

UNIVERSITY OF WINCHESTER

***Participating in Christ's Mission by the Spirit:***  
*Developing a Trinitarian Perspective on Mission Spirituality*

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*This thesis has been completed as a requirement  
for a postgraduate research degree of the University of Winchester*

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With all this support the final outcome is still my responsibility, as are any errors that remain.

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ABSTRACT

***Participating in Christ's Mission by the Spirit:***  
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This Context Statement reflects on a life shaped by participation in the mission of World Christianity: first as Principal of a mission college for churches in East Africa, then as General Secretary of a European world mission society, and now as a Diocesan Bishop in England. The Statement articulates a Trinitarian and participatory mission paradigm for understanding World Christianity, developed and articulated in a selection of publications written over this 25-year period.

This Statement is not an apology for the missionary movement *per se*; rather it shows that God's mission, and our participation in it, shapes the fundamental reality and major dimensions of World Christianity. God's mission is to share his life by making, restoring and recreating us in his image. He has done this supremely in Jesus by the Spirit and invites us to become like him (*theosis*) by participating in this mission: we have a part to play in God's Yes to us: our part is to say Yes to him by living his mission. We are an analogy of God's mission in the daily vocations in which we witness to God who gives us life.

At the heart of this mission paradigm is a mission spirituality of *receiving* and *responding*: we *receive* our life, our identity and vocation in Christ by the Spirit, enabling our *response* of participating in God's mission. Jesus has come into the far country of the creation that has fallen away from God. Christ comes to take us home: to return all of creation to the Father. In our return journey we discover all that God has given us as participants in his mission. This pilgrimage of *response* takes us through diverse cultural contexts, the renewal of religious traditions, and the discovery of the plurality of humanity. We are participants in God's great mission of sharing his life: *participating in Christ's mission by the Spirit*.

Keywords: Mission Spirituality; World Christianity; Four Systems of Mission.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS OF PUBLICATIONS

<b>CMS 1.</b>	“CMS and New Mission”
<b>CMS 2.</b>	“CMS and New Mission II”
<b>CMPC.</b>	<i>Christian Mission in a Pluralist Context</i>
<b>EMM.</b>	“Encouraging Mission Mindedness”
<b>FFTS.</b>	<i>From the Father Through the Son: In Defence of the Filioque</i>
<b>MCB-SSS.</b>	“A Missionary Church in Britain” [Republication of: <i>Church Mission Societies: Scaffolding or Structure of the Spirit?</i> ]
<b>MSMO.</b>	“Missional Structures for Missional Outcomes”
<b>MWAC.</b>	“Missionary Work in the Anglican Communion”
<b>TAM.</b>	“The Accidental Missionary” [Italian Translation: “Practica E Prospettiva Della Missione Anglicana”]
<b>TNPT.</b>	“The Nature of Practical Theology”

## INTRODUCTION and OUTLINE

My perspective on life has been shaped by my participation in the mission of World Christianity. This Statement sets out this context, and outlines the Trinitarian and participatory mission paradigm for understanding Christianity developed and articulated in a selection of my publications written over a 25-year period. During this time I served as the Principal of a mission college for churches in East Africa, as the General Secretary of a European world mission society, and as a Diocesan Bishop in England.

However, this Statement is not an apology for the missionary movement *per se*;<sup>1</sup> rather I aim to show that God's mission, and our participation in it, shapes the fundamental reality and major dimensions of World Christianity. God's mission is, I propose, to share his life by making, restoring and recreating us in his image.<sup>2</sup> He has done this supremely in Jesus by the Spirit and invites us to become like him (*theosis*<sup>3</sup>) by participating in this mission. 'God has honoured us by allowing us in our own human way to have a part in God's yes to us.' (Krötke 2019, 49) Our part in God's yes is to say yes to him by living his mission. We are an analogy of God's mission in our daily vocations in which we witness to God who gives us life.

At the heart of this mission paradigm is, I suggest, a mission spirituality of *receiving* and *responding*: we *receive* our life, our identity and vocation in Christ by the Spirit, enabling our *response* of participating in God's mission. Drawing on the Parable of the Prodigal Son, Barth uses the image of Jesus going into the far country of the creation that has fallen away from God (1956-81, IV/1 §59). Christ comes to take us home: to return all of creation to be with the Father. In becoming part of creation Jesus is called to be the God-human who takes into himself the separation of creation from God and also holds restored creation in union with the as yet imperfect and sinful humanity in his resurrection reality: Jesus as Victor (Collins Winn 2009, 232-280). God calls us into this calling of Jesus:<sup>4</sup> to participate in his mission and to

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<sup>1</sup> Stroope (2017) questions whether 'mission' language can survive seven big shifts: waning Christendom; colonial legacy; pluralism; decline of modernity; existence of *Christianities*; the modern missionary movement as a failing term; and the desire for empathy and mutual exchange (347-352). Yet, Stroope thinks, 'The original impulse of the gospel endures and awaits new expressions.' (353) I suggest the *original impulse* is God's missional intention to share the divine life, and our analogy of his mission takes ever *new expressions*. I interpret this viewpoint in terms of biblical eschatology (Middleton 2014).

<sup>2</sup> I draw on Robinson's study of the *imago Dei* (2011) in Barth, Balthasar and Moltmann, emphasising the *participatio Christi* in Barth. I also draw on the African theology of God as giver of life, which contrasts with European perspectives (Fulljames 1993).

<sup>3</sup> By *theosis* I mean becoming God-like in the way Jesus was like God: in his mission of sharing God's life with us. In his survey of modern missiology Oborji notes the place of *theosis* in Orthodoxy (2006, 78-81).

<sup>4</sup> I refer to Barth's reworking of the doctrine of election: Christ's election in eternity revealed in history (1956-81 II/2 §33, §34); I draw on McSwain (2018) and his interpretation of our participation in Jesus'

become like him – receiving as we respond – on the homeward journey of reconciliation with the Father. Our return is also transposed into our eternal response in which we explore for ever the fullness of the divine life in the Father’s house: like the elder son, we find that all that is his is also ours.

‘Christianity is thus fundamentally about God’s actions in Word and Spirit. Only consequently is it about our necessary response and co-operation as God’s partners.’ (Healy 2004, 294) This Barthian view is modified in this Statement by the emphasis on two modes of participation: *receiving* God’s yes as the foundation of our lives as mission participants; and *responding* with our yes, our participation, in all the dimensions God’s mission entails. Receiving and responding are concurrent and yet also work as separate phases. Within a Trinitarian perspective I use the procession-and-return modes of Spirit-Christology as a mission resource (Peppiatt 2010 & 2014).<sup>5</sup> As Del Colle says,

Spirit-christology, therefore, functions as a dogmatic model in which the convergence of the christological and pneumatological missions point to the connection between the divine economy and the social praxis of the church. The witness and deeds of the church in mission are human actions that participate in the agency of the risen Christ through the energizing power of the Holy Spirit. (1994, 210)

In Spirit-Christology there is no Christology without Pneumatology and *vice-versa*, and the Biblical and exegetical perspective on the ministry of Jesus by the Spirit is combined with the systematic and historical understanding of doctrine (see FETS). Here I combine these elements in a missiological approach. Thus the procession and return of God’s Trinitarian mission shapes our participation: we *receive* life, salvation and eternity as these are given in the *procession of the Spirit from the Father through the Son*; and we *respond, return*, by giving thanks to God for our lives – as creatures shaped by God’s *contextual* call, with the riches of our Christian *traditions*, and in our intercultural *networks – in the Son, by the Spirit, to the Father*.<sup>6</sup> Here the kenosis and plerosis themes in Barth’s later theology – the descent and ascent of Christ as

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election, emphasising Christ’s *iustus et peccator* and modifying Neder (2009). A fruitful conversation here would be with the contrasting and diverse perspectives of African Christology – including Ancestor (procession/revelation/salvation) Christology from above, and Prophet/Elder (return, reconstructionist) Christology from below – thus providing the basis for a wider mission spirituality (see Dinkelaker 2016).<sup>5</sup> *Logos* Christologies were once contrasted with Spirit Christologies, with latter as examples of heresy (see Habets 2003)! In using Spirit-Christology I aim to avoid: (i) claiming too much, (ii) collapsing the immanent into the economic Trinity, and (iii) advancing either a monarchical modalism and/or a social Trinitarian role allocation. I emphasise Walls’ notion of God translating himself in Jesus by the Spirit, and how our appreciation of God’s Trinitarian mission evolves historically and culturally (Sexton 2014).

<sup>6</sup> Barth, (1956-81 III/3 §49.4) writes about participation ‘within’ God the Father’s providence, in terms of our belief, obedience and prayer. Yet this participation is only by grace; it is not by an inherent capacity implied by *analogia entis*: creation expresses ‘externally’ the covenant in Christ (cf Johnson 2010, 100).

Priest and King – are opened up, by the Spirit, for our participation in the dynamics of receiving and responding to Jesus’ ongoing historical mission as Prophet (see Figure 1).

The Statement has six sets of reflections. Sections One and Two are about the *receiving* and establishing of our participation in God’s mission; Sections Three to Six are about our *response* and the shaping of our participation in the expanding fullness of God’s mission. In each section the reflections spiral round core aspects raised with reference to my publications (abbreviated as initials). Mission spirituality, for which I offer the analogy of mission as basis in Section Two, is the evolving connecting thread in each section.

The following outline thus provides a narrative and summary of the sections, identifying key issues. This context Statement therefore indicates the duration, breadth and depth of this project: it is a series of conversations through academic literature over a period of time about the form of spirituality that goes with the actions, life and endurance of World Christianity. Thus, Section One shows how my thinking has developed from a focus on the discipline of European Practical Theology (TNPT) to a wider interest in the mission spirituality of World Christianity (EMM). The transition to world mission spirituality was via an engagement with the spirituality of the African context and the delivery of a locally developed and taught programme in missional theology that was validated by a UK university. This was the gift that generated a new perspective which I began to articulate in TAM and then developed into the four systems of mission that I explore further here. In this section I also, through EMM, begin to address the crucial question of the missional nature of the church.

Section Two picks up on the question of how mission spirituality is grounded. Drawing on Barth’s refounding of theology,<sup>7</sup> I propose an *analogy of mission*,<sup>8</sup> expressing a participatory Trinitarian mission spirituality that resists both a European subjectivism and an over-economic Trinitarianism.<sup>9</sup> I also consider critical realism and the use of judgemental rationality as a way of exploring the practical adequacy of mission spirituality<sup>10</sup> as this is expressed in the four

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<sup>7</sup> Barth inspired theological movements of retrieval (Sarisky 2017) and Postliberalism (Dehart 2006 and Michener 2013, 40-47; see also Webster & Schner 2000). The new foundation for mission, *missio Dei* (Doe 2010, 52-58), is also directly or indirectly attributed to Barth (but see Flett 2011).

<sup>8</sup> I develop an analogy of mission of participating in Christ’s mission: *as Jesus was in mission so are we*.

<sup>9</sup> Wisse (2011) argues that Trinitarian theology steers us away from immanentist secularism and non-soteriological theology (248-314). Some Trinitarian models avoid secular immanentism but slip into Jensen-like theology in that God’s aseity is lost (Black 2015).

<sup>10</sup> Ward (2017b) summarises the three elements of critical realism as follows: ‘*Ontological realism* is the assertion that there is a distinction between the realm of knowledge and the realm of the real’; ‘*Epistemic relativism* resists both enlightenment certainty and postmodern scepticism’; and ‘*Judgemental rationality* recognizes that not all accounts of reality are equal’ (22).

dimensions I consider in later sections. Each of these sections reflects a stage in the return mode of Trinitarian mission: by the Spirit, in the Son, to the Father. I shall summarise these four dimensions of response in the following paragraphs.

In Section Three, using the four systems of mission proposed in CMS2,<sup>11</sup> I first consider the *context and experience of participation*. I recognise that context has emerged as a key theme for understanding the Christian faith and I look at different interpretations of how to understand experience and context. *The Spirit as the presence* in the experience is recognised as an *a priori*<sup>12</sup> of being known by God in Christ. In MSMO and SSS I also explore how the *ecclesial self*, in its world-oriented missional character, shapes the imagination and practices of mission spirituality so as to be contextually and practically adequate.

In Section Four I explore the *Anglican tradition of mission* in the development of a global understanding of the missional character of Christian faith. Here *Jesus' mission* is the participatory basis for a missional understanding of church across traditions. In TAM I review the way in which the *Anglican tradition* developed its recovery of the worldwide nature of Christian mission through mission societies. This highlights the diverse economy of church already explored in MSMO. In MWAC I suggest that mission work includes enabling the church as a whole to express its missional nature through the creedal marks.

In Section Five I review the way that *mission networks* have facilitated the development of the global perspective of World Christianity: our participation in *God the Father's covenant of fellowship with creation*. In CMS1 and CMS2 I consider how this has emerged within the mission societies that first focused on a territorial extension of Christianity, but which then moved to an interchange between diverse perspectives of Christianity, not least in recognising the significance of migration: Christianity is a *mission movement* and is part of the many human movements shaping the world.

Section Six explores the *mission capital* of Christianity: the character of *Trinitarian mission* as it unfolds in contexts, traditions and networks, leading to the culture of Trinitarian mission itself, which is also only understood through intercultural exchange within a *pluralist world*. I look at

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<sup>11</sup> My three systems of contextual, transcultural, and networks are similar to Doran's (2001) three sets of social, cultural and personal in his scale of values. The dialects within, and the influence between, these three is similar to my adequacy test for mission spirituality. Similar schematics can be found in world-systems thinking (Wallerstein 2004) or global approaches to religion (Beyer 1994, 2006). And see also the way spirituality is contribution to new patterns in world-systems thinking (Smith, 2017).

<sup>12</sup> I draw on Loder (1989), but see also Chapman (2001, chap.6) on the religious *a priori* in German theology – the background to Barth.

this through CMPC where I recognise the pluralist setting of World Christianity and explore, with FFTS, the Trinitarian significance of the *Filioque* in Africa. I conclude by reviewing the development of my Trinitarian perspective on mission spirituality: the grounding and unfolding of participation in Christ's mission by the Spirit with the Father.

## SECTION ONE:

### From Practical Theology to a Mission Spirituality of World Christianity

#### 1.1. Starting with European Practical Theology

In TNPT – which arose out of a research project in England – I offer a three-level theological hermeneutic for practical theology: 1. *the experiential and situational level* of everyday expressions of theology or the focused exploration of a situation; 2. *the reflective level*, using a perspective, sphere of life or ministry for developing a view on practice in relation to general Christian thought; 3. *the orientational level*, which is an interpretation of our life-world. TNPT suggests that the orientational level is part of modern life. I consider two orientational strategies: one (drawing on Browning) proposes the correlation of theology and life through the religious dimension (the depth) common to all societies; the second (drawing on Barth) proposes a theological understanding of the relationship between faith and culture based on the (transcendental) reality of the risen Lord Jesus. I argue for the second. The outcome of the second is the expression of Jesus' risen life in his ongoing ministry as prophet: 'In his prophecy he creates history, namely the history enacted in Christian knowledge' (205, quoting Barth 1956-81, VI/3.1., 212). I further explore what this enacted Christian knowledge looks like in the lived expression of faith in terms of the repetition of the transformation seen in Jesus' life, death, resurrection and his ascension presence. TNPT left questions unanswered that shaped my development:

1. What is the formational role of practical theology and who is it for? Miller-McLemore asks whether theology is too academic as well as too clergy-oriented (2007, 26). The temptation is for practical theology to be a form of academic reflection on practice, and/or belief in practice, by clergy. My work with African colleagues on the development of a mission training programme brought this home.
2. What is the outcome of practical theology in terms of the lived Christian life – mission spirituality in contextual practice? The nature of African spirituality and church life was a focus. But lurking here is the question of normativity in practical theology and whether practical theology is 'theologically empty' if it does not engage with the Biblical witness, church history and doctrine (Barth 1956-81, IV.3.2., 881).
3. How is a *theological* practical theology grounded in an understanding of God-and-world which makes sense of the nature of history and diverse understandings of transcendence

(immanent or otherwise)? In Barth's theology, Jesus is the relational transcendent presence guiding our participation in his mission towards the *telos* of his history. This is 'the Christian "experience with our experience"' (Dalferth 1988, 123). But how does the Holy Spirit enable participation in different cultures (cf Uzukwu 2012)? So both orientational theology but also a pneumatology are necessary for a contextual mission spirituality.

## **1.2. Mission Spirituality: Beyond European Practical Theology**

Thus TNPT arose out of a research project that explored the possibility of developing a *theological* practical theology drawing on Barth's theology.<sup>13</sup> I was, initially, trying to make sense of practical theology within the Western tradition of theological education. I looked at questions about its genealogy, particularly the way it had become separated from an earlier tradition centred in devotional wisdom and community life, as it sought to find a place in the modern university by mirroring the knowledge found in professions like law and medicine. Farley (1983) called this 'the clerical paradigm'. He showed how theology had become more specialised in the three theoretical disciplines of Biblical Studies, Systematic Theology and Church History (which corresponded to the secular disciplines of language/literature, philosophy, and history) and how these had become separated from Practical Theology, which drew on human sciences for its theory and was focused on ministerial practices including local/foreign missions. It was mission which proved to be a resource for a new approach.

My aim was to recover a new centre of devotional wisdom (as a '*theologia*') for a contemporary context by using Barth's theology, as interpreted by Dalferth (1988), as a theology of orientational knowledge: of elucidation and explication (see TNPT). I thought this approach would re-invigorate practical theology and also offer an integrating point for other theological disciplines. I was aware that in the literature discussing Farley's research there was still a question about how practical theology could, as a discipline, be recognised academically if the practical knowledge it offered was not seen to be of academic or theological significance. Yet practical theology has also developed 'the academic paradigm'.

My research was turned around by two events that moved me in a new direction. First, in one of those heart-stopping moments, I read an essay by a major theologian which summed up my

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<sup>13</sup> A *theological* practical theology echoes Webster's phrase (1998). Sarisky summarises Webster's self-critique of his early work (2015, 2): he had been too sketchy in outlining historical theological problems, too analytical of Christian culture, had not valued doctrines like creation, and had not been constructive enough. Webster died before he could develop his theological theology. But he had begun to 'locate our reception' of God's action in the economy of our lives in creation and by regeneration (Allen 2016, 231).

research to that point (Frei 1988). However, second, reading Barth's own challenge about the place of world mission in theology<sup>14</sup> also triggered a question about the wider genealogy of practical theology: how is the practical theology of the West related to the expansion of Christianity world-wide and, drawing first on Frei and then on Sanneh, Walls and others, how is Biblical faith translated in diverse cultures worldwide?<sup>15</sup>

I began to realise that the set of connecting issues I was exploring in the theology of practical theology, embedded in the European tradition of theology and part of a declining Western Christianity, could be seen in a new way. In other words, a practical theology beyond the clerical, ecclesiastical or liberation lenses: one more rooted in world mission. I wondered if the spirituality and mission that shaped indigenous mission and inculturated mission theologies across the cultures of World Christianity could bring a new perspective. For example, I wondered if theological education in Africa had its own forms of *theologia*?<sup>16</sup> Western patterns of theological education have been challenged, and we see African projects of retrieval articulating thought forms and practices based on early thinkers of Christianity.<sup>17</sup> These are being used to renew contemporary African theology in relation to today's African mission issues.<sup>18</sup> I also wondered if it was possible to develop a *theologia* that was not tied to the academic paradigm. In terms of Frei's fivefold typology of theology (1992) and using Dalferth's hermeneutics (1988), I began to internalise Type 3 (Browning – correlation) within Type 4 (Barth – self-description) as one example of a cultural perspective that is part of a worldwide range of cultural perspectives in which God's Trinitarian mission is known, translated, and expressed within new cultures through a mission spirituality.

### 1.3. An African Project

At this point a chance opportunity offered itself to explore some of these fundamental issues through an actual project: redesigning and then implementing a three-year theological education programme for a college in Kenya. With African colleagues we imagined a new

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<sup>14</sup> Note Barth's long reflection on the modern mission movement under the heading of Jesus the Prophet (1956-81 IV/3.1, 18-38).

<sup>15</sup> See Frei's work on *ad hoc* correlation (1990, 70-91), Sanneh on translation as mission (1989) and Walls on incarnation as translation (1996).

<sup>16</sup> See LeMarquand & Galgalo (2004) and Phiri & Werner (2013) for two collections of essays on theological education in Africa. In particular, Lygunda Li-M (2018) explores how mission theology has been taught in the Congo within an African evangelical framework.

<sup>17</sup> Kwame Bediako (1992) explores the comparison between the theology and mission of the early church and that of modern Africa.

<sup>18</sup> See Ngong's survey (2017) of African Christian thought and the review of how some key issues have been addressed over the centuries.

theological curriculum<sup>19</sup> for a non-Western cultural context relating to the practical issues of the evangelistic ministry of a non-Western Anglican mission society.<sup>20</sup> The relationship with the Western context was maintained as the programme was validated, with its own African approach, through an English university (Dakin 1998a). The aim was to acknowledge the Western tradition, but also renew it and revise it using what African Christians considered to be core issues.<sup>21</sup> There were four educational dimensions: comprehension, competence, character and community, as these related to reading of Scripture through cultural eyes.

Within this simple framework we developed a spiral curriculum (Dakin 1998a, 8; Appendix 3). The focus of all studies, the spine of the spiral, was God's mission in context (*missio Dei*) mediated through a continual reading of Scripture in African settings: a fusion of the Biblical horizon where God has acted out his purposes, and the present context where God continues to act out his purposes within cultures.

To interpret this engagement, we adopted a hermeneutic based on a classic model of interpretation. However, to this classical three-dimension model, of explication, meditation and application, we added religion and communication. These five continuous elements each became a form of study and together constituted the interpretative spiral, each connecting with each other through the spine of the *missio Dei*. The spiral curriculum was therefore as follows: *explicatio* (Biblical Studies), *meditatio* (theological studies), 'religio' (interdisciplinary studies of religion), 'communicatio' (practical studies), *applicatio* (fieldwork studies) (Appendix 2). Adding 'religio' and 'communicatio' between *meditatio* and *applicatio* acknowledged that, in moving from *meditatio* to *applicatio*, the interpretation expressed in practices is greatly influenced by cultural thought and philosophy.<sup>22</sup> FFTS and Dakin 1994b are influenced by this approach. In an African context it was crucial for African traditions of wisdom (Golka 1993) to be part of a curriculum: in oral cultures this allows for the unwritten to be acknowledged, explored and included. Thus in an article on Chris Wright's book *Mission of God* (2006), I

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<sup>19</sup> Something Farley was actually unable to achieve whilst he was in post (Miller-McLemore 2007, 34).

<sup>20</sup> Later I will explore my own viewpoint, but here I note that the debate about the significance and contribution of mission/religious communities to the priority of a mission perspective and to the church's practical engagement has deep roots (Daley 1987; O'Malley 1988).

<sup>21</sup> In early searches for introductions to African Religion I recall Clark & Fergusson's OU study text (1978) as being helpful. The study of African religions is now in a new phase (Bongmba 2012 & Olupona 2014). For a World Christian perspective on Christianity in Eastern Africa see Kollman & Smedley (2018).

<sup>22</sup> Barth (1956-81) acknowledges the same in his own use of this pattern, eg. 1956-81 II/1 736, for which he has established a framework in §21 (Freedom of Word) and §22 (Mission of the Church), CD I/2, 661-797. See Oakes (2012, 184-185), but also the work of Ricoeur on the same pattern (Wallace 1990). I include this approach to engaging with wider reality when I explore Barth's *participatio Christi*.

argued for the role that Middle Eastern wisdom played as a dialectical resource in relation to the tradition of the Jewish Covenant (Dakin 2007).

I published an article describing this curriculum development (Dakin 1994b). Since then practical theology has developed hugely.<sup>23</sup> At that stage, my thinking about the theology of practical theology was stirred up by new cultural perspectives (for example, the place of ancestors in family and community life), by the commitment to evangelistic mission of a particular mission community (Church Army Africa) where members were pioneers in contexts like Sudan, Eastern Congo and Northern Kenya, and by a confident African mission spirituality.

This African project literally put me in new place and changed my perspective. Looking back, I can see that all three phases of my ministry have generated changes in my perspective. Yet as I reflect on these changes I began to discern an emerging interpretative framework which I articulated in CMS2 and CMPC: the four-systems model. I have continued to refine this model and I develop it in this Statement.

#### **1.4. Mission and Spirituality**

The mission spirituality I encountered in Kenya is influenced by the East African Revival, which in turn influences the life of church and society in East Africa. (Many Christians in the Revival refused to take the Mau Mau oaths and suffered for it.) It is a lay movement in origin and focuses on personal and social holiness. It is egalitarian, recognising neither hierarchy nor ethnicity.<sup>24</sup> It began with an African and European praying together. It spread rapidly and still continues. The Revival emphasises the importance of salvation through the death of Jesus for understanding the nature of God who, in African traditions of spirituality, is immanent to creation and human society that is also suffused by spirits. In this context the value of Christianity is its power to overcome evil forces and to harness the forces of good through a repentance for the sin that destroys lives, and through a commitment to a new lifestyle.<sup>25</sup> Such

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<sup>23</sup> Surveys of the development of practical theology include: Dingemans (1996), Hazle (2003), Swinton (2003), Cahalan (2005), Miller-McLemore (2007), Graham (2017) and Ward (2017). However, none of these explore a *theological* practical theology. Even Swinton & Mowat (2016) do not do that, though they do recognise the place of revelation as an authoritative norm in tradition. NTPT is a retrospective summary of where I had got to before Kenya, but it does not offer a detailed *theological* practical theology. The theological practical theology I sought became *missiological*, inspired by the Kenya context, using a critical realism, eg Anderson (1975, 1984, 2001), who inspired Root (2014 & 2016) on the theme of Christopraxis – similar to Barth’s interpretation of Christ’s ongoing prophetic ministry.

<sup>24</sup> For an evaluation of the Revival as an African indigenous movement not dependent on anticolonialism, see Bruner (2017).

<sup>25</sup> A complementary view of a Christian Bantu philosophy of life, from the same region, is Nkurunziza’s African vitalistic theology (1989).

revitalisation movements are now studied academically as part of World Christianity.<sup>26</sup> Such movements face uncomfortable questions when they fail to prevent the evil they claim to overcome.<sup>27</sup> The Rwanda genocide is a challenge to the Revival. The tragedy is that a movement in which conversion may be understood as a transition to a Christian vision of cosmopolitanism<sup>28</sup> was not able to resist and overcome the ethnic hate that often fuels genocides. Such a challenge remains today. It is the reason why many African theologians are integrating social reconstruction and development into their theology and arguing for a holistic mission spirituality, in a spiritualised cosmos, that is socially just.<sup>29</sup>

Moving back to UK I found myself in the secular context of Europe which contrasted with the African whole-life perspective of African Christianity. EMM is my outline of some theological perspectives on missional spirituality in modern Britain from within one tradition of Anglicanism. The plausibility structures of this spirituality were mediated by associations of those committed to the same vision, which sustains the participants within what is a largely a non-religious wider secular culture. In EMM, however, I advocated for the influence of a World Christianity perspective. First, I proposed that world mission is the framework for mission spirituality, so that it is from this perspective that the nature of the church is understood. This places participants within the 'drama' rather than standing outside an 'epic' whose ending is known. We are more like resident aliens, inside-outsiders: this is the character of Christian life, its ethos. Second, I explored three ways in which participating in this drama happens as an expression of a resident-alien ethos: a mission spirituality of evangelism, ethical action and eschatology.<sup>30</sup> The first is about proclaiming that God has done something in Jesus that changes the world for ever. The second is about how Christians are called to live in the world even though they know they are resident aliens. The third is about the *telos* that the resurrection creates and which gives the drama a 'comedic' character. However, a key development in EMM is that missional spirituality is about the character of *missional church*: this kind of ecclesiology, as a missional hermeneutic of the gospel, other publications develop.

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<sup>26</sup> O'Malley (2011) has edited a collection of papers that consider the impact of Revitalisation thinking on Christian theology. On religious social movements, see Linderkilde & Kühle (2015). World Christianity can be seen as a revitalisation movement for humanity as a whole.

<sup>27</sup> Ormerod & Clifton (2009) begin with this question in their study of mission. Radner (2012) also accepts the challenge.

<sup>28</sup> See Peter's study on the Revival (2012) and the corresponding study on the Rwanda genocide by Longman (2010); cf Ferdinando 1999. See also Katongole's (2017) Catholic perspective on lament.

<sup>29</sup> Ngong (2013) affirms African responsibility and agency for leading change. On reconstruction, see Gathogo (2007) and Gunda (2009).

<sup>30</sup> The risen Lord shares his life and mission by the Spirit through Scripture in the Christian community in its engagement with the world. I see this eschatological realism as something translatable in all cultures.

Having proposed this I was conscious that my notion of mission spirituality would lead to a whole-life view of practical Christian faith. I summed this up using a quote from Sheldrake (EEM, 285, n.6):

From a Christian perspective, spirituality is not just concerned with prayer or even narrowly religious activities. It concerns the whole of life, viewed in terms of a conscious relationship with God, in Jesus Christ, through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and within a community of believers.

However, I was now conscious (see TAM) that Western Christianity can sustain a viewpoint in which mission spirituality can remain contextually unconnected, may be unaware of its tradition, and is not necessarily related to the wider networks of World Christianity. More deeply, mission spirituality can also float free from the deeper traditions of the Christian faith that are grounded in Trinitarian theology. This has changed: mission and spirituality have been linked in recent research (Chevalier 2017). My framework for mission spirituality is the four dimensions: each dimension has an internal life-system that interacts with other systems; combined they shape participation in Christ's mission by the Spirit.

A brief overview of the literature gives a sense of development in mission spirituality. Holder defines spirituality as, 'the lived experience of Christian faith and discipleship' (Holder 2011, 1). Sheldrake adds that the study of spirituality is self-implicating and transformatory (2011, 459). This might be especially true of a spirituality shaped by engaging with Christianity across different cultures (Smith 2006, 344; Young 2011): the sheer vitality, diversity of churches and social engagement of World Christianity is challenging and stimulates the imagination to reflect on the dynamics of faith and the life of discipleship in context (Kim & Kim 2016, 8-9). So whilst the relationship between theology and spirituality is debated, especially in connection with theological anthropology (Endean 2011), I affirm this link and also draw on mission theology as an apologetic framework (Graham 2017, 148) to explore the perspective and practice of mission spirituality. I have outlined my own view (Dakin 2008a & b), drawing on Bevens & Schroeder (2004) to show how the Anglican Five Marks of Mission shape discipleship but also require interpretation through a diversity of Christian mission theology and practice from across the centuries and continents. As such, mission spirituality is a reservoir of resources, motivating vocation and guiding daily life so as 'to tap into the Spirit's presence for grace and growth' (Bevens *nd.*).<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Bevens' reference to the Spirit is quite unusual in definitions of spirituality. For an overview of the significance of the Holy Spirit's relationship with the believer as a basis for defining spirituality, see Shults & Hollingsworth (2008). See Hawthorne (1991) on the place of the Spirit in Jesus' life.

In simple terms I define mission spirituality as: sharing God’s life by living the mission of Jesus. This perspective is another way of talking about participation – acknowledging that this includes what is implied by terms like ‘in Christ’,<sup>32</sup> *theosis*, deification, and divinisation – and is grounded in a perspective that recognises the fundamental question of the God-world relation.<sup>33</sup> This goes to the heart of understanding the nature of theology, the use of language and the understanding of agency and therefore mission. The four systems of mission are therefore not only a framework but also an intentional grounding of spirituality in a *missional* critical realism, an ‘analogy of mission’ drawing on Barth as resource,<sup>34</sup> and referencing the theology of Trinitarian mission,<sup>35</sup> including Spirit-Christology.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> I have also been influenced by Gorman’s exploration of this theme in his studies on the New Testament (2009, 2015, 2017).

<sup>33</sup> Keating (2015) explores typologies of deification. He identifies three core aspects: reliance on Scripture; embeddedness in doctrine, creed and liturgy; and the theme of participation, which clarifies the divine/human elements and relationship. I have also drawn on Anderson’s study (2014) which looks at the theology of Cyril of Alexandria in reviewing participation in Barth and Balthasar. Burger (2009) has also explored (as have others, including Dalferth) what being ‘in Christ’ means in the Reformed tradition. Chow (2013) has also explored *theosis* in his missional review of Chinese theology and spirituality.

<sup>34</sup> Neder (2009) looks at participation in Barth’s theology, and Flett (2010) at how Barth’s can be read as a mission theology. I take note of McSwain’s criticisms of Neder (2018, 82-89), and also draw out implications for the eternal nature of mission.

<sup>35</sup> Dodds’ study (2017) of Newbigin’s Trinitarian mission theology is helpful here for a Trinitarian understanding of *missio Dei*.

<sup>36</sup> Coffey’s theology is interpreted here using Del Colle (1994) and O’Byrne (2010); see also O’Byrne’s study of early Church Councils (2018).

## SECTION TWO

### ***Analogy of Mission, Barth, Participation and Practical Adequacy***

#### **2.1. *Analogy of Mission and Barth***

In MWAC I used the phrase ‘analogy of mission’ (678, 679 n.4) in commenting on Barth’s ‘two sendings’ of Christ and of the Church (1956-81 VI/3.2., 768f). This relates to Jesus’ saying in John’s Gospel: “as the Father has sent me so I send you” (John 21:22). Here I develop this idea further, using Barth’s refounding of theology to articulate a basis for a mission paradigm. My aim is to connect participation in mission with Barth’s analogy of faith and relate this to my four-fold framework. My intention is to offer a missional interpretation of God’s purpose for creation, that is, to establish a covenant relationship with his creatures. This purpose, which is effected in Christ as justification and sanctification, sets the context for vocational expressions of God’s fullness: vocational<sup>37</sup> life is not just for the present time, but from all time for all time (Eph. 2:10).

Interpreting Barth has become a way of understanding modern European theology,<sup>38</sup> so the differences between early and later Barth<sup>39</sup> reflect major changes in some 20<sup>th</sup> Century theology. Interest in Barth’s theology grew out of such developmental interpretations of his theology, especially those by Balthasar (who explored Barth’s understanding of analogy) and Frei (who looked at Barth’s theology of revelation, scripture and culture). Later, McCormack brought a new focus on Barth’s dialectical realist theology of election and covenant. Two articles, by Wigley (2003) and Stanley (2009), provide a helpful overview. Yet Barth himself was always starting again, redescribing theology in a way that did not rely on, but still related to, European metaphysics and epistemology. My own understanding has recently been shaped by Stanley (2009, 2010) and Johnson (2010a, 2010b, 2012, 2019 & 2020). Stanley shows that

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<sup>37</sup> For Barth, ‘Christian existence is grounded only in vocation’ (1956-81 IV.3.2., 530) and this vocation is to be united with Christ, and he with us, in the personal histories which are part of the universal history that is unfolding in Christ. There are endless forms in which the specific freedom of Christians can be exercised (554); vocation is not within the church but within creation (540). Yet these multiple forms of vocation have a particular ethos which is centred on the love of God and love of neighbour (559). The core Christian identity is that of witnessing to Christ in the personal history of a vocation that is joined to Christ’s history, in which communion between God and humanity has been restored and is growing: ‘the essence of their vocation is that God makes them his witnesses’ (575).

<sup>38</sup> Buckley (1994) was published as I moved back to Kenya. He argues that Barth could be read as both articulating the Christian universe and spelling out the rules of Christian thinking. Barth therefore *shows* us the faith and *states* the principles of faith. Buckley recognised the wider significance of Barth’s three-fold hermeneutics (outlined earlier) but did not develop the *applicatio* aspect.

<sup>39</sup> See Myers (2011, 121-137) on Williams (1979), reflecting Barth’s earlier and later perspectives on the Trinity; and Leigh’s (2017, 145-177) exploration of Barth’s use of Hegel’s triadic logic (see Adams 2013).

the question of metaphysics runs throughout Barth's development. He reworks Busch's view that Barth's theology is about understanding what it means to say, 'God is God' (Busch 1986). Johnson looks at Barth's development (he finds four stages) and relates this to his engagement with Catholic theology, looking at the relationship between the 'analogy of being' and Barth's notion of the 'analogy of faith'.

Barth's 'analogy of faith'<sup>40</sup> reworks the God-world relationship through the doctrine of election: creation is the external expression of God's gracious intention to bring all things into a covenant relationship with him through Jesus by the Spirit, even if this is in the face of sin and evil. Because of this, the later Barth could say that the human has an intrinsic capacity for faith, based on the extrinsic eternal election of Jesus as the God-human through whom God created the world (Johnson 2020, 104f). Yet faith only comes by God's grace in enabling us to know him in Christ by the Spirit. For Barth, the 'analogy of being' (by which our being participates, analogically, in God's being, because God is the origin of our existence and has made us so we can know him) only works if it sits within the 'analogy of faith'. We may recognise natural revelation, lights of creation coherent with Scripture, but only from within faith, not as supplement or basis for it.

Barth adopts an analogical understanding of God-world relation that leads to continuity between God's act in creation and justification, but his analogy works in reverse from the Roman Catholic one: the human as created stands in continuity with the human in grace precisely because justification is the condition of the possibility of creation. (Johnson 2010b, 644)

My interpretation of the economy of God's Trinitarian mission is thus a modified version of Barth's later emphasis on God's being-in-act in history in the person of Jesus. In summary terms, Christ's incarnation, as the fully divine and fully human person of Jesus, includes, by the Spirit, Christ's fully human *theosis* which (simultaneously) incorporates the reality of righteous but sinful humanity (*simul iustus et peccator*). We are all included in this *theosis* by the Spirit who is poured out on all flesh. Thus God's mission economy has three parts: the divine incarnation (participation) in a humanity that becomes Godlike; a humanity that holds together the impossible possibility of righteousness and sinfulness in a Godlikeness; and our present participation in Christ's Godlikeness as part of God's mission of sharing the divine life eternally. The forms this participation takes are the variety of vocations we are called to that witness to the life God has shared with us in practical expressions of service to our neighbour

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<sup>40</sup> Barth uses the language of participation, but it is always 'in Christ'. Human culture is not excluded, but it is not the basis for revelation.

within and across cultures in the hope and direction set by the Spirit in Christ. (Jamir 2016 explores a cross-cultural appreciation of Barth's social theology of vocation.)

## 2.2. Judgemental Rationality and Participation

Barth's view of Christian existence as vocation can be drawn out in any culture. The question is, How do we participate in Christ's mission in context, knowing we have been set free by Christ's history? How is the Spirit drawing us into the ongoing mission of Jesus, in his vocation to create and go on enhancing the communion between humanity and God within society? Loder's view of the Spirit's work implies that the pattern of environment, selfhood, non-being and new being may be identified in any context. Loder articulated the core problematic of practical theology in Chalcedonian terms:

*that two ontologically distinct realities, the divine and the human, be brought together in a unified form of action that preserves the integrity of both and yet gives rise to coherent behaviour.* (Loder 2000, 23, italics original)

Loder's response is that we hold together three things in the pattern of the relationality of the person of Jesus: the indissoluble difference between divinity and humanity; the inseparable unity of these two; and the asymmetrical order of the relationship. It is the work of the Holy Spirit in relationship with the human spirit to create this asymmetrical reciprocity, in what Loder calls an analogy of the Spirit (1989, 94) but which I am developing here into a wider interpretation as an 'analogy of mission'. This pattern of participation in the life of God, within the Chalcedonian pattern of Jesus' person, is a transformatory relationship in which the Spirit brings the human spirit into correspondence with Jesus, the God-human.

Thus I am inspired by what Webster argues is Barth's 'extensive recovery of the prophetic office of Christ, that is, of Jesus' self-presentation in the power of the Spirit to the Christian community and to the world' (1997, 64). As Mangina says, summing up the significance of this recovery:

In Jesus Christ, God has graciously reconciled us to himself. More graciously still, he has given us a share in Christ's prophetic work through our witness which we offer in the vocations into which we have been released by Christ's reconciliation. In the space defined by these divine actions a space opens up for the human person to be something quite definite and particular. (2001, 201f.)

In exploring this open space created by Jesus' prophetic witness I have used McSwain's view of Barth's theology of 'simultaneously righteous and sinful' (*simul iustus et peccator*) in considering what participation in God's mission might look like. Scepticism remains about the

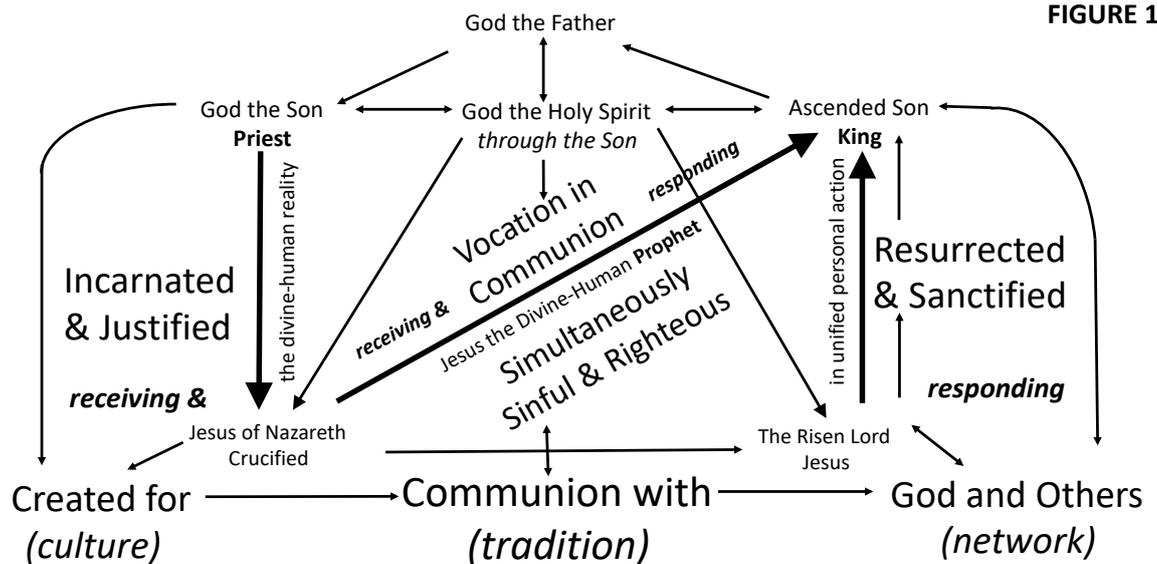
possibility of such an ‘open space’ in Barth’s theology, yet Johnson defends this possibility in terms of a ‘correspondence in action’:

Barth uses his account of Jesus Christ’s reconciling work in the priestly and kingly offices to set up his description of the correspondence of divine and human action that takes place in the prophetic office, and this *correspondence in action* is precisely how Barth understands the analogy between God and the human in light of God’s covenant of grace in Jesus Christ. (2010a, 219f, *my emphasis*)

This correspondence in action is incorporated in *the analogy of mission*: we are called to participate in the ongoing prophetic mission of Jesus and our action is enabled by the Spirit to be analogous to that of Jesus in a true but asymmetrical correspondence within the different vocations we are called to in our diverse cultures. In the Parable of the Prodigal Son, Jesus tells the story of his action and our participation. Barth’s theology retells this story of who God is and who we are and who we are to become. Figure 1 encapsulates some of the dynamics of participating in Christ’s mission by the Spirit.<sup>41</sup>

## Participation in Christ’s mission by the Spirit

FIGURE 1.



The Christian claim is that God’s mission can be truly known and accessed locally in contextual practice without diminishing the fullness of God’s global mission. In fact, it is of the essence of Christian mission that Jesus, who lived at a particular time and place, is also known and discovered contextually, because as the risen Lord he makes himself known in all times and all

<sup>41</sup> Barth’s Christological doctrine of election combined with his later eschatology has shaped my focus on Jesus’ Prophetic mission (McDowell 2000, chaps. 6-8). Collins Winn argues (2009) Barth’s emphasis is the person of Jesus: ‘Jesus is Victor’ sums up this eschatology. And as McDowell notes elsewhere: ‘Barth claims “Eschatology, rightly understood, is the most practical thing that can be thought.”’ (2019, 480)

places: “I am with you always” (Matt. 28: 20). For Ormerod & Clifton (2009), Christian participation in the life of the local church community is the starting point; however the goal of that life is not intra-church ministry but involvement in the world of politics, economics, education, family, work and other life commitments as a sharing in the mission of Jesus who overcame evil through redemptive suffering. The church does not exist for itself but for the world: as a way of ‘participation in the divinely originated solution for the problem of evil’ (44).

At one level this is similar to Sayer’s critical realist appeal to ‘practical adequacy’:

To be practically adequate, knowledge must generate expectations about the world and about the results of our actions which are actually realized. ... The practical adequacy of different parts of our knowledge will vary according to context. The differences in success of different sets of beliefs in the same practical context and of the same beliefs in different contexts suggests that the world is structured and differentiated. (Sayer 1992, 69)

However, even in the theological literature on critical realism (eg Wright 2013 & 2016) there is more discussion of the onto-epistemological issues than judgemental rationality. In emphasising the latter, I recognise that making a judgement includes what may be held to be critically but realistically true, but I am also suggesting that the truth and reality of this judgement is seen in its ongoing enactment, ie participation, by the Spirit, in Christ’s ongoing prophetic mission. For Barth it was the givenness of God’s reality (in Christ by the Spirit) that was his Anselmic breakthrough (Pugh 1990), not a new epistemology. Thus, God’s givenness to us, is the mission in which he is inviting us to participate in the Son by the Spirit.<sup>42</sup>

The language of sending, particularly if associated with a spatial notion of mission as going to-and-from church, can dominate lived reality: *we are commissioned to be where we already are*. It is where we already are, engaged in the world, which has priority for the realism I use. In the same way that *as* Jesus came to a world already made through him, *so* we go to where God has already placed us in his world. It is in this vocational form of mission that non-Western Christianity can be truly appreciated. The four systems of mission offer a multi-layered approach to a verification of the *judgemental rationality* of this claim: that faith seeks and discovers the reality and truth of Christianity in action as God’s Trinitarian mission unfolds in context, as a tradition, as a transnational network, and as a view on ultimate reality.

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<sup>42</sup> God’s Trinitarian life shared in mission shapes metaphysics and therefore also our understanding of participation. This is Christianity’s Trinitarian mission capital. For an alternative to my view, see Bellini’s missional approach to being and grace, drawing on Radical Orthodoxy (2010). My view is more like the dynamic and pragmatic realism developed by Ochs in conversation with postliberalism (Ochs 2011; cf Pecknold 2005 and Dehart 2006). See also Springs on the priority of *explicatio* in Frei (2010, chap. 8).

## SECTION THREE

### BY THE SPIRIT – Contextual Mission and Missional Church

The emergence of the ‘ecclesial self’ (Hovorun 2015, chaps. 5 & 6) in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century theology indicates how important an understanding of the church became in Western Christianity. As EMM implied, and my conclusion to the last section indicated, the mediation of mission spirituality through the church is crucial. Here I consider some implications of this in relation to two publications, MSMO and MCB-SSS. First, I note that Before Farley wrote his books on theological education he grappled with the question of church. The ecclesial mediation of self, of human relations and of the nature of God in Christianity is an ongoing debate.<sup>43</sup> Missional ecclesiology is an example which makes explicit the responsive participation of mission spirituality. A missional church generates a local or contextual theology that has local and global *practical adequacy*. Gelder & Zscheile (2011) have mapped its development, Jenson & Wilhite (2010) have shown how mission is relevant for ecclesiology generally, and Ott (2016) has looked at how different traditions have engaged. In MCB-SSS and MSMO I argue we also need to appreciate the role of the Spirit in creating the kind of mission communities that engage contextually and effectively. So I begin with the Spirit’s work.

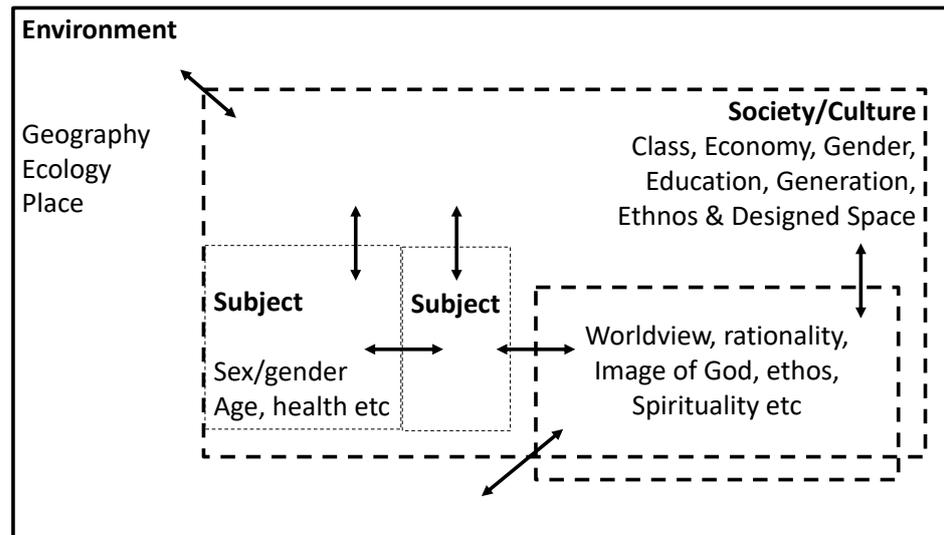
#### 3.1. Local and Contextual Theology

Loder argues we need a spirituality that shows how the Holy Spirit relates to the human spirit. It is this relationship, played out on a worldwide scale, that we see in the *missio Dei* as this is expressed in the life and mission of World Christianity. And this same relationship is also part of the different traditions of Christianity and within the particularities and localities of Christian communities and personal lives. The question of locality and cultural context are now recognised as significant aspects of theology. Bergmann (2003) notes that this uneasy but explicit development in theology can be traced to the 1970s. He recognises the difference between local theologies, from a particular place, and contextual theologies which are broader in their use of culture. However, whether it be place or perspective, we are now aware that our construction of reality, including our understanding of God, is socially and culturally conditioned at many levels. He offers this diagram, Figure 2., as a summary of his view (44).

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<sup>43</sup> On Farley, see Dorrien (2006, 331-349). In recent work on ecclesiology and ethnography (Ward 2012), we see Western echoes of the long engagement by missiology with the social studies for interpreting the nature of Christianity. See Mawson’s critique (2018, 180-186) of Milbank (1990) and Ward (2012).

FIGURE 2.



The key aspect for me in this diagram is the way that the 'subject' sits in the middle of the whole interpretation. An African viewpoint might not express it this way. In African cultures subjectivity is not central, but rather the life of others who give the individual value within the shared life God gives to all. So this diagram is itself an example of the contextual way Western theologians have developed in the turn towards the subject. In African perspectives, individuals derive their identity by belonging: 'I am because you are'; this is extended to include God, as in the Kenya liturgy – 'We are because he is' (discussed in Kings & Morgan 2001, 23). Liturgical inculturation is thus a key aspect of missional church life (Gitari 1994).

Within the mission framework I have already begun to outline, the subjective, objective and relational aspects are included. Subjectively, the Holy Spirit actively shapes the divine and human relationship, and it is therefore by the Holy Spirit (whether we realise or not) that we discover we are 'spirit' and in a relationship with divine reality. It is also the Spirit who unites the divine and human in a coherent way that preserves the distinct integrity of both realities, given that they do not share a common ontology, and therefore are not in competition but in an asymmetrical yet reciprocal relationship.

It is only from within this relationship, this personal knowing, that we can gain confidence. This kind of convictional perspective was developed by Loder with scientist colleagues and having read Polyani, who had a similar view of personal knowing (Loder 1989, 44-49).<sup>44</sup> Loder calls this

<sup>44</sup> Newman recognised the limitations of rational reason. He proposed an illative sense: a cumulative and intuitional grasp of truth through a commitment (Aquino 2015, 66-72).

(a)esthetic knowing, a turning point or conversion. Conversion takes place through an event in which the uncertainty of knowing coincides with the possibility of non-being. This stimulates a five-fold process of reflection: conflict with existing knowledge, search for something new, imaginative intuition, new openness, and developing interpretation (3-4, 40).<sup>45</sup> The process of this change takes place within wider human life, which Loder believes has four contextual elements: environment, selfhood, possibility of non-being, and possibility of new (Holy) being (69). Loder brings out the necessary depths of a contextual theology.

Schreiter (1985) and Bevans (1992/2002) are classic texts on local and contextual theology. Schreiter offers three sets of models of local theology: translation, adaption and contextual. The first has a kernel-and-husk approach: the dynamic equivalent of the gospel-kernel is expressed in the husk of local theology; the second set engages with culture in a dialogue between the gospel and an underlying worldview, as in an African philosophy of vitalism; the third is about connecting with the needs or liberation of communities, particularly the poor. Schreiter also develops five criteria for evaluating the adequacy of local theology. Bevans develops and uses these in his approach to contextual theology.

Bevans has six models and adds another five criteria. His six models are: the countercultural, translation, anthropological, praxis, synthetic and transcendental models. These models offer different ways of emphasising and relating the *experience of the past*, drawing on scripture and tradition, with the *experience of the present* in a particular cultural context. Thus, for Bevans, it is the *experience of past and present* which takes priority in evaluating what any particular model may advocate. Specifically, in contrast to his understanding of Barth, Bevans writes 'contextual theology emphasizes that *experience is the ultimate norm for the adequacy of a contextual theological expression*'. (Bevans 2018, 36, *my italics*)

The place of experience arises in its most acute form in relation to the resurrection: 'Is the resurrection an event in the life of Jesus or an event in the life of the believer?' (Fergusson 1985, 287). There are three main options: radical, liberal and traditional. Radical interpretations are about the significance of Jesus in the life of the disciples – about the rise of faith in the Christian community, not an event in the life and ongoing destiny of Jesus. The liberal option (closer to Schreiter and Bevans) says that the disciples experienced visions of the risen Lord and felt reunited with him. Jesus' life is celebrated as grace and vocational hope.

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<sup>45</sup> Loder grounds this perspective in both his own experience of encountering God in such an event, and in the pattern which he finds in the disciples' experience, exemplified in the walk to Emmaus. See Demson (1997) for Barth's interpretation of pre-Easter and the 40 days.

The traditional view affirms the realism of the event in the life of Jesus as part of his divine-human identity: 'The gospel narrative describes the resurrection as something that happens to Jesus, and, as the risen one, Jesus is able to impart his presence to the believer.' (Fergusson 304-5) It is this real presence of the risen Jesus, with its world-changing significance, that is the basis of Christianity. For Barth this becomes the focus of his later writing (1956-81 IV/3 §69) where Jesus as Prophet reveals who he is through his divine-human participation in God's mission of creating communion.<sup>46</sup>

However, for Bevans, it is the Spirit of God who, as the inside-out God – from the immanent to the economic Trinity – (2018, 159-165), is present in all places and who brings out the significance of Jesus in whatever form is contextually appropriate. Thus Bevans argues for no particular model of contextual theology; they can all be useful, depending on the context: 'So my missiology is really based on discernment; it is based on listening, based on contemplation, trying to find the best way – not so much to express a message, but to express the saving presence of God in a particular situation.' (2018, 181) The criteria for recognising good contextual theology are therefore crucial (2018, 40-42; 54-59) and are helpful in evaluating the judgemental rationality of verifying the truth in action. However, following the pattern of thought I developed in TNPT, I would argue the resurrection is the ultimate norm – not our experience and our experience of reflecting on experience. I would therefore internalise Bevans' approach to interpret the meaning of the realism of the risen Lord in different contexts.<sup>47</sup> Bevans' global experienced-based approach can be affirmed in a Loder-type way as the presence of the Spirit who helps us understand our experience. This begins, in the analogy of mission, with the reality of God who has drawn human beings into his life through Christ so as to share that life with others in all its diversity. By internalising Bevans' correlational approach in an orientation that sees all things being drawn into God's reality – and after Barth all external perspectives on faith can be internalised – in which God's unfolding mission is a 'prophetic dialogue' between Jesus the Prophet in dialogue with humanity in its participation in creation's redemption by the Spirit (thus reinterpreting Bevans & Schroder 2011).

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<sup>46</sup> Dalferth (2004) offers a fourth option: a grammatical interpretation in which the resurrection is not an event in the world but a transformation of the world. That Jesus was raised means we know he died for our sins and for our salvation. (203-207). Springs reviews Frei's variation focused Jesus' person (2010, chap. 4). MacDonald's study of Barth explores the *sui generis* historicity of Jesus' resurrection (2000, chap.8). Chester explores O'Donovan's resurrection eschatology as a missional morality (2006, chap.13).  
<sup>47</sup> For example, Bediako experienced Christ whilst in the shower! (Hartman 2012, 4) His view of reality changed: he became more of what he was as an African. However, we can evaluate how Bediako used his African perspective in his understanding of Jesus as Ancestor (Bediako 2013), exploring the kind of contextual theology Bevans develops and the criteria he uses.

### 3.2. The Missional Church

For many, it is through the local mission of the church that people come to understand and interpret God's mission practically by 'verifying the truth in action' (Forrester 2000, 16). Thus, as Ormerod and Clifton say (2009, 19), missional ecclesiology has at least two implications:

The first is that a church called to act as a sacrament and sign of the Kingdom of God is responsible to model its own global structures and culture in ways that can be said to be representative of the values constitutive of the Kingdom. The second is that the Church, motivated by a biblical vision of universal history (past, present and future), is called to participate as an instrument of the Spirit in the eschatological overcoming of globalized evil, through the praxis-based proclamation of the good news of Jesus about the coming of the Kingdom of God.

MSMO begins by looking at 'Messy Church' as a movement that has emerged from the Church of England's emphasis on mission-shaped church (2004). Messy Church is one kind of Fresh Expression but it could also be an adjective for a wider set of changes. A key aspect of MSMO which relates to MCB-SSS is the emphasis on the outcome of life in the world as the Kingdom of God. The new messy fluidity of church thus corresponds with what took place in the early church as it kept changing to express the gospel, for example as it incorporated Gentiles. Some missiologists suggest this early-church-fluidity has re-emerged in a renewed underlying structure that encourages the church to re-organise itself and also understand its organisation as being *for* mission in two complementary structures: *modality* – like a local inclusive synagogue-type traditional parish; and *sodality* – the religious or mission-band community like Paul's. To this I added a renewed understanding of missional oversight/leadership: the *nodality* – like the apostles. Where these three structures exist there is the possibility for a missional church to promote mission in a way that can engage with context and support Christian witness in the world. It is this kind of church that can shape and support a mission spirituality that engages with overcoming evil.

In the Anglican tradition, the local church is a balance between the church in a region, the Diocese, and the church in the local community: the parochial congregation or local mission community. Both levels have legal significance in the Church of England. Local church refers to both levels. The Diocese thus provides a regional level of church life and supports the parish mission and ministry that in turn enables parishioners to express their faith at work and in everyday relationships. The Diocese also sustains the collective significance of the parishes in their local ministry in the region and enables complementary forms of mission across the region, such as new mission communities or religious orders, and the social mission of educational, cultural or medical work. I suggest a renewed emphasis on these mission

structures encourages a vitality of mission engagement, as modality, sodality and nodality play their roles. In both MSMO and MCB-SSS, I argued such structures are strategically crucial for the emergence and development of a missional church. I have therefore developed Winter's model (1974), adding nodality (an Anglican contribution?) to structures of modality and sodality.

However, as Barth says, it is only when the church is shaped by the dynamics of Christ's own apostolic-prophetic ministry that a truly missional church emerges (1956-81 IV/3, §69): one that engages with the ongoing revelation of God through Christ in the world's cultures. This affirms the world-oriented outcome of MSMO. Barth, in a challenging passage, re-centres the church's mission as follows:

1. The world would be lost without Jesus Christ and his Word and work;
2. The world would not necessarily be lost if there were no Church; and
3. The Church would be lost if it had no counter-part in the world. (1956-81 IV/3.1., 826)

These three points shape mission around Christ's dedication: to the world; to valuing the world for itself; and to the church finding its place with the world. So an apostolic church: is shaped by Jesus' love for the world; values the life of the world; and aims to be a counter-part to the world. For a local church to be missional means it will be shaped by these three in its cultural context in its modality, sodality and nodality structures in their diverse, collaborative and combined contributions.

As I suggest in MSMO, the outworking of faith in the world through vocations – in which we pray for God's Kingdom to come – is the main outcome of church life. The practices that go with the calling, the vocation, to live as a disciple in the world, are the concerns of the local church in its context. Such practices are not primarily about life in the church; they are about daily life in the world. So problems arise when Christian faith fails the practical adequacy test of daily life. For example, the duality of African Christianity is well-known: either in terms of the growth in Christianity but not in the diminishment of suffering (Ngong 2010, 10), or in the increase in those who practise church-going but also practise traditional religion alongside. In response, African theologians have proposed the need for a better form of African Christian mission and a more thorough-going theological education. They also recognise the growing effectiveness of African Pentecostalism that emphasises personal faith-power and social confidence (Galgalo 2012). In a post-colonial context (beyond thinking tied to gaining independence) and, amid the challenges of corruption and injustice, there is a need for a wider social framework in which to set such daily practices. Mugambi's social theology of

reconstruction is an example (Mwase & Kamaara 2012), as is Ogbannaya's values-based theology of development (2013) and Magesa's ethical-ecclesial approach (1997 & 2004).

Underlying much of what is being explored here is the proposal I made in MCB-SSS, outlining the church growth model that Henry Venn developed for planting churches across the world in the process of sharing the gospel in other cultures. It is called the three-self church: self-extending, self-governing and self-supporting. The idea was that such a church would continue to grow without dependency on the mission society that had planted it – there would be a euthanasia of the mission. The irony is that if this attitude of self-othering by the mission society is not also planted as a founding virtue, then a three-self church may expand, but perhaps only in its own cultural context. A sodality structure, that is self-othering, needs to be part of the church that is planted. This is the kind of tradition that hands on but also gives away. The character of a self-othering church is the church that gives itself away, so that the church it helps plant in another context is both truly indigenous and yet also able to give itself away. A self-othering church that restricts its own cultural self, and yet also encourages the other, is a truly missional church: a virtue ecclesiology (Moore, G. 2011, 45-65). The self-limiting, other-enhancing relationship needed for such planting is like the ministry of the Spirit, who is poured out to bring fullness of life to Jesus in his ministry. He in turn pours out himself and the Spirit to bring fullness of life to the church: a fullness (plerosis) that is only known in the kenotic character of being like Jesus in the Spirit. This is the practical expression of a Spirit-Christology in terms of the dynamics of missional church.

## SECTION FOUR

### IN CHRIST'S MISSION – Anglican Mission and Tradition

In what follows I explore how Anglicanism can become an intentional mission tradition building on its 'accidental' missional history (TAM). In MWAC I proposed a missional reading of the Nicene Creedal marks of the church as a starting point. Below I also develop the emphasis in MWAC on Christ's mission, using what I have said earlier about the prophetic ministry of Jesus for framing a World Christianity tradition of mission spirituality. I explore how the Vincentian canon can be reused for developing the missional tradition of Anglicanism using Andrew Walls' understanding of the transmission of faith.

#### 4.1. Anglicanism: An Intercultural Mission Tradition?

Tradition has become a significant category for understanding the development of modernity and postmodernity in Western culture.<sup>48</sup> That tradition and traditions have more significance means that the development of tradition has become more intentional. My argument here is that although Anglicanism might be included as one of the traditions arising from Western Christianity, if it is going to contribute to the global mission of the church, *as a tradition*, then it needs to develop a way of understanding itself as a transcultural tradition that resources mission across contexts. This concern has been at the heart of my own participation in Anglican life and ministry over the years. And this theological question was focused for me during my time on the Inter-Anglican Standing Commission on Mission and Evangelism, particularly the (2003) conference it sponsored, 'Transformation and Tradition in Global Mission' (see ACC 2006, section 2 & appendix 5 for a background).

The conference investigated the link between transformation and tradition. It was proposed that the heart of mission (aspects of which were identified) was the dynamic character of tradition understood as, 'the body of faith we have received and are called to "hand on" to others in the same spirit in which Jesus "gave himself up" on the Cross.' (ACC 2006, 193) As a

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<sup>48</sup> Prickett (2009) explores the dynamics of the development of the terms 'tradition' and 'modern'. Thus, as circumstances stress identity beyond continuity or discontinuity, questions of identity become acute and the 'traditional' is seen as a way of re-establishing identity within a historical 'modern' perspective. This is illustrated by the African heritage debate and the way Christianity is seen as undermining or securing African identity in its mission processes (Tarus 2017). Alexander (2012) explores this process and suggests that, 'there are three forms of tradition: those with only continuity, those with also a canon in addition to continuity, and those with also a core in addition to canon and continuity' (Alexander 2016, 24). These are associated with the divine, the immortal and mortal in their claims and significance (25).

gathering of people from over 40 countries and with representatives, lay and ordained, from all aspects of the life and mission of different Anglican Provinces, this conference was one of the most diverse expressions of global Anglicanism for many years, but it lacked a coherent theological basis for the new era in which churches from the Global South are now also shaping what we have come to call World Christianity. In other words, although we could recognise many ways in which Anglicans shared their life across the world (Kaye 2008, 62), it was clear we could not articulate the foundations of a shared theological perspective on missional Anglicanism.

As Kaye has shown, Anglicans have been practically involved in mission, but as a tradition *for* mission Anglicans have not been motivated by a shared set of doctrines which necessarily encourages this direction or outcome. Rather, there are elements of its character which are potential carriers of what we now call missional church. For example, its double foundation of the Celtic and Roman missions is a deep resource, as is the emergence of missionary bishops;<sup>49</sup> so also is its social, cultural and national engagement forged in the long Reformation of the Church in England by which it was established as the Church *of* the nation. Lastly, its polity is flexible, corresponding with similar characteristics in British society, so that it is open to voluntary movements. In fact, it was such voluntary movements which first catalysed the mission potential of Anglicanism. Anglicanism was able to be hospitable – in an emergent process – to the recovery, discovery and development of a new missional ecclesial identity and practice.

The Anglican missionary society is a practical example of this which I explore in TAM in relation to a particular context (Kenya) and one mission society – Church Mission Society (CMS). Mission societies emerged in both evangelical and catholic versions. They were inspired by mission spirituality, enabled by modern business structures, and sustained by contemporary communications. But this mission movement was something of a surprise and has, at a fundamental level, yet to be fully integrated into Anglican theology. This challenge is not unique to Anglicanism, but it does take its own form in the way that mission has emerged in Anglicanism. As Duerksen & Dyrness (2019) suggest, ‘the entities we call “churches” emerge from the interaction of their cultural assumptions, their special historical circumstances, and their understanding of God’s revelation through Scripture.’ (ix) So the particular challenge to

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<sup>49</sup> See Elchin’s (1971) fascinating reflections on the Uniate Model and Anglican Ministry.

an integrated Anglican missional identity, which I am considering here, might be described as the move from an accidental (TAM) to a theologically intentional mission identity: MWAC.<sup>50</sup>

In MWAC I begin with this challenge. I suggest there needs to be a Christological framework and that this is used in taking a new look at the four Creedal marks of the church but reversing them, starting with 'Apostolic' as the missional mark which then shapes the other three. So I start with the Anglican Communion's Five Marks of Mission (similar to Bevans & Schroeder's six aspects of mission practice) as a wide-ranging way of re-imagining the church. Second, I consider the vision for a Catholic, worldwide, mission to all peoples. Though globalisation brings its challenges, there is a good basis in the translatability and in the eschatological vision of Jesus as both known and stranger in every context to have a transcultural confidence. Third, I explore Holiness as the return to the priority of mission created by the work of God in Christ, so that it is not the structures which shape the church but a mission spirituality (Allen & Taylor). Those set apart to sustain this work model the kind of holiness that is about purpose rather than purity. It is about sustaining a vocation vision rather than marking a boundary: purity is based on hope. Lastly I consider how the vision of unity, Oneness, is the eschatological hope in which the multiple cultures of the new global context of Christianity show what the fullness of Christ is like that we shall be discovering for ever in the ongoing mission of our human vocations. This destiny, of diversity in unity, is the outworking of God's original unity in diversity by which he created the world through Christ by the Spirit.

So my two texts relating to this section recognise the accidental nature of Anglican mission and also the need for a more thoroughgoing missional Anglicanism. Although Anglican means 'English' it is also a pattern for the development of an identity that is Biblically grounded, contextually engaged, and Reformed Catholic.<sup>51</sup> Yet the question is whether through its mission engagement it has also become mission-shaped. In MWAC I proposed a missional 'refounding' of the tradition by reversing the four Creedal marks of the Church in relation to

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<sup>50</sup> It is striking that in Mbiti's *New Testament eschatology* (1971) he offers a minimal critique of the motivational perspectives of missionary millennialism. The significance of millennial theology (post- and pre-millennialism) is articulated in De Jong (2006) and critiqued in Shaw (1996, chap.9). As Dyrness & Garcíá-Johnson note (2015, 149), for Africans a theology of development or reconstruction is an eschatological viewpoint that echoes the millennialism of early mission, particularly positive post-millennialism. For a systematic approach to eschatology through Christology see König (1989).

<sup>51</sup> Laing (2012) notes two limitations of Newbigin's ecclesiology in comparison with Catholicism: 1. the religious and mission orders are integrated into the understanding of the church; and 2. 'for Catholics the local unit of the church is the diocese rather than the congregation.' He then adds, 'At this level the church, through the leadership of the bishop, can take real responsibility for society, with the laity understanding the primary expression of their witness to be through their daily work.' (226)

Christ and Spirit. This could provide a transcultural resource for intercultural conversations about participation in mission.

#### 4.2. Tradition, Transmission and Christ

For Anglicans, as for Roman Catholics, mission raises deep questions about the development of the Christian tradition. I have argued that this tradition developed accidentally (TAM) but also needs to develop intentionally (MWAC) if it is going to integrate what I have explored in MSMO and MCB-SSS. The underlying question is as old as Vincent of Lérins' attempt to develop a simple canon for the rule of faith. Vincent lived from the late 4<sup>th</sup> to mid 5<sup>th</sup> century. His era was that of the great Christological controversies: Nestorianism, Arianism and Apollinarianism.<sup>52</sup> He was a renowned defender of the faith against heresy.<sup>53</sup> Those writing about doctrinal development – like Newman – have wrestled with him.<sup>54</sup>

Vincent claimed there was an inviolable deposit of faith given in revelation, and this is the basis for the apostolic rule of faith taught to believers.<sup>55</sup> His well-known test for orthodoxy, as *that which is believed everywhere, always and by all*, was developed within the Greco-Roman European culture where conceptual assent was part of living the faith. Core to this perspective is Christ as Logos. Thus, the Logos of faith is the Logos of life: this is the truth for all, not some. Yet, second, Vincent also affirmed the process of doctrinal development but only when it unfolds, grows, *in accord with its typological origin that is already given*, thus maintaining the *same doctrine, with the same meaning and the same judgment*. The emphasis here is on continuity yet with fresh explication; heresy emerges through discontinuity and innovation. Third, Vincent explores how these two rules are applied through a series of authorities that interpret Scripture: ecumenical councils, theological doctors, bishop-overseers, the faithful, and the Bishop of Rome. In effect, this is a third rule: *the whole church preserves faithful interpretation*. Together these three rules outline the appropriate development of tradition: 1.

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<sup>52</sup> Williams (2001, 46, 82-89) comments that the development of Arianism as a distinct Christology is as much to do with the workings of the teaching role of the bishop within a context as it is to do with doctrinal innovation. In another time and place Arius might have been seen as an 'academic' alongside, but challenging, the bishop's 'Catholic' teaching role. Guarino suggests that Vincent's third rule requires a collaboration between church authorities, not a singular authority.

<sup>53</sup> See a recent scholarly introduction by Guarino (2013), on whom I draw to interpret Vincent's major work, the *Commonitorium*. In combining Vincent's three rules, Guarino challenges the Anglican scholar Moxon who thought Vincent's canon was more limited, cf Moxon (1915, xlvi). We note the tradition that Vincent is the main source for the Athanasian Creed!

<sup>54</sup> Newman included elements of Vincent's canon and his illative sense is also shaped by Vincent (see Guarino 2013, chap.2).

<sup>55</sup> See the classic text by Caird (1955) which outlines these early church developments (in chapter 10).

The universality and particularity of the gospel; 2. The development of doctrine in continuity not discontinuity; and 3. The agreement of diverse authorities, for example, bishops, synod and Bishop of Rome.

After Constantine made Christianity the official religion of the Empire, a Christendom pattern evolved until the disruption of the Reformation. Vincent's three rules were part of the background of Christian thought. However, the Reformation's ecclesial upheaval reopened many of the issues that Vincent had addressed, not least the interpretation of Scripture. Yet only with the global spread of Christianity through world mission and the processes of globalisation does the Vincentian canon re-emerge as Christendom's territoriality unravels. However, by swapping 'everywhere' with 'everyone', we could re-interpret Vincent from a World Christianity perspective: he could be reinterpreted as proposing *the historical transmission of faith* across culture, time and space: everyone, always, and everywhere. The transmission of faith is thus primarily missional: to share the gospel and not just to preserve doctrinal purity; to proclaim the gospel to all nations; and to baptise and to teach all that Jesus had commanded.

The transmission of faith is the theme the mission historian Andrew Walls uses to interpret the history of the World Christian movement (2016, 685-699). He suggests that the history of mission has not unfolded as a serial expansion of a successful progression – a greater Christendom; rather there is an ongoing and vulnerable re-engagement with cultures whereby Christianity both expands and dies as it engages and re-engages with cultures. In fact, the vitality of Christianity is maintained by its regular cross/inter-cultural engagement which 'releases' the gospel afresh. Christian history must recognise that Christendom is just a Western cultural expression that was broken up – not least by cross-cultural mission movements and mass European migration. That Christian heartlands are now found in other parts of the world, especially in Africa, and have previously been elsewhere, should not surprise us.<sup>56</sup> Positively, Christianity is affirmative of human culture but cannot be syncretised with any one culture.<sup>57</sup>

This perspective is bolstered by Walls' principle that: 'Incarnation is translation.' (1996, 27) The implications of this for the apostolic transmission of faith now begin to emerge: this perspective is grounded in the historical and continuing teaching ministry of Jesus by the Holy

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<sup>56</sup> See Philip Jenkins (2008) on the ancient Asian and African churches.

<sup>57</sup> Newbigin and Sanneh are both more positive about culture than some missiologists. See Hunsberger's review of the options, including Newbigin (1998, chap. 7) and Sanneh (2003 chap. 2).

Spirit – so it is *his* transmission of faith which is at the heart of the Christian community and the apostolic teaching office. So participation in Christ’s mission is by the Spirit and is based on the incorporation of humanity into the restored loving relationship God had intended. First, we have been reconciled with God by the justification which Christ objectively achieved in his death and resurrection. Second, whilst this is one side of what is objectively the case, there is also a subjective orientation and direction which is yet to be subjectively known in relationship with God, but which is already achieved by what God has also done in Christ who, in taking sinful nature to himself also achieved our sanctification. We are therefore already oriented in the direction of actualised righteousness with God. What Christ continues to hold in unity is both the sinful nature and the righteous nature during this interim time when humanity is on the way towards the fullness of Christ’s glorified humanity. Dalferth’s interpretation of Barth’s eschatological realism is that we become more real by our ‘eschatological *assumptio et Deum*’ (1988, 119). Thus we participate in the objective, subjective and complete reconciliation with God, but await full human actualisation. In the interim we have fellowship with God for which we have been created, and also with humanity and with creation, by fulfilling the vocations we have each and all have been called to. It is in this vocational form of human existence that God proclaims, through Christ’s ongoing ministry by the Spirit, that we are both justified and sanctified. Mission is the transmission of this good news.

Yet Walls would also say we rediscover the gospel as we proclaim it afresh. Thus he argues that the new global context of World Christianity has helped us rediscover the Scriptural pattern of ‘the Ephesian moment’ (Ephesians 2). This is the first cross-cultural transmission of faith from the Jewish to the Gentile world. The inter-cultural content of faith is expressed in the shared proclamation of the ultimate significance of Jesus as both the Jewish Messiah and the Gentile Lord: “the Lord Jesus Christ”. However, this confession is not the inter-cultural content of faith *per se*, rather it is the pattern – the economy of the mystery (Eph. 3:1-4). This is the mystery of the unity-in-difference of God’s asymmetrical relationship with our history, in both his transcendence and immanence, and also in the way we interpret relationships within the diversity and the dialectics of humanity’s multi-layered historical existence.

Given the challenge raised in the last sentence, the attempt to find a shared basis for Anglican mission that offers a transcultural resource might seem futile, especially if contestations are inevitable because at the heart of the Anglican tradition are the ‘contextualizations that are embraced by a broad international family’ (Heaney & Sachs 2019, 154, 223). Disturbingly, Radner (2012) suggests we may need an understanding of conflict in God: ‘Eristology’ (4),

which is beyond even Balthasar's exploration of Holy Saturday.<sup>58</sup> MWAC proposes a resource for transcultural engagement: the four Nicene Creedal marks of the church interpreted in reverse order in relation to Christ's mission. Thus, if the four marks are recognised ecumenically, including by Anglicans globally, and, if the missional church movement has proposed the reversal I deployed, then this might resource collaboration. My contribution was the attempt to offer a Christological grounding for this approach by reflecting on each mark first through Christ. This hope echoed the ACC Report *Communion in Mission* (2006, chap. 2) where Walls' theology of the 'Ephesian Moment' sums up a vision for conversations rather than contestations across cultures.

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<sup>58</sup> See McIntosh (2000, 101f) and Anderson (2014, chap.3), and Trier (2007) on the broken missional church.

## SECTION FIVE

### WITH THE FATHER – Communion and Mission Networks<sup>59</sup>

This section begins with Barth's proposal that God the Father's mission intention is to establish a covenant of fellowship with creation. This perspective interprets my publications, CMS1 and CMS2, where I suggest mission societies have supported the kind of mission networks that reflect a global understanding of humanity that is in fellowship with God: World Christianity. The dynamics of these networks are sustained by 'keystone ministries' which are crucial for a flourishing mission ecology that is contextual and intercultural in its tradition, and open to those who do not share the Christian faith but who share public space with Christians across the world. This diverse form of World Christianity is a counterpart to the global reality of religious and socio-cultural pluralism. I suggest pluralism is an outcome of human migration that has been part of human life for thousands of years. Within this context mission networks encourage a principled pluralism, particularly in today's nation-state societies, in which the Father's providential mission, as Father of all, is to promote the common good in a covenant with creation.

#### 5.1. From the Transmission of Faith to World Christianity

Barth worked as a pastor for over a decade in the Swiss Reformed Church. Only after that did he become a professor. I have wondered what Barth's theology would have been like if, for a decade, he had participated in the Basel Mission Society? Would Barth have written *Mission Dogmatics*? What would Barth's doctrine of Election have been like if informed by a World Mission perspective and grounded in an experience of participating in Christ's mission in another culture? We get a glimpse of what Barth might have written through his influence on the development of *missio Dei* thinking. Flett also says, in his study of Barth (2010), that did he actually write from a mission perspective: it is just that in the English translations of the *Church Dogmatics* we miss the mission implications of Barth's use of words (ix-xii). However, Flett is also clear that *missio Dei* thinking is muddled, and whilst the catch-phrase holds together a disjointed ecumenical movement, *missio Dei* thinking is not properly grounded in basic elements: Trinitarian theology, Kingdom of God, ecclesiology and eschatology (35-76). Thus, whilst many use *missio Dei* language, it has to be recalibrated *missiologically* within the

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<sup>59</sup> Here I again draw on Walls' approach to the history of mission for interpreting our context. I combine this with a Barthian perspective in which God's missional intention, of sharing his life with creation, is revealed in his 'election' of Jesus from the foundation, and for the future, of the world. Thus, God's missional purpose is revealed and accomplished by our participation in Christ's mission by the Spirit.

different traditions so as to be a constructive focus for all theology and to which all disciplines can contribute.

It is more in this spirit that I therefore explore the emergence of what has become 'World Christianity'. I thus consider the dynamics of mission in World Christianity as identified by Andrew Walls. I ask whether these dynamics can be seen as the work of the Spirit drawing us into a participation in Christ's mission with the vision of God the Father's providential mission intention to create a covenant with creation.

Thus the "as ... so" of my proposed analogy of mission is not based on territorial or spatial images of God 'sending' Jesus from heaven to earth, nor on attempts to find a human equivalent of the incarnation in contextualisation processes. Rather, I propose a vocational analogy of action in which we fulfil our calling as Christ has in obedience to the Father. Thus, Christ's cross and resurrection redeemed humanity for renewed diverse vocations that contribute to a fellowship with God and neighbour (who ever they are) which is the renewal of the covenant fellowship that God intended from the beginning:

In the beginning it was the choice of the Father Himself to establish this covenant with man by giving up His Son for him ... In the beginning it was the choice of the Son to be obedient to grace and therefore to offer Himself and become man in order that this covenant might be made a reality. In the beginning it was the resolve of the Holy Spirit that the unity of God, the Father and the Son should not be disturbed or rent by this covenant with man. (1956-81, II/2, 101)

God does not need to do this. As Stratis says (2010, 29-30), referring to Barth: 'God's movement toward man is genuinely free because it proceeds not from necessity or caprice, but from the 'readiness' for fellowship that God enjoys in his own triune life. "That He is God – the Godhead of God – consists in the fact that He loves, and it is the expression of His loving that He seeks and creates fellowship with us."<sup>60</sup>

## **5.2. Mission Networks**

The dynamics of a world mission society are now necessarily transnational, and they necessarily have to engage with the public pluralist nature of diverse human societies across the world. My interest here is how this wider ecology, that includes contextual and

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<sup>60</sup> Moreover, Stratis adds, quoting Barth: 'In Himself He does not will to exist for Himself, to exist alone. On the contrary, He is Father, Son and Holy Spirit and therefore alive in His unique being with and for and in another. The unbroken unity of His being, knowledge and will is at the same time an act of deliberation, decision and intercourse. He does not exist in solitude but in fellowship.' (1956-81 II/1, 275) It is in this fellowship formed in Christ by the Spirit that we share God's missional life.

transcultural systems, is sustained by the mission networks and ministry of the mission community. Over a 12-year period I visited 25 different countries in my CMS role. In CMS1 and CMS2 I look at the lived interpretation and sustaining of a mission ecology in the community of CMS. I interpret CMS as a transnational community that supports a contextual and transcultural mission tradition through its mission networks and keystone forms of ministry that sustain the ecology and vision of the mission of World Christianity. Thus CMS is itself a hermeneutical community of the gospel for all places: it is a networked ministry from everywhere to everywhere. It is a community that has helped generate the four systems of mission as its work has evolved: from a particular context, to resourcing a transcultural tradition, to supporting the worldwide partnership relationships not only within Anglicanism but also with, and between, other traditions. CMS has also generated the kind of shared theology that articulates the mission capital of Christianity as shaped by the ultimate reality of God's Trinitarian mission, expressed across the world (eg Taylor 1972).

The history of CMS and the trajectory of its work is towards the ultimate significance of Jesus. I will revisit this notion in my exploration of mission capital, but in this section I note that, in Walls' thinking, this notion is the necessary companion to the infinite translatability of Jesus. In CMS2 (288 & 296) I suggest how the four systems of mission have shaped and been expressed in the life and work of CMS as it became a hermeneutic for the mission spirituality of World Christianity. I also show how the ministries in Ephesians (4:9-11) – Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist and Teacher-Pastor – help to sustain the dynamics and ecology of the four systems of mission. The image 'keystone' thus refers both to the building metaphor in Ephesians (2:20), and to keystone species that sustain an environmental ecology.

The core dynamics of World Christianity are shaped by its basic perspective:<sup>61</sup> the translation of God in Christ in the *transmission of faith*. Walls thus deploys the term 'translation' to provide an overarching perspective on the transmission of faith, which has three elements: 1. World Christianity is dynamic and serial; 2. The translation principle includes gospel appropriation; 3. Conversion is the 'turning' of an individual within their culture to Christ (Hanvey 2014, 104). I focus primarily on conversion but also refer to the other two elements.

The transmission of Christian faith includes the kind of change that raises questions about the nature of truth and meaning in another culture. Walls argues that faith is transmitted in the

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<sup>61</sup> I draw on Dalferth (1988) in using the terms perspective, orientation, and the internal and external perspectives on faith.

process of conversion<sup>62</sup>; this process is different from proselytism. Proselytism is about how Gentiles take on Jewish culture; conversion is about the redirection, turning, of cultures towards Jesus, which therefore includes Jewish believers turning towards Jesus as Messiah: 'Jesus for the early Jerusalem Christians was a Jewish saviour, whose work could not be fully understood without reference to the destiny of the nation' (Walls 1997, 146).

Yet the dynamics of Christianity have included the transmission of faith beyond the Jewish culture, and these dynamics are what we have come to recognise as 'apostolic' and as core to the character of the church. However, as Walls makes clear (2004), apostolic Christianity was led not just by the apostles: it was a movement led by unknown people triggered by Stephen's death which forced a migration of Christians from Jerusalem (4). The dynamics of this transmission take place within the New Testament period but stretch beyond it and still continue. Walls identifies three stages: missionary, convert and reconfiguration. The first stage recognises that Jesus can be shared and known in another culture. Thus the disruptive and unexpected turning point of Stephen's death triggered a forced migration but also a mission dynamic within the early Christian community. This dynamic is then deliberately incorporated as an essential character of Christianity through Paul's apostolic calling to share the gospel, as an outsider, with the Gentiles in their cultural terms. Thus the title of 'Lord', understood in pagan and Gentile terms, becomes the title through which Jesus is understood. This translation of the gospel is not about making sense of 'Messiah', but about how the ultimate significance of Jesus can be understood in terms of another culture as it turns towards Jesus and, in the process, is affirmed and enriched in converting.

The second – convert – stage goes to the question of identity: how can Romans also be Christians? Can Jesus be understood across the whole range of Hellenistic culture in a way that only a Gentile convert could appreciate? Walls takes Justin Martyr as an example and shows that conversion includes exploring the implications of believing in the God of Israel revealed in Jesus, as understood in the scriptures. 'So the Scriptures become for Justin a principle of critique, a source to correct other sources. By their aid he affirms some part of his heritage, modifies others, and rejects others with revulsion.' (149)

The third stage of transmission, reconfiguration, comes in the generation after conversion. For Walls, Origen is a good example: 'Origen embodies the attempt to refigure the entire Greek intellectual and scientific inheritance in Christ terms.... The work of Christians, he concludes, is

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<sup>62</sup> Walls also expects missionaries to be in an ongoing process of conversion in perspective and practice. See his reflections on the multiple conversions of Timothy Richard in a Chinese context (2002, 236-259).

to take the materials of the heathen world and fashion from them objects for the worship and glorification of God.' Origen therefore builds on the convert stage, showing how Christ 'is greater, grander, and more active and his relations with God more complex than the earliest concepts could convey.' (149) Walls notes that the development of the whole panoply of creeds, confessions and teachings emerges at this stage. The missionary, convert and reconfiguration stages presume contextual and transcultural mission. The relationships that foster a transcultural tradition are those of mission networks. Thus apostolic ministry includes culture-crossing relationships that generate the appropriation of new visions of human society.

What Walls highlights is another aspect of the character and dynamics of apostolicity: network mission. This aspect of apostolicity is an expansion and interpretation of the nodal coordination of mission, and the Apostolic mark of the Church. However, Flett (2016) is uncomfortable with churches exporting their structures with the gospel into other cultures. He is critical of ecumenical attempts to create a universal ecology of ministry through agreements about baptism, eucharist and ministry. Thus some traditions have taken New Testament ministries and made them ecclesiastical and institutional roles, affirming these as essential for mediating participation in Christ's mission. The office of bishop is seen by some traditions as an essential expression of the Apostolic mark, yet the oversight ministry of episcopacy could be more broadly interpreted (though it is interesting how many second-generation indigenous churches adopt bishops). In this light I suggest that voluntary mission associations have been important for maintaining the wider ecology of apostolic ministry in Christianity's worldwide networks. I have also noted earlier how the re-emergence of world mission through Anglican mission societies (TAM) could be seen as prophetic-type ministry in the way in which these mission communities engaged with other cultural contexts. This highlights the importance of these ministries which, like keystone species, generate a whole ecology around themselves. They are, as Paul says, the foundation of the apostles and the prophets (Eph. 2:3) in the way they generate a whole ecology. Anglicanism may be undergoing a refounding as aspects of apostolicity are recovered and other ministries are given new prominence.

The ministries which create the Christian mission ecology open up indigenous cultural resources: the primal imagination of the breadth, depth and length of the ultimate significance of the person of Jesus in a particular culture. Yet this does not mean that Christians brought Jesus to a culture; rather they obeyed Christ in enabling others to name him in the cultures they went to. As the Father of Jesus, God is the Father of all in all cultures. Thus, for Walls, there is a dynamic process in Christianity which means that the gospel is translated from one

culture to another in the transmission of faith. This dynamic has breadth, depth and length.<sup>63</sup> Yet ultimately this dynamic is grounded in the nature of God whose mission is to share his life with creation. Specifically, God shares his life through a covenant he makes with Israel and supremely in the revelation of the election of Jesus of Galilee to be the God-human.

However, for Walls, this interpretation of human networks through the intentionality of human faith-sharing points to the deeper reality of human migration which, arguably, has had a greater influence in spreading Christianity than any intentional engagement (2008, 193-204). Walls' theology of migration emphasises this as he explores the place of migration in the Old Testament where enforced and voluntary migration takes place (2017, 49-57). Elsewhere Walls also notes that the Great European Migration is now in reverse and the migration of people from the Southern Hemisphere is bringing with it another whole phase of Christian mission, as those who migrate bring their own interpretation of non-Western Christianity to the Northern Hemisphere (2014). Migration has made world communion a possibility and so the transmission of faith in all its various forms brings out God's covenant intention.

Clearly, therefore, crusade is not *the* model for transmission; it was eventually aborted as an extension of Christendom. Transmission of faith is serial, not progressive and territorial; Christianity declines as well as grows within cultures. Transmission is always at risk of failure and demise, with each new translation needing to engage a new context and culture. Walls' 'Culture and Coherence in Christian History' (1996) identifies six examples of cultural translation: Jewish; Roman/Hellenistic; Barbarian Europe; Western Europe; Expanding and Contracting Europe; Cross-cultural transmission (between cultural contexts). The implications of the translation principle for the apostolic transmission of faith are seen in its need to be grounded in the historical and continuing teaching ministry of Jesus by the Holy Spirit: it is *his* transmission of faith at the heart of the Christian community and the apostolic ministry.

### **5.3. Mission Networks, Migration and Communion**

Yet the intentionality of mission societies and the focus on those who cross cultures to share the gospel may obscure the overriding significance of a basic form of human movement: migration. Whilst crossing cultural frontiers reveals the significance of culture for knowing the riches of God's gift of life, this does not just take a missionary form. Migration is part of human history from earliest times and it recurs, 'because of deep and underlying processes and

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<sup>63</sup> These three correspond to the dimensions Walls identifies in his reconsideration of Latourette's history of mission (2002, 3-27).

motivations that make themselves felt in every society' (Manning 2013, 196). If the very earliest human beings migrated out of Africa and if their descendants, in developing agricultural and urban lifestyles, continued to migrate – and carried out forced migration on or amongst diverse culture and civilizations – then migration must be of primary concern for mission networks. Pre-history and recorded history give us a picture of major, gradual and continuous migration. The major movement of people that has shaped the modern world includes the European exploration and colonial migrations when over 50 million people left Europe for other parts of the world over a 200-year period.<sup>64</sup> Alongside this, there were many movements across the globe. Manning finds four types of migration, within middle level and transnational models: home-community (gene pool enhancement), colonisation (resource access), whole-community (seasonal movement), and cross-community (share culture with others). Most models use the term '*network*' which conveys, 'a series of interconnected social, political and economic relationships that individuals manage to maintain across space.' (202) This network perspective on migration is now enhanced with an analysis of institutions, social capital and world-systems. Although my focus is on the cross-community sharing motivation and network perspective, there is much that could also be said about religious persecution and migration that draws out the history of the early church and current trends in the world today.

Hanciles has shown (2008) just how significant African migration has been for developing and re-shaping the nature of World Christianity, and how the Christendom model was broken and is being remade. This inevitably raises the more challenging side of inter-cultural mission, as highlighted by Jennings (2010) in his approach to race and the theology of supersessionism (as the church supersedes Israel, so white people supersede others in other mission engagement). Ochs has also highlighted how supersessionism has been criticised in postliberal theology (2011), which draws on Barth's positive interpretation of Israel (1956-81, II/2 §34). Such a critique requires a reframing of the eschatology of mission spirituality. Walls' theology of the Ephesian moment could help reframe this critique for the development of network mission.

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<sup>64</sup> See Fedorowich & Thompson (2013, 6, fn 37).

## SECTION SIX

### TRINITARIAN MISSION – Christian Mission Capital

In this section I review two publications which represent the Trinitarian interpretation of mission and ultimate reality: a paper on the *Filioque* (FFTS) and CMPC.<sup>65</sup> These two pieces, 15 years apart, both address the deep question of Christian identity in an age of pluralism and spiritual immanentism (Taylor *et al*, 2012). The first was written when I had newly returned to Kenya. I was struck by the vibrancy of the theological debate in the Anglican Church, particularly in its theological Colleges and Boards (where liturgy was also discussed), and by the vibrancy of the African Independent Churches and the Spirit/Pentecostal Churches. This vibrancy underlines the impression of the immanentist features in African spirituality,<sup>66</sup> emphasising Gyekye's famous statement: 'What is primarily real is spiritual.' (1995, 69) The second piece was written as I brought together the four systems into a whole, relying on a Trinitarian viewpoint that could hold everything together. The mission capital of the Trinitarian perspective is thus strategic for the other three dimensions. The mission capital of God's Trinitarian mission sustains the covenant for communion, and holds together the differences of pluralism, the diversity of communion, and the mixed economy of a missional church. The procession of the Trinitarian God reveals his purpose in the relations of creation, salvation and recreation of a mission spirituality.<sup>67</sup>

#### 6.1. Positively Engaging Pluralism

It is hard to over-estimate the significance of the global socio-religious movement of 'World Christianity' (its mission and culture, ecumenical relations and dialogue with other religions

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<sup>65</sup> I take a traditional view on the authorship of I Timothy. See Johnson (2001, 55-99) for arguments in support of this view.

<sup>66</sup> Magesa (2013, 195-197) identifies seven elements to African Spirituality: 1. an ancestral heritage which affirms the goodness of life; 2. a vision of harmonious relationships across all aspects of life in which God is God; 3. the ethical values about appropriate relationships and rituals which sustain life; 4. the multiple significations for the plurality of life as a gift; 5. a both/and patient dialogue rather than a forced dialogue, for deepening connections with transcendence; 6. the good life as a goal for all and thus a respectful humanising of life without prejudice to others; and 7. the Spirit of God as the Paraclete who draws all things together as the world becomes God's dwelling place.

<sup>67</sup> The eschatological framework of mission capital includes all these elements but is not focused on the traditional four last things (death, judgement, heaven and hell). Rather the approach here is about the orientation of creation towards the goal of the unity of all things in Christ. This includes the four last things, but is more concerned with a wider process. Long includes six things: 1. The restoration of Israel; 2. The coming of the kingdom of God; the renewal of creation; 4. Heaven and earth coming together as God's dwelling place; 5. Final judgement; 6. and the completion and fulfilment of history. (2019, 11).

and social sciences<sup>68</sup>). It is not just its scale as a global movement,<sup>69</sup> but its nature which, from Jewish and European origins, has become a non-Western world religion: it truly is a migrational mission. In this is seen the Christian claim: the universal ‘translatability’ of God revealed in Jesus. The result is not a singular Christianity, but many Christianities; World Christianity is polycentric, plural, diverse and engages variously with public issues.<sup>70</sup>

In CMPC I consider the increasingly pluralist context for the public ministry of the Church of England. The pluralist reality of global humanity continues to be generated by migrational forces, and migration to Europe is now creating the kind of social reality already experienced in World Christianity. This pluralist reality challenges any kind of Establishment between church, culture, gospel and state as in the peculiar form of Christendom in the Church of England settlement. In CMPC I explore some implications for mission spirituality in this context, proposing a middle distance perspective that holds together, in the form of a principled mission practice, aspects which would otherwise be lost in emphasising either the local or the global, or by insisting on a particular interpretation of the transcultural understanding of the ultimate significance of Jesus. To engage positively with pluralist societies requires a bold humility: a principled pluralism based on respect, difference and cooperation. Principled pluralism is normally associated with a particular continental perspective on social theology, but Jonathan Chaplin has begun to extend its application to a global level. He notes that pluralism in today’s globalised societies is structural (diverse communities), cultural (diverse expressions of life), and directional (diverse human purposes). Engaging with Chaplin’s views (2006), Smith first defines pluralism and then critiques Chaplin:

The “challenge” of pluralism is the challenge of forging a life in common in neighborhoods, communities, territories, and states that are populated by citizens with divergent worldviews, different ultimate beliefs about the Good, and different practices and rituals that they understand to constitute a life well lived. In short, the

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<sup>68</sup> See Irvin (2016); also, Sanneh (2008), and his eight pillars of World Christianity which have emerged over the centuries. I slightly modify and interpret the eight pillars as follows: missionary and cross-cultural; comparative and pluralist; commercialism and colonialism; Western missionary movement; charismatic and indigenous; millennial and primal; critical and reflective; and ‘Bamboo’ mission and glocalism.

<sup>69</sup> Religion is slowly appearing in the subject areas of the study of social movements, for example Linderkilde & Kühle 2015, but it is yet to be better recognized in Sociology as a resource for social change. On the development of this recognition see Christian Smith (2001/2011).

<sup>70</sup> See chapter 8 of their overview, which looks at Christianity in six regions and from a range of perspectives: Kim & Kim (2016). This publication adopts both a theological and a religious studies perspective: it accepts the theological perspective of Christian faith, but also uses human and social sciences to engage with the religious phenomenon of World Christianity. We have moved on from the polarized position in Britain when there were two traditions of religious studies: those who believe in God and those who don’t. However, the ‘external perspective’ on faith is itself a question for a faith-based approach to general hermeneutics, and vice-versa for secular viewpoints.

challenge of pluralism is how to forge common life in the midst of what I'm going to call "confessional" diversity or what John Inazu simply calls "deep differences." (2016, 2)

Smith challenges Chaplin's view that Christians should not influence the state with the directional purposes of Christianity by arguing for certain outcomes of the common life in which there are diverse directional purposes. However, Chaplin is not against Christians influencing politics, but he thinks that an established Church is not able to effect such an influence if it is already co-opted into a procedural form of justice that might not be appropriate for a Christian faith based on voluntary conversion. The significance of this for the discussion here is that migration is shaped and interpreted by nation-states.

Newbigin, whose experience in India, where there was a constitutional secular state, reworks the three perspectives on Christ that once dominated Christian theology of religions: exclusivism, inclusivism and pluralism (see CMPC, 10). Newbigin's reworking is a kind of principled pluralism which resonates with the sort of critical realism I am using. In CMPC I argue that Christians should not be quietist about their faith and practices but show open public commitment; I also accept that Christians should, in believing in their own spirituality, invite others to know the reality of Christ,<sup>71</sup> thus expressing the wider Church of England's commitment in its vision for Education: 'Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good' (2016). However, it is the Christian understanding of God in his Trinitarian mission that is the 'principle' for a Christian relation with the pluralism of the common good. The use of Trinitarian models for connecting with mission and social order have burgeoned.<sup>72</sup> Yet these often rely on a now questionable social Trinitarianism;<sup>73</sup> not what I advocate here. Rather, building on Newbigin's ground-breaking thought on Trinity and mission (1966), I have used the theology of a Trinitarian Spirit-Christology (reviewed later).<sup>74</sup>

## 6.2. The *Filioque*, Spirit-Churches and God

The *Filioque* (the clause 'and the Son' in the Nicene Creed) is often presented as that which caused the split between the Eastern and the Western churches and, if only it was removed,

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<sup>71</sup> See Metzger 2012 on how to discuss Jesus in a world of diverse faiths and in relation to public issues.

<sup>72</sup> See those from just one tradition: Wright (2000), Buxton (2005), Chester (2006) and McIlroy (2009). I have not attempted an outline of the huge literature on the modern interpretation of the doctrine of the Trinity (see Marshall's overview, 2007).

<sup>73</sup> See Kilby's critique of social interpretations (2000), other debates (Davis et al 1999), and debates with Barth (Collins 2001).

<sup>74</sup> Spirit-Christology is now part of the theology of World Christianity: Mahohar (2009), Habets (2010), Jinkins (2018), Sánchez (2019).

then everyone might get on much better. However, another way of exploring the significance of adding the *Filioque* clause is to consider its mission implications. This is what I did in FFTS, which was written for a theological conference of the Board of Theological Education of the Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK). The debate, across the Anglican Communion, was whether we should drop the *Filioque* from the Creed.<sup>75</sup> As Principal of a Mission College I was asked to contribute about the practical significance for mission.

I used the Scriptures and a classical form of hermeneutics (*explicatio, meditatio* and *applicatio*), whilst also engaging with a priority for ACK: the mission of the church in its cultural context. I was aware that the Western metaphysical argument, one-substance of the Father and the Son, was seen by some African theologians as an imposition on an African map of the universe. So I did explore what Western theologians said of Christ as the divine mediator, but also African Christological motifs: Christ as Ancestor (from above?), *Muthamaki*-Elder (from below?) and Christ indwelling (*'skenosis'*) the African context. Christ as divine-human mediator within an African context is equivalent, I suggested, to the one-substance confession. Christ draws all powers to himself in revealing and enacting the power of God Supreme. It was from this perspective that I offered a mediating proposal: *'through the Son'*. The aim was to allow for connections to be made between the Spirit and spirit-filled universe and the mediation of Jesus. As Goergen says, 'An African christology ought to be a pneumatic or Spirit Christology which shows Jesus' power over the world of spirits and his connectedness to the Holy Spirit'. (2001, 23)

The African map of the universe is not the same as Western metaphysics. It tends to be more culturally specific; it is also less abstract and less dominated by the language of universals. The language of 'being' is not part of the history of African philosophy in the way it is in Western culture. Thus, to talk about the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father *and the Son* only becomes important if it shapes how God relates to humanity in creation. The identity of Jesus and the Spirit are crucial, but it is not clear there is a vernacular concern for the metaphysics of the immanent Trinity. There is no abstract name for God. The procession of the Spirit is therefore much more connected with the daily outpouring of the Spirit, which, in Trinitarian terms, is related to the economic Trinity. My proposal, *'through the Son'*, seeks to

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<sup>75</sup> See Sicienski (2010, 206-209) for a summary of the ecumenical debates where this proposal was made.

acknowledge this experienced and participatory perspective whilst also implying an eternal procession.

During a focus week at the College we looked at credal confessions which illustrated Anglican emphases relating praying to believing. I invited a Senior Prophet from an African Instituted Spirit-Church to speak. He came with his prophet's staff and purple cassock – he often walked down the highway dressed like this. It was an animated seminar. Afterwards students reflected on differences between their views and the prophet's. The implications for understanding the Spirit became clear, especially the way that Spirit-Churches combined traditional beliefs and practices with Christianity. We then discussed the clause in the Nicene Creed about the Holy Spirit 'proceeding from the Father *and the Son*'. We reflected on what the *Filioque* meant as a belief and how the creed worked as the grammar of what Christians do: *living* is related to *praying* and to *believing* (*lex vivendi, lex orandi, lex credendi*) in a totality of mission practice. Recent literature has given worship a high profile in the shaping of faith,<sup>76</sup> but perhaps it is other public practices of daily life, engaging with a socio-cultural context, that are more significant. This is nowhere more clear than in contexts that have undergone significant culture upheavals, as in Africa.

The form of God's immanence is significant in the *Filioque* debate. My paper argued that the *Filioque* has cultural significance because it articulates the Christological mediation of the Spirit in the experience and participatory life of the church and mission. In the debate between Western and Eastern traditions, recent scholarship encourages the acknowledgement of similar patterns of theology, even if they are expressed in different Trinitarian forms. Thus both West and East argue for a divine unity, for distinct identity of the divine persons and for a genuine experience of God in revelation or the divine energies.<sup>77</sup>

Thus my suggestion was that a revised *Filioque* that drew on Western and Eastern traditions might also provide the grammar for the African emphasis on the immanence of God. Bediako recognises that something like this is needed for drawing out but also for reshaping the

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<sup>76</sup> Smith explores how worship may not have the formational impact we expect if cultural liturgies are more powerful. He illustrates this with the 'Godfather problem': a reference to the Hollywood film sequence where the Godfather has been contracted for a violent retaliation which is taking place while he is at a baptism, confessing his belief in God and renouncing the devil and all his works. (2017, 165-168)

<sup>77</sup> See Guretzki (2009, 38-45) for this kind of approach to discussing Barth and the wider tradition. Guretzki draws on Laats (1999) and Reid (1997), but then critiques Barth using Rosato (1981) for not developing a proper pneumatology that does more than display what a Trinitarian theology implies. Recent research on Barth and the Spirit is more positive than Rosato. See Varkey (2011) and Kim (2014).

relationship between God's vernacular identity and the plurality of the experiences of power in the holistic oneness of African life. 'The plurality of divinities and spirit-powers, with the concomitant multiplicity of worships and devotions, must ultimately weaken the human grasp of the unity of all things in the Supreme God.' (1986, 87) In summary, I argued for a revised version of the *Filioque*<sup>78</sup> that could provide a pattern for recognising the immanence of God in African cultures; *it offers other Christians a lived pattern of the Spirit mediated through the Divine-human Prophet*. It is interesting that Bediako claims that most African Christologies are strictly neither from above or below; 'rather they are indicative of the way the primal imagination grasps the reality of Christ in terms in which all life is essentially conceived – as spiritual.' (1995, 176) Whilst Bediako may want to affirm this 'intuitive' theology, the significance of AICs, Spirit-Churches and Pentecostal Churches and their local and global social mission is precisely what is at stake when intuitive theology is not grounded. It is dialogue with other traditional denominations that might be significant here (see Dakin 2003a). A more developed Trinitarian contextual understanding of the Spirit might help. Alongside Bediako, Uzukwu provides a thorough reflective resource (2012).<sup>79</sup>

### **6.3. Moving towards a Spirit-Christology**

A Spirit-Christology might enable both a focus and an openness, in a Trinitarian perspective on mission spirituality, to explore the diversity of cultural interpretation of the Spirit. I suggest this could be based on the logic which I follow in FETS: Bible, immanent Trinity, economic Trinity (Coffey 1999). This is the logic of the self-description of faith in which the Spirit is involved: inspiring, uniting and raising. Using the pattern of *explication, meditation and application* offers a pattern for how to understand the way different cultures may participate in Christ's mission in relation to the ultimate reality of God:

Jesus mediates the Spirit to humanity because it was he who pours out the Spirit, baptizes in the Spirit, and gives the Spirit without measure. But the Spirit also mediates Jesus to humanity for no one can confess Jesus is Lord except by the Spirit, for he enables and causes believers to be united to and participate in the risen Christ. (Dodds 2017, 185)

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<sup>78</sup> Ayres shows (2010, 264-268) that Augustine struggled with the question of the Spirit's procession; he also reviews the ecumenical currency of 'through the Son'.

<sup>79</sup> Uzukwu (2012) explores key issues for developing an African understanding of the Trinity, and especially the work of the Spirit. He finds that in many AICs the Spirit is the point of entry for people coming to a Trinitarian faith (175) that is still suffused with spiritual sensibilities which would not fit a Western worldview. He illustrates this with West African anthropology, traditional beliefs about God, divine entities, spirits, spiritual powers, ancestors, the living dead and spiritual personages (eg healers).

A Spirit-Christology might enable both a focus and openness in a Trinitarian perspective on mission spirituality. Its logic is: Biblical inspiration; immanent Trinity; economic Trinity; drawing on Cyril, Taylor, Loder and Uzukwu to affirm again the diversity of cultural interpretations the Spirit brings. After all, as Barth says of the *Creator Spiritus*, 'In his movements from below to above and from above to below, the One Holy Spirit achieves the opening of God for man and the opening of man for God.' (Barth 1963, 169)

Christians reiterate the Biblical perspective on ultimate reality, which is that God is Trinity: that what God has shared of himself, in the Son and the Spirit and as Father, is what God always has been and will be. God in eternity is what God is in time and space: God shares, missions, himself as Son and Spirit of the Father in the way that reflects what God is eternally as Father, Son and Spirit. Not only that, but also in 'sending' Jesus and the Holy Spirit, God is only sending what has already been sent. As Ayres says in his study of Augustine's Trinitarian theology: 'The Son and the Spirit are, however, always sent to a place where they already are.' (2010, 181) I believe the pattern and content of how God has shared himself in Jesus and the Holy Spirit, as the mission of the Trinity, is important for the Christian understanding of human life and wider existence. Having a clear understanding of the pattern of God's mission is therefore important for interpreting reality.<sup>80</sup> This is not only how Christians describe their faith, it is also their witness to God: the Son has come to be with us, and so we have fellowship with the Father by the Spirit. We are called to live for him with others, and in this way know the fullness of life.

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<sup>80</sup> An example of this is Robert Doran's huge project (2012 & 2019) of relating God's divine missions with a mission spirituality of imitation.

## CONCLUSION

Trinitarian theology, and its counterpart of *missio Dei* theology, became newly significant in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century for how Christians interpret reality and express their way of life in relation to God. Looking back through the Trinitarian perspective on mission spirituality, I have explored how the reality of this God has become the basis for a mission spirituality: responding to what we have been given by God by participating in God's participation in our life. This pilgrimage of response takes us through diverse cultural contexts, the renewal of religious traditions, and the discovery of the plurality of humanity. We are participants in God's great mission of sharing his life: *participating in Christ's mission by the Spirit*.

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