cognitive horizon).[590] He is interested in the way in which communication is stifled in modernity due to the increasing isolation of actors from the various systems of control and the way in which actors life-worlds are increasingly shaped by the system. Habermas believed that communicative competence has developed through the course of evolution, but in contemporary society it is often suppressed or weakened by the way in which the major systems of social life – the market, the state – have been given over to or taken over by strategic/instrumental rationality. This led to the logic of the system supplanting that of the lifeworld of the actor. He traced the growing intervention of formal systems in actors everyday lives which lessened the ability of actors' to communicate meaningfully in, and to, the widening areas of public life. He argued that the result of this was that boundaries between public and private, the individual and society, the system and the lifeworld were deteriorating. For Habermas democratic public life only thrived where institutions enable citizens to debate matters of public importance. His theory of communicative action, whereby 'pure speech', free from interference by the media, economic, and political processes, could reveal open communication for the transmission and debate of ideas in order to better people's life-world, would, he hoped, lead actors to be emancipated from these systems of control. Although Habermas' work would certainly enliven the Church's understanding of the difficulty of participation, in particular, through communication in Western democratic states, and the ways in which this is being impeded, it lacks the specific focus and breadth that is required in order to understand the multiple ways in which actors' lives are

[590] See Habermas 1981 and 1985.

shaped by the differing forces of modernity and is therefore not best suited for use in this thesis.

Beck's work has largely been concerned with the concept of risk.[591] He argues that in late modernity people's behaviours are preoccupied with how to avoid, prevent, and manage risks, whether they are new pandemics, environmental pollution, or terrorism. He developed the theory of risk society, which is a major characterisation of reflexive modernity (his and Giddens' term for contemporary modernity), concerning how risks can be prevented, minimized, or channeled. These risks are produced by the sources of wealth in modern society. Industry, for example, produces a wide range of hazardous consequences that reach across time and space. Beck has also argued that science has become a protector of a global contamination of people and nature. His most recent works have suggested that subgroups, such as large companies, are more likely than the governments to lead the way when coping with risks. For the purposes of this thesis Beck's work is too focused on the forces of risk in a globalised world, although it offers insight into the way in which risk often characterises actors' behaviour. Like Habermas it does not offer a overarching multi-faceted understanding of the Church of England's context, nor would it easily lend itself to a critical analysis of the sociology of *MSC*.

Giddens developed several major sociological theories, the most well-known being structuration theory, which is a form of social ontology.[592] It sought to define what sorts of things exist in the world, rather than setting out laws of development. It tells us what sociologists are looking at when they study society rather than how a society works. As such it rejected functionalism and evolutionary theory (with regard to sociology) because for Giddens they were closed systems, whereas social phenomena and events were always contingent and open-ended. His theory attempted to close the gap between action and structure by suggesting that social practices by actors produce and reproduce structures through rules and resources. His later concept of Historical Sociology explored, by way of his structuration theory, how time and space are important in understanding social theory and social analysis, particularly the way in which society binds together time and space.

Giddens has also worked on a sociology of modernity, which he argues is given dynamism by three processes.[593] First: time and space distanciation, referring to the

[591] See Beck 1992, 1999, 2009.
[592] Giddens 1984.
[593] Giddens 1990 and 1991.

tendency for modern relationships to be increasingly distant. Second, and related to this, is his idea of disembedding, which involves the lifting out of social relations from local contexts of interaction and their restructuring across indefinite spans of time-space. In such a system, trust becomes necessary because we no longer have full information about social phenomena. Third: reflexivity, the idea that the social practices of modern society are constantly reexamined and reformed in the light of incoming information. Although out of the sociologists examined thus far Giddens work has the broadest range of approaches to sociology in modernity, his work is very closely tied to understanding structures within modernity rather than focusing closely on the affects of these structures on actors. His work, as well as that of Habermas or Beck, would certainly counter many of the deficiencies of the sociology of *MSC* but it does not adequately deal in depth with a culture of consumption and consumerism, which shapes the ecclesiology and missiology of the report.

This thesis contends that it is the work of Bauman that offers the most compelling theory which can best help us can understand the Church of England's social context and offer a substantive critique of the sociology of *MSC*. He is a mature social theorist, and his work has gone through several modifications, being the product of over forty years of writing and researching. Significantly, his work, in contrast to the above sociologists, is deliberately written from the perspective of the UK (though the same could be said of Giddens), where he has lived for the last forty years. He has recently developed a sociological theory of solid and liquid modernity, building on his early works on modernity and postmodernity. This theory seeks to trace the continuing development of contemporary modernity. His work is truly innovative, because it is able to represent many sociological traditions, using the strengths of each, leading his sociology to be rich and varied in its methodological sources.[594] He draws from the insights of Habermas, Beck and Giddens, whilst always focusing on the affect of the social environment and systems on actors. He is concerned with the difficult aspects of contemporary sociality, the often hidden more insidious forms of culture. Central to his work is his theory of consumer culture. He traces the influence of this ideology across the many contours of contemporary society, from industry, to politics, and globalisation. Given that *MSC* itself also attempts to construct a theory of the development of modernity, and the emergence of postmodernity Bauman's work is a natural partner to assess how well *MSC* achieves its goal. Yet the strongest reason for using Bauman is that he is also one of the main sources of the sociology of

[594] Beilharz 2010.

MSC. Given that a critical examination of *MSC* forms the basis of this thesis it is therefore important to critically access Bauman's sociology, accessing how well he is represented, and if he is not well represented whether his work might actually have been of benefit to the construction of *MSC's* sociology. However, before we consider the sociology of Bauman we must first trace the sociology of *MSC* itself.

The Sociology of MSC

In chapters two and three we explored the theological development and genealogy of *MSC*. We noted the importance of contextual theology and sociological material as the basis for its missiology and ecclesiology. Within the working papers of *MSC* it was clear very early on to those compiling the report that, "[t]he post-modern context is accepted as the given – [it is characterised by] mobility, fragmentation, connectivity, materialism/consumerism."[595] The report goes on to describe the apparent widespread and systematic social changes that have occurred over the last few decades of the twentieth century in England. First, it asserts that society is increasingly dominated by the power of networks, which affect family life, employment patterns, housing patterns, financial markets, the economy, the power of the nation state and social mobility on a national and international scale. This results in what it terms "a fragmented society".[596] It claims these local changes are also mirrored within the wider Western world, which is also increasingly dominated by the emergence of a network-based society.[597] Second, *MSC* argues for the emergence of consumer-orientated culture; people's identity is now found in what they consume not what they produce. Citizenship is no longer predicated on the modern notion of progress, where what one produced contributed an overarching vision of better life; we now contribute by being 'good' consumers. A core value of this new society is that the proliferation of choice fulfills the needs of the individual. Truth claims have become based on choice and relativised to the desires of the individual, and what they understand best fulfills their needs. *MSC* suggests that such a networked and consumer society is essentially theologically neutral, stating that "there is no alternative to a consumer culture. This is where we are, and where we must be church and embody the gospel."[598] However, it

[595] Notes from Breaking New Ground 2 Meeting 2002b.
[596] *MSC* 2004: 1-4.
[597] Ibid: 4-5.
[598] Ibid: 10.

does argue that consumerism, at its worst, can create self-indulgent societies, where the poor are excluded because they cannot consume.[599] *MSC* sees these social changes as part of the emergence of a postmodern society, which presents unique problems to the contemporary church, and as such requires some unique missiological and ecclesiological responses, as we previously explored. Several of the Fresh Expressions explored in *MSC* are introduced as responding to this postmodern culture.[600] We also noted in chapter one that there is a notable reliance upon the early work of Bauman (through secondary literature), who *MSC* uses to reinforce its theory that Western society had undergone a sociological shift from the culture of modernity to that of postmodernity. The report also draws on qualitative research from the Henley Centre to further illustrate these changes.[601] *MSC* describes a radical discontinuity between the present modern culture of the Church of England and the culture(s) of postmodernity. This results in an ecclesial discontinuity between the present ordering and practices of the Church of England and the emerging ordering and practices of Fresh Expressions of church within these new cultures. Crucially for this thesis, the argument that the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries brought about a cultural shift from modernity to postmodernity allows *MSC* to suggest that these extreme social changes create a parallel need for the Church to explore radical shifts in its ecclesiology in order adequately to address the requirements of these new contexts. Yet are the claims that *MSC* makes shared up by other sociologists? Does the work of Bauman construct such a harsh distinction between the cultures of modernity and postmodernity to justify the ecclesial turn that *MSC* makes? Or would Bauman reject such a reading of his work? I will demonstrate over the course of this chapter that *MSC* actually misrepresents Bauman, and also draws on a particular strand of sociology that has seriously been questioned in the last few decades.

MSC also couples the emergence of postmodernity with the emergence of post-Christendom, relying on the work of Murray-Williams.[602] *MSC* links the demise of Christendom to the rise of individualism and the emergence of consumer culture, where people can now 'pick and mix' their religious beliefs as they see fit, seeing no need to adhere to traditional religious frameworks, nor institutional forms of religion.[603] As a result of this in the last half of the twentieth century the Church of

[599] Ibid.
[600] Ibid: 45 and 64.
[601] *MSC*, p. 5.
[602] Murray-Williams 1998 and Bartley 2005.
[603] *MSC* 2004: 6.

England has experienced a rapid decline in attendance, as well as the number of baptisms, confirmations and funerals, resulting in what Brown calls, "the death of the culture that formerly conferred Christian identity upon the British people as a whole."[604] For Brown, if a core identity survives for British people, it is certainly no longer Christian. The culture of Christianity has gone in the Britain of the new millennium.

MSC's advocacy of social postmodernity is also partially based in its adoption of certain contextual missiologists' positions, as well as its reliance misinterpretation of Bauman. In chapter two we traced the genealogy of *MSC,* noting how it drew upon the sociology found in Bosch, Newbigin and Murray-Williams. Each argued that a significant cultural shift had occurred within the West that called for an entirely new mission strategy and ecclesiology. Bosch advocated that a paradigm shift was underway from the culture of the Enlightenment to a post-enlightenment, or postmodern, culture.[605] Following Bosch, Newbigin also argued that the West had moved from a modern to a postmodern era, placing the Western church in a new missionary situation which required radically new missionary methods.[606] Stuart Murray-Williams – quoted several times in *MSC* in relation to its assertions that Britain is entering a post-Christendom era – also emphasised that a postmodern culture was the setting for the demise of Christendom, and that there is a close relationship between the end of modernity and Christendom, and the emergence of postmodernity and post-Christendom. He, like *MSC,* argued that there needed to be a radical discontinuity between the mission practices and ecclesiology in Christendom and the mission practices and ecclesiology in post-Christendom.[607]

The social description of English culture that *MSC* outlined has not been revised in current Fresh Expressions of church literature or teaching material. The official Fresh Expressions website states that Fresh Expressions of church are primarily a response to the emergence of a postmodern culture within Britain. Fresh Expressions core team member Norman Ivison states that, "I have always been amazed at the imagination and daring some Christians show as they begin to take mission seriously and want to encourage others to take real risks in this post-modern age."[608] The Fresh Expressions

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[604] Brown 2001: 193.
[605] Bosch 1991: 349-362.
[606] Newbigin 1996: 7-12 and p. 64ff and 1995: 27 and 46ff.
[607] Murray-Williams 2004 and 2005: 12ff and 228ff.
[608] Fresh Expressions 2012d.

webpage describing ordained pioneer ministry states that pioneers are those who have "opportunities to focus on Christian engagement with postmodern society".[609] On the Share the Guide website[610] under the section 'Fresh Expressions and post-modern society' it states that "Fresh Expressions can be seen as more personalised forms of church – Christian communities that are 'customised' to specific networks and neighbourhoods."[611] The website also allows practitioners to contribute with stories and reflections from their own Fresh Expressions of church: the majority use the term postmodern as a general cultural descriptor.[612] It also states that Fresh Expressions are churches that "are wrestling with the challenges presented to the Christian faith by 'post-modern' culture, thought and behaviour."[613] The 'Mission Shaped Ministry course', a taught introduction to starting and developing Fresh Expressions of church, states in its introductory session to culture that, "[t]here are obviously a host of factors in our post-modern world, such as advancing technology, expansive media, increasing opportunity for local and global travel, not to mention individualism and materialism."[614]

In summary, we can see that *MSC* argues that a cultural paradigm shift has taken place from the culture of modernity to the culture of postmodernity. We see that it constructs this social account partially based upon its reading of Bauman. It goes on to claim, based on this paradigm shift, that the Church now needs to be market-driven, placing itself as another product which must compete in the marketplace of religions. However, the report fails to develop any sort of critical hermeneutic towards such a culture, an important weakness that will be explored further when we outline Bauman's own critical take on consumer culture.

We shall now move on to explore the work of Bauman. Given that his work forms part of the theoretical basis of *MSC,* it is important to consider whether it adequately represents him and whether the report's assertions regarding missiology and ecclesiology are justifiable in light of a critical reading of his work. We shall also explore whether current sociology broadly accepts the postmodern thesis that *MSC,* Bosch, Newbigin and Murray-Williams all advocate.

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[609] Fresh Expressions 2012e.
[610] A site hosted by Fresh Expressions that gives advice on starting and sustaining Fresh Expressions of Church.
[611] Accessed from http://www.sharetheguide.org/section1/3/postmodern on 12/12/2010.
[612] Share the guide 2012a-i.
[613] Ibid 2012i.
[614] Mission Shaped Ministry Course 2012.

Introduction to Bauman's work

Bauman can best be described as a sociologist, yet attempts to place his work in a particular sociological discourse or category are difficult because it steadfastly refuses any such categorisation. Jacobsen and Poder state that he has variously been called a "'storyteller', 'socialist', 'structuralist', 'critical theorist', 'humanistic Marxist', 'existentialist', 'hermeneutic sociologist', 'postmodernist' [and even a] 'poet-intellectual'".[615] Bauman resists attemps to classify his work and deliberately uses a variety of sociological discourses, including those listed by Jacobsen and Poder, to elucidate and enliven his work. Bauman himself, when explaining his own method, says that, "[i]n all my books I constantly enter into the same room, only that I enter the room through different doors. So I see the same things, the same furniture, but out of a different perspective."[616] Bauman's approach can best be described as a form of cultural sociology, which holds together the strands of culture and power, image or symbol and human relationships.

His work constantly dialogues with existing sociological categories, criticising their assumptions and developing new ideas by bringing together previously disparate elements. Metaphors are used systematically to illustrate the lived experience of different people. Central to his sociology is a deep concern for the human consequences of social development. He does not deal with abstract social processes but is always turned towards the effects of social change and social occurrences on people's lives, particularly those who are marginalised and excluded by new social developments and conditions. His work therefore always has political and moral concern. Blackshaw suggests that the whole gamut of his sociology can be understood as seeking an answer to the question of how social development in modernity has affected the "morality and suffering of human beings and their concerns with

[615] Jacobsen 2008: 3.
[616] Welzer 2002: 109.

community, love and memory and the pain and happiness [these social processes] bring."[617]

His method also exposes his concern that sociology can be wedded too closely to descriptions that have outlived the era that gave rise to them, for "concepts tend to outlive the historical configurations which gave them birth and infused them with meaning."[618] Development within his own sociology suggests that Bauman takes this claim seriously. He sees sociology as part of an ongoing communal effort by humans to understand and comprehend their social environment in order to better it, and in particular to help focus on the way in which social conditions affect people's freedom and morality, causing some to suffer. Smith, Bielefeld and Bunting have each traced these central concerns of Bauman to two key experiences. First, Bauman's own experience as a Jewish member of the exiled Polish Army, who fought in the battle to liberate Berlin and in Poland during the fifties and sixties. He was an initially loyal but increasingly critical member of the Communist Party, being expelled in 1968 and having to flee to Britain as a political refugee because of the increasingly anti-Semitic sentiment towards him and his wife. Second, his wife's experience of surviving the Warsaw ghetto and then hiding for two years from the Nazis in order to avoid deportation to the death camps.[619]

Bauman's use of Marx, Weber, Durkheim, Freud and Foucault, as well as insights from the Frankfurt School, can best be seen in light of these formative experiences. They also clarify his desire to explore the darker side of modernity. Bauman develops the the work of the Frankfurt School which was critical of Marx because it believed his work had succumbed to economic determinism, was too mechanical, and was too focused on a purely economic critique when it needed to focus on the whole of social life.[620] It attempted to broaden Marx's thesis to include the cultural realm, and it was critical of existing modern sociology because of its scientific posivitism which made sociology captive to the existing society and unable to critique it by transcending it. It could not help people who were oppressed because it focused too narrowly on the society as a whole rather than on individual actors. It could not say anything meaningful about political change, and became "an integral part of the existing society

[617] Blackshaw 2005: 16.
[618] Bauman 1982: 192.
[619] Bunting 2003 and Bielefeld 2002 and chapter three Smith 1999.
[620] Ritzer 2006: 144-148.

instead of being a means of critique and a ferment of renewal."[621] Bauman followed the Frankfurt School's reorientation of Marxism and incorporated a subjective element in his own work, enabling him to bring to the fore an understanding of the influence of the subjective elements of the social at both individual and cultural levels. Bauman also developed their thinking on ideology, the role it played within culture and the manner in which people were dominated by it, of particular interest for this thesis is his thinking regarding consumer culture and commodification.[622]

Bauman also followed the Frankfurt School in suggesting that domination in the modern world occurred more often via cultural than just economic processes.[623] He, like the Weberian-Marxists, focuses on cultural domination at work in modern societies, particularly the increasing rationalisation of modernity. He adopted Weber's distinction between formal rationalisation – that is technocratic thinking whereby the goal is simply to find the most efficient means to ends – and substantive rationality – the hope for society founded in terms of the ultimate values of peace, justice and happiness. The Frankfurt School identified Nazism in general and concentration camps in particular as formal rationalisation, a theme Bauman would reflect in his first major work.[624] Though Bauman's work focused on late capitalism in modern or liquid modern culture, he developed the Frankfurt School's work on domination and technology through his exploration of globalisation and virtual geography, the concept of the stranger, the subsuming of politics to consumerism and the reorientation of desire.[625]

Bauman was also influenced by several other theorists who helped him to modify and develop his early sociology. Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* gave Bauman a way to conceptualise society in general as analogous to the society of the factory: an institution of confinement and discipline itself.[626] Bauman was also influenced by Freud in his critiques of nationalism, and its reliance upon the figure of a scapegoat.[6] Bauman argued that if classical culture was shadowed by Sisyphus, Prometheus and Oedipus, then modern Western culture's striking figures are Frankenstein – the hideous other that must be destroyed – and Faust – the willingness to sacrifice

[621] Tar 1977: x.
[622] Agger 1991 and Schroyer 1973.
[623] Ritzer 2006: 144ff.
[624] Bauman 1989b.
[625] Ibid.
[626] Foucault 1991.
[627] Freud 1965: 295-296.

everything to satiate one's own desires. Bauman saw nationalism as the cultural embodiment of these figures because it encouraged citizens to destroy or expel those who did not fulfil certain racial types, and was also willing to remove or suspend certain civil liberties to carry out this task. Bauman was interested in the dark side of these forces, arguing that nationalism rests on the postulation of the 'other', an enemy to be overcome and destroyed. He developed this idea using Simmel's category of the 'stranger' (one who comes and goes, who is offered provisional or probationary belonging or assimilation, but whose type of belonging is always tentative, open to suspension at the will of the host).[628] Bauman's later work on liquid modernity, would give the 'stranger' and the 'other' new names – the 'vagabond' and the 'tourist' – representing a new type of master-slave relationship, a domination based on mobility rather than just capital.[629]

The starting point for Bauman's work was a severe critique of some of the classical assumptions sociologists held about modernity. Although this thesis will use Bauman's theory of Liquid Modernity both to critique *MSC* and to provide a more adequate sociological basis, it is necessary to trace the manner in which this theory developed from within his oeuvre, for its sociological hallmarks emerge from these earlier works. We shall briefly trace the two major foci – modernity and the holocaust and potmodernity – that would lay the groundwork for his most recent and mature theory.

Bauman and Modernity

The sociology of *MSC* argues for social postmodernism based partially on its misreading of Bauman it is important therefore to demonstrate that Bauman's work actually takes seriously the continuing significance of modernity. Even though he would later modify his thesis of modernity and postmodernity the themes of modernity would still continue to animate and guide his work. *MSC's* use of his theory fails to take this into account. *MSC* posits a clean break between the culture of modernity and the culture of postmodernity that Bauman himself does not argue for.

Bauman's early work focused on the culture of modernity, which he characterised as a "movement with a direction", driven by universalisation, systemisation and

[628] Simmel 1950.
[629] Bauman 2000.

rationalisation.[630] Modernity was a way of organising society that was geared towards resolving the problem of order. It sought to bring about the homogenisation of individuals, who were expected to share similar values, attitudes and beliefs. Bauman suggested that the kind of societies we now call modern emerged in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[631] Prior to this, society was largely ordered by religious world-views, but during the eighteenth century religious world-views began to break down and as a consequence people saw that the world was actually less ordered than they thought, it was more contingent and people became increasingly disenchanted. He suggested that people responded to this by seeing difference, discord and chaos as the enemies of society.[632] This discord led people to construct a society around order, marking the beginning of modern society, a society that sought to "disqualif[y] any uncertified agency."[633] Every attempt was made to preclude activities that destabilised society in its struggle for survival and there was a firm belief that progress could only be sustained by the state ignoring the judgements of individuals and acting in what it believed to be its own interests. Bauman argued that the modern mind was like the mind of the gardener who is horrified by the weed that ruins his view of the garden: the key knowledge was that he knew what a weed was.[634] Bauman argued that this was why utopias played such a prominent role in modern society. They provided an endpoint, functioning as a beacon to guide the long march of modernity, they enabled it to continue to rid itself of difference in the hope of progressing towards a perfect society.[635]

Bauman was interested in the darker aspects of modernity, and his first major work on modernity, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, mounted a serious critique of the forms of society modernity had created. In this work, he argued that when people thought of the Holocaust they thought of it as an exception, a regression into barbarism, something unique and peculiar that had happened to the Jews.[636] Most sociologists at that time viewed the Holocaust as a breakdown of modernity or a special route taken within it.[637] Yet, Bauman asked, was there a closer connection between the holocaust and modernity? Was the Holocaust a natural result of modernity rather than a

[630] Bauman 1991a: 188.
[631] Bauman 1991b: 31ff.
[632] Ibid: 61ff.
[633] Bauman 1991a: 190.
[634] Bauman 1989: 219ff.
[635] Bauman 2002: 222-223.
[636] See introduction Bauman 1989.
[637] Varcoe 1995: 221-223 and 231-234.

regression? For Bauman, the Holocaust was a byproduct of the modern quest to establish an ordered world. The modern paradigm of rationality was found in the Holocaust, for "considered as a complex purposeful operation, the holocaust may serve as a paradigm of modern bureaucratic rationality."[638] Bauman, following the same line of thinking as Arendt's famous work, *Eichmann in Jerusalem,* argued that the Holocaust needed modern means for its implementation: modern bureaucracy.[639] He rejected the thesis that the Holocaust was caused primarily by anti-semitism. Instead he argued that anti-semitism was a modern form of social engineering – the desire to create a better social order by either the modification, or in this case the eradication of those elements that are not as desired.[640] The Holocaust involved the application of the basic principals of industrialisation – factory systems in particular – to the destruction of human beings. It treated humans as cargo, the raw ingredients of the factories, which poured forth the smoke of smelted human beings.[641] Bauman argued that "[t]he truth is that every "ingredient" of the Holocaust – all those many things which rendered it possible – was normal; not "normal" in the sense of the familiar … but in the sense of being fully in keeping with everything we know about our civilisation, its guiding spirit, its priorities, its immanent vision of the world."[642] He then focused on the increased efficiency of action and the effects it has on individual morality, using both the Milgram experiment on obedience to authority figures and Zimbardo's experiment on the psychological effects of becoming a prisoner or a guard as comparable evidence.[643] He argued that these modern methods had given rise to a disconnection between the actor's actions and the victim's suffering by virtue of providing a substitute morality of duty and discipline; this disconnection was also observed by Milgram and Zimbardo in their own experiments. Historically, these forms of rationality and organisation also promoted cooperation by the Nazis' victims. The Jews were themselves part of the process, in that it encompassed them; the ghetto itself was "an extension of the murdering machine"[644] – the leaders of the ghetto communities carried out most of the preliminary bureaucratic work. Bauman argued that as social relationships are rationalised so the possibility of these sorts of inhuman

[638] Bauman 1989: 149. Arendt 1963.

[639] Bauman 1989: 76ff. The Holocaust was also dependent on the modern phenomena of racist theory and the medical-therapeutic syndrome.

[640] Ibid: 65.

[641] Ibid: 8.

[642] Ibid: 8.

[643] Milgram, 1974 and Haney 1973.

[644] Bauman 1989: 136.

immoral action increases.[645] Yet the Holocaust was not an end in itself - it was a means to an end. It was a moment when the quest for order was carried out in its most brutal fashion. It was made possible by, and unthinkable without, the rational world of modernity.

Jacobsen argues that Bauman's thesis undermined much modern sociology which had argued that modernity was essentially a civilising process.[646] Weber saw modernity as providing the progressive rationalising of all spheres of social life, he missed its darker side which Bauman illuminated.[647] Bauman suggested that the Holocaust had fatally exposed the true *telos* of modernity and had contributed to its unraveling, an unravelling which resulted in the emergence of postmodernity. This was a theme that would occupy Bauman for his next three major works.

Modernity and the Holocaust has received some criticism: some suggested that Bauman's view of modernity as a quest for order is a little too simple and one sided.[6] Mann, for example argued that Bauman downplayed the specificity of the Holocaust – particularly the coming together of important factors such as ethnic nationalism, that embraced racism in its own self-understanding, and imperial expansion through militarisation, which became linked to the expendability of certain ethnic groups.[6] Despite these shortcomings however, *Modernity and the Holocaust* represented a key development in sociology, introduced some of the central themes that Bauman would develop in his later works, and also clearly reflected his concern with the darker aspects of modern culture. This focus shows how *MSC* in postulating a neutral view of culture misrepresents Bauman, for Bauman's work is always turned to the shadows, to the sinister. By ignoring one of the central concerns and critical aspect of his sociology *MSC* succumbs to a form of cultural positivism which neglects – at great cost – the more destructive aspects of the Church of England's cultural context. *MSC* even occasionally makes these an essential component of its missiology and ecclesiology, suggesting, for example, that poor people should have their own form of church, or that increasing social fragmentation into cultural ghettos should be embraced by the church, further highlighting the acceptance of a market and consumer driven ideology. Bauman categorically rejects the idea of cultural neutrality, and, like the Frankfurt

[645] Ibid: 154.
[646] Jacobsen 2008: 7-8.
[647] Ibid.
[648] Marshman 2008: 85ff.
[649] Mann 2004.

School, sees such a line of thinking as incapable of critically assessing its own culture, and, by implication, remaining largely unaware of, and therefore incapable of, re-imagining society away from its more destructive elements.

Bauman and Postmodernity

Given that *MSC* emphasises Bauman's theory of postmodernity it is necessary to assess how well it represents him. In particular *MSC's* depiction of the relationship between modernity and postmodernity. Has *MSC* placed too much emphasis on the discontinuity between the two and does Bauman himself make such a move in his own sociology?

Bauman has been described as one of the foremost sociologists of postmodernism, its high prophet.[650] During the late eighties, and early nineties, Bauman published a trilogy of books that argued that a postmodern turn had occurred during the late twentieth century in society, theory, culture, ethics and politics, representing a new stage in modernity.[651] These works mark his second major foci. In contrast to modernity Bauman viewed postmodernity as: "[m]odernity conscious of its true nature", a form of modernity that was self-critical, self denigrating and self-dismantling.[652] The most visible characteristics of postmodernity were "institutionalised pluralism, variety, contingency and ambivalence."[653] Bauman was particularly concerned with this last characteristic – ambivalence –characterised by action that takes place within a habitat where individual human agents have to choose between many rival and contradictory meanings. Bauman argued that increased ambivalence in politics had led to greater inequality, as access to knowledge, and the ability to understand and process that knowledge, was the key to freedom and enhanced social standing. He argued that over the course of the twentieth century there had been an increasing disenchantment with modernity which lay in its inability to confront three challenges: preventing moral anaesthesia, coping with subcultural heterogeneity and encouraging a sense of personal moral responsibility.[654] Each of these failures contributed to creating a climate of ambivalence that meant people were

[650] Smith 1999: xff.
[651] Bauman 1989a and 1993 and 1995.
[652] Bauman 1991a: 187.
[653] Ibid.
[654] Smith 1999: 134ff.

unable to commit to personal moral responsibility. Bauman thought that these conditions could not be overcome, they were part of the nature of modernity, fundamental flaws that made it unacceptable. Increasing rationalisation, culminating in the Holocaust, had robbed modernity of its emancipating power – it had simply become another weapon in the hands of the state. A new intellectual order had been imposed that forced a particular vision of truth and reality, that of capitalism. Bauman follows Marx's critique of capitalism, suggesting that it emerges and sustains itself culturally and materially as entirely natural and always seeks to deny the possibility of an alternate reality.[655] His work in the nineties on postmodernism placed great stress upon the irrepressibility of difference, otherness and ambivalence within society and culture. Each of these characteristics was extirpated by scientific posivitism.

Bauman argued that unlike modernity postmodernity could not be reduced to statistical formulae. Instead, personal agency was carried out in a habitat that was totally undetermined, chaotic, and made up of many competing potential solutions. Individuals were able to construct and deconstruct their personal image and make-up seemingly without end. He argued that this "process of *self-constitution* ... has no visible end; not even in a stable direction."[656] The focus of identity construction was on what people ingested and what people wore – all commodities. The possibility of a life-project where people could advance their lives through meaningful stages in a fixed landscape was impossible. Instead people were forced to orientate themselves in whatever ways they could and form allegiances through their own choosing, rather than on any predetermined basis.[657] Bauman suggested that there was a close link between the advanced forms of consumerism that emerged in the eighties and nineties and the emergence of postmodernity, a claim he would refine and develop in his work over the next fifteen years.[658] Postmodernity was a globalised version of capitalism, where the idea of a local community making local decisions had been annihilated due to the power of the global markets.[659] Whereas within modernity people were primarily seen as producers in a Fordist world – you were what you did – in postmodernity they were primarily consumers – you are what you own.[660]

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[655] Beilharz 2000: 43.
[656] Bauman 1997: 194.
[657] Ibid: 194.
[658] Bauman 1991a: 59.
[659] Bauman 1998a: 51ff.
[660] Ibid 32ff.

Bauman argued that in a postmodern society there was no longer a set of experts who handed down knowledge and interpretation. This created a great deal of uncertainty in people and led them to try to compensate for this by creating mutual meanings for themselves through what might be termed consumer cooperatives.[661] This process could be seen as a form of *bricolage,* where the cultural fragments of modernity were put into new uses and developed in new ways in many different contexts. This gave rise to the re-emergence of the assembly, of sociality, where people felt part of a crowd, an 'imagined community'. Such eruptions were short lived and tended to focus on singular issues, or interests, which united people for a time.[662] Ethics were affected in the same way, changing irrevocably in postmodernity. Whereas in modernity ethics were largely fixed, handed down and contained in a rulebook, within postmodernity there was no fixed framework.[663] This could lead to paralysis, an inability to act, which was further reinforced on a global scale where there was an even greater lack of coherence in order and determinacy and frequently meant that the 'other' was ignored in society, or passed by, and global issues were not possible to address.[664]

Bauman's sociology of postmodernity represent a development of his sociology of modernity. He saw postmodernity as the natural result of the culture of modernity. It offered new perspectives on community, ethics and politics, founded largely on the end results of the modern concepts of individualism and consumerism. Although we can see clear parallels between Bauman's description of social reality and that offered by *MSC;* they both depict a stark fragmentation of society, leading to the loss of a common sense of purpose and identity; they both argue that society has fractured into groups that are united by self-interests fuelled largely by consumerism. It is Bauman alone who develops a critical re-action to this development. *MSC* in contrast views postmodern culture as neutral. *MSC* also over-emphasises the break between modernity and postmodernity whereas Bauman, although keen to ascertain the differences emerging within postmodernity (the centrality of choice fuelled by consumer desire, truth as a set of competing narratives rather than a singular metanarrative, the ability of actors to engage in identity construction via technological development and particularly new media), also stresses its continuity with the culture of modernity, seeing postmodernity as a natural development of modernity not

[661] Ibid: 140.
[662] Bauman 1993: 143.
[663] Crone 2008.
[664] Bauman 1993: 210ff.

something new. Bauman would go onto modify his language, introducing the metaphor of liquidity in order to better illustrate these changes, but his analysis would remain largely the same. His continuing analysis of his own work would result in these two early foci – modernity and postmodernity – being further refined in his theory of liquid modernity. Which would distill further his understanding of contemporary social conditions.

Critical remarks on postmodernity

Given that *MSC,* as well as the secondary Fresh Expressions literature, assumes that the conditions of postmodernity stand in stark contrast with those of modernity, it is relevant to ask whether or not this is actually the case. In the last twenty years many social theorists such as O'Neill, Frow, Kumar and Calhoun have seriously questioned the theoretical assumptions, and practical analysis, of postmodern sociology, and leading social theorists Habermas, Beck and Giddens have also produced counter theories of modernity.[665] One of the most frequent contentions of these critics is that while there are undoubtedly elements of modern thought that have been seriously questioned, such as the monolithic idea of progress, others are still seen as vitally important and are socially retained – for instance, the power of reason and argument and the importance of individual autonomy are two simple examples amongst many.[666] The clean cultural break described in *MSC* is simply not reflected in these sociological accounts, and certainly not in the work of Bauman.

There is also a difficulty that arises with the use of the term postmodern. Giddens argues that modernity has always had its critics and always been reflexive to those criticisms.[667] The work of Marx, Adorno and Nietzsche are all indicative of this. The hubris of postmodernity is that you can somehow stand outside of modernity and, looking beyond it, announce its end with a triumphant finality. In Bauman's work on postmodernity the basic values that animate his discourse are still those of modernity – freedom, justice and human dignity, never does he develop a thesis that totally abandons these modern conception, instead they still animate and dominate his work. Kumar and Antonio argue that the substantive analyses of postmodern theory

[665] O'Neill 1995 and Calhoun 1993 and Frow 1991 and Kumar 1995.
[666] Giddens 1990: 2-3 Habermas 1987: 197.
[667] Giddens 1990: 38.

culminated in a one-sided emphasis on cultural and social fragmentation that ignored societal interdependencies and devalued social solidarities.[668] We see this same one-sided emphasis in *MSC*. Moreover, Ritzer concludes that classical theorists, including Marx, Durkheim, and Dewey, conceptualised the interdependent and integrative features of modernity, *and* the forms of disintegration and fragmentation, providing illuminating and broad perspectives on contemporary social formations.[669] These works, alongside Bauman's, thus avoided the rather one-sided emphasis that we see in *MSC*.

Antonio and Kellner argue that postmodern social theory lacks the language and theoretical basis to critique oppressive social movements, because such movements can be classified as 'simulacra'. They conclude that such theory reflects "a vision of an isolated and alienated intelligentsia within a social ordering sliding towards more extreme inequality and polarization, about which they are unable to theorize."[6] Postmodern theorists, such as Baudrillard, also reproduce the theoretical despair of Adorno and Horkheimer, seen in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* in the face of the triumph of fascism.[671] Baudrillard's work succumbs to an overarching framework of pessimism, with its focus on the culture of death in society, which results in a profound catastrophe. There is no hope beyond this catastrophe, nor any sense of how to avoid it – it just is.[672] Frow argues that in the end, postmodernists' totalising claims continue in the tracks of classical sociology, but without the conceptual tools and analytic methods to provide a satisfactory account of the alleged postmodern condition.[6] *MSC's* claim that "in one sense there is no alternative to a consumer society. That is what we are, that is where we are and that is where we must be church and embody the gospel"[674] carries within it a profound pessimism that echoes that of Baudrillard, that the cultural context the Church finds itself in cannot be changed or transformed, it simply is.

Some of the leading social theorists today – Habermas, Giddens and Beck – also argue that we still live in a society that can best be described as modern and about which we can theorise in the same way previous social thinkers have. Giddens uses the

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[668] Kumar 1995: 153ff. and Antonio 1994: 142.
[669] Ritzer 2008: 502-503.
[670] Ibid.
[671] Adorno 1979.
[672] Baudrillard 2010.
[673] Frow 1991: 36ff.
[674] MSC: 10.

terms radical, high or late modernity to describe society today to indicate that it is not just the same as the one described by classical theorists.[675] Beck contends that early modern society was best associated with industrialisation processes, whereas contemporary modernity is best associated with risk society. Habermas sees modernity as an unfinished project, whose central issue is still rationalisation (as Weber suggested) – the utopian goal is still the rationalisation of the system and the life world.[676] Bauman's work would also go onto modify his language, lessening his focus on modernity and postmodernity and instead reflecting the manner in which the culture of modernity has and is changing.

MSC appears to be unaware of this recent scholarship on modernity and postmodernity and is cutoff from resources that would have indicated that its sociology is underdeveloped and one-sided. A deeper reading of Bauman would have also alerted it to its one-sided reading of his work. *MSC* and other Fresh Expressions literature overstate the level of change that has occurred socially and in doing so weaken their argument for radical missiological and ecclesiological change. Had *MSC* argued that the social conditions within England had only altered incrementally rather than significantly, it would not have been able to make as strong case for its ecclesiological recommendations; instead it would have had to pursue a less radical agenda. As we have seen, there is much consensus amongst social theorists that we are still indelibly in the modern era, and modern social theories still have much to offer analysing of our contemporary context, even if they need to be attuned to its technological and social complexities. Bauman's work in particular offers a nuanced reading of our context, especially as he would continue to develop it further to take into account some of the above criticisms of postmodern theory. Given that the social description offered by *MSC* is an inadequate basis for understanding the Church of England's contemporary context, we will now explore whether this latest development in Bauman's thesis, his theory of solid and liquid modernity, offers a more complete and compelling basis from which to reconstruct an Anglican ecclesiology and missiology.

[675] Giddens 1997.
[676] Habermas 1992.

Liquid-modernity and the ideology of consumption

Bauman's account of liquid modernity arose out of his desire to continue to try and test his own sociology against the ongoing changes in contemporary western society, as well as to take account of those who were critical of postmodern sociology. He now wished to draw a distinction between two phases of modernity – the solid and the liquid, echoing Beck and Gidden's. I shall now explore three facets of Bauman's thesis that offer a better basis than *MSC* for understanding the Church of England's social context. We will briefly rehearse what Bauman understands by solid modernity, that is the social conditions of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, how these began to change and in what ways, and also the conceptual framework and tools that Bauman's thesis uses. We will then go onto explore the specific social conditions that have now emerged. First, his concept of the consumer society, and the manner in its ideology dominates daily life. We will also examine in what ways this ideology can be seen in *MSC's* ecclesiology and missiology. Second, the casualties of consumerism, that is the effects that is has on those who are on the margins of society, whether or not it creates a new type or class of 'poor', and as such what this might mean for the Church's understanding of its mission. Third, the death of utopian thinking with liquid modernity and its concomitant affect upon social life and whether this also enlivens an aspect of the Church's mission. We will then briefly examine some critical remarks concerning Bauman's thesis before drawing some general conclusions regarding the usefulness of Bauman's concept of liquid modernity as both a critique of *MSC's* sociology and also a basis for understanding the Church of England's context.

A brief history of solid modernity and the emergence of liquid modernity

Modernity, as we previously explored, was ushered in with the collapse of certainty. Bauman characterises its solid phase as one that emerged with the rise of industrial capitalism and scientific knowledge, which people used to erect new structures, replacing older traditional frameworks. In solid modernity people were primarily producers employed in factories and nationalised industries protected by unions and welfare state provisions. For Bauman the key descriptive metaphor for solid modernity was Fordism – representing increasing industrialisation, rationalisation, bureaucracy

and constant mechanisation.[677] Bauman saw Fordism as representing the epistemological building site upon which solid modernity was constructed. Within such a society, gratification was characterised by long-term security, and the storing up of goods.[678] Value was placed in reliability, trustworthiness, order, and durability. Economically, Keynesian theory was prevalent and the governments of the post-Second World War period sought to establish healthy growth in partnership between government owned businesses and private companies. This era was marked by a closed market attitude and an emphasis on state intervention in the life of the individual.

Within England this changed significantly under Thatcher in the eighties. She introduced privatisation and opened up the marketplace to external competition, encouraging a free market economy, which paved the way for a competition-based economy. Credit constraints were liberalised to fuel growth, and manufacturing output continually dropped.[679] Unions were dismantled and in their place market forces and consumerism began to provide security and demand for jobs. Labour, under Blair, became increasingly influenced by 'Third Way' theory, continued privatisation and reduced the regulation of the market.[680] Competition was introduced into the state sector, and previous welfare legislation was slowly eroded.

A second important change that precipitated the collapse of solid modernity was the decline of the modern idea of progress, the slow march of society towards its perfection. The two World Wars had significantly weakened people's belief in modern progress and eventually by the end of the twentieth century the belief had largely eroded all together: as we shall see, time became focused on the present moment rather than some future possibility or potential.[681] Bauman terms this new age liquid modernity and we shall now briefly trace its contours before exploring three of its facets in more detail.

Bauman argues that in this new liquid modern age, older social structures are melting.[682] By this he means that we now live in a world where nothing can be relied upon to stay the same. The forces of individualism and globalisation have led to the collapse of the solid modern era of nation, state and territory and the emergence of a

[677] Bauman 2000: 57ff.
[678] Ibid.
[679] Beckett 2006: 2.
[680] Giddens 1998 and Blair 1998.
[681] Bauman 2000: 29.
[682] Ibid.

new world order where only the 'global elite' – the opposite of a 'vagabond' or 'stranger' – are totally at home and able wholly to participate in a consumer society. As Bauman states, "liquid life is a precarious life, lived under conditions of constant uncertainty."[683] Structures such as the family, class and neighbourhood, which previously provided a solid robust framework for society, are now being 'liquidated', or, as Beck would say, becoming 'zombie categories', reconfigured in new ways that reflect the ideology of consumption.[684] Individuals can no longer count on these older solid modern structures to provide meaning and order for their lives. People no longer train for a job for life – they are told that they need to be flexible. Life in this new world is characterised by insecurity and fear, fear of being left behind, for those who succeed are those who are the most agile. Looseness of commitment is an asset – commitment can constrain the individual – human bonds and partnerships acquire a fluid and ever-changing character. Bauman even argues that the State has lost its once-dominant position of political power – for there is a growing divorce between power and politics. Power is sucked up into the abstraction of global markets, and sucked down into the individual, who is now forced to reckon with the end of the welfare state and an increasingly privatised form of care.[685] Collective solidarity – the idea of the community – is an increasingly hollow idea. The concept of citizenship has been fatefully undermined. The link between the well-being of the individual and the well-being of the community has been removed. Individuals now compete with one another; collaboration is no longer the norm. The art of public life is increasingly privatised by the needs of the many and various individual concerns.

Bauman argues that the metaphor of liquidity best captures the present state of contemporary life. He writes we should "consider 'fluidity' or 'liquidity' as fitting metaphors when we wish to grasp the nature of the present, in many mays *novel,* phase in the history of modernity."[686] Fluidity is "[t]he truly novel feature of this social world [and describes] the continuous and irreparable fluidity of things which modernity in its initial shape was bent on solidifying and fixing."[687] Jacobsen and Marshman compare Bauman's use of metaphors to describe social reality to the action of a fisherman casting his nets into a sea attempting to catch fish, though Bauman is

[683] Bauman 2005: 2.
[684] Bauman 2000: 4ff and Beck 2002: 202ff.
[685] Bauman 2000: 185ff and 192ff.
[686] Ibid: 2.
[687] Bauman 2004a: 19-20).

attempting to catch insights into our present and past social conditions.[688] These metaphors also illustrate Bauman's utopianism, as they are designed to be open-ended, indicating possibility rather than mere descriptions of things as they are, both describe what *is* happening and what *could* happen. Bauman observes that, "we live in a society which no longer recognises any alternative to itself and therefore feels absolved from the duty to examine, demonstrate, justify (let along prove) the validity of its outspoken and tacit assumptions."[689]

Bauman's use of metaphors within this new thesis also extends beyond those of 'solidity' and 'liquidity', but these additional metaphors still chiefly concern the way in which modernity has dominated different social groups, particularly immigrants, the unemployed and those in short-term, low-paid and unskilled employment. Such groups are termed the 'waste' or 'vagabonds' of liquid modernity. These metaphors represent a "people without role, making no useful contribution to the lives of the rest, and in principal beyond redemption."[690] Bauman suggests that in liquid modernity such people are 'disposed' of, deliberately invoking his earlier work on the treatment of the Jews in the Holocaust and showing that his work on liquid modernity focuses on this same basic issue and how it manifests itself in a world of global capitalism and consumer culture and ideology. Those who do the disposing are characterised as 'gardeners' who rid the 'garden' of 'weeds' or 'waste'. Bauman himself argues that using metaphors is an important sociological strategy because it helps him avoid the temptation to construct a systematic sociology. He states that, "I flirted once with the idea of an all-embracing, all-accounting-for and all-explaining system of knowledge, composed as a series of points and sub-points and narrated in a compact story with a clear beginning and even clearer end … enthusiasm for such a project gave way to outright resentment."[691] Instead, Bauman goes on to argue that he understood his task as "an ongoing conversation with human life experience, and the last thing I soon began to expect in that experience was the king of systemness, cohesion, comprehensiveness, iron-clad logic and elegance once sought, and occasionally found, in philosophical argument." Over time, Bauman admits to "becoming wary of imputing to the human condition more logic that it contained and could conceivably ingest and absorb – lest the sociological portayals of that condition shall miss that

[688] Jacobsen and Marshman 2008: 22.
[689] Bauman 2001: 99.
[690] Bauman 1998a: 66.
[691] Z. Bauman 2008: 235.

most crucial, even if infuriatingly elusive, attribute that makes it human."[692] He goes on to argue that the

> non-sequiturs, ambiguities, contradictions, incompatibilities, inconsistencies and sheer contingencies for which human thoughts and deeds are notorious should not be viewed as temporary deficiencies not-yet-fully-extinct … [t]hey are rather the crucial, constitutive features of the human modality of being in the world … and sociological analysis needs to attune itself to their ubiquitous and perpetuate presence.[693]

He sees his own work in this light, suggesting that "each successive [sociological] response should be aware of being a gambit, an introduction and an overture – not an *Endspiel,* conclusion or final verdict."[694] Bauman sees the task of his sociology as "the hope to enhance the scope and the potential of the actors' freedom through offering them a better insight into the social setting in which they perform their tasks and which they (most unwittingly) co-produce."[695] Bauman sees his, and sociology's, task as one that helps humans to comprehend or make sense of their life experience, and ultimately helps people to have a degree of control over their own life-pursuits. Sociology should enable people to be critically aware of their own social conditions and conditioning and should open the door to possible alternative social arrangements by mitigating against the prevailing ideologies and life philosophies.

Bauman also argues that in liquid modernity the task of critical theory has changed. Its task used to be protecting the individual from the domination of society, from the panopticon – as seen in the work of Foucault, Hawkheimer, Adorno.[696] The task now is not to protect the individual but rather to reinvent and reinvigorate the public domain, which is at risk of disappearing.[697] The danger today is that the political domain will be stripped of all its power and that the private will engulf the public, leaving nothing but talk of private pursuits. Within society, Bauman argues that there are several contested areas of life where the processes of liquid modernity are fatally undermining the idea of the public domain: consumerism and relationships, strangers, and the eradication of utopianism. We will now examine Bauman's claims for each of these areas, asking whether his theory can withstand critical scrutiny (bearing in mind

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[692] Ibid.
[693] Ibid.
[694] Bauman 2008: 236.
[695] Ibid: 236.
[696] Ibid: 25ff.
[697] Ibid: 38ff.

the above criticisms) and if so what these processes and areas of contestation say to the life, work and witness of the church.

The consumerist society

Sociology has nearly always had a productivist bias and has historically focused on industry, work and workers. This is most obvious in Marx and neo-Marxian theory, but is also found in the work of Durkheim and Weber. Yet within their analysis consumption was rarely explored: only Veblen's work on conspicuous consumption and Simmel's thinking on money and fashion ventured into this terrain, until recently.[698] Initial postmodern sociology saw consumption as playing a central role in social life – society was a consumer society. Baudrillard's *Consumer Society* and Lipovetsky's work on fashion both reflected a growing interest in this area.[6] Bauman's theory of liquid modernity places consumption at the heart of liquid life. For Bauman, consumerism can now be seen as "the principal propelling and operating force of society",[700] in that it co-ordinates systemic production, provides social integration and social stratification; it is the essential component in individual formation and helps in the process of individual and group self-identification.

Bauman suggests that the solid modern notion of Hegelian progress, where the *telos* of time is discernable and desirable, has disappeared; instead, life is hurried from one experience to another.[701] Time is consumed: once each moment is passed it is disregarded and replaced with the next moment and experience. Society now thrives on the rapid turnover of commodities, as evidenced in viral marketing campaigns that desperately try to garner attention in those few moments before a product is launched, before it is swept away under the ever-increasing tide of new things. Liquid modern time emphasises transience and novelty, a reversal of the solid modern emphasis on durability and lastingness.[702] This results in a shortening of the gap between desire, gratification and disposal: embodied in the language of advertising: 'this autumn's destination is'; 'this month's look is sequined and pleated skirts'. A month can be an eternity, with the obvious implication that whatever is bought will shortly be

[698] Veblen 1994 and Simmel 1972.
[699] Baudrillard 1998 and Lipovetsky 1994.
[700] Bauman 2007a: 28.
[701] Bauman 2000: 91ff.
[702] Ibid: 125.

redundant and must quickly be disposed of or changed.[703] This desire for the new is not just constrained to products – cosmetic surgery can enable the body to be renewed to match the norms presented in magazines, television and billboards. This power to annul the past, and even change one's body, as Shestov notes, was once the sole preserve of God, yet it is now a way of life – past events, past looks, past relationships, can all be negated, and their power to effect life reduced or even eradicated altogether.[704] Such statements are however, difficult to sustain as a purely liquid modern phenomena. Distorting the body in order for it to conform to various social norms has a long social history going back thousands of years, Chinese foot binding being an obvious example. Bauman's argument is over-reaching itself. It would be better to suggest that the ability of actors to change and transform their bodies has become much more obtainable on a mass scale and much more widely practiced than it has been historically marking the continuing development of the ability of actors to create new and different selves in myriad ways.

Bauman argues that this ability to change continually and transform one's life could be seen as a present day substitution for religious salvation or redemption, yet one that is more attractive because it can be realised in the immediate horizon of the everyday.[705] The promise of happiness and satisfaction permeates a consumer society's value system; happiness is promised in this earthly life, in this instant. Yet this promise is also based on a lie, for people cannot become satiated but need to remain on the move, advancing to the next new thing that promises satisfaction; there must be a gap between what is promised and what is experienced. Bauman recognises that were society suddenly full of satiated people the economy of consumption would stop, and consumers would disappear, for satiated people are the death knell for a consumer society.[706] Recent statistics on debt, both individual and national, support Bauman's argument: individual debt per household at the end of 2010 was nearly £9000 (rising to nearly £18,000 including mortgages),[707] an increase of 350% since 1993.[708] Waste levels have risen by over 25% between 1984 and 2004,[709] and Government borrowing has grown from also a surplus of -£243 million in 2001/2002 to record levels of

[703] Bertman 1998: 97.
[704] Shestov 1966: 2.
[705] Bauman 2007a: 113.
[706] Ibid: 46.
[707] Creditaction 2012a.
[708] Creditaction 2012b.
[709] DEFRA 2012.

£106,510 million in 2009/2010.[710] Bauman sees consumption as a means to invest in one's own social membership, and products offer themselves as having investment value. A persons vocation is as a consumer: products are potent signs of membership and social standing and remaining part of a consumer society means continually partaking in consumption. Consumer markets are the battleground where the rights to build these identities are fought. So whereas some would attempt to see this new consumer self as the final mastery of society, *homo eligens*,[711] Bauman rightly suggests that "the conquest, annexation and colonization of life by the commodity market has resulted in the elevation of the written and unwritten laws of the market to the rank of life precepts."[712] However, Bauman's negative assessment of individuality and identity construction in liquid modernity also has its positive sides in comparison with the fixed forms of identity construction that were characteristic of solid modernity. By arguing that "the idea of individualization is the emancipation of the individual from the ascribed, inherited and inborn determination of his or her social character,"[713] he marks the transformation of identity from a 'given' to a 'task'.

Bauman argues that the commodification of everyday life has also had a profound effect upon the way individuals conduct relationships.[714] Hochschild's research validates his view and shows that

> [c]onsumerism acts to maintain the emotional reversal of work and family. Exposed to a continual bombardment of advertisements through a daily average of three hours of television workers are persuaded to 'need' more things. To buy what they need now, they need money. To earn money, they work longer hours. Being away from home for so many hours, they make up for their absence at home with gifts that cost money. They materialize love. And so the cycle continues.[715]

Bauman argues that people are becoming less and less socially adept in relationships, increasingly lacking the resources to deal with confrontation, misunderstandings and conflict; instead these are seen as the pretext to break off communication, escape and burn up relational bridges behind you.[716] This cycle of relational disappointment

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[710] Guardian 2012a.
[711] Twitchell 2005: 269ff and Danziger 2005: 238ff.
[712] Bauman 2007a: 61.
[713] Bauman 200: 144.
[714] Bauman 2000: 160ff.
[715] Hochschild 2003: 208ff.
[716] Bauman 2000: 148ff; Independent 2012.

further re-inforces people's reliance upon anything but the immediate object of their own desires. As Levinas prophetically said, "society may be a place where self-centred, self-referential, egotistic people emerge, who neutralise or silence the haunting responsibility for the 'Other' which is born whenever the face of the other appears."[7] The rise of internet dating, which two-thirds of single people in the UK are now using,[718] and the proliferation of social networking sites such as Facebook, further illustrate Bauman's argument. Relationships are increasingly treated in the same way people would think about buying a house or a car – they are commodified. This way of relating is, for Bauman, the opposite of true I-thou relationships, where devotion, solidarity and love are key elements,[719] and as Klima notes, consumer relationships represent the de-legitimisation of questions.[720] The safety provided by the knowledge that you can cut someone off with just a mouse click is much easier, more trouble free, and more instantaneous, than actual physical relationships.

It is clear that Bauman's work on consumerism and commodification does offer genuine insight into the social conditions in which the Church of England is called to minister. Bauman's concept of liquid modernity and the ways in which this manifests itself through the dominant ideology of consumerism and its subsequent effects on open social relations is particularly pertinent to the ecclesiology of *MSC* in two ways: first, the manner in which daily life has been commodified; second, the re-alignment of desire, where desire is satiated in the desiring itself rather than the object of desire.

Miller, in his recent study on consumerism, *Consuming Religion,* outlines several important ways in which Christian faith and Christian communities have been particularly affected by consumerism.[721] His work offers an important theoretical framework, developed from the work of Bauman, through which we can understand and examine the ecclesiology of *MSC.* Miller argues that religion and religious communities are not isolated from the effects of liquid modernity, nor the ideology of consumerism. He goes on to say that this is because religious practices are akin, though not identical, to a proper culture. Religious life consists of dogma, symbols, values and practices, and the meanings of religion are interwoven in these interrelations; they provide a coherent structure of theology and are related to

[717] Levinas 1981: 9.
[718] Bristow 2012.
[719] Bauman 2007a: 21.
[720] Klima 1999: 60-62.
[721] Miller 2006.

religious authorities and the institutions that help relate these things to each other.[7] Religion itself is subject to these same forces and is equally susceptible to abstraction and reification. Within a consumer culture, religious dogma, symbols, values and practices are treated in the same way as other commodities, and suffer the same degrading treatment. They are removed from the complex cultures, histories, traditions, and communities that enable religious practices to shape daily life for believers. Instead, they are reduced to "abstracted, virtual sentiments that function solely to give flavour to the already existing forms of everyday life or to provide compensation for its shortcomings."[723]

Consumer culture disturbs the traditional make-up of religious life by allowing people to decouple religious practices from their setting. Commodification in particular has deeply affected religious life in England. Miller suggests that the most obvious response from religious communities has been either to attempt to confront the heretical elements of consumerist ideology or to condemn the unjust practices and behaviours it elicits.[724] Yet this tactic, though historically well attested, simply does not work. The problems religion faces in a consumer culture are of a different order, for consumerism has little interest in censoring or condemning activities of religious communities. Any beliefs, even those that are most hostile to consumerism and most critical of capitalism are embraced with enthusiasm. Prosaic examples of this would include the appropriation of the organic and slow food movement by the supermarket giants and the incorporation of the anti-capitalist protest movements into popular mainstream culture through the commodification of its signature leaders (Che Guevara, for example). This process occurs because beliefs are not seen in competitive or conflicting terms. They are merely invitations, people are invited to choose, and then to choose and choose again. Whether each choice, when thoroughly scrutinised by a philosopher or theologian, brings some sort of ideological or dogmatic conflict is not an issue.

The pursuit of choice, and the ongoing need to choose, have also manifested themselves in religious communities in the guise of the religious 'seeker' or the 'spiritual tourist'. Such people, and communities, detach religious belief from its institutional and traditional communal setting and construct their own forms of

[722] Ibid: 5-7.
[723] Ibid: p. 105.
[724] Ibid: p. 5.

religious life that are synthesised from diverse traditions and sources. They represent a commodification of the religious life. Such communities and people are not necessarily shallow nor narcissistic: they are simply seeing religion in the same manner in which they see food or clothes and are happy to construct hybrid communities and practices which are totally abstracted from their original setting. As Miller suggests, this is not something new – syncretism has always taken place – but the ease with which we can do it and our endless ability to reconfigure it are new.[725] However, a key contemporary difference is that people are also able to draw from a dizzying array of global sources to construct these new forms of religious life. It is perfectly feasible for a religious service to use elements from every major historic era and every continent.

Bauman also argues that within liquid modernity there has also been a reshaping of desire: desire has stopped becoming attached to things but is found instead in the pursuit of things, it is about the joy of desiring itself, and a desire for this to be endless.[726] The actual consumption of things is disappointing as the object can never live up to its promise. Miller, developing Bauman's thinking, suggests that desire drives the process of consumption and commodification, and is constituted by the never-fulfilled promise of consumption.[727] The fulfillment of desire is most found not in the consuming act itself but rather in the joy of the desiring. Banal, everyday objects are marketed in a manner that offers profound values and unmitigated joy. This form of desire is similar to religious desire and resembles "longings for transcendence, justice, and self-transformation enough to be able to absorb the concepts, values, practices of religious traditions into its own form without apparent conflict."[728]

This subverts the religious quest into something more sedate and domesticated. Elements of religious belief and tradition are now fragmented into discrete, free-flowing signifiers which are abstracted from their interconnectedness with other religious doctrines, symbols and practices, and from the conditions of their production. This abstraction has weakened the ability of religion to affect people's daily practices because the prior comparative coherence of religious belief and behaviour has been lost and contemporary practices are subjected to more basic religious desires and sentiments. The concept of 'spirituality' is one such occurrence of this form of religious practice. However, 'spirituality' is not necessarily, as is often accused by therapeutic-

[725] Ibid: 5.
[726] Bauman 2003: 9ff.
[727] Miller 2006: 107ff.
[728] Ibid: 144.

based critiques, narcissistic or shallow, although it does correlate with a modern, socially isolated form of individualism and it is this isolation that is the source of its problem. Commitments to a religious set of disciplines and practices are difficult to sustain and develop without a form of shared communal life and belief. This shared life also provides a coherent framework of social structures that enable these practices to develop and mature.

Miller's thesis is a convincing development of Bauman's understanding of consumption applied to contemporary religion; although it primarily focuses on religion in the United States, it is clearly applicable to a British context. Using Miller's theory, we can see that the ecclesiology of *MSC* represents a commodified form of church life, because *MSC*'s understanding of the Church is largely conceptualised in a manner that is detached from the traditional Church of England understanding. 'Church' has become a free-floating signifier that can be marketed and branded in the same manner as other commodities according to the needs of a given context or the desires of a certain market. We can see this in the way in which *MSC* suggests that there need to be churches for mothers-and-toddler groups, age-related groups, or churches based around a common social concern, or 'network' interest such as leisure interests, music preferences, and even a particular disability.[729] The practices of these Fresh Expressions are contextually determined, with each community discerning for itself the manner in which it will worship, and the form that this will take.[730] Because of this Fresh Expressions of church become much more susceptible to manipulation and misappropriation by their own members: Christian practices that have deep historic meaning can be put to multiple uses that can potentially be in contradiction to their original purpose. Fresh Expressions can easily become decoupled from the symbols and practices – the eucharist, baptism, common liturgical texts – and dogma – the canons, liturgy and ecumenical reports – of their origin. There is the possibility, and danger, that such communities will simply change and adapt their practices from one thing to another, repeating the endless cycle of desire.

We noted in chapter two Newbigin's warning about contextual theology that is too contextually determined, and how the Church always needs God's 'no' as well as God's 'yes' to culture; we also explored Temple's concept of double judgement. *MSC*'s missiological theory appears to have ignored or been unaware of such critical thinking.

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[729] *MSC* 2004: 62 and 63.
[730] Ibid: 43-84.

The effect of the commodification of Fresh Expressions is threefold. First, it removes – as we also explored in the previous chapter – some of the central transformative resources and practices that enable believers to become like Christ. Instead, it replicates the experiences people would have with any other product, and encourages people to think of religious life, religious practices, and beliefs, like any other product. Second, Fresh Expressions of church become unable to relate to other Anglican churches because their forms of church life are so different. Third, this commodification also significantly weakens the possibility of maturity because the basis of religious belief remains harnessed to consumerism, tied to cultural bonds rather than the Catholic, Apostolic faith that we discussed in the previous chapter.

A key problem with this form of consumer culture is that it also misdirects well-intentioned people, who are seeking to do good things, and show solidarity with other people. They remain unable to find spiritual transformation and a community that will sustain this ongoing process. People see consumer culture as liberating. It frees them from the closed constraints of small communities, and the prescribed gender, class and political roles that previous generations endured. Consumer culture liberates them from the multiple sources of authority such as teachers, bishops, pastors, friends, as new sources of authority can be created and assimilated in an instant. It is a narrative that is alluring and seducing, bringing myriad options to people's daily routines, and offering a counter-soteriology to that of the Christian faith – acting as a faithful consumer.[731] For such people the moment of choice is seen as the key means by which they develop, the choice itself is the resolver of conflict, bringing inner happiness and peace. Traditional patterns of self-transformation are subordinated to this process and a chasm erupts between belief and practice as "people sincerely and mistakenly assume they are acting on the beliefs they are choosing."[732] Bretherton draws attention to this process when he examines the potential for social media to lead to social change. He uses the example of Facebook.[733] Within Facebook, users can be invited to join causes that have a group page, which you can link to and repost so that others can join. Bretherton rightly points out that people joining such groups may be confusing the desire to give to a charity or advocate a cause with the actual act of giving or acting.

[731] Consumer soteriology has been explored by Beaudoin, who argues that consumer society functions in a way analogous to a religious society, what he terms 'Theo-capitalism' (Beaudoin 2004). Christopher Dawson also suggests that the collapse of the nation state has created a vacuum for the church in terms of religious support, and it is perhaps into that gap that maybe the consumer society has produced its own 'religion'. Dawson 1998: chapters six, thirteen and fourteen.

[732] Beaudoin 2004: 225.

[733] Bretherton 2012.

Essentially social media has been fetishised – it is given the value that should be given to concerted action – and the process of fetishisation (valuing good things in the wrong way – or what theologians call idolatry) dissolves the ability to act together. Communication as a form of exchange medium has replaced action.[734] When people do encounter religious practices they are often made present to them in a fragmented and commodified form, meaning that the original connections between desires, beliefs and practices are broken apart, and as such religious practices are far less likely to result in personal transformation where participants lives are drawn away from conformity with consumer culture. Instead, religious practices become something altogether different, being somewhat decorative, a gloss rather than a deeply connected set of disciplines that shapes and informs the whole of life, social, political and economic.

The ecclesiology that *MSC* outlines potentially suffers from exactly this sort of problem. The Church actually needs to deepen people's ability to understand and read the culture(s) they are situation in, and the manner in which the Christian tradition enlivens, affirms and critiques that culture(s). This is not to say that some Fresh Expressions do not enable people to connect with the Christian tradition: they do, albeit in a modified and basic way. They should allow and encourage people to deepen their understanding of, and familiarity with the riches of Anglican worship, acting as a bridge between local parish churches and the communities they are situated in. The Church of England needs to begin this process by significantly modifying the recommendations of *MSC* in order that Fresh Expressions of church relate more deeply to the understanding of the Church explored in the previous chapter. The Church needs to model relationships that emphasise devotion, solidarity and love, based on care and respect for the other, rather than the self-centred ways of relating outlined by Bauman. In addition, churches need to be places that are full of the social diversity of the areas they minster to: *MSC* merely mirrors the social and relational fragmentation occurring within Britain, whereas the Church is called to welcome all, because we are all reconciled to God through Christ rather than our cultural similarities. The theological and liturgical framework conveyed by baptism and the eucharist offers a way of doing just that because it enables people to encounter the gift of love made present in the grace of Christ in a community being made holy. The biblical narrative contains a profound counter narrative to that of consumptive

[734] Dean 2012.

relationality, emphasising the need for those who preach and teach to be excellent hermeneutists of both Scripture and culture.[735]

Consumerism and its casualties

Bauman's thesis of liquid modernity also focuses on the destructive impact consumerism has had upon the poor, who are often hidden, or whose voices are often marginalised.[736] A key figure in his work in this regard is that of the 'stranger'. Bauman brings together Simmel's work on the stranger with a reading of Levi-Strauss' *Tristes Tropiques.*[737] In this work, Levi-Strauss speculated that if we examined cultures from the outside we could potentially distinguish between two types of culture. First, those who are cannibals, who consume individuals who posses dangerous powers as a means to neutralise those powers, and even turn them to an advantage. This is the *anthropophagic* (from the Greek meaning man-eating) that annihilates strangers by devouring them and then metabolically transforms them into a tissue indistinguishable from their own. Bauman explored this strategy more fully in *Modernity and the Holocaust* and *Modernity and Ambivalence.*[738] Second, those who, like our own society, practice *anthropoemy* (from the Greek, *emein* meaning to vomit), who, when faced with the same problem, choose to eject such dangerous people from the social body, initially building for them habitats away from the central body of people, before expelling them permanently.[739] The strangers are banished, forbidden from any communication with those in the present social order. It is a strategy of exclusion, where the stranger is either confined in a ghetto, or made invisible and locked away.[7] Bauman sees contemporary order-building in liquid modernity as a war of attrition against the stranger and the strange.

Anthropoemic strategies are an attempt to overcome ambivalence or difference. The tolerance threshold for difference within solid modernity was dependent on the

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[735] Brueggemann 1993: chapters two and three both use a contextual reading of the books Exodus, Joshua and Jeremiah in order to offer a counter narrative to consumerism. For a New Testament perspective see Wright 1996: 244ff. and 369ff. Wright argues that the parables and signs/symbols of the Kingdom of God are related to Jesus' historic context, revealing their deeply political and social implications, implications which are also profound for a consumer society, though he does not make this connection.

[736] Bauman 1998b.

[737] Beilharz 2001.

[738] Bauman 1991b: 62.

[739] Levi-Strauss 1955: 508.

[740] Bauman 1997: 16.

political and nationalist sense of limits. Bauman argues that within liquid modernity difference becomes much more economically focused because the modernist notion of national boundaries and political limits has been diluted. The stranger within liquid modernity becomes more prevalent, and economically speaking, can be encountered in two different ways: first, for those who have enough money, secure privatised habitats and lifestyles can be created. Strangers are then encountered on their own terms, they are paid for services rendered, and terminated if they are no longer valuable. The stranger is the object of the gaze of desire – engaged as an object.[741] By contrast, those who are poor cannot choose whom they live next to, or what particular neighbourhood they live in; they are incarcerated in a territory from which there is little chance of an exit. This means that they are surrounded by strangers, who are often perceived as a threat, and so defence of their territory becomes paramount. Community therefore takes the form of ghettoisation, as observable in many inner city areas in the UK.[742]

The social account of reality in *MSC* fails to adequately address these issues and lacks the depth of social analysis that Bauman's work in this area brings. We saw within Temple's ecclesiology a concern to understand the structural inequality that existed within Britain during his time, and his conviction that the vocation of the Church is to challenge and critique such inequality and to exhibit within its own life a form of society that was inclusive, and overcame the social divisions of his time. The danger of *MSC* is that it is unaware of the manner in which society excludes certain people(s) and essentially focuses its missiological strategy on those whom Bauman would describe as – borrowing Galbraith's term – the 'contented majority'.[743] Bauman's work goes on to develop his understanding of the 'stranger' and this work will further illustrate the depth of his thinking in contrast to the shallow sociology presented in *MSC*.

Bauman argues that within liquid modernity a new class has emerged, the underclass, who are the non-consumers, marginalised without hope.[744] Bauman's argument is not new. Murray's research into the emergence of a new underclass in the 1990 notes that such a concept can be traced back the early Victorian period, and is also not unlike Marx's concept of the *lumpenproletariat,* though Murray claims it originates in a

[741] Ibid: 28.
[742] Marcuse 2006.
[743] Bauman 2001: 154 and Galbraith 1992.
[744] Bauman 1998b: 63ff.

culture of fecklessness and irresponsibility.[745] Field's work is closer to Bauman's in associating the emergence of this new underclass with broader social, political and economic factors, including globalisation and commodification.[746] Young's work, like Bauman's, identifies a reordering of class and status that has taken place along the lines of sociocultural inclusion/exclusion, and Keyfitz also argues that what marks out the 'underclass' of the 'new poor' is their inability to participate in the sphere of market-mediated consumption.[747] Bauman argues that their place is out of site, removed from public spaces. They are the elderly who are placed in homes until they die; they are the illegal immigrants, put in detention prisons until they can be deported, or immigrants placed together in social housing.[748]

Recent government figures on debt further illustrate Bauman's argument and show that this new underclass has the highest proportion of debt to earnings,[749] often on the highest interest rates,[750] both combining to keep them trapped in a cycle of debt. Consumer-driven economic models were also reflected in Labour's 2008 bill on immigration, which emphasised people's marketability as the central criteria for entry, a bill that the Conservatives supported, and, now in government, have actually extended.[751] The obvious implication of this is confirmation of Bauman's argument that those who have little marketable value should be rejected. The increasing ghettoisation of those who are economically poor, and the growing volume of behaviour classified as criminal, is another way that Bauman sees consumer society exorcising its inner demons, ridding itself of its poison.[752] Girard's scapegoat theory – the necessity of violent sacrifice in order to re-inscribe and shore up the essential values of any society – is powerfully played out in this process.[753] Warde also observes that this process serves to "advanc[e the] tyranny of the economically correct."[754] That is, whatever 'makes sense' economically does not need the support of any other sense, be it political, social or ethical. Nor does society need to make any apology for this policy.[755] Even when the underclasses are employed, they are often afforded the least

[745] Murray 1990.
[746] Field 1989.
[747] Young 1999 and Keyfitz 1992.
[748] Bauman 1998b: 72ff.
[749] Moneystuff 1012.
[750] Guardian 2012b.
[751] Labour 2012, Homeoffice 2012 and Conservative 2012.
[752] Bauman 1997: 41.
[753] Girard 1989.
[754] Warde 1997: 23ff
[755] Ibid: 24.

job protection and the lowest wages. Research suggests that they are primarily on temporary contracts, working in the lowest band of pay, and rarely, if ever, gaining promotion.[756] They are the most expendable, disposable, and exchangeable parts of an economic system; their jobs require little skill and no face-to-face contact with clients.[757]

Bauman's understanding of the casualties of liquid modernity provides some much-needed insight into the effects of a consumer driven society. Månsson notes that Bauman has replaced capital as his measuring stick with mobility and the ability to consume, but the result is still the same: the structural inequalities of industrial modernity still exist.[758] Bauman's thesis of a new underclass develops this further. In some places, such as the UK, they are the minority and are counterpoised to Galbraith's ever-free 'contented majority' of consumers.[759] Yet Bauman has a tendency to draw very solid lines between losers and winners in liquid modernity, sometimes in a manner that is too simplistic and can stand in opposition to more nuanced and considered work, such as that by Savage.[760] This could stem from his Marxist roots. For he seems to parallel the global elite/localised masses with the capital/labour binaries of Marxist thought.[761] A view shared by Davis.[762] This is most clear in his work in the terms 'contented majority' and the 'new underclass', which essentially continue to reflect the Marxist dualism between the 'bourgeois' and the 'proletarian'. Davis points out that such dualisms always fail to convey the rather ambiguous boundaries that exists between the two terms and the severe difficulty of plotting a given individual on Bauman's map of cultural types. Such terminology fails to do justice to the complexities of modern life, and it is easy to identify social groups that simply fail to be represented adequately by Bauman's dualities. Davis gives as an example of social groups that have a wealth of available resources but which refuse the hedonistic tendencies of Bauman's 'tourist' on moral, ethnic or religious grounds. Such groups do not fit into Bauman's simple binary.[763]

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[756] Kings College London 2012: 7-10.
[757] Bauman 2000: 150.
[758] Månsson, 2008: 155ff.
[759] Bauman 2001: 154.
[760] Savage 2004: 205ff.
[761] Bauman 2001: 25.
[762] Davis 2008: 151.
[763] Ibid.

Despite these criticisms Bauman's thesis is deeply insightful for the manner in which it draws attention to the profound ways in which globalisation and commodification have only served to reinforce the structural inequality that he has observed within solid modernity. His penetrating analysis of consumerism's casualties must act as a catalyst for the Church of England's missiology and ecclesiology. If, as we argued in the previous chapter, the Church is a place of welcome for all – a true vision of a social body cemented through the atoning work of Christ, rather than our own common cultural bonds, reconciled to one another and God through Christ – then the Church must attend to how and whether it manifests this within its own life, in each locality where it is found. We shall explore the implications of this in our concluding chaper.

The death of utopia

Bauman argues that within liquid modernity utopian thinking has withered away.[7] Mazlish, in his historic analysis of civilisation, also shares this view and states regarding modern society that "utopian thinking, except in the form of messianic or fundamentalist aspirations, appears either to take other shapes or be in the tepid condition or non-existent."[765] This loss of utopian thinking has appalling effects on society, and Tester suggests, for Bauman, utopianism "signifies the praxis of possibility that seeks to critically open up the world against the ossification of actuality by common sense, alienation and brute power."[766] Bauman wishes to show that the world need not be as it is and that what presently seems so natural or inevitable does not have to be so. Bauman argues that within liquid modernity thinking and imagination have taken a u-turn away from utopianism that was firmly embedded in a *topos,* today utopias are conceived in spaceless and visionless deserts. On the surface, this is a pessimistic perspective and pinpoints the problems posed by a globalised and individualised social world that has forgotten how to imagine alternative ways of organising itself. It is unable to think about anything other than that which currently appears real and tangible. This tendency for passivity, indifference, and defeatism that Bauman locates among politicians, as well as ordinary people, has for decades permeated sociological discourses within which the tradition of 'realism' has gained a

[764] Bauman 1987: 194 and also 2000: 131.
[765] Mazlish 2005: 43.
[766] Tester 2004: 147.

new stronghold.[767] Bauman argues that positions such as Durkheimian sociology have a tendency to naturalise the world, making a second nature of it, allowing common sense to prevail. They anaesthetise any kind of creativity, critical thinking or human ingenuity regarding the creation of a better or alternative world.[768] Beilharz agrees with Bauman and suggests that Durkheim deifies society, with the potential effect that sociologists cannot imagine there ever having been any other way to live.[769]

Utopias within solid modernity were encapsulated within metanarratives that sought to dissolve disorder into order and annihilate ambivalence and strangeness in their relentless search for structure, symmetry, and neatness.[770] In liquid modernity, these metanarratives have disappeared, resulting in a suspicion of social engineering aimed at creating a better or more ideal future. The idea of, and the interest in, building a better future appears pointless, since the mastery of the future has vanished because of increasing complexity, individual indifference, and a decline of institutional and political control.[771] Bauman argues that when collective emancipatory politics and the security of nationhood are replaced by politics that focus purely on the needs of the individual and the insecurities and uncertainties of global living, liquid 'utopias' eventually come to undermine the previously solid variant.[772] He argues that although the solid modernist attempts at enforcing utopia often ended in the opposite – tyranny and human suffering – we cannot altogether cease to imagine a different world. This is because the now liquefied modern reality will eventually end up being as solid as its historical predecessor, since no counter-imaginations or counter-narratives exist. Mannheim's assessment sums up Bauman's understanding of the importance of utopian vision:

> [t]he disappearance of utopia brings about a static state of affairs in which man himself becomes nothing more than a thing. Thus, after a long tortuous, but heroic development, just at the highest stage of awareness, when history is ceasing to be blind fate, and is becoming more and more man's own creation, with the relinquishment of utopias, man would lose his will to shape history and therewith his ability to understand it.[773]

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[767] Bauman 1999: 201-21.
[768] Bauman 1976b: 70ff.
[769] Beilharz 2010.
[770] Bauman, 1989a, 1989b and 1991b.
[771] Bauman 1998c: 37-49.
[772] Bauman 1999: 211.
[773] Mannheim 1985: 236.

As we have already stated, *MSC* is captive to a consumer-focused ecclesiology that places choice at the heart of its missiological strategy. Its social description of reality misses those who are excluded or marginalised from a consumer society. *MSC* does not offer an alternative way for society, or even the Church, to organise itself, where those who are excluded are welcomed and included. The utopian strand in Bauman's work is key to his overall thesis for sociology, since it provides the alternative space within which a consumer ideology can be reimagined; without it, Bauman's work remains merely descriptive rather than possibly transformative. However, Bauman's thought in this area is significantly underworked and theoretically underdeveloped, perhaps pointing to the difficulty of this task. A clear vocation for the Church is to witness to a very different form of society than one dominated by the ideology of consumption. This requires that those within the church must first become aware of the manner in which the ideology of consumption affects contemporary life, only then can the church draw from its own history and tradition the ways in which the Christian life offers a counter-imagination to this. The lack of appreciation for the darker aspects of consumerism means that *MSC* was not able to do this. We saw in Temple's ecclesiology, and in particular in his sacramental theology, some of the resources the Church needs to draw upon if it is able to adequately equip and disciple its own members whilst also witnessing to fullness of life in Christ. Temple's response to the perceived excesses of his own time were multifaceted and far ranging; from lobbying over government legislation on education and organising conferences that sought to respond socially, politically and economically to the urban problems caused by industrialisation, to his popular writings, where he sought to communicate to as wide an audience as possible the concern of God for the whole of social reality. *MSC* lacks this multifaceted approach; it is simply not as comprehensive in scope as Temple's vision of the Christian life and the mission and witness of the Church. Essentially *MSC* remains captive to a privatised understanding of religion, whereas for Temple the Christian religion was that which informed and guided all else. Temple's thinking was permeated with idealism and utopianism; in contrast, *MSC* lacks the same depth of social analysis.

Critical Remarks on Liquid Modernity

How well Bauman's new thesis succeeds has been hotly debated, and several critical questions need to be asked. Campain is critical of Bauman's simplistic and uniform descriptions of modernity and liquid modernity, arguing that Bauman fails to recognise those who argue for different stages within modernity or the different modern mindsets which make it a contested idea.[774] Bauman's thesis of solid modernity also suffers from some of the same problems as his conception of modernity in that it largely gives singular accounts of socioeconomic, institutional, structures and material frameworks.[775] This new thesis also, as Kellner previously argued, is still largely pessimistic and fails to give any positive account of modernity (solid or not), ignoring some of its central features, including for instance, democracy, human rights and associations.[776] The strongest criticism of Bauman's conception of solid and liquid modernity relate to its ability to provide a general model that draws upon contemporary empirical studies of global institutions and processes, as well as general sociality in contemporary society. Ray rejects Bauman's thesis on such grounds, suggesting that it "illustrates a tendency within sociology to view theories as metaphors to be judged on grounds of appropriateness rather than truth claims judged on grounds of explanatory power."[777] However, such criticisms rest upon the assumption that social frameworks – such as Bauman's – are only of use when they are empirically grounded in observable processes. Such criticisms could be made of all such general theories for each explores all current social phenomenon though "an undifferentiated prism – [in Bauman's case] that of liquidization – and as a consequence must write off whatever fails to conform to it."[778] Despite this it is clear that Bauman's work does need supplementing with empirical work so that the local is interpreted in a more in-depth manner.

Bauman's work also over-simplifies the diminishing power of the state, particularly regarding its ability to control global forces and its relationship to transnational corporations. His description of the relative impotency of politics appears to create another binary when in fact the context is much more complex and the relationship much more nuanced than his work makes out. For instance, the work of Hirst and

774 Campain 2008: 193-208.
775 Kellner 1998: 76.
776 Ibid, p. 78.
777 Ray 2007: 64.
778 Elliott 2007: 53.

Thompson, argues that transnational corporations do not have total control of national economies, that the state still has primary control over taxes and welfare spending, that international bodies like the UN and the EU are made up of, and dependent on, nation-states, and that states are developing increasing control of borders and migration.[779] Yet Bauman's thesis, if treated as a set of metaphors that offer *one* of several explanatory prisms through which we can view contemporary society, still offers compelling insights so long as it is not taken as a systematic account of reality – a claim he would never make himself.

Warde is critical of Bauman's work on consumerism, particularly Bauman's contention that we are all "consumers first, and all the rest after",[780] suggesting that such a proposition amounts to speculative reasoning based upon modest empirical findings.[781] He argues that Bauman's work hinders the sociological task, as it skews sociology towards niche categories such as fashion, advertising and social networking, each of which relies upon models of highly autonomous individuals who are themselves preoccupied with these forms of symbolic communication and identify formation.[782] This amounts to a highly selective outcome and ignores other potential routes for sociology to take regarding identity formation and symbolic communication. More traditional sociological views are often ignored or under emphasised in their influence on contemporary identify construction – for instance the role of the family or an individuals education.[783] It would be better to suggest, as Blackshaw argues, that consumerism is *one* of the dominant ideological forces at work within contemporary British society.[784]

Elliott points out that in Europe some elements of the economy, as well as various forms of private life-strategies, are still reliant upon the ordering, structuring, classification, hierarchy and control mechanisms of 'solid' modernity. Elliott suggests that Bauman has ignored this and exaggerated the significance of liquidization. The empirical work of Smart and Shipman's appears to back-up this claim. Their research examines the way in which the values and practices of transnational families in Britain do not fit with the ideas of Bauman's liquid modern relationships. Similar research has been carried out by Gross regarding the continued existence of the traditional concept

[779] Hirst and Thompson 2009.
[780] Bauman 2000: 66.
[781] Warde 1994: 880.
[782] Warde 2005: 152.
[783] Ibid.
[784] Blackshaw 2008.

of romantic love and lifelong partnership, yet Bauman argues such practices have been swept away by liquid modernity's view of relationships as fluid and nowist.[785] It would be better to see the theory of the commodification and liquidification of life as a partial transformation of social and social practices, even if it is increasingly dominant.

Related criticisms of Bauman's theory aim squarely at its ability to help sociologists rethink the relations in the global order, between the north and south, the First and Third worlds. Yet such criticisms fail to understand Bauman's actual thesis, which is always primarily focused on the social realities of the West, and in particular Europe and Britain. Critics such as Best, who argues that Bauman's thesis is still indelibly modern and Western in orientation and is better suited to explaining social processes that are prevalent within the Western world than those elsewhere,[786] as well as Chesneaux and Paoline, who argue that in globalising his theory Bauman has greatly diminished the political and social differences as well as geopolitical space between the First and the Third world, each make this mistake.[787] Elliott contends that these criticms are overemphasised and also fail to adequately represent Bauman's own views. Bauman, throughout his work, is careful to repeat time and again that the processes of liquidification take place predominantly in the rich, expensive cities of the West, and that those who are isolated by such processes are predominately those in the Third world.[788] Bauman's work does not develop the specifics of these geopolitical processes in the Third world – the other side of his liquid world – simply because his attention is centred on the activities in the West.[789]

Crone is critical of Bauman's insistence on the need for utopian thinking because in it he fails to provide a coherent and consistent political theory that could help to re-imagine society.[790] Even though Bauman is almost unique amongst sociologists in arguing for utopian thinking, Bauman fails to articulate in any detail how and where this might occur. Crone notes that Bauman is animated by Castoriadis' ambition to reinvent the *agora* - a sphere of life halfway between the public and private spheres.[79] Yet, Bauman appears content to hint at the manner in which this might function, and one is left with the impression that despite Bauman's grand claims for the discipline of

[785] Smart 2004 and Gross 2005.
[786] Best 1998.
[787] Chesneaux 1992: 57ff and Paolini 1999.
[788] Elliot 2008: 54.
[789] Ibid: 54.
[790] Crone 2008: 72-73.
[791] Bauman 1999: 86.

sociology he fails to translate the desire for social and political transformation into a clear account of how this might actually come about. Bauman's work remains impotent in this regard: it does not provide the theoretical basis with which to bring about the change that he demands.

The work of Bourdieu also exposes a limitation in Bauman's work, particularly Bauman's concept of capital. Bourdieu expands Marx's concept of capital into several other social arenas, building on his concept of the 'field'. 'Fields' were the systems actors founds themselves in, they offered options for the actors actions (and also conversely ruled out certain actions depending on the type of field the actor was within) and in which these actions become meaningful. His work thus defended the structuralist notion of the importance of relations and relationships (within fields) in forming actors (a position *contra* those, such as Sartre, who argued for the self-creating, autonomous subject). He also understand the fields, or systems, actors occupy themselves as their *habitus* (a term borrowed from Husserl). By which he meant the actors childhood, schooling, the work they were taught, their developing schemata of thinking, perceiving and acting, each contributes to creating a *habitus* the actor inhabits. This *habitus* enables actors to respond to different situations and tasks. Tastes and actors interpretations of the world are formed in this early stage and determine options for the actors actions. Though Bourdieu argues that this does not lead to a purely utilitarian concept of action, because he allows for the fact that actors can, and do, engage in creative and innovative conduct, even though, he argues, they cannot totally step out of their own *habitus*.

He developed this initial work on fields and *habitas* by then seeking to explain which goods the actors in their various fields struggle over, and what they were trying to achieve by deploying their action strategies. He rejected the Marxist assumption that social life is exclusively the struggle over economic goods, because it neglected other forms of dispute.[792] Bourdieu then began to argue that capital can take many different forms and introduced three other forms of capital alongside the economic form. The cultural, the social and the symbolic. By cultural capital he means works of art, books and musical instruments, both present within these objects, and also the cultural capacities and cultural knowledge that have been absorbed by actors encounters with, and use of, these objects. Within cultural capital he also included those who attained a high level of academic specialisation because they were holders of, and acquirers of,

[792] Bourdieu 1992: 292ff.

cultural knowledge. By social capital he means the resources through which actors demonstrate membership of a group – family or ones university for instance – and the networks of social relationships upon which actors draw to realise goals. He deploys the term symbolic capital as a generic term to talk about the interplay between the other three types of capital. It is the capital gained through generous deeds, or extravagant behaviour, leading people to be held in distinction and occupy a position of power or privilege. It is relevant to class hierarchy as much as it can be transformed into economic capital. Bourdieu states that this form of capital also represents a "transformed and thereby *disguised* form of physical economic" capital".[793] It becomes the sum of the actors overall standing, reputation, renown and prestige in society, and determines the actors place in societies hierarchy. What is always at issue within Bourdieu's concept of the actor is still the accumulation of capital but his theory nuances and expands the various forms this takes.

Through these concepts of capital Bourdieu is able to analyse and model a societies class structure in a more convincing manner than orthodox Marxism. Bourdieu's theory is also more developed and nuanced than Bauman's, who has a largely singular conception of economic capital. Bourdieu also develops a sociology of culture that is also lacking in Bauman, whilst retaining a Marxist dimension, for his focus is still on describing the cultural apparatus as that of the economy. In both of these spheres it is still the actors' interests which play the decisive role; it is the types of capital that differ, the main concern is still the profit and loss and the struggles and disputes over them. Bauman's lack of a cultural form of capital narrows his ability to see how conceiving of capital in this wider sense could have broadened his critique of consumerism through an appreciation (for instance) of the role eduction could have to creating actors who can resist a purely economic vision of capital such as that of consumerism. It also would have broadened his understanding of the ideology of consumerism, how it affects these different forms of capital, and how these different forms of capital within a consumer society also work to re-inforce consumerism. Bourdieu, in *Distinction,* develops just such an understanding with regard to cultural capital, within which he includes taste, the aesthetic appreciation of music, and clothing. He suggests that each of these is conditioned by the actors' class *habitus*. Part of his aim is to demystify those who give such 'tastes' a quasi-eternal characteristic. His analysis of the manner in which the upper classes continually try to eat and dress

[793] Bourdieu 1992: 183.

in ways which give distinction to their social standing, further reinforces class boundaries. Attitudes toward art, sport, politics, opinion and film also mimic this same pattern, where together they become 'life-styles' which set-apart actors' of different class from each other. Though Bauman's work is hugely illustrative it is blind to this way of thinking because he does not have a wide enough conception of capital. Bauman is also at variance to Bourdieu over social class and access to resources. Bauman argues that those who cannot exercise their consumer freedom represent the excluded, the poor. Yet Bourdieu's work shows that this creates a overly simplistic binary between the privileged and underprivileged in society. Bauman's focus upon economic difference lacks the ability to see beyond this to explain social practices. Bourdieu's understanding of the cultural mediation of practices, by way of cultural, social and symbolic capital, provides a more sophisticated form of analysis that helps understand what shapes consumer choice beyond discrepancies in income levels.

Yet Bourdieu also suffers from some of the same problems as Bauman, in that he is not able, in his scheme, to articulate a manner in which systems, or fields, of oppression may be changed or to describe how real discourse may arise that precipitates change. For Bourdieu freedom is only possible when actors understand and recognises the laws that govern societies; "sociology frees by freeing from the illusion of freedom".[794] His theory of multiple accounts of capital helps illuminate the myriad ways in which people are less free than they think, and enlivens Bauman's account of freedom, particularly where he stresses the ability of actors to choose life-styles, and to re-narrate their life at will. Bourdieu draws attention to the fact that consumers are less free than Bauman thinks.

Although these critical remarks do cast certain aspects of Bauman's thesis in a critical light they do not diminish the force of his work. Bauman always claims that he was not writing a systematic sociology that could account for all social possibilities and influences, he uses metaphorical language exactly to avoid that kind of systematising and to resist his ideas becoming 'solid', not open to development. As such his sociology contains within itself an openness to the above sorts of criticisms. His thesis genuinely sheds light on contemporary social conditions in the West, particularly in the Britain and it provides a robust critical response to the sociology of *MSC* which appears shallow and undeveloped in contrast. Even bearing in mind the above criticisms Bauman's work can enrich the Church's understanding of the present

[794] Bourdieu in Dosse, *History of Structuralism,* vol II, 67.

cultural and social conditions and help enable a more adequate ecclesiology to be constructed with respect to capitalism.

Conclusion

During this chapter, we have traced the contours of the sociology that underlies *MSC*. We have related this in detail to Bauman's postmodern sociology, written in the late eighties and early nineties, and noted how *MSC* misconstrues Bauman's work in overemphasising the cultural differences between modernity and postmodernity. We argued that this makes the social description that *MSC* offers questionable in several areas. We demonstrated that in arguing that society has moved to a postmodern social reality that bears little resemblance to the former modern society *MSC* holds a theoretical position that has been severely critiqued in the last ten years. Many sociologists have developed theories that reject the term postmodernism in favour of a more modified account of modernity. *MSC* relies on the polarity between modernity and postmodernity to reinforce its argument for a radical discontinuity between the missional practices and ecclesiology of the inherited Church of England tradition, which it assumes have largely been shaped by modernity, and its contemporary context, which is thoroughly postmodern. This argument is now significantly weakened. *MSC* has been shown to be unaware that social theorists, like Bauman, have constructed a far more complex and nuanced picture of our contemporary context. Their work, including Bauman's, acknowledges that the sociology that developed in modernity, and its subsequent analysis of modernity, still have much significance for contemporary life, even if new theories, concerns, and social realities have emerged in the last decades of the twentieth century. Given the weaknesses of *MSC*'s sociology it was necessary to seek an alternative contemporary account of the Church of England's social context. Having identified Bauman as one of the key sociologists who informs *MSC*'s sociology (although he is misrepresented), and recognising that he is a mature theorist whose work has developed significantly over nearly fifty years, we decided to take his recent account of liquid modernity as a basis for critical reflection.

Bauman's thesis of liquid and solid modernity provides a conceptual framework that partially explains the changing conditions of social life. This thesis of liquid modernity,

which is mature and much more nuanced than that of *MSC's*, largely focuses on the ideology of consumption. This over-arching emphasis enables the Church to understand more precisely the myriad ways in which consumerism, globalisation and technology (to name but a few things) impinge on society and create new and complex social realities that differ from those fifty years ago. His definitions of 'solid' and 'liquid' enable the Church to question to what extent these new contemporary situations differ from their historic variants, and in what ways they impinge on the life of society, particularly those on the margins. Although we recognised that there are problematic elements to his theory – its reliance on binaries that that over-simplify complex social phenomena, and the way in which the use of such blanket categories amounts to a highly selective outcome that ignores social processes and events that do not neatly fit his schema, as well as his limited and narrow account of capital, particularly in comparison to Bourdieu's – nevertheless, and despite these criticisms, Bauman's thesis is illustrative of the manner within which social life, and social freedoms (and un-freedoms) have altered in the last fifty years. Bauman is an astute guide, though perhaps more like an early mapper of the English landscape, who, whilst lacking the detail of a present Ordinance Survey map, does capture the general contours and characteristics of the landscape.

Bauman's work has enabled this thesis to build a more complete and complex social description of the Church of England's context than *MSC* and to describe more adequately the context to which the Church is called to minister. It helps the Church to see clearly the ways in which *MSC* uncritically incorporates into its missiology and ecclesiology some of the more sinister aspects of consumer ideology that Bauman's work identifies, particularly when coupled with the work of Miller. We examined this specifically with regard to social fragmentation, the treatment of the stranger, the commodification of the Church, and the increasing detachment, reification and abstraction of the Church's core practices and symbols from their original context. Within *MSC,* this highlights a lurking scientific positivism, where one can simply accept a particular sociologist's theory without any form of critical engagement with the assumptions the theorist makes. *MSC* adopts the idea that one can adequately and comprehensively describe social reality, yet we have seen the way in which it fails in this regard due to its overly simplistic architecture.

Bauman's work illustrates some of the darker aspects of a society increasingly dominated by a consumerist ideology. Yet his work contains little that serves to

remedy his findings apart from some very under developed thoughts on the *agoria*. It is the contention of this thesis that the Church of England has within her past history a rich tapestry of thought that is of relevance to its contemporary ecclesial vocation, particularly in the work of William Temple that we explored. Bringing the sacramental ecclesiology of Temple to bear upon the social reality Bauman describes would, I argue, result in a much richer and more profound (as well as more orthodox) encounter of the gospel with the Church's contemporary context. This would lead to an ecclesiology and missiology that is alert to the more insidious aspects of liquid modernity and able to bring the weight of the gospel to bear upon them whilst also bearing witness to the riches of her own tradition. In our final chapter, I shall attempt to summarise the three major lines of critical thought regarding *MSC,* as well as make some tentative attempts to use Temple's ecclesiology as a critical basis to engage Bauman's work, outlining a few possible ways in which the Church of England is called to manifest the gospel today.

Conclusion

This thesis has demonstrated that *MSC,* as well as its secondary literature, is deficient in the following areas: ecclesiology, missiology and sociology. After assessing the report and secondary literature in chapter one and demonstrating that the current critical responses to the report were either underdeveloped or inadequate, we began examining these deficiencies in more detail. In Chapter two we identified and explored the sources of the report, ascertaining that these were primarily non-Anglican, drawing upon work by congregationalist and free church theologians, such as Murray-Williams and Bosch. These missiological and ecclesiological sources were in themselves a Western utilisation of the methodology of contextual theologians based in Africa and Asia during the last century. We argued that there is no issue with using such theologies but that they must be held in critical dialogue with the existing theological traditions of the Church of England, and tested against the insights of those traditions. We then explored some of the major missiological reports and movements of the last two centuries within the Church of England. We argued that these were also contextual in nature, being highly varied in their approach. Their ecclesiology had developed existing Anglican tradition in the light of their changing social conditions, but was, and is, recognisably Anglican. Their recommendations, structures, and patterning of eucharistically centred worship drew upon, and developed, existing Anglican theological traditions and disciplines. Their understanding of mission was broad, and reflected a concern for the social, economic and political world in which they were situated. These reports and movements represent sustained and mature theological reflection as well as practical action over a period of nearly two hundred years. Yet they constitute a body of work which *MSC* ignored, for it took a contrasting approach, being written without reference to this existing body of work, and largely constructing its own pool of literature from which to draw. Ironically, it could be accused of being too ecclesiastical because it does not take its own context seriously, and shows a primary concern for the Church's existing structures rather than a desire to understand the Church's missionary context and history. It thus stands detached from a powerful tradition of Anglican social criticism and missiology exemplified in the theology of Temple. Simply put, *MSC* is not ecclesiological enough: it does not place itself in continuity with the powerful and broad tradition we examined. This is a tradition upon which it actually needed to reflect, and recontextualise.

Chapter three examined the work of Temple as a representative of that tradition. We explored his ecclesiology and missiology in both its written and practical forms, demonstrating that it provided a more adequate basis for reflecting on the role and nature of the Church in the world than *MSC*'s ecclesiology or missiology. Temple's theology was an attempt to comprehend how the whole of social reality could be illuminated by Christ. This theology emerged from his understanding of the sacramental universe, which itself was centred on the sacramental encounter with God encountered in the life of the local church. Through this theory Temple gained a deep appreciation for the importance of the material and social world which led his ecclesiology and missiology to develop existing Anglican thought by placing it in dialogue with the dominant philosophies, and deepest social needs, of his own time. Temple is not exclusive in developing this sort of theology, he stands in a long Anglican tradition of theologians who made these same sorts of claims. This thesis' use of Temple is illustrative of the sort of ecclesiology which would have better served *MSC* and enabled it to develop a far more sophisticated ecclesiology, an ecclesiology that was not utilitarian and instrumentalist, nor one that sought to confine Christian faith to the private sphere as a consumer 'life-style choice'.

In Chapter four our attention turned from theology to sociology. After establishing the sources of *MSC*'s sociology in chapter one, this chapter critically examined the representation of those sources and *MSC's* use of them. We showed that the sociology of *MSC* postulated a radical form of social postmodernity that has attracted significant criticism in the last twenty years, and was itself based on a misreading of Bauman's work. *MSC*'s reliance upon this theory undermines the sociology it presents and reinforces this thesis's view that its sociology is theoretically underdeveloped, uncritically accepted, and without sufficient theological reflection. We then examined the sociology of Bauman as a basis for critical reflection on both *MSC* and the nature of social reality in contemporary English society. We demonstrated that his thesis of solid and liquid modernity provides a robust framework for understanding the complexities of contemporary social processes. Bauman's work, because of its focus on the sinister aspects of liquid modernity, illuminates the way in which a society dominated by a consumer ideology results in severe cultural fragmentation, increasing violence towards the stranger and the strange, and the commodification of daily life, each of which lead to the dominance of a seriously under-resourced anthropology. We also explored the work of Miller, who develops Bauman's writings on commodification with regard to contemporary Church practices. Using Miller's thesis we demonstrated

that *MSC* had uncritically adopted some of the excessive forms of consumerism and commodification by placing personal choice at the heart of its ecclesiological and missiological strategy.

Before drawing together the insights of these chapters, and bearing in mind the above criticisms, we must ask whether there are any lessons that the Church of England can learn from *MSC*. The answer must be yes. First, even though this thesis rejects *MSC*'s account of the ordering and practices of the local church, the Church must welcome and encourage its call for adaptive and creative missiological responses to our present contemporary context, and the need for diversity in ministry, if it is to continue to attempt to minister to the entire population of England. If it does not, the Church faces the prospect of further decline.

Second, *MSC* and the Fresh Expressions of church that have emerged over these last seven years affirm the complex and varied ways in which people journey towards the heart of the Church. As Williams notes: "those are journeys towards the heart of God's purpose, [which is] quite a long business; in fact it's one [people] never come to the end of."[795] We find this same testimony in the gospels, which witness to the various ways, and various situations, in which people come face to face with Jesus Christ, as well as the confusion this causes in some and the fulfillment it immediately causes in others. The commonality in these encounters is Christ, and the manner in which an encounter with Him transforms people's view of themselves, their community and the world. This encounter leads people, or at least it should lead people, to continue to reflect upon the possibilities that that encounter brought, and continues to bring. The pace of change, or in Christian terms, growth in holiness, that occurs through this encounter with Christ also varies from person to person, a view attested to by the gospel writers: some are challenged by Jesus to change straight away (the rich young man in Matthew 19), whereas with others (most notably the disciples) Jesus is depicted as being very patient. *MSC* recognises this, and many Fresh Expressions enable people to slowly begin to explore what an encounter with Christ may mean. Fowler's concept of 'stages of faith' explores this issue more thoroughly.[7] His theory has been criticised for its understanding of 'faith', its structural 'logic of development', its over-emphasis on cognition and consequent lack of attention to emotional/psychodynamic dimensions as processes of transition and transformation,

[795] Williams 2011.
[796] Fowler 1981.

its gender bias and cultural specificity, and its purported difficulty in accommodating postmodern trends in psychology.[797] Despite this Fowler's work does help illustrate the pragmatic missiological basis for diversity in the life of the Church. Humanity is diverse; therefore the Church should expect and enable people to experience Christ in diverse ways.

This should remind the Church that questions regarding the boundaries and essential practices of the local church are complicated, and not easy to settle. This does not diminish the description of the Church we have developed in this thesis, for the sacraments – baptism and eucharist – are the 'big things' in the life of the Church and its mission. They are what enables the continued encounter with Christ to become most vivid, and most real, in the lives of the believer and the believing community. This thesis would also strongly argue that it is the vocation of each local church to manifest in its own life the reality that all are reconciled to God through Christ. This vocation would necessarily resist the homogenising tendencies of the ecclesiology of Fresh Expressions. For the Catholicity of the Church, and the witness and centrality of the sacraments, in its life raise difficult questions regarding the legitimacy of naming as churches in their own right Fresh Expressions that do not see Catholicity or sacramental participation as important and essential parts of their own life. Such communities could instead be seen as missionary communities, where the presence of Christ can be encountered, and faith nurtured and developed. Yet in the majority of cases in order to develop a mature faith their members need to make the transition into a, or the, local parish church. For it is the embedded nature of the parish structure throughout England in every place that provides the richest setting for an encounter with Christ, and the propagation of the gospel.[798] The parish is the church in this place for these people. Each local church is called to be as full an expression of the Catholic Church as it can be. *MSC,* in essentially restricting the make-up of the local church to like-minded individuals, diminishes this point, and reduces the capacity of such communities to be truly Catholic and impoverishes their encounter with Christ.

Having finished our critical examination of *MSC,* we are now in a position to attempt to repair the problems we have identified. Before that we must remind ourselves of the broad missionary calling of the Church, an understanding we found exemplified in the theology of Temple. The life of the Church is centred on Jesus Christ, and the manner

[797] Coyle 2011.
[798] A view shared by Davison and Milbank, 2011.

in which an encounter with Him – in baptism, in the eucharist, in the proclamation and exposition of the word – transforms a community's understanding of themselves, and of the world. This leads believers to reflect upon the possibilities that this encounter brings for all they do. The embodiment of these possibilities is the missionary calling of the Church, of every believer, local congregation, diocese, national and international church. To discern, nourish and develop a vision for social, political and economic transformation is nothing less than to explore the possibilities of the Kingdom of God in each and every age, and in each and every place.

Because of this calling, the concerns of the Church, and the concerns of the state, creatively overlap politically, economically and socially. The Church contributes to the idea of citizenship. It helps people to develop a public and private dignity. It helps people to have a voice and be listened to. It nurtures the understanding that all must contribute from what they have to the common project, the common public vision or purpose, shared in a community. As Williams argues, to "learn to be a Christian therefore is to learn how to exercise decision-making freedom and the maintenance of your environment in the context of a vision for all human beings, which is one of the things that makes it both exciting and complicated and liable to appalling failures."[7] Christian citizenship is not 'pie in the sky when you die'; it has very visible and tangible effects in the world. Therefore, the Church ought to be a place where people are educating one another about civic questions, human dignity, liberty, responsibility, and the creation of a sustainable human environment, and then witnessing to the new pattern of life that emerges from this process. Bauman's sociology suggests that today politics in the public square is operating with a desperately impoverished vision of what human beings are like, and what they are capable of. This view is echoed by Williams, who goes on to say, "the only justification for the public presence of the Church in British life ... is its God-given capacity to keep that argument alive, to remind people that humanity is never exhausted by any particular political definition or social order, that there is always more to discover about human beings made in the image of God."[800] In *MSC* this vocation of the Church is diminished. Christian faith is treated as essentially private, and the Church's vision of humanity is overridden, forgotten or marginalised. Yet in the work of Temple, this broad and rich understanding of mission remained as an essential strand of his thinking, and caused him to call the Church to engage with the deepest social needs of his own day.

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[799] Williams 2009.

[800] Ibid.

By examining the work of Temple and Bauman we have begun the process of rectifying the deficiencies we identified in *MSC,* and can now begin to reconstruct a more adequate ecclesiology that learns from the sociology of Bauman, yet also works critically within and upon the social reality that he describes. This thesis argues that the Church of England needs to configure its ecclesiology, as well as aspects of its missiology, to emphasise the following four areas, each of which emerge from a critical reading of Temple against the backdrop of Bauman's liquid modernity: first, the Church's Catholicity; second, the role of education; third, sacramental ecclesiology; fourth, the comprehensive nature of theology. Though we shall attempt to explore these issues separately, they do of course overlap, not only with each other but also with other areas of theology as well.

Catholicity

The Church of England believes that the Church is a place of radical inclusion, offering hospitality to all. We saw how this view, in the last twenty years, has developed to include the idea that the planet, and all its resources, also participate in the life and purpose of God's redeeming activity. In contrast, *MSC* is content to offer a reading of social reality that recognises that consumerism and commodification are the dominant social ideologies of today, but it fails to develop its analysis to explore the ways in which these ideologies powerfully exclude and marginalise people. Its ecclesiology and mission strategy does little to remedy the ills of consumerism: people remain isolated, some contented, some exploited. As such it diminishes the power of the gospel, or Christ, to reconcile and overcome difference, and actually goes on to enshrine the irreconcilability of difference into its own theology. The Church of England has in various reports addressed this in a number of specific ways including the issues of racism and ethnic exclusion, economic philosophy and ideology, prison reform, and environmentalism.[801]

The nascent *koinonia* theology we saw in Temple's theology also emphasised that homogenous churches represent a diminishment of a Catholic vision of the Church and a capitulation to secular norms.[802] He rejected the idea that the Church should be made up of like-minded, or culturally similar, groups of peoples. Such a view

[801] See pages 72-80.
[802] See pages 113ff.

diminished the focus on Christ as the reconciler of all things to God. Temple's stress upon a common liturgy, and the need for bishops to function as figures of unity in the Church, emphasise his commitment to this Catholic dimension of the Church's life. He resisted the emerging individualising ideologies of his own time in order to re-assert that the form of fellowship the Church local and universal must exhibit must be all embracing, having a continual focus on its oneness in Christ across all time and space rather than having too narrower focus on one particular culture or time.

Temple presents a rich Catholic vision of the Church that forms a powerful antithesis to the individuating and compartmentalising aspects of liquid modernity that we see described in Bauman's work. In particular Bauman's work highlights the ill treatment of the stranger and the strange in British society, the manner in which urban areas are increasingly ghettoised, and the way in which society is increasingly segregated culturally and economically. He illuminates the more sinister areas of a society that prioritises pluralism in its own life. The Church of England must not within its own life reflect these same tendencies. The vision Temple offered is one in which these divisions are resisted and broken down and it offers a radical vision of the Kingdom of God. Miller's work also alerts the Church to the need for further in-depth theological reflection of the impact consumerism has on society and the Church, and its resulting anthropology, and the manner in which the gospel provides an alternative narrative to that of consumerism, which results in a profoundly different anthropology, one based on mutuality and gift giving.

Today the Church needs to equip its members to see how the imagination of consumerism is false, how its anthropology fractures humanity, and how it perpetually misuses the resources of the planet. Temple's understanding of the Catholic nature of the Church means that humans' bonds are not simply reducible to materialist or utilitarian accounts. For it is Christ, as the head of the Church, who unifies and binds people and all things together – not what people wear, nor their social category or purchasing power – and it is Christ who reconciles and perfects all things. This emphasises the need for each local church to reflect in its liturgy, teaching, and preaching, this broad and generous understanding of the Catholic nature of the Church. Such communities would then exhibit a powerful and compelling vision of humanity that speaks of the possibility of healing the deep divisions that exist within society and that are perpetuated by consumerism. The community's, and believers',

encounter with Christ in the eucharist is the horizon that guides and undergirds this Catholic vision of the church.

Education

It is ironic that a key feature of contemporary culture is that the laity are the most literate and educated they have ever been, yet the Church has not kept pace with this growth by equipping them with the dogmatic, liturgical and spiritual depths of its own tradition in compelling communications. Literacy rates have soared in the last century, classic texts of the Christian tradition are available in print for the first time, and theology books are now more widely read than ever.[803] Yet this increase in knowledge and learning has largely come from secular sources, and as Miller argues, "[t]he church desperately needs adult education on a daunting scale."[804]

If we take Bauman's thesis on commodification seriously, and use Miller's work to further understand its impact upon religion, then there is a danger that believers themselves will become content with the way in which they presently consume religion and happy with the 'service' the Church provides them. Within such a culture, believers become members of a community of passive consumers, whose consumption equals that of other consumers of professional services, rather than agents of Christ. *MSC* is an example of the manner in which Christian practices can be commodified. The Church needs to educate believers from understanding faith as something branded to suit a particular people – which robs the gospel of its judging power – to understanding Christian faith as that which informs the whole of life, and engages critically with the social needs of each and every age.

Temple emphasised the role education needed to played the life of the Church in order to equip its members to witness adequately to the fulness of the gospel. Mission could only be carried out by laity who were equipped to understand the context within which they lived and the manner in which the gospel critiqued and enlivened that context. The Malvern and COPEC conferences, as well as his continual touring and

[803] Miller 2006: 8.
[804] Ibid: 223.

speech making as both bishop and archbishop, are illustrative of the way in which he attempted to help the Church understand the ways in which the ideologies of individualism, capitalism and utilitarianism were damaging society and distorting its vision of human flourishing. These educational foci were all underpinned by his sophisticated theory of the sacramental universe which affirmed the importance of the material and cultural without reifying or idealising them.

The Church of England needs a specific focus on Christian education; this thesis contends that one of the primary focuses of that education should be understanding theologically the culture of consumerism. Though *MSC* purports to be a report about mission as expressed in and through the local church, it surprisingly does not focus on equipping believers, through on-going discipleship, with the resources they need to be effective missionaries in their own places of work. The local church is instead encouraged to focus almost exclusively on the forms its own practices take, which are orientated towards drawing people in rather than converting people to a different way of life.

MSC lacks the critical hermeneutic Temple had for engaging with the Church's social context. This is because it does not developed a detailed account of the Church's relationship to the world. Christian faith is privatised and individualised, the Church has little to say to the totality of social reality, and no account is given of the laity's life in the Church, nor their role in mission. *MSC* is unaware of the 'Temple' method – exploring all social problems in the light of the Christian faith and his understanding of double judgement enables the Church to become capable of being a partner of the state and other social bodies, as well as being critical of those social bodies and of itself. Temple is just one figure amongst many – others include Gore, Maurice and Ramsey for instance – who showed within his own work the expansive reflection that the Church of England has undertaken with regard to its own self-understanding and attitude towards its own context.[805] The Church of England needs in its ordination, reader, and lay training, to address these issues in order that it might equip its members adequately for mission in its own context.

[805] Avis: 1988, Morris 2005 and Chadwick 1990.

Sacramental Theology

Temple's sacramental theology, and in particular his understanding of the sacramental universe undergirded his theology and led him to his particular understanding of Catholicity, the importance of eduction, and theology's comprehensiveness. It is this aspect of his ecclesiology that most needs re-articulating in the Church of England today. For even though sacramental theology and sacramental ecclesiology have seen significant development in recent Anglican theology, this is not reflected in *MSC*. We saw how Temple developed a thoroughly sacramental ecclesiology – the sacramental worship of the Church was its characteristic activity, which along with the creeds, the scriptures and ordained ministry made up the safeguards that guaranteed its continuity and fidelity. They helped sustain and develop its vocation as the Body of Christ. In the eucharist believers encountered the presence of Christ, are sustained, nourished, and transformed into the likeness of Christ, and through the power of the Spirit the Church became more fully the true *koinonia,* the Body of Christ. This body witnessesd corporately and individually to the reality of the risen Christ and the Kingdom of God. His understanding of the real presence of Christ in the eucharist provided the basis from which he developed his theory of the sacramental universe, where the bread and the wine point to the sacramentality of all material things. It was this that gave value to all material things and led him to have a deep concern for the material and cultural world.

Temple's sacramental theology saw the world as God's creation, a gift from God. Everything in the world is both a material thing *and* a sacrament of God's grace. Bauman's work illustrates how the present economic system in liquid modernity creates a rift between the material and the sacramental, making it fundamentally at variance with this principle. Such a system de-sacralises material things: they are simply something that can be manipulated, branded and commodified.[806] Human beings are treated in the same way – they are sources of labour for the economy. These contemporary accounts of anthropology and social reality are similar to the views in the nineteenth and early twentieth century that Temple (as well as Maurice and Gore) were seeking to combat.[807] Today they are stronger, and more prevalent. Bauman's work further highlights how utilitarianism and materialism dominate the English

[806] Bauman 1989.

[807] See chapter four.

economic and social landscape, yet the whole witness of Temple's theology is that human beings are primarily social, rather than primarily materialistic, creatures.

This thesis argues, alongside Temple, that the Church, in taking bread and wine – signs of humanity's labour – sees labour redeemed and completed by and in God. Through this encounter, the community's understanding of production, consumption, and finance is transformed. Material things are not seen as absolute values in themselves, but as gifts, a means of grace, that people can use to participate in God's redeeming activity in Christ. This encounter enables believers to act as catalysts, agents of social change. Over time, through the liturgy, preaching, teaching, and the act of receiving the bread and wine itself, believers, by the power of the Holy Spirit, become critically aware of their own social context, and the way in which various aspects of it are unjust. They begin to understand that there is a cost to their belief and on-going participation in the Body of Christ. They see that various aspects of their own lives are complicit in economic, political and social structures that are unjust. Believers are empowered to challenge the consumerist, materialist, and utilitarian ideologies that Bauman, amongst others, identify as the dominant social philosophies today. This may, for instance, lead to believers working to challenge the unjust working practices in the third world; increasing exclusion of the elderly from society due to their inability to consume; the degrading treatment of immigrants; and the exploitative effects our materialist society has on our environment, whether directly in this country or indirectly in other more hidden parts of the world. Temple's sacramental theology repudiated the view that worship is a private encounter of the believer with God – arguably a view that *MSC* presents – and instead asserts that worship expressed the consecration of all life, for worship and prayer educate believers into a fuller understanding of the true nature of materiality, social life and social reality.

The Road Ahead: Comprehensiveness

Given that Temple's ecclesiology offered a profoundly rich and varied account of the Christian life and its witness to the whole of social reality, it is extraordinary that *MSC* was unaware of, or ignored, this powerful strand of the Anglican tradition. It is a tradition that is attested to in other reports we have examined as well as the work of contemporary theologians such as Milbank, Pickstock and Ward. *MSC* is not alone in this respect: two other reports in the 1990s addressing the Church of England's

missionary vocation suffer from the same shortcoming. *Presence and Prophecy* and *The Search for Faith* both explored how, and why, the Church was in decline, and how it might reverse this situation. Both gave the same form of social analysis as *MSC*.[8] These three reports are illustrative of the problem of how the body of work that the Church has developed – even in reports published in the last twenty or thirty years – is continuing to inform its self-understanding.

The alternative tradition we have examined in this thesis, studied most clearly in the work of Temple, shows an alertness to some of the more insidious aspects of modern culture, and also liquid modern culture(s) described by Bauman. Though the reports we examined at the end of chapter two are not widely available they do hint at the manner in which theology provides a rich, profound, and compelling, basis for understanding the possibilities of human flourishing today.[809] Yet, it is clear that this tradition has not influenced, or informed, official missiological reports like *MSC* to the extent that it should. This thesis has attempted to bring this tradition more clearly into view, showing how it might inform the Church's present debates concerning ecclesiology and missiology. Whilst it is beyond the remit of this thesis to totally address this problem, it is clear that information technology and multimedia technology both provide low cost ways to distribute theological material across the Church of England. Official reports of the Church of England should contribute to a developing library of documentation that lay readers, priest and bishops use as a basis to teach and preach. Commissioned reports, in most cases, appear to be rarely read beyond General Synod, and are quickly archived. The popularity of *MSC* stands as a testimony that this need not be the case, yet it remains an isolated example. The Church of England needs to ensure that it does not remain so.

This tradition also enlivens and develops perhaps the most important feature of Temple's theology, and arguably Anglican theology – its comprehensiveness. The conviction that the believers' and communities encounter with Christ has ramifications for the whole of social reality. Reports on the environment, prison reform, free market economy, and race relations have been produced because they take seriously the claim that the message of the gospel is for all people in all places and at all times. There are simply no social, political or economic conditions that are beyond

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[808] See Mission Theological Advisory Group 2002 and 1996. Both argue that increasingly individualised culture, increasing materialism through consumption, and the difficulties globalisation has caused are some of the primaary causes of decline in numbers attending local churches.

[809] See 73ff.

the scope of the transforming power of Jesus Christ, whose body, the Church, is called upon to be a witness to the extent of this power in its actions and interactions with the world. It could be said, not unjustly, that *MSC* represents a narrowing of this missiological vocation, reflecting the increasing dominance of the secularisation thesis, even in parts of the Church itself. *MSC* should have represented a rich depository of wisdom to which future generations of priests and theologians could have turned in order to further resource the pressing social, and theological, questions of their own day. Had *MSC* drawn from the rich tradition we have examined, represented so ably by Temple, it might have avoided many, it not all, of the theological and sociological deficiencies we have identified and attempted to rectify. Yet, as this thesis has shown, there is still much work to be done in this area if the Church of England is to proclaim the gospel afresh in this generation.

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