

The Economic Geographies of Religious Institutions

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Abstract

The Christian Church is one of the oldest institutions in the UK. Furthermore, the Church is an important economic actor in the British economy, with the current Church of England holding investment assets of approximately £8billion. In addition it provides the largest amount of explicitly religious spaces, through its network of Churches, in the nation. However, despite a recent resurgence of interest from geographers in religion, through the Geography of Religion discourse, the Christian Church is, and has remained, an understudied institution. In contrast, I will argue that the particular characteristics of the faith make it an ideal institution for study. By investigating the Church I will integrate the previously disparate literatures of the Geography of Religion and Economic Geography to identify how the spaces of Christian religious institutions, such as the Parish Church, continue to exist in the capitalist economic system of the UK. To this end the thesis will adopt an economic institutionalist perspective to understanding religious bodies; using the case studies of The Church of England, The Baptist Union, and The Assemblies of God to investigate the process of institutional reproduction. In addition to providing an overview of how religious institutions are reproduced the thesis will make a further two contributions to Geography. First, it will investigate how Christianity and capitalism interrelates. In so doing I will argue that, whilst geographers have traditionally argued that institutions influence the practices of capitalism, this is a two-way process as the economic imperative of reproduction entails that capitalism itself also alters the properties of religious institutions. Second, the thesis will provide an investigation of the internal properties of institutions to argue that, rather than being a cohesive body, religious institutions are an assemblage of a number of linked

networks. This has a severe impact on the process of institutional reproduction as finance and resources do not flow freely around the institution to where they are needed.

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1. Introduction

The Christian Church is one of the oldest institutions within the UK. With the faith incepted into the nation at the time of the Roman Empire it has now been prevalent in various forms for approaching 2000 years. Furthermore, the Church is an important economic actor within the British economy, with the current Church of England holding investment assets of approximately £8billion (The Church Commissioners for England, 2008; The Pensions Board of the Church of England, 2008; CCLA, 2007a; CCLA, 2007b; CCLA, 2007c; CCLA, 2007d; CCLA, 2007e). It is also a major land owner with vast rural estates and commercial property holdings both in the UK and globally. In addition it provides the largest amount of explicitly religious spaces, through its network of Churches, within the nation. The Church of England, one of many denominations, currently operates approximately 16,550 places of worship (www.achurchnearyou.com, 2010). However, despite this prominence very little work has been conducted upon the Christian Church within Geography. Indeed, despite a heritage of institutional studies in economic geography and a resurgence of interest in religion (through work on the geography of religion, (for example see Kong, 2001; Holloway, 2006; Proctor, 2006a)) surprisingly few authors have studied the Church. In contrast, I will argue that the particular characteristics of the faith make it an ideal institution to be studied. Indeed, through investigating the Church I will integrate the previously disparate literatures of the geography of religion and economic geography to identify how the spaces of religious institutions continue to exist within the capitalist economic system. To this end the thesis will adopt an economic institutionalist perspective to understanding religious bodies. This will provide an economic perspective that is currently missing in the nascent geography

of religion debate and a thorough discussion of the process of institutional reproduction that is lacking in the contemporary institutional literature. In so doing I will make a further three arguments. First, in addition to the traditional institutional argument that institutions reshape and modify economic behaviour, I will argue that the need to ensure financial reproduction entails that the properties of institutions themselves are re-shaped by capitalism. Indeed, the thesis will suggest that the need to engender an income has continually reshaped the three Church bodies to render them more commercially viable. Second, I will draw upon the classic work of Weber (1971) to add a religious interpretation to the traditional institutional approach. I will argue that Christian bodies have been key influences in the ongoing creation and modification of the economic, and financial, landscape of the UK. Third, and finally, the thesis will provide a discussion of the internal properties of institutions, another omission within the current literature.

I will now briefly discuss each of these contributions in turn, at each point highlighting the relevancy of Christianity to a study of this sort.

1.1.1 The Process of Institutional Reproduction

As a historical institution the Christian Church provides a good example of the process of institutional reproduction¹. Indeed, utilising the work of Veblen, I will argue that, in order to survive, an institution has to reproduce itself. This reproduction takes the form of satisfying the economic pressure that is placed upon it (Veblen, 1988). Thus, within the context of a contemporary Church, this economic pressure can be as straight forward as the costs of energy supplies and staff, without

¹ It is the argument of this thesis that gaining an understanding into the process of institutional reproduction is of importance as it allows one to understand how longstanding bodies, such as the Church, continue to exist and exert an influence upon culture from both societal and economic perspectives.

which the Church would be unable to function². Consequently, I will argue that the process of reproduction requires the Church to raise the necessary finance to cover these costs, as well as other expenses. Indeed, if the Church were unable to meet these costs it would cease to exist and the religious space would be lost.

Despite a long standing tradition of institutional thinking, very few authors have engaged with this process of institutional reproduction, either from the discipline of Geography or the wider academy. Instead, institutional thought has been applied to understanding the effect of culture upon economic activity; as shown in phenomenon such as uneven development (Amin, 2004). Whilst studies of this sort are of significant merit (and the thesis seeks to provide a contribution to this area), a prior understanding of the character of institutions themselves is necessary. Without this, one is unable to understand how an institutions' influence can change as it either waxes or wanes in prominence. By providing a discussion of the reproduction process for three contemporary Christian institutions (those of the Church of England, the Baptist Union of Great Britain, and the Assemblies of God) the thesis seeks to fill this niche within the literature.

In making this argument I will highlight three other pertinent factors to the reproduction process for which a discussion is lacking within the contemporary literature. First, as argued by Veblen (and discussed in Chapter Three), institutional reproduction is not guaranteed; instead it is a process of inter-institutional competition. To exemplify, Veblen (1988) argues that the process of 'evolutionary selection' dictates that, as society develops, new institutions become prominent (as they are more relevant to the new societal form) and replace those that previously existed. Thus, in order to be continually reproduced, institutions need to alter their

² This process of institutional reproduction will be discussed in much greater depth in Chapter Two.

characteristics to remain relevant to society and provide a function that other institutions do not. Indeed, if institutions were to become irrelevant to society they would be deemed unappealing by prospective new members, who would join other institutions. Consequently, the institution would die out as older members left. Thus, as a longstanding institution, the Christian Church provides a good case study to explore the historical pattern of institutional modification and reproduction as, in order to have survived, it will have had to continually change itself to remain attractive, and thus competitive, over a long period of time. Furthermore, I will argue that the contemporary period provides an interesting time to study the reproduction of the UK institutions of the Christian Church as the social characteristics of religion are undergoing, or have undergone, radical change. This has, thus, entailed that the institutions themselves have had to undergo considerable recent change in order to remain appropriate to society. Indeed, while Chapter Two will discuss this in more depth, it is possible to identify a number of disparate theories about the current characteristics of religious society within the UK; these debates include works on the secularization of religion, the transition to a postmodern religious belief system, and the commercialization of religion. In regards to secularization authors such as Bruce (2002) have argued that the 20th, and the first part of the 21st, Century have been marked by a decline in the number of people participating in religious beliefs in the UK. Bruce argues that this borne out through falling Church attendances and decline in the social standing of religious institutions. Consequently, through this argument, religious institutions are finding it hard to reproduce themselves as they are becoming irrelevant to wider societal trends. In contrast, several authors have argued that the nation is as religious as ever, albeit that religion has taken on a new structure (for examples please see Davie, 1994 or Lyon, 2000). These authors,

influenced by postmodernism³, argue that religious beliefs have taken on an individual form, with Churchgoers creating their own versions of Christianity. For Davie (1994) this development can be characterised as the transformation from 'belonging to believing' whereby people no longer attend institutional religious services but, instead, retain an unpractised sense of spirituality. Similarly, Lyon (2000) argues that post-modernism has increased the number of ways in which one can practice religion. This has led to a plural religious society with spiritual people⁴ adopting many different religious positions. Thus, in this discourse, the religious institutions have had to modify themselves to be relevant to a more spiritual, and less committed religious society. Finally, Karner and Aldridge (2004), amongst others, argue that religious trends have altered to mirror a consumer society. They argue that Churchgoers have become religious consumers who pick their beliefs like they would products in a supermarket. Karner and Aldridge (2004) thus suggest that Christian institutions have had to modify their practices to compete against each other in a commercial environment.

Second, a key argument of this thesis will be that the particular culture of each institution affects its ability to modify and, thus, reproduce itself. Indeed, I will argue that the three institutions have had different levels of success in achieving the

³ While the specific applications of post-modernism to religious studies will be discussed in chapter two, the thesis, as a whole, will, in a rather problematic and overly simplified manner, approach the concept as being plurality. Indeed, resembling the work of Bryson et al (1999) upon post-cultural turn economic geography, it will suggest that post-modernism, at its core, is the opening up and legitimisation of multiple narratives and approaches to the same thing. Thus, I will argue throughout that this has rendered post-modern approaches to religion as being '...multiperspectival, multidimensional, and multivocal...' (Bryson et al, 1999:16). Thus, to exemplify empirically, while traditional modernist approaches to religion would see Christianity as being a collective and uniform expression of faith (as characterized by traditional interpretations of institutions such as the Church of England or the Methodist Church), Davie's (1994) interpretation suggests a series of multiple individual belief patterns that differ radically from person to person.

⁴ By 'spiritual people' it is meant that while people adhering to post modern belief patterns may believe in a transcendental God these beliefs may not fit the ordered belief patterns of the traditional religions.

necessary changes. In particular, I suggest that the process is contingent upon the theological and historical context of each institution. This will be explored by a comparison of the traditional institutions of the Church of England, the Baptist Union of Great Britain and the Assemblies of God through which I will argue that the relatively nascent institution of the Assemblies of God has been better able to reflect contemporary society and is, thus, growing at a greater rate than either the Anglican or Baptist churches. This finding will call into question theories, such as secularization, that suggest religious trends are a uniform process evident evenly across all of society. Instead, I will argue that the particular cultures present in each institution mean that, while one institution may reflect religious resurgence (and thus be continually reproducing itself through continued growth), another may provide evidence of secularization. This finding will provide a further contribution to the burgeoning literature upon the importance of culture in mediating economic activity.

Third, Buttimer (2006) argues that the need to ensure reproduction creates a conflict between the traditional purpose of the Church and the need to alter to fit the needs of society. Whilst evident in all institutional reproduction, she argues that this tension is of paramount concern for religious bodies as these institutions are formed with clear, value driven, purposes and missions which can be compromised by adopting changes to ensure reproduction. This means that Churches, more than many other institutions, have to carefully balance the economic needs of reproduction, and the associated imperative to modify their practices, without undermining or reducing the values that they represent. However, Buttimer (2006) argues that institutional religion has, of yet, been unable to balance this imperative adequately; instead it has sacrificed values in favour of economic pursuits (Buttimer, 2006). Within the thesis I further investigate how this balance is managed in order to identify whether, what might be described as 'religiosity', has, indeed, been reduced in

order to guarantee economic reproduction. This will take the form of identifying the compromises that have been made to ensure economic stability and recognizing the extent to which religious values inform and dictate economic decision making.

Through this investigation of the process of institutional reproduction the thesis will make a further contribution to the institutional approach; it will exemplify how, due to the imperative need to finance the institution, processes of capitalism inherently alter the characteristics of institutions. This will be particularly highlighted within Chapter Six and Chapter Seven. In Chapter Six, I will identify how the substance, and in some instances geography, of Church services has been altered to fit the needs of society. Similarly, in Chapter Seven the Churches practices as an institutional investor will be discussed. This will identify how the spiritual message of the Church is diluted as it needs to achieve the necessary financial returns to reproduce the institution.

1.1.2 The Characteristics of Religious Institutions

In addition to the reproduction process it is possible to identify a lack of study into the characteristics of religious institutions themselves. By investigating the Christian institutions, this thesis will aim to rectify this. In particular, I will draw upon the work of Schoenberger (1999) (upon the institution of the firm) to argue that religious institutions are not coherent bodies but are, instead, made up of a series of disparate entities. In making this argument I will be influenced by the work of Latour (2005) and Legg (2009) (as discussed in Chapter Four) to conceptualize institutions as being ‘assemblages’ of disparate networks. Chapter Five will apply this theory to argue that the Church of England, for example, is made up of disparate networks of the Parish Church, the Diocese, and the National Church bodies which link together

to form the institution as a whole. However, in so doing, I will argue that while these networks are linked together, the people within them hold very different views and, consequently, often engage in very different practices.

Through this study I will highlight two clear points. First, I will argue that being an assemblage of disparate networks has a significant impact upon the practice of institutional reproduction. Indeed, Chapter Five will exemplify how every individual network within each institution has to reproduce itself individually. This entails that, due to a lack of flows between the various networks, resources can get trapped. Thus, while an institution such as the Baptist Union may, as a whole, have sufficient resources to reproduce itself, these resources may not be positioned in the networks where they are required. Consequently, despite these wider resources, certain Baptist Churches may not reproduced and cease to exist.

Second, I will argue that economic institutionalism has traditionally approached religious institutions as being cohesive wholes. For example, within his discussion of the impact of Mormonism upon economic development in Salt Lake City, James (2005) suggests that there is only one Mormon culture⁵. In contrast I argue that, as institutions are comprised of a number of disparate bodies, different members will hold varying strengths of beliefs and will thus impact upon the economy in different ways. To exemplify, while James (2005) states that the economic culture of Salt Lake City is mediated by the uniform Mormon practice of family being the most important element of life I will argue that, within Christian institutions, the strength of teachings and practices differ throughout.

⁵ This is discussed further in Chapter Three

1.1.3 The Church as an Institution

In addition to providing a useful case study to understand the process of institutional reproduction, the thesis will argue that the Church, as an institution in its own right, is an important (and overlooked) influence upon the economy. Very few authors have studied the mediating economic impact of the Church. This is particularly evident in relation to finance where I will argue that the Church institutions have been prevalent in the creation of the techniques of Socially Responsible Investment. This lack of economic study into religion is also reflected within the developing Geography of Religion literature. Indeed, I will argue that while much work has been conducted upon religious space from the perspective of cultural and historical geography very few authors have attempted to integrate the necessary economic perspective to this approach. Again, by focussing upon institutional reproduction, the thesis intends to contribute to this debate by identifying how religious spaces continue to exist.

1.2 Selection of Faith and Institutions.

There were two overarching reasons for the selection of Christianity over other faiths to be investigated within this project; practical constraints and theoretical implications. First, the research was constrained by both geography and politics. In regards to geography, Christianity is the traditional faith of the UK and thus has a longer history within the nation. Therefore, one is able to more easily identify its institutional evolution and to place the aforementioned practices of institutional modification within the context of the past. This would not be possible with a faith that has only recently been established within the UK. To exemplify, due to their longevity one is able to note the differing ways in which the institutions of

Christianity have responded to changing social climates in their attempts to reproduce themselves. For instance, as discussed in Chapter Two, Worrall (1988) argues that the process of assembling Churches into institutions was, itself, an attempt to respond to the industrialization of society. Current geo-politics also proved inhibitive to the wider conduction of research. It was considered that the current socio-political climate of religious tension and insecurity, coupled with my positionality and background (as a white Christian male), would have rendered it extremely difficult to conduct the research upon any other faith within the UK, such as Islam for example.

Second, as highlighted above, Christianity provided an interesting example for a number of theoretical reasons including religious trends and a lack of previous studies. For instance, Christianity is the faith most associated with the practice of secularization and declining Church attendance (Martin, 1978). In contrast, the return of questions on religion in the 2001 census⁶ and the data that this has subsequently provided (Table 2.3), suggest other faiths are growing in popularity in the UK. This means that the institutions of Christianity are unique in having to reproduce themselves within the constraints of aggregate decline⁷. The Christian faith, therefore, provides a distinctive and appropriate case study. Finally, as shown in Chapter Three, very little geographical research has been conducted upon the interaction between Christianity and capitalism. This, consequently, leaves a substantial hole in the literature.

The Church of England, the Baptist Union of Great Britain and the Assemblies of God were chosen as they have very different characteristics and are based upon

⁶ Religion had been absent from the census since the 1900s when questions were predominantly centred upon ascertaining data as to which denomination of Christianity was most prevalent.

⁷ By aggregate decline it is recognised that despite an overall pattern of decline, as previously discussed, many institutions of Christianity are growing.

different theologies and approaches to Christianity. Consequently, they provide appropriate, yet contrasting, case studies about the ways in which churches seek to become financially viable and enable one to examine the difference that small individual institutional cultures make to the process of reproduction. The Church of England was chosen as it is the state Church of England, meaning that it is both the largest institution in terms of participants and it has a distinctive financial advantage over many other religious institutions. For instance, it benefits from historical assets bequeathed to it by past governments shown through the Church Commissioners holdings of £5.7 billion (The Church Commissioners for England, 2008). The Baptist Union of Great Britain was selected to provide an example of a traditional non-conformist institution. The results obtained from the Baptist Union should, thus, be influenced by the alternative approach to Protestantism adopted within these Churches (as discussed within Chapter Two). Finally, the Assemblies of God was selected to provide an example of the Pentecostal approach to Christianity which, as argued within Chapter Two, has, of late, experienced growth. In addition, it allowed study into the reproduction process of a relatively young institution. These selections made it possible to compare of three very different institutions, formed at different times and under different contexts, but that are simultaneously united in a shared task; teaching society about Christianity.

Despite offering a potentially useful case study, the UK Roman Catholic Church was rejected as a case study for three reasons. First, as Pollard (2005) illustrates, the institution is incredibly secretive about its finances and is sceptical of any approach to investigate them. It was, thus, considered that it would be difficult to gain the level of access required. Second, Pollard also notes that the majority of the institution's financial dealings have been centralized within the Vatican in Rome. Although fascinating from a geographical point of view, this thus presents practical

research problems, with both distance and language providing significant barriers to investigation. Finally, by solely focussing on Protestant faiths the project was able to identify how three denominations of the Church, derived from the same theological route, can differ dramatically in their process of reproduction.

1.3 Thesis Structure

The thesis itself is organised into an additional seven chapters. In Chapter Two I will further discuss theoretical contributions on the organization of religious society. This will enable discussion into the particular social environments in which religious institutions have to reproduce themselves. Chapter Three will first introduce and then explore the economic theory upon which the thesis is built. This will include an in depth discussion of institutions and the process of institutional reproduction. It will also highlight existing research into the relationship between religious cultures and the economy. Chapter Four will provide the methodological context for the thesis. It will further introduce the assemblage approach and the data collection techniques utilised. Chapter Five will serve three purposes. It will first, apply the assemblage approach to the empirical material in order to discuss the particular characteristics of the institutions various networks. In so doing it will highlight the network links between the different bodies of the assemblage to argue that these links allow for finance to flow around the institution and thus reproduction to occur in networks that are not, in themselves, financially sustainable. Second, Chapter Five will also argue that the number of these network links, and thus the composition of each institution's assemblage, differs dependent upon each Church's particular theological culture. Furthermore, it will claim that this, consequently, has an impact upon the ability of each institution to reproduce itself. Third, Chapter Five will

provide a breakdown of the major sources of income for each institution. Having provided this overview, Chapter Six and Chapter Seven will be based thematically upon the two largest income sources of each of the institutions; congregational giving and investment income. Chapter Six will identify how each institution attempts to maximise income from its congregations. This will highlight practices in relation to altering the Church to be attractive to new members and techniques of maximising giving from those already active in the institution. Similarly, Chapter Seven will show how the Church has attempted to integrate its religious beliefs into its investment practices. However, in both chapters the thesis will highlight how the need to ensure reproduction has led to a decrease in the religious values of the Church. Finally, Chapter Eight will provide a conclusion and identify areas for further study.

2. Understanding (the Spaces of) Religion

In this chapter I will provide the context for the empirical research by examining literature that focuses upon the contemporary character of religious beliefs in the UK and the Western world. While the thesis will identify how three denominations of one religion continue to exist within contemporary society, the notion as to what a religion is, is not unproblematic. Indeed, this chapter will identify several competing notions of what characterises a religion and, thus in terms of geography, what constitutes a religious space. To do so the chapter is divided into four sections. First, it will investigate wider notions of what constitutes a religion through the discipline of the sociology of religion. Having done so, the remainder of the chapter will narrow its focus to concentrate solely upon Christianity. Part two of the chapter examines work on the process of secularization, and the counter-theory of a religious resurgence, within Western Society. Part three identifies a resurgence of interest in religion from geographers through the growth of the sub-discipline of the 'geography of religion'. The fourth, and final, part of the chapter will investigate the characteristics and history of Christianity within the UK and, in so doing, will provide the historical and theological contexts of the religious denominations studied.

2.2 What is a Religion – Introduction to the Sociology of Religion

Before the chapter begins in earnest it is important to provide a definition of what constitutes a religious belief. However, this is no simple endeavour. Nadel

(1954 as cited in Hamilton, 1995:12), argues that it is, 'difficult to determine just where the dividing line between religion and non-religion is'. Indeed, irrespective of how one defines religion, 'there will always remain an area or border zone of uncertainty' (Nadel, 1954 as cited in Hamilton, 1995:12). Similarly, Weber (1965), in his seminal work *Sociology of Religion*, famously failed to provide a definition of religion, arguing that this was not possible. This difficulty in defining religion is highlighted through there being three competing approaches proposed within the sociology of religion; substantive, functional and polycentric.

First, Furseth and Repstad (2006:16) argue that substantive definitions are characterized by identifying the, 'characteristics of the content (or substance) of religion'. Furthermore, they argue that 'this content is usually based on the human belief in extraordinary phenomena, that which we cannot experience with our senses or grasp with our intellect.' Consequently, substantive definitions search for a common content of all religions. Hamilton (1995) argues that the first substantive definition of religion was provided by Tylor (1903) who suggested that religion was, 'a belief in spiritual beings'. However, Furseth and Repstad (2006:17) criticize Tylor's definition as being 'naively evolutionary and ethnocentric' as it does not fit non-Western religions such as Buddhism. In addition, they argue that Tylor's definition is flawed in relation to a lack of reference to religious practice. Perhaps the most famous substantive definition of religion is provided by Durkheim who argued that,

'all known religious beliefs, whether simple or complex, present a common quality: they presuppose a classification of things – the real or ideal things that men [sic] represent for themselves – into two classes, two opposite kinds, generally designated by two distinct terms effectively translated by the

words *profane* and *sacred*. The division of the world into two comprehensive domains, one sacred, the other profane, is the hallmark of religious thought.'

(Durkheim, 1976:36)

Indeed, as shown in the quote Durkheim views religion as a sacred world apart from human existence. In contrast, both Spiro (1966) and Berger (1967) argue that religion should not be defined as being a separate world to that of human existence but should be seen as the process of communication between the two worlds of the profane and the sacred. Indeed, Spiro (1966:96, cited in Furseth and Repstad, 2006:18) defines religion as, 'an institution consisting of culturally patterned interaction with culturally postulated beings.' One of the major criticisms of substantive definitions of religion is that they are reductive and exclude many belief patterns that are religions. This is highlighted by Aldridge (2007:37) who argues that, 'Cultures are too diverse, and new religious movements continually threaten to break the mould with new modes of belief and practice.' Aldridge states that this has meant that substantive definitions have tended to be conservative and focus on the traditional religious institutions such as those studied within this thesis (although it will be argued in Chapter Six that these institutions have, in themselves, attempted to transcend the traditional substantive boundaries of religion through creating new ways of 'being a Church'⁸).

Second, Furseth and Repstad (2006:20) argue that functional definitions 'define religion according to the utility or effects that religion is supposed to have for the individual and/or society'. Furthermore, they identify two prominent examples of functional definitions in the works of Luckman (1967) and Yinger (1970) (both cited in

⁸ As discussed further later in the Chapter the Methodist Church and the Church of England have cooperated on an initiative to create new ways of being Church. This has involved taking worship outside of the traditional religious space of the Church and into community spaces such as schools or coffee shops.

Furseth and Repstad, 2006). First, Yinger (1970:7, cited in Furseth and Repstad, 2006:21) defines a religion as being 'a system of beliefs and practices by means of which a group of people struggle with the ultimate problems of human life.' Second, Luckman (1967, cited in Furseth and Repstad, 2006:20) classify religion as, 'the transcendence of biological nature by the human organism.' Both of these definitions are categorised as functional as they concentrate upon what religion does rather than providing a criteria for what religion is. For Furseth and Repstad (2006), Luckman's definition places emphasis on the 'formation of the self' in regards to developing religious practice. Indeed, they argue that Luckman accents the role that individuals play in developing their own relationship between reality and religious beliefs. As a consequence they claim that, 'on this basis, Luckman distinguishes between religion in a broad sense; which is a human constant, and social, institutionalized forms of church-related religion' (Furseth and Repstad, 2006:21). Furthermore, both of these definitions bear out Hamilton's (1995) notion that functional definitions are much more inclusive than substantive. Indeed, in describing what a religion does Hamilton (1995) argues that functional definitions include, 'anything which performs the said function or operates in the said way ... even if not conventionally thought (as being a religion)' (Hamilton, 1995:19). Consequently, within Yinger's definition of religion, anything that helps one struggle with the ultimate problems of life (whatever these may be) is a religion. However, for Aldridge (2007:34), this represents the major criticism of functional definitions as the broad definition can be extended to include 'all human beings [as being] religious, even if they are professed atheists and utterly reject religion.' Thus, whilst functional definitions succeed in extending notions of religion beyond the traditional institutions, as described by reductive substantive approaches, it has been criticised in regards to its wide inclusivity.

As a response to the flaws in both the substantive and functional methods, Hamilton (1995) identifies a third group of definitions; polythetic. He argues that ‘a polythetic definition is one that designates a class of things that share resemblances with one another but where no single or set of attributes is common with every member of the class’ (1995:21). For Furseth and Repstad (2006), this approach to providing definitions is inspired by Wittgenstein’s (1958) attempt to define sports as being a group of activities that show a family resemblance. Indeed, they argue that Wittgenstein noted that,

‘There are numerous forms of sport and it is difficult to find a definition that will include all of them. The element that all sport activities share is not a set of common characteristics, but a “family likeness,” which enables us to recognise them as sports. The analogy is that we are able to recognize some family features in each member of a family even if every member does not share all features.’

(Furseth and Repstad, 2006:24)

Consequently, polythetic definitions of religion have taken the form of providing a list of attributes that a religion may have, although it should be noted that it is not expected to have them all. One attempt to provide a definition of religion in this manner is offered by Southwold (1978, as cited in Hamilton, 1995:21-22). For him a religion should display some of the following characteristics:

- ‘1. A central concern with Godlike beings and men’s [sic] relations with them
2. A dichotomisation of elements of the world into sacred and profane, and a central concern with the sacred.

3. An orientation towards salvation from the ordinary conditions of worldly existence.
4. Ritual practices.
5. Beliefs which are neither logically nor empirically demonstrable or highly probable, but must be held on the basis of faiths – ‘mystical notions’ but without the requirement that they may be false.
6. An ethical code, supported by such beliefs.
7. Supernatural sanctions on infringements of that code.
8. A mythology.
9. A body of scripture, or similar exalted oral traditions.
10. A priesthood, or similar religious elite.
11. Association with a moral community, a Church.
12. Association with an ethnic group or similar.’

This list of attributes thus contains elements of both substantive and functional definitions. However, the polythetic approach has, itself, been criticised as it has been unable to set a minimum number of the attributes that a belief system must meet to be categorised as a religion. Indeed, while many ‘non-religious’ phenomenon meet one category very few designated religions satisfy all.

Whilst there is little consensus as to how a religion should be defined the categorization of what is a religion is not simply an academic endeavour (Furseth and Repstad, 2006). Indeed, Aldridge (2007) and Furseth and Repstad (2006) argue that being defined as a religion – by academics, governmental bodies and wider society –

can imbue a number of benefits for a religious group. Using the examples of Scientology and the Baha'i version of Islam – over both of which there is debate as to whether they are indeed religions – Aldridge (2007) identifies four advantages to recognition. First, official designation as a religion can bring, 'wide protection under law in many countries' (Aldridge, 2007:21). Second, depending upon the particular law of the country in which the belief system operates, official religious designation may allow the organization to claim tax benefits. For Aldridge (2007) this is highlighted by Scientology's successful campaign against the Internal Revenue Service in the USA to be granted religious charitable status in order to be tax exempt. This status was denied in the UK as the Charity Commission ruled that, 'although Scientology professed belief in a supreme being, its core practices – 'training' and 'auditing' – did not constitute acts of worship' (Aldridge, 2007:22). Third, citing the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Aldridge argues that designation as a religion enables a group to shed stigmas of being a sect or a cult⁹ and gain a degree of respectability. Fourth, and finally, definition as being a religion bestows a degree of respect upon the employees and devotees of the group.

Overall, the problems in defining religion will be a recurring theme within this literature review. As noted in the geography of religion – particularly in relation to the work of Ivakhiv (2007) – debate has contested upon similar lines as to how one can define what is meant by a religious space. However, by studying the various denominations of Christianity the thesis somewhat circumvents the importance of

⁹ Whilst Hamilton (1995:246) argues that there is a lack of consensus as to the definition of what cults and sects are he defines them as follows. First, he argues that a sect contains an element, 'of deviance', and that they, 'break away from an established religion organization.' By this it is meant that a sect initially belongs to an 'official religion' but splinters from it based upon a principle that differs from conventional teaching. Second, Hamilton (1995:246) argues that, 'Cults in contrast [to sects], while also deviant, are entirely new movements which are not schisms from established religious organizations.' However, both cults and sects share a similarity in that, 'Both stand in a relationship of tension with the surrounding socio-cultural environment' (Hamilton, 1995:246).

these definitions. The Church of England, the Baptist Union of Great Britain, and the Assemblies of God qualify as a religion within each of the substantive, functional, and polycentric approaches. Indeed, by taking an economic institutionalist approach, as described in Chapter Three, the thesis is concentrating upon the visible material Church upon which the, original, narrow substantive definitions were formed. However, these debates are of interest in regards to understanding the transitions that the institutions have made in order to remain relevant to society.

2.3 'Declining Church Attendance' and 'Religious Revivalism'

Having discussed the wider notions as to what constitutes a religion this chapter will now begin to narrow its focus to concentrate upon the 'organised religion' of Christianity. Within this section I will discuss the theory of secularization and examine secondary data to test its validity. This discussion will pay particular attention to the practical importance of the definitions of religion. Indeed, I will argue that if one treats religion as it is defined by the narrow substantive approach (such as the formal religious institutions studied in the thesis) the overarching societal trend is that it is declining in importance. However, the chapter will identify a counter body of academic research which argues that, if one extends definitions of religion in line with inclusive, functional, approaches, it is possible to identify resurgence in the popularity of entities that can be described as being Christian religions.

2.3.1 Declining Church Attendance and Secularisation

According to Bruce (2002), secularisation can be defined as being a general decline in the importance of religion within the developed world¹⁰. Furthermore, he argues that this takes place through three active processes. First, religion is of declining importance within ‘... the operation of non-religious roles and institutions such as those of the state and the economy’. Second, there is ‘a decline in the social standing of religious roles and institutions’. Third, and finally, there is ‘a decline in the extent to which people engage in religious practices, display beliefs of a religious kind, and conduct other aspects of their lives informed by such beliefs.’ However, whilst there are several empirical studies into the existence of secularization (Bruce, 2002; Barnett, 2004; Martin, 1978) these authors disagree about the cause of the process. The chapter will now consider several theories into the cause of this phenomenon.

Barnett (2004) argues that secularization is a product of the enlightenment. His argument states that the philosophical movement eroded religious beliefs through placing a contrasting stress on scientific endeavour. This argument is best explained through discussion of the work of Withers (2009) as follows. Associated with an era of ‘modernism’, Withers (2009:193) defines the Enlightenment as “modern’ ideas of rationality, public criticism and the emancipation of civil society through reasoned reform.’ Furthermore, he states that the Enlightenment rejected notions of classical and renaissance scholarship, which meant that ‘Philosophy and science were widely believed to be the basis to universal social betterment.’ Indeed, Withers (2009:193) argues that the enlightenment movement believed that, ‘Secular

¹⁰ Bruce (2002) argues that secularization is far from a uniform process and is instead concentrated in the Christian industrialised world. Furthermore, he argues that the USA provides an anomaly to this pattern as the country has, in contrast to the UK for instance, retained a strong sense of religiosity.

tolerance would overcome religious intolerance.’ Thus, to relate Withers’ writings to the arguments of Barnett (2004), the enlightenment privileged notions of science and reason ahead of the illogicality of religion. This, consequently, caused a reduction in the number of practising Christians¹¹. Indeed, it is possible to argue that this interplay between science and reason as being opposed to religion is played out in the current popularity of the works of Richard Dawkins (2007)¹².

However, in contrast to Barnett (2004), the classic work of Max Weber argues that it is wealth rather than modernity that is the key driver of secularization. While Weber argued that protestant-Christianity was influential to the development of capitalism (see Chapter Three), he also argued that the onset of capitalism would be destructive to the faith. Indeed, Weber (1971:118) argued that ‘the whole history of monasticism is in a certain sense the history of a continual struggle with the problem of the secularizing influence of wealth.’ Thus, he contends that levels of wealth and religion would alternate cyclically as religion enables the accumulation of wealth¹³, but wealth, in turn, erodes the standing of religion.

While the majority of work upon secularisation treats it as being an a-spatial phenomenon, Martin (1978) approaches the subject much more geographically¹⁴. Indeed, concentrating upon Christianity he proposes three historical spatial models, those of the ‘Anglo-Saxon’, ‘American’, and ‘French (or Latin)’ experiences. In so doing, he measures secularisation upon three indicators: those of the success of traditional religious institutions; the existence of a vague religious ethos, and; the extent to which general beliefs linger. His results are presented within Table 2.1.

¹¹ As argued later secularization theory is applied to the Christian religion.

¹² Richard Dawkins is a popular atheist author within the United Kingdom and has many publications including *River Out of Eden*, and, *The God Delusion*.

¹³ This will be further developed within chapter 3

¹⁴ Despite this geographical focus Martin is a professor of sociology who has written extensively in the area of religion.

Curiously, Martin (1978) suggests that such socio-geographical variations in secularization are shaped by the historical manner in which the relevant religion was imposed. For example, he states that religions imposed by conquerors remain essentially weak long after the historical event, whereas those that are utilized in resistance to invasion¹⁵ remain strong.

Table 2.1 - The General Theory of Secularization

(1) Anglo-Saxon	Institutional erosion, erosion of religious ethos, maintenance of amorphous religious beliefs.
(2) American	Institutional expansion, erosion of religious ethos, maintenance of amorphous religious beliefs.
(3) French (or Latin)	Massive religious beliefs, ethos and institutions confronting massive secularist beliefs, ethos and institutions.

Source: Martin (1978:7)

Martin's (1978) concept of a vague religious ethos links with the more recent theory of 'believing without belonging'. Most widely associated with the work of Grace Davie (1994), this suggests that Britain¹⁶ has remained, in the most part, religious because people generally still believe in a Christian God. However, Davie also argues that the characteristic of this belief has changed. Despite claiming to be religious, she states that people no longer actively participate in church services.

¹⁵ By this is meant that when a religion has been utilized patriotically to unify people against a threat it has remained strong

¹⁶ Although much of the literature on religious characteristics takes a wider view the work of Davie is specific to religious trends in the UK.

Instead, they just opt into a vague Christian ethos¹⁷. In making this argument she counters the hegemonic claims of the proponents of secularisation, claiming that levels of religion have not declined as they suggest, but rather they have changed form away from what has traditionally been seen as being a religion.

A similar argument to Davie is provided by Karner and Aldridge (2004) who argue that declining Church attendance is a result of a widening religious marketplace. This has reshaped faith towards a more consumer led approach, rather than declining religiosity itself. Referring to the practice as a 'Spiritual Supermarket', they draw upon the theories of 'Reflexive Modernity' (Giddens, 1990) and 'Risk Society' (Beck, 1992) to suggest that society has individualized and, as a result, people are selecting their own religious beliefs as one would pick products in a supermarket. As a result they argue that all religions are now competing against one another for consumers and any reduction in the congregational attendance in the traditional religious institutions is a result of poor marketing.

To place this debate within the practical context of the UK Bruce (2002) argues that the process of secularization has been particularly evident within the traditional institutions of the Church (those that fit the substantive definitions of religion). Indeed, he argues that these institutions resemble, 'a pale shadow of [their] former self' (Bruce, 2002:53). He provides five examples for this; first, Bruce argues that statistics, such as those contained within Table 2.2, show that the number of people attending the Churches of the traditional institutions is declining substantially.

¹⁷ Davie (1994) argues that by Christian ethos people believe in Church however do not attend. Thus whilst people are not necessarily practising the religion in a Church they continue to hold a version of the belief system. This entails that one can easily opt into a religious belief as there are very few barriers to entry.

Table 2.2- Extent of Secularization 2001 – 2004

Institution	Unit	2001	2002	2003	2004	Change	% Change
Church of England	Attendance	1039000	990300	1005900	998100	-40900	-3.9
The Methodist Church	no. Church Members	322227	314530	302353	289818	-32409	-10.1

Source: www.cofe.anglican.org, 2009; The Methodist Church, 2005¹⁸

Second, he argues that this decline is caused by the Church's inability to attract new members from a younger generation. This inability to attract youthful audiences is potentially fatal to the Church groups. Indeed, he argues that the high proportion of elderly persons within the Church¹⁹ is not a consequence of religion being attractive to that sector of society, but that new members are not joining. Thus, he argues that a new generation of older person is not going to replenish the current members of the Church and once the current generation have died so will the Church.

‘This is not growth caused by religion being particularly attractive to the elderly; it is a result of young people abandoning Christianity. Or, to put it another way, had life expectancy not increased so much in the past 30 years, the decline of the Churches would have been even more dramatic.’

(Bruce, 2003:54)

Third, related to this inability to attract youth, Bruce identifies a decline in the number of Sunday Schools²⁰. Fourth, Bruce argues that the number of religious professionals, such as the clergy, is declining. Bruce (2003:55) claims the number of

¹⁸ It is important to note however that these figures are not directly comparable as they measure different things. The Church of England data shows Church service attendance whilst that of the Methodist Church highlights the number of committed members of the institution.

¹⁹ Bruce (2002:54) argues that, as of 1999, 25% of members of Church of England congregations are over 65 with 38% of Methodist Church of a pensionable age.

²⁰ That is, bodies that provide religious teaching to children of a school age on a Sunday. These are argued to be of importance as they play a key function in creating future Church Members.

clergy is symptomatic of both the social and economic power of the Church as they must either be paid for by public taxation (thus the Church is strongly within a nation's social conscious²¹) or the gifts of its congregation (which would mean it is popular). Thus, the decline of clergy numbers – approximately 25 percent in the traditional UK institutions between 1900 and 2000 – is symptomatic of the decline in importance of religion (Bruce, 2002:54). Fifth, and finally, Bruce highlights the decline in the number of rite of passage services²² which were previously key parts of life development.

2.3.2 'Religious Revivalism'

Having explored a decline in levels of religiosity the paper will now turn its attention towards an emergent discourse countering secularization; 'de-secularization' theory.

This counter discourse is epitomized by the view that, '...the assumption that we live in a secularized world is false. The world today, with some exceptions ... is as furiously religious as it ever was' (Berger, 1999:1). Indeed, Berger (1999) argues that the relationship between enlightenment modernity and religion is not singularly causal. Instead, he argues that while modernity has undeniably secularized some societies it has also caused reactionary de-secularization. Thus, for Berger (1999), a return to religion has ironically been caused by the dominance of modernity.

'Modernity, for fully understandable reasons, undermines old certainties; uncertainty is a condition that many people find very hard to bear; therefore

²¹ Germany, for instance, operates a system where the Church is funded by a voluntary tax levied by the government (Hartley, 2007).

²² Those of Baptisms, Confirmations, Marriages and Funerals.

any movement (not only a religious one) that promises to provide or to renew certainty has a ready market.' (Berger, 1999:1).

However, while Berger argues that de-secularization is of limited importance in the Western world, Karner and Aldridge (2004) suggest that it is very much so. Drawing upon Castell's (2000) reading of the global economy as being a series of networks, Karner and Aldridge (2004) argue that the organization of post-modern society is dominated by two separate socio-economic groups; those who control these networks and thus enjoy employment stability, and the majority, outside of such systems, whose lives are dominated by economic insecurity and concomitantly chronic anxiety. Therefore, for Karner and Aldridge (2004) de-secularization within the Western World is economically determined because, 'we are now confronted with economically induced 'survival anxiety,' for which religions appear capable of offering some form of antidote' (Karner and Aldridge, 2004:11). This bears out the inverse relationship between levels of wealth and religiosity as suggested by Weber. Similarly, Huntington (2002) highlights the increased importance of religion in world politics. Following the demise of the Cold War he suggests that the new geo-political climate will be characterized by a clash between different civilizations rather than countries.

Many narratives of religious resurgence draw upon a notion of post-modernity becoming more prominent in society. Indeed, Lyon (2000) argues that the onset of post-modernity has upset the enlightenment relationship between religion and reason and has thus undermined one of the potential causes of secularization.

'at one level, postmodernism is all about the demise of the grand-narratives, the superstories of modern times, the decline of ideological commitment to big ideas like the nation state or progress. Within postmodernism, Reason

loses its capital R, science softens its hard edges, and knowledge is seen – and felt – as (con)textual, local and relative... Despite the popularity of some rationalistic accounts of religion, secularization cannot sensibly be viewed as the steadily rising superiority of science over traditional beliefs. This is one meta-narrative that has fallen on hard times’

(Lyon, 2000:xi)

However, Lyon (2000) further argues that this post-modern religious resurgence has not benefitted the traditional institutions:

‘If one assumes that religion must take institutional forms, and that those institutions will exert social, political, cultural, economic impacts, then contracting institutions – seen in declining pew-populations and diminishing financial bases – will spell shrinking social shadows.’

(Lyon, x)

Instead, he argues that such resurgence has been based within the unconventional religions (those that fit functional rather than substantive definitions).

‘The idea of secularization, if taken to refer beyond institutional religiosity to the attenuation of all forms of faith, spirituality, and belief, is plainly mistaken.’

(Lyon, x)

Indeed, while it is argued that this religious resurgence has bypassed the traditional institutions, the Church of England has, influenced by these theories of alternative approaches to religion, sought to modify its practices. The Church has produced

several key writings on the area²³. *Mission Shaped Church* (The Church of England, 2004) is the most notable of these and holds the record for the denomination's bestselling book. Within the volume, the contributing authors argue that the traditional activities of the Church are no longer relevant to a contemporary society dominated by consumerism. Instead, they suggest that the Church of England should adopt multiple approaches to delivering and expressing its faith. Labelling this as a being a 'mixed economy'²⁴ approach to Church (Croft, 2006) it was argued the Church should offer a spiritual service, supplementary to that provided within its parish Churches, in order to attract a more youthful congregation who are disillusioned with Church itself.

'The existing parochial system alone is no longer able fully to deliver its underlying mission purpose. We need to recognize that a variety of integrated missionary approaches is required. A mixed economy of parish churches and network churches will be necessary, in an active partnership across a wider area ... Our diverse consumer culture will never be reached by one standard form of church.'

(The Church of England, 2004:xi)

Consequently, within 'Mission Shaped Church', the authors argue that religious activity should be integrated with a number of other leisure pursuits, labelling these 'Fresh Expressions of Church'. Examples of these unconventional patterns of worship include a Christian drum and bass²⁵ nightclub in the Thornbury area of Bristol, Church

²³ These will also be discussed in more depth, and in relation to empirical material, in Chapter Six.

²⁴ The phrase 'mixed economy' of Church was originally coined by Archbishop Rowan Williams and uses a shop metaphor for religious provision. Within this the Church would take a number of different guises, like different shops, but would ultimately be selling the same product; Anglican Christianity.

²⁵ Drum and Bass is a form of dance music.

services in Costa Coffee branches and in a pub²⁶. Despite these activities originating within a conventional denomination their worship practices fit more with functional and polythetic definitions of religion than they do with the traditional substantive.

In her exploration of what the Church of England may be like in the 2050 Helen Cameron suggests that this transition to new ways of being Church will continue. She argues that the number of people affiliated with the Church of England through the conventional, geographically ordered Parish Church model, will continue to fall by 2050. However, membership will be counted in different ways so as to include people who participate in the organization through affiliate groups such as these 'Fresh Expressions of Church'.

In summary, the secularization/desecularization debate further highlights the importance of the earlier arguments about definitions of religion. Indeed, if one solely accepts belief systems that fit substantive definitions as being religions neither Davie's concept of a vague Christian ethos or Lyon's postmodern belief systems would constitute a faith. Thus secularization would be the active societal process. Instead, if one accepts wider definitions of religion it would appear that society remains actively religious.

In line with this possible rise in the prominence of religion in society it is also possible to identify resurgence in the study of religion within academia. The paper will now turn its attention to such a shift within Geography.

²⁶ The different geographical spaces of these endeavours will be discussed within the following section of the chapter in relation to the spaces of religion.

2.4 A 'Religious Space' - 'The Geography of Religion'

As an academic discipline Geography has engaged with religious revivalism through the sub-discipline of the 'Geography of Religion', although work in this area predates this development, as shown by the work of Cooper (1992). However, traditionally the approach has been accused of being 'a diverse and fragmented endeavor' (Stump, 1986:1) and, 'in disarray for a lack of a coherent definition of the phenomenon it seeks to understand.' (Tuan, 1976:271). This is a problem that, according to Kong (2001:211), has been readdressed within the last decade through the contemporary re-engagement with the subject area and the increased amount of work that has subsequently focussed upon the relationship between space and religion. This re-emergence of interest in the geography of religion has become much more ordered of late with the development of a specific 'Geographies of Religion, Spirituality and Faith' working group (affiliated to the Royal Geographical Society), led by Justin Beaumont, and a similar body of academics associated with the Association of American Geographers. As a sub-discipline the Geography of Religion has investigated de-secularization theory from a spatial perspective and it has done so from four perspectives. First, in line with debates over the definition of religion, recently attempted to problematize notions as to what constitutes the sacred and the secular. Like Lyon (2000) and Karner and Aldridge (2004), Proctor (2006a) argues that the legitimacy of the 'de-secularization' argument is dependent upon a conceptual understanding as to what constitutes a religious belief. Indeed, he contends that if the boundaries of religion are restricted to the traditional institutions of substantive definitions, secularization is an active process. In contrast, he suggests that if one engages with a wider (functional) view as to what constitutes religious practice then 'de-secularization' is dominant. Furthermore, Proctor perceives this as being a spatial process given that 'It is likely that secularization and

sacralisation²⁷ are highly place dependent, given country-specific and regional differences concerning institutional religion and other salient factors.’ (Proctor, 2006a:167).

Similarly, Ivakhiv (2006) establishes the importance of questioning what is defined as religious through the exploration of how spaces come to be deemed as sacred. In so doing he draws upon the empirical example of the red rock landscape of Sedona, Arizona to suggest that places some deem to be sacred may be demonic for others. Thus, for Ivakhiv (2006) what constitutes a sacred site is a matter of personal subjectivity. Ivakhiv (2006) furthers his argument to question whether sites of pilgrimage such as Elvis’ home at Graceland are indicators to the existence of ‘civic religion’. Overall, Ivakhiv (2006:173) concludes that what is defined as being ‘religious’ is constantly undergoing transition (this is also highlighted through the contrasting definitions of religion discussed at the outset of this chapter). Therefore, ‘Tracing the (re)distribution and (re)configuration of those elements is a task geographers may be especially well equipped for’ (Ivakhiv, 2006:173).

While geographers have not yet studied it, the Church of England’s attempts to create ‘Fresh Expressions of Church’, as argued within ‘Mission Shaped Church’ (The Church of England, 2004), reflect these nuanced approaches to religious space. By moving Church services into nightclubs and pubs, the denomination is temporarily rendering secular spaces religious.

Ivakhiv’s (2006) treatment of religious ‘sacred’ space bears links to the research agenda proposed by Kong (2001) who argues that religious space is always both secular and sacred. What should be of interest to the geographer of religion,

²⁷ By sacralisation it is meant the process of adding a religion, for instance making something sacred.

she argues, is how spaces interact with society to be categorized as either. In order to investigate this relation she draws up a framework concentrating upon the interactions of what she terms to be the 'politics' and 'poetics' of religion. Through such a framework Kong (2001) stresses the importance of concentrating on the combination of everyday secular social factors of religion, previously considered an externality to investigations of this type, (referred to as the politics of religion) as well as the more obviously sacred 'poetics' when exploring the formation and reproduction of sacred space. However, whilst broadening the 'frame' of religious analysis through engagement with the politics of religion Kong (2001) continues a significant failing of the 'Geography of Religion' by not engaging with the necessary economic factors within the re-production and sustenance of sacred place. This is deemed to be a failing of the sub-discipline as a whole in that it is the argument of this research that religion requires economic capital as well as an emotional attachment to survive.

Brace *et al* (2006) utilize Kong's (2001) work into the wider implications of religion to investigate its importance in spaces not officially seen or designated as 'religious' or 'sacred'. They focus empirical attention upon the role of Methodism and 'chapel culture' in the formation of regional and community identities in Cornwall. Through this they suggest that these Cornish communities were produced and rehearsed through the day to day language of the faith. In drawing such conclusions Brace *et al* (2006) reaffirm the need for Geographers of Religion to move beyond the obviously sacred in order to explore the ways in which 'faith' interacts with, and mediates, the everyday.

By concentrating on spiritual landscapes Dewsbury and Cloke (2009) take a more abstract approach to understanding the ways in which faith patterns can

influence the everyday. Again demarking notions of 'spiritual' as being separate to organised institutional religion they state that 'the spiritual is constitutive of all experiential knowledge' (Dewsbury and Cloke, 2009:708). Thus, for them, no activity can be divorced from a spiritual context.

However, it should be noted that Yorgason and della Dora (2009) have critiqued these approaches to the Geography of Religion as being over deterministic. They state that many geographers of religion have conceptualised the subject as a 'one-way street' that provides a further area of subject to explore of human interaction with space and place.

'They [geographers of religion] often envisage religion as a *terra incognita*, a field to 'colonize' within our discipline through the imposition of new approaches and theories.

(Yorgason and della Dora, 2009:630)

Instead, they suggest that the researcher should approach religion in a more nuanced manner in order to allow its many subtle, yet contrasting variations, to speak back to the research process so that matters of religion can influence wider human geography analysis. As argued in Chapter Four I have adopted an ethnographic approach to this research in order to empower my research subjects so as to allow for this two-way dialogue to occur.

The second manner in which geographers have, of late, engaged with religion is through a concentration on the post-secular city. Authors such as Beaumont (2008a, 2008b), Beaumont and Dias (2008), and Baker (2005) have argued that the wider adoption of neo-liberal economic practices in Western countries has entailed a blurring of the boundaries between the spheres of religion and politics. As a

consequence Beaumont (2008a, 2008b) argues that faith based organizations are increasingly playing a larger role within the provision of public services in cities. For Beaumont (2008a, 2008b) these organizations have particularly focussed upon combating social problems such as poverty and social exclusion.

As part of their ongoing Leverhulme Trust/William Temple Foundation funded project Baker and Miles-Watson (2007) have made a further contribution to this research area through study of the concept of 'religious capital'. Influenced by the concept of social capital the authors define religious capital as being, 'the concrete and tangible actions and resources that faith groups contribute to civil society' (Baker and Miles-Watson, 2007:3). Although at a nascent stage their research found that Christian Church groups, a particular focus of their study, helped promote the development of society in a number of ways. These included; the promotion of interest in local history through historical Church buildings, the use of Church land for economic endeavour and the development of caring networks that help vulnerable members of the community. These roles provided a notable benefit to the functioning of the wider community.

In addition to work upon the wider spaces of religion it is possible to note a third research theme within contemporary 'Geographies of Religion'; that is, an interest in 'affect'²⁸. For the sociologist Hemmings (2005), it is possible to note an 'affectual turn' within wider academic debate. She argues that social scientists have begun to place emphasis upon the importance of this to human behaviour. Within

²⁸ Although noting a variety of approaches to understanding affect within human geography Anderson (2009:8) defines the concept as being broadly, 'the intensive capacities of a body to affect (through an affection) and be affected (as a result of modifications). As discussed the work of Thrift (2007) upon non-representational theory has been highly relevant to the development of this theory. Indeed, he notes the growth of capitalist 'affectual practices' that manipulate human emotion for economic ends (for instance he cites the example of the manufacture of car doors that are designed to provide a pleasing sound when they are shut so as to attract consumers to them).

geographical discourse Thrift (2004) has identified the way in which space can be mobilized as a political tool to engender such emotion. He draws upon 'affect' to suggest that the burgeoning development of technologies that enable the micro-practices of the body to be seen are opening up political possibilities for the control, training and manipulation of emotional response to certain items. Thrift (2004) argues that certain places are encoded with specific affectual potential in order to capture human attention and also to control the body's performance within such spaces.

Holloway (2006) builds upon Thrift's work (2004) to investigate the affectual space of the séance²⁹. Within this he shows how the space of the séance was important in the reproduction and transformation of British Victorian society in at least three ways. First, he argues that the space of the séance affected society's relationship with Christianity as it provided a forum for testing relations with the dead. Second, he argues that it altered the norms of science as séances were conducted as rigorous investigation into the supra-natural. Finally, it is argued that the séance altered norms of gender relations as it provided a space in which the female subject was in control. This was in contrast to society at the time. However, the creation of this space of social mediation was dependent upon the utilization of specific embodied practices, mobilized in order to create an emotional response. Thus, for Holloway (2006), the emotions and practice of the séance can only be fully understood in the temporal immanence within which it was conducted. Whilst providing a very specific empirical example, Holloway's work has wider implications for the 'Geography of Religion'. Indeed he argues that, 'The affectual relations and forms of embodiment that produce and are produced in religious-spiritual space

²⁹ Whilst not traditionally seen as a religion the séance is categorised as a spiritual practice satisfying the criteria of both functional and polythetic definitions of religion.

must be given greater attention if we are to develop more complex and nuanced analyses (Holloway, 2006:186).'

Finally, it is possible to identify a fourth, albeit embryonic, approach to the 'Geography of Religion'; that of returning attention to the large, substantive, institutions of Christianity. Buttner (2006:200), argues that this represents an important line of inquiry because, 'Once structured ... these institutions often took on a life of their own, as it were, their political, cultural, and economic survival and growth becoming more important than the cultivation of the original idea.' This is an area of work in which the thesis seeks to add by concentrating upon the understudied denominations of the Church of England, the Baptist Union of Great Britain and the Assemblies of God. In order to provide the context for this study the chapter will now move on to discuss literature upon these bodies.

2.5 The History and Institutions of Christianity within England

In order to allow for this research niche to be filled I will now provide the context behind these denominations and their prevalence in England. This geographical area has been selected as it is the only common ground within which each of the institutions studied currently operate. For instance, whilst the Baptist Union covers the whole of the United Kingdom, the Church of England does not have a presence in either Scotland or Wales. The section will thus be structured into two inter-related sections. First, it will provide a brief introduction into the overall characteristics of religious participation within England before moving on to investigate the institutions studied within the thesis.

2.5.1 Religion in England

Throughout history changing religious beliefs have played a key role in both the politics and development of England. Christianity was first introduced in 597 AD through Pope Gregory's 'Initiative for the conversion of England' (Laughlin, 1988). From this period onwards, Roman Catholicism remained the national religion until the English reformation, led by King Henry VIII in 1534. This created the Church of England which, despite a further period of Catholicism under the reign of Mary I (1553-1558), existed as the sole legal religion until 1689. During this year parliament passed the 'Tolerance Act' which rendered legal several other denominations of protestant Christianity, although Catholicism, Islam and Judaism continued to be outlawed until after 1791. Whilst it did not immediately legalise full religious pluralism, the passing of the Tolerance Act did represent a major development in the history of English religion as, for the first time, the nation legally accepted the validity of multiple religious.

In the contemporary period religion in England is commonly characterized by two principles: the growth of multiple faiths and declining Church attendances amongst the traditional institutions (as discussed earlier). Firstly, economic migration has created substantial communities of people dominated by religions other than traditional Christian beliefs. This has become a hugely political issue with governmental attempts to create a cohesive multi-faith society. Secondly, it is possible to identify declining attendances amongst the traditional Christian Churches. However, a recent study commissioned by the charity Tearfund (2007) has suggested that while people are no longer attending Church, 26 million adults within Britain still consider them self to be Christian. This, therefore, fits with the principles of Davie's (1994) theory of 'Believing without Belonging'.

Table 2.3 - Population of England and Wales by Religion

Faith	Numbers	Percentages
Christian	37,338,486	71.75
Muslim	1,546,626	2.97
Hindu	552,421	1.06
Sikh	329,358	0.63
Jewish	259,927	0.50
Buddhist	144,453	0.28
Other	150,720	0.29
All non-Christian	2,983,505	5.73
No Religion	7,709,267	14.81
Religion not stated	4,010,658	7.71
All Population	52,041,916	100.00

Source: Census of Population (2001)

2.5.2 The Christian Institutions of England

Having laid the context of the general pattern of religion in England the chapter will now move on to investigate the history, theology, prevalence, geography and economic structure of each of the key institutions of the Christian Church. It will, first, concentrate upon the Church of England as the established, or state, religion of the nation before moving on to investigate the Baptist Union of Great Britain (within the context of its development as part of the 'Free Church' movement) and, due to little literature being produced upon the Assemblies of God itself, the rise of the independent Pentecostal Church.

The Church of England

The Church of England is the established, or 'state religion' of England and is the country's most popular religion. The chapter will now explore the institution's history, theology, geography and popularity.

The Church of England was formed within Western Europe's reformation period by King Henry VIII through the passing of the 1534 acts of 'Succession' and 'Supremacy'. This subsequently changed England from a Roman Catholic to a Protestant nation. In so doing the person in charge of English religion also changed, with the resident monarch taking over control from the Pope in Rome. However, despite geographically furthering the reformation from its heartlands of Germany and the Netherlands, Rosman (2003) argues that it is possible to identify two arguments that the inception of the Protestant Church was a political rather than theological affair. First, Henry VIII was himself a fervent Catholic and he had no intention of revoking the belief system. Second, the switch was made merely in order

to allow Henry to divorce his first wife, Catherine of Aragorn, and marry his second in order to render the child she was bearing legitimate.

Despite Henry VIII being a Catholic himself the institution that he created was very much Protestant from the outset. For Rosman (2003), this was due to the role of Thomas Crammer, who was then the Archbishop of Canterbury (a leading position in the Church). She argues that Crammer was influential in the production, implementation and subsequent revision of the Common Book of Prayer, upon which the institution is still based today. The purpose of the document was to unify all churches throughout the country around the new Protestant doctrine thus ensuring that they were all teaching a similar message. Rosman also argues that Crammer was a key figure in the conversion of Church services from Latin to English so that parishioners could understand what was being taught. However, possibly the most important, and lasting, theological change attributed to Crammer during this period was that of the purpose of Holy Communion (the practice of eating bread and drinking wine as supposedly done at Jesus' last supper). Coherent with the wider reformation movement the Church of England abandoned the Roman Catholic practice of 'Transubstantiation', where it is believed that upon being blessed the bread and wine physically alters and actually becomes the body and blood of Jesus, in favour of seeing the act as being one of remembrance of his life and death. This period of protestant reform was briefly halted between the years of 1553 and 1558 due to the accession to the throne of the Catholic Mary I. During this era the Church of England was dispelled and was reformed only upon the accession of Elizabeth I.

The period that followed was very important for the development of the institution. Indeed, Rosman (2003) argues that the establishment of Protestantism as the major Christian faith in England was solely a result of the longevity of the reign of

Elizabeth I. During this reign the Church adopted the '39 articles of faith' shaping the Church irrevocably as Protestant whilst still allowing for a hierarchical, Catholic-esque, institutional structure. However, despite this Protestant focus the church continued to retain some reminders of Catholicism; Archbishop Laud, then Archbishop of Canterbury, placed great emphasis upon notions of ceremony in religious practice, something that had previously associated with Catholicism. Further, at the time the reformation movement was beginning to fragment into different theologies with the puritanical ideas of John Calvin³⁰ becoming increasingly popular. Thus Laud's ceremonies were seen by Calvin's followers as being frivolous and unnecessary. Indeed, the ceremonial focus angered many Calvinists to such an extent that they fled England, believing it to be spiritually lost, in order to start a new community in America (Rosman, 2003).

This was the beginning of a period of contestation for the Church of England. Due to the existence of multiple interpretations of Protestantism it became impossible to have a single church that covered the religious needs, and desires, of everyone within the nation. This led to the acceptance of religious plurality through the aforementioned 'Act of Tolerance' in 1689.

Following the passing of the 'Act of Tolerance' the Church of England retained the theological principles of Crammer and the '39 Articles'. In so doing the Church became an established interpretation of Protestantism in itself that is today referred to as Anglicanism. However, that is not to say that the institution has not changed since this date. Indeed, Laughlin (1988) argues that the most significant development since this period was the institution's separation from government. Due to campaigns against the state funding of the Church and governmental control

³⁰ Most widely associated with the practice of Puritanism Calvin's works stressed a simplistic religion that cut out any unnecessary aspects to practising the faith.

of the institution in 1919 the 'Church of England Assembly (Powers) Act' was established. Whilst keeping the Monarch at the head of the Church, this meant that the institution became a self financing and self governing entity in its own right.

Having established the history and theological position of the Church of England this section of the chapter will now move onto to discussing its contemporary prevalence and organization. As shown by Figure 2.1, the Church organizes England into 43 dioceses which are contained within the two meta-regions of Canterbury and York. According to Laughlin (1988) this mode of organization is a legacy of the original implementation of Christianity within Britain. He argues that the faith was originally adopted at varying rates by the different pre-medieval kingdoms of Britain and thus that each original diocese³¹ was an area that converted at the same time. Furthermore, he argues that the two biggest kingdoms at the time were based in Canterbury and York and that consequently these became the administrative centres for the South and North of England respectively.

As mentioned before the Church of England is the largest Christian institution within Britain with 1,225,200 people on its electoral roll ³²(www.cofe.anglican.org.uk, 2007). However, as highlighted by Table 2.4 the Church is very much in decline, with attendance at the average Sunday service falling by four percent nationwide.

³¹ Following this period a number of new dioceses were formed. For instance the diocese of Southwell and Nottingham was formed in Victorian times in response to the process of urbanization as caused by the industrial revolution.

³² This is a list of names of the people who regularly attend the Church. Due to the particular approach of the Church of England it differs to the membership structure of the Baptist Union as in the Church of England everyone within a parish is automatically a member.

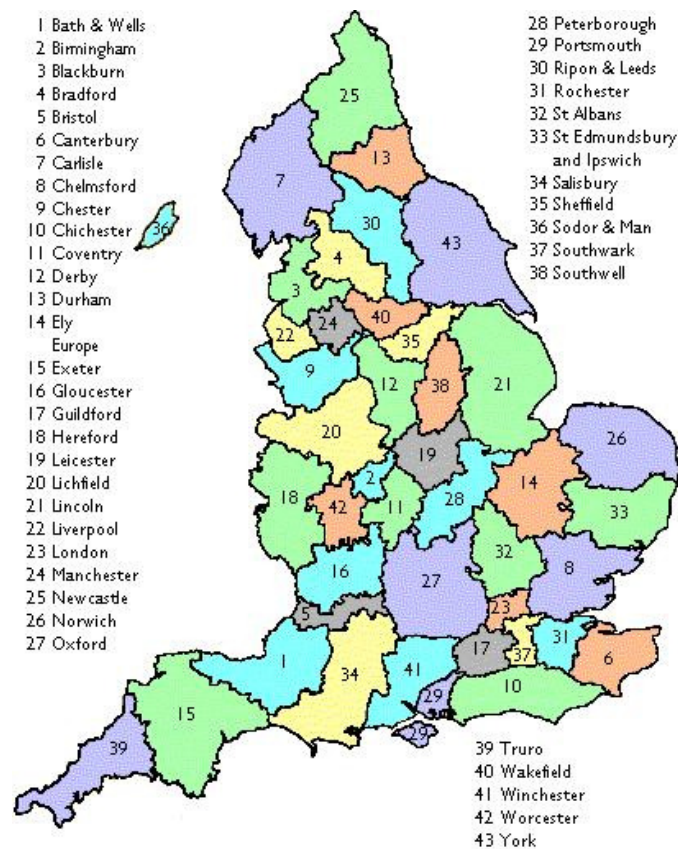
The Baptist Union of Great Britain

It is impossible to separate the development of the Baptist Church within England from that of the wider Free Church³³ or dissenting movement of the Seventeenth Century. Consequently this section will first investigate this movement as a whole before moving on to investigate the Baptist Union of Great Britain specifically.

The history of the Free Church is very much dependent upon it being an 'other' to the established Church of England. Indeed, the term 'Free Church' was created by those Protestant religions cast as 'dissenters' or 'non-conformers' to the Church of England. Indeed, the phrase came '...from a desire to affirm what the non-Anglican Protestant bodies have in common and to assert their essential churchliness' (Worrall, 1988:134). As shown by Figure 2.2, the present day 'Methodist Church', 'Baptist Union', 'United Reformed Church' and wider Evangelical Churches all trace their roots back to this period, and are thus characterized by the term.

³³ This was comprised of a group of likeminded protestant Churches that were set up in opposition to the Church of England and included, amongst others, the Methodist and Baptist Church's

Figure 2.1 - Diocese Structure of the Church of England³⁴



Source: www.cofe.anglican.org (2007)

Worrall (1988) argues that the various churches of the Free Church movement grew exponentially during the nineteenth, a period that Rupp (1965) describes as being characterized by an 'Evangelical Revival'. Worrall (1988) suggests that it is possible to identify four reasons for this growth. First, he suggests that all the fledgling 'Free Church', or dissenting movements, drew strength from the example of the Methodist Church (itself associated with the 'Free Church' movement). Methodists, during this period, had engaged with a strong policy of individuality and separation from both the 'Church of England' and the other 'Free Churches' and had thus provided a working example for other faiths.

³⁴ Please accept my apologies for the quality of the map. This is the clearest indication of the location of the dioceses available.

Table 2.4 - Church of England Attendance by Diocese

	2001	2002	2003	2004	Change	% Change
Bath and Wells	25200	24800	24300	23700	-1500	-6
Birmingham	17300	16400	16500	17000	-300	-1.7
Blackburn	31100	29300	29800	31600	500	1.6
Bradford	11600	11000	10500	10900	-700	-6
Bristol	26200	15600	16700	16300	-9900	-37.8
Canterbury	21100	19800	20100	21100	0	0
Carlisle	15400	14400	15200	15100	-300	-1.9
Chelmsford	40000	38300	39400	38400	-1600	-4
Chester	37300	32900	33800	34100	-3200	-8.6
Chichester	41000	39000	42000	41000	0	0
Coventry	15100	14100	14400	14700	-400	-2.6
Derby	18000	17500	17700	17500	-500	-2.8
Durham	20300	19300	18500	19200	-1100	-5.4
Ely	17200	17400	17200	17600	400	2.3
Exeter	26000	26000	25400	25600	-400	-1.5
Gloucester	19500	21100	19100	17500	-2000	-10.3
Guildford	26800	25800	26200	26100	-700	-2.6
Hereford	11400	11400	11600	11500	100	0.9
Leicester	15600	15200	15500	15400	-200	-1.3
Lichfield	34700	30900	32700	32200	-2500	-7.2
Lincoln	21200	21000	20900	20600	-600	-2.8
Liverpool	30000	27100	28300	27300	-2700	-9
London	57000	56900	60400	61900	4900	8.6
Manchester	29200	29700	29700	29300	100	0.3
Newcastle	12600	13000	12400	12100	-500	-4
Norwich	22900	22300	22000	21000	-1900	-8.3
Oxford	54600	53400	51800	51900	-2700	-4.9
Peterborough	19000	18800	18500	18700	-300	-1.6
Portsmouth	14700	13500	13900	13500	-1200	-8.2
Ripon and Leeds	14800	15200	15000	14000	-800	-5.4
Rochester	27900	27000	27400	27100	-800	-2.9
St Albans	32800	32100	31700	31500	-1300	-4

St Edmundsbury and Ipswich	20200	18200	19000	18200	-2000	-9.9
Salisbury	30900	27700	29000	29000	-1900	-6.1
Sheffield	19100	16900	17800	16700	-2400	-12.6
Sodor and Man	2600	2200	2400	2400	-200	-7.7
Southwark	39100	39800	39500	40100	1000	2.6
Southwell	16000	17100	17300	16500	500	3.1
Truro	13300	12300	13500	12100	-1200	-9
Wakefield	16600	15800	15900	15500	-1100	-6.6
Winchester	30300	29900	30900	31200	900	3
Worcester	15800	14300	15000	14400	-1400	-8.9
York	27600	25900	27000	26600	-1000	-3.6
Total	1039000	990300	1005900	998100	-40900	-3.9

Source: www.cofe.anglican.org

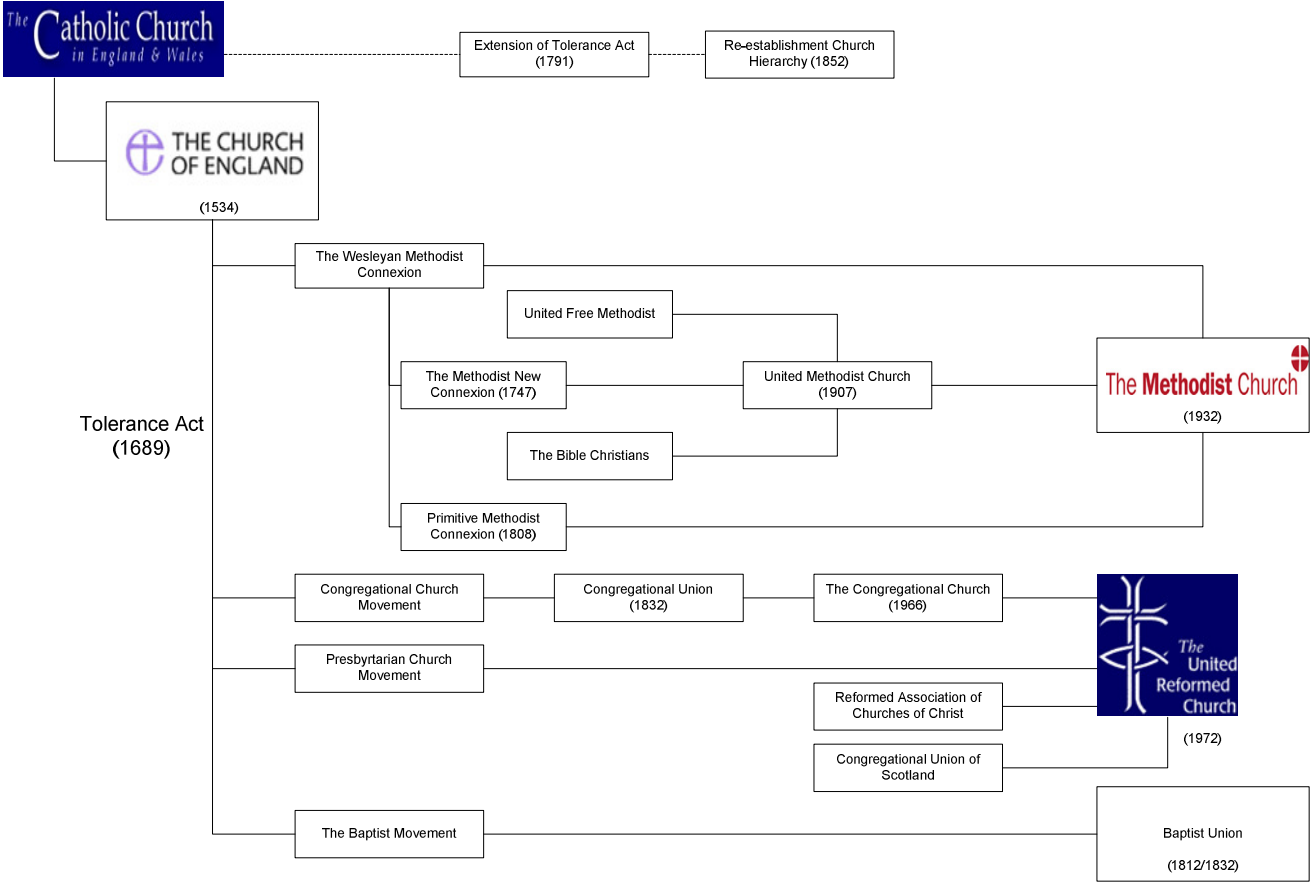
Second, he suggests that the punitive laws against members of the various churches were slowly repealed during this period. Of particular note he highlights the importance of government repealing the Test and Corporation Act in 1848. This allowed members of Free Church congregations to stand for public office. Third, the churches appealed to the increasingly important middle classes who associated themselves with its emphasis upon virtues, 'of sobriety, thrift and hard work' (Worrall, 1988:141). Finally, Worrall contends that the Free Churches focus upon evangelism, the practice of going out into the world and preaching about God, attracted a large number of people to the Church and led to the development of celebrity preachers.

However, despite their growth during this period the various denominations of the Free Church movement were yet to unify into institutions. This meant that every church had to be individually financed. Worrall argues that this was the cause of a geographical 'drift to the suburbs'. By this it is meant that churches were built primarily where they could be afforded and were thus located in affluent middle class areas. This drift provided a strong incentive for future institutional unification as

the churches were keen to establish a presence in areas of relative poverty where they would not be able to be self funding. This required resource sharing links that in turn became institutions (Worrall, 1988). The chapter will now turn to investigate this practice of Free Church institutionalization in more depth.

Worrall (1988) argues that the late nineteenth century was the period within which the majority of the institutions of the Free Church were created. In so doing he suggests that this was the result of two constraints upon the fledgling Church groups, those of economic practicalities, as discussed above, and denominationalism. Indeed, he contends that by unifying into denominational institutions the churches were able to hone their respective messages and lobby together for increased power from the government.

Figure 2.2 - Institution Formation Diagram (Source: Worrall, 1988; Authors own)



Work)

Theologically, the 'Free Church' was distinguished from the 'Church of England' through notions of the voluntary character of faith and the centrality of the local chapel to wider life. Within 'Free Church' doctrine adopting a religion was a choice that an individual had to make rather than them being born automatically into the faith. This has led to the Free Church placing a strong emphasis upon notions of membership (exemplified by the Baptist practice of adult baptism) which is, in turn, reflected today by the production of detailed statistical membership figures (Worrall 1988). Similarly, each of the Free Church denominations has been characterized by the Protestant notion of the importance of the laity to religion. In contrast to Catholic doctrine, Protestant teaching highlights the ability of the lay person to have direct contact and a relationship with God. Consequently, the lay person was afforded a prominent role in the managing of the individual 'Free Church' and its teachings. Worrall (1988) argues that this concentration led to a great emphasis being placed upon empowering the local Church rather than wider institutional structures³⁵. However, as Shier-Jones (2004), notes this belief has often hindered institutional unification as a balance has to be struck between the conflicting views of prioritising the local Church and also providing an organizational structure to allow for the support of other Churches. This is a tension that will be explored empirically within Chapter Five.

Having identified the growth of the 'Free Church' the chapter will now move to look at the Baptist Union itself. For Payne (1958), the Baptist Church in England has commonly been associated with the teachings of John Calvin. Rosman (2003) argues that this Calvinist influence has left a legacy of radicalism within the

³⁵ This was due to the notion that if an individual is able to have their own relationship with God the role of the Church is to help them develop and action this relationship. Therefore, by empowering the local Church the Free Church institutions are placing an emphasis upon these individual religious relationships.

institution which appears to have manifested itself in three Baptist practices. First, Worrall (1988) highlights the practice of adult baptism and total submersion in water. Originally implemented by John Smythe in 1608, the practice is the cornerstone of Baptist beliefs and it may be from this that the institution derived its name (Rosman, 2003). It is based upon the belief that becoming a Christian should be a conscientious choice and thus cannot be made by a child. Second, Worrall (1988) argues that the Baptists, along with the Congregationalists, have traditionally been seen as being the most antagonistic towards the Church of England and the state Church movement as a whole. Finally, Worrall (1988) argues that the Baptist Church, unlike the United Reformed Church, has stuck to the traditional Protestant principle of the primacy of local congregations and has thus continued to place great stress upon the independence of the local Church. However, again it appears that economic pressures were responsible for the faiths eventual unification. Indeed, in making this argument Payne (1958) stresses the importance of 'Church Extension Fund', created in 1928, which allowed for the expansion of the institution into urban areas and the need to raise funds for overseas missionary work thus providing an element of institutional resource sharing.

As of 2003 the Baptist Church had 131,536 members and operated 1932 individual churches (The Baptist Union of Great Britain, 2004-2005). England and Wales is currently split into thirteen parts and it is within these regions that statistics for Church attendance are collected.

The Assemblies of God and the Pentecostal Church

In contrast to the institutional basis of the Church of England, and to a lesser extent the Baptist Union, there is no single institution in the Pentecostal Church movement.

Instead, the Assemblies of God (AOG) is the largest of many Pentecostal groupings (Aldridge, 2007). As for the movement itself Percy (2003) argues that Pentecostalism derives from charismatic³⁶ notions of Christianity and draws its roots from the early twentieth century. Pentecostalism formed as a reaction against modern and liberal theology as preached within different denominations of the Church. Consequently it is associated with a highly conservative theological approach. Indeed, for Aldridge (2007:129), like Charismatic Christianity, Pentecostalism has two main approaches; first, it 'emphasizes the binding authority of the Bible'. By this it is meant that the denomination is fundamental in that it treats the contents of the Bible as being matters of fact. Consequently, Aldridge (2007:129) argues that, 'Its teachings on controversial issues such as women's ministry, homosexuality and abortion are all framed in terms of scriptural authority'. As a result, these views differ from the liberal teachings of the Church of England and the Baptist Union. However, the Pentecostal approach is slightly less conservative, in regards to its Bible teaching, than other 'charismatic' approaches. Within Pentecostalism the Bible is of lesser importance than the experience of God. Again, as a protestant faith, Pentecostalism vehemently stresses the importance of the individuals' experience of God and the Holy Spirit. Thus worship practices tend to be, 'enthusiastic and emotionally charged' (Aldridge, 2007:130).

³⁶ Unlike other approaches to the religion Charismatic Christianity has no theological core and has become an umbrella term for many different approaches to the faith, including Pentecostalism (Percy, 2003). For Percy (2003) it places great emphasis upon two notions; first charismatic Churches believe that the congregation should experience God. Thus acts such as 'faith healing' are a regular part of their services. Second, they are associated with the practice of Bible Fundamentalism. This means that adherents to the approach believe that every word within the Bible is fact (Percy, 2003).

Table 2.5 - Baptist Union Membership by Region

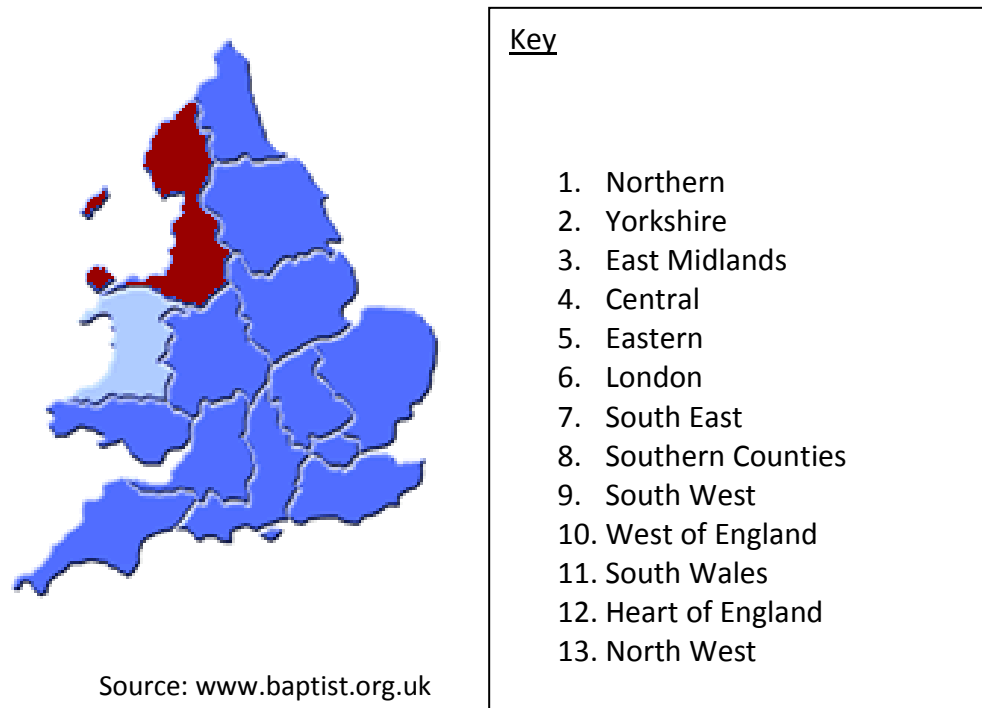
	Baptist Church	2003	
	Number of Churches	Total Members	Membership per Church
Central	154	10712	70
East Midland	158	8185	52
Eastern	178	12147	68
Heart of England	163	11239	69
London	281	25724	92
North Western	159	8281	52
Northern	51	2982	58
South East (amalgamated data)	140	13532	97
South Wales	152	8179	54
South West	91	5901	65
Southern Counties	170	11883	70
West of England	125	7048	56
Yorkshire	110	5723	52
Total	1932	131536	68

Source: The Baptist Union of Great Britain (2004-2005)

Aldridge (2007) claims that Pentecostalism is the fastest growing Christian religion in the world and is the theological background to many of the Mega-Church developments. Indeed, according to Martin (2002) approximately a quarter of a billion people adhere to the faith. Aldridge (2007) argues that this is, in part, due to their successful approach within the 'spiritual-marketplace'. Furthermore, Bruce (2002) suggests that conservative faiths, such as Pentecostalism, have avoided the

onset of secularization. For him the strong leadership of the conservative Church, and the fear of Hell (as preached in Charismatic Churches) maintains strong congregations.

Figure 2.3 - The Geographical Structure of the Baptist Union³⁷



The AOG, in the UK, is an autonomous part of a worldwide organization. It has 600 Churches spread across England, Scotland and Wales (email communication with National Secretary, 2008). It is part of the Assemblies of God World Fellowship, which began in the USA state of Arkansas in 1914 (The Assemblies of God USA, 2009). The denomination first appeared in the UK in Birmingham in 1924 and subsequently spread around the country (Assemblies of God, 2009). As a Pentecostal faith the organization places a very strong theological emphasis upon the primacy of the local Church. Consequently, there is wide variation in both theology and style between the different AOG Churches, however they all have to consent to the following statement of beliefs.

³⁷ Again this map represents the best available visual depiction of the geographical organization of the Church.

- 'We believe that the Bible (i.e. the Old and New Testaments excluding the Apocrypha), is the inspired Word of God, the infallible, all sufficient rule for faith and practice.
- We believe in the unity of the One True and Living God who is the Eternal, Self-Existent "I AM", Who has also revealed Himself as One being co-existing in three Persons – Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- We believe in the Virgin Birth, Sinless Life, Miraculous Ministry, Substitutionary Atoning Death, Bodily Resurrection, Triumphant Ascension and Abiding Intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ and in His personal, visible, bodily return in power and glory as the blessed hope of all believers.
- We believe in the fall of man, who was created pure and upright, but fell by voluntary transgression.
- We believe in salvation through faith in Christ, who, according to the Scriptures, died for our sins, was buried and was raised from the dead on the third day, and that through His Blood we have Redemption.
- This experience is also known as the new birth, and is an instantaneous and complete operation of the Holy Spirit upon initial faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- We believe that all who have truly repented and believed in Christ as Lord and Saviour are commanded to be baptised by immersion in water.
- We believe in the baptism in the Holy Spirit as an enduement of the believer with power for service, the essential, biblical evidence of which is the speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance.
- We believe in the operation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the gifts of Christ in the Church today.

- We believe in holiness of life and conduct in obedience to the command of God.
- We believe that deliverance from sickness, by Divine Healing is provided for in the Atonement.
- We believe that all who have truly repented and believe in Christ as Lord and Saviour should regularly participate in Breaking of Bread.
- We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the everlasting conscious bliss of all who truly believe in our Lord Jesus Christ and the everlasting conscious punishment of all whose names are not written in the Book of Life.'

(Assemblies of God, 2009).

2.6 Summary

In this chapter I have sought to introduce the religious theory and provide the historical background and theological context for the denominations to be discussed within the thesis. In particular the chapter made two overarching contributions. First, through discussion of the sociology of religion the chapter noted the growth of, and academic interest in, the development of religious beliefs beyond those of the conventional religious institutions. This particularly focussed upon spirituality and post-modern belief patterns. The chapter argued that whilst this work is of significant importance the focus on the 'spiritual' has entailed that insufficient attention has been paid to the traditional religious institutions and how societal changes have affected them. This is a research niche the thesis seeks to fill. Second, the chapter laid out the historical and theological institutions studied. These contexts will be referred to throughout the thesis to explain for variations in each institutions pattern of reproduction.

3.0 Placing God in the Economy

3.1 Introduction

Having identified the key religious literature I will now focus upon the economic theories that inform the thesis. I will, first, introduce the conceptual approach used to study the religious bodies, economic institutionalism. In so doing I will introduce the principle tenets of the institutionalist approach and justify its adoption. Second, the chapter will look at works that concentrate upon the key focus of the thesis; the relationship between religion and the economy. This will commence with an investigation into the seminal writings of Max Weber, upon a possible religious origin for the Capitalist economic system, before subsequently approaching more contemporary works. Included in this will be a discussion of investigations of the current relationship between Christianity and Capitalism, an investigation into a supposed divide between ‘secular’ financial activities and ‘spiritual’ religious activities within religious institutions (as discussed from the perspective of the discipline of critical accountancy, and the ‘gift economy’ literature), and an examination of works investigating how financial practices and religious beliefs have inter-related within the development of ethical (or socially responsible investment (SRI)). The third, and final, section of the chapter will build upon this to investigate wider issues involving SRI and institutional investment.

3.2 Economic Institutionalism

Having introduced the Church of England, the Baptist Union of Great Britain, and the Assemblies of God, I will now move on to discuss, in more depth, the

conceptual manner through which they will be investigated; economic institutionalism.

3.2.1 Economic Institutionalism Theory

Economic Institutionalism is categorized by the argument that economic activity is inherently linked to and bound up in the institutions of culture and society (Martin, 2000). It is associated with the view that:

‘Economic activity is *socially and institutionally situated*: it cannot be explained by reference to atomistic individual motives alone, but has to be understood as enmeshed in wider *structures of social, economic, and political rules, procedures and conventions*.’

(Martin, 2000:79. Emphasis in original).

Similarly, Amin (2004:49) argues that the approach is characterized by a recognition of, ‘the collective or social foundations of economic behaviour’ and that, ‘the economy emerges as a composition of collective influences which shape individual action and as a diversified and path-dependent entity moulded by inherited cultural and socio-institutional influences.’ (Amin, 2004:51). Consequently, Amin (2004), Barnes (1999) and Granovetter (1985) all argue that the key contribution of the institutionalist approach is that it provides a critique of neo-classical and behavioural economics (the ideas of *homo-economicus* and *homo heuristicus*), and of dominant neo-liberal thinking. By stressing the role that social institutions, such as the Church, play within economic activity, the institutionalist perspective dismisses the ‘methodological individualism’ associated with these more mainstream economic approaches (Hodgson, 1998). Indeed, whereas neo-liberal, neo-classical, and

behavioural economic approaches theorise economic actors as being inherently rational individuals, due to their status as isolated atomized bodies (Peck, 2005) (hence the phrase 'methodological individualism'), institutionalists argue against this isolation. For them economic actors are linked to the particular social institutions and cultures prevalent within the specific locale in which they are located. Consequently, these institutional cultures influence actors' decision making processes (Granovetter, 1985:483). This is illustrated through Hodgson's (1998) discussion of pricing theory within which he argues that prices are not derived from either rational notions of supply or demand, or by a labour theory of value, but by what society determines the adequate price to be.

'Neoclassical economics relies on universal concepts of supply, demand, and marginal utility. Adam Smith, David Ricardo and Marx relied on the labour theory of value. By contrast, in institutionalism prices are social conventions, reinforced by habits and embedded in specific institutions. Such conventions are varied and reflect the different types of commodity, institution, mode of calculation, and pricing process.'

(Hodgson, 1998:169)

Accordingly, the economic institutionalist perspective places great emphasis upon the role that institutions play in influencing economic behaviour (Amin, 2004). By situating economic activity in this manner the approach identifies institutions as the key mediators and influences within decision making (Granovetter, 1985). Thus, for institutionalists, the key to understanding 'irrational' economic behaviour lies in gaining an apprehension of the properties of the institutions prevalent within the studied locale. Consequently, Amin, (2004) argues that institutionalism is an inherently geographical theory. He argues that economic transactions are rendered

specific to the institutional cultures in which they occur and the influence of these institutions differs from place to place. This is further explained by Martin (2000), who highlights the concept of 'institutional space.' Through this, he argues, that the influence of any particular institution is bounded to a certain area. Thus, both Martin (2000), and Amin (2004), suggest that the presence of different institutions, in different places, influence society in different ways and cause different outcomes. This concept has been taken up within economic geography to explain uneven patterns of economic development. Indeed, it is often argued that Institutions prevalent in some areas promote wealth generation, creating upwardly mobile environs, whilst those in others impinge upon it (Amin, 2004). For Barnes, this focus has meant that institutionalist analysis has concentrated upon the local and regional scale in order to identify areas of wealth generation so that these can be replicated elsewhere. However, while institutionalist analysis has, in this manner, predominantly concentrated upon the local, Hodgson (1998) argues that it would be wrong to suggest that it is a micro-economic theory. Instead, the institutionalist approach provides a clear link between micro and macro economics with the micro economics of institutions informing and stabilizing macro-economic practices (Hodgson, 1998).

The arguments of Barnes (1999) and Hodgson (1998) are symptomatic of the ongoing debate over scale within economic geography. While Barnes adopts a regional approach, investigating the impact of institutions within a defined area, Hodgson argues that institutions impact the economy in a mutual relationship which travels beyond their immediate space. He argues that the micro practices of institutions either re-enforce or alter prevailing macro-economic tendencies. This conflict is mirrored throughout the thesis with much discussion centred upon the

relationship between bounded, scalar, and unbounded, networked, economic practices. This will be discussed further, in relation to assemblages, in Chapter Four.

Whilst the chapter, thus far, has sketched out the principle tenets of the institutionalist approach, many authors argue that it would be incorrect to talk about the theory as being a coherent or ordered body of thought (Amin, 2001, 2009). Indeed Amin (2001) suggests that,

‘unlike Marxism or neoclassical economics, institutionalism is not a canonical theory with strong claims about the laws of the economy, but a nexus of convergent positions on what counts as economic, how it is organised in different contexts, and how it might be examined.’

(Amin, 2001:1237)

This is best highlighted by a lack of consensus as to what comprises an institution and, subsequently, disagreement as to the physical process through which they affect the economy (Hodgson, 1998). However, Amin (2009) further argues that it is possible to group the broad range of conflicting theorists into two schools of institutionalist thought; ‘old’ institutionalism and ‘new’ institutionalism. The chapter now considers each of these in turn.

3.2.2 Old Institutionalism

‘Old’ institutionalism derives from the work of several forefathers of US economic thought, including Thorsten Veblen, Wesley Mitchell, and Clarence Ayres, as well as more recent authors such as Karl Polanyi (Amin, 2009). Like the broader theory of institutionalism itself Hodgson (1998) argues that ‘old institutionalism’ provides no clear definition as to what an institution is: ‘Ever since Veblen there has

been a failure of the 'old' institutionalists to agree upon, let alone develop, a systematic core' (Hodgson, 1998:167). However, Amin (2004), once again, provides a structure to the debate suggesting that all possible definitions of institutions fall within two categories; formal or informal entities. First, he argues that formal institutions include bodies such as 'rules, laws and organizations'. Indeed, he states that formal institutions are comprised of bodies that exist in a physical and organized form. They, include organizations such as schools and, significant in relation to this study, Churches – where people visit and are influenced by their teachings – and written entities such as laws that force people to operate within a certain manner. Thus, a formal institution is a physical entity that one can see and prove it exists. It is in this manner that Schoenberger (1999) considers the firm as an institution. She argues that businesses, like schools and Churches, garner set patterns of activity amongst their staff and thus influence their process of decision making and, in turn, mediate the economy.

Second, Amin (2004:50) identifies informal institutions as being, 'individual habits, group routines, and social norms and values.' It is in this fashion that Veblen (1988) defined institutions as being 'settled habit(s) of thought'. Indeed, in his seminal text, 'The Theory of the Leisure Class', Veblen focussed upon the upper class as an institutional group; identifying a core pattern of beliefs and actions that had an influence upon the wider economy. Hodgson (1998:180) further explains informal institutions through his concentration upon habit. He argues that habits function as institutions in that, once they have been learnt, they strongly influence an individual's decision making process. To explain, Hodgson (1998) conceptualises the informal institution of language as being a habit claiming that one must learn a language in order to participate within society; however once learnt the language

affects the way in which one decides to conduct oneself. Thus, in summary, informal institutions exist as in-tangible bodies that influence economic thought.

For Hodgson (1998), the example of language highlights a further key tenet of 'old institutional' theory; that institutions can be enabling and enhance an individual's agency (Hodgson, 1998). To illustrate this concept Hodgson argues that learning a language enables one to participate and express oneself in a more varied manner within society. This ability opens up further decision making opportunities. This is in contrast to 'new institutional' approaches that argue institutions constrain an individual's actions to certain pre-programmed responses³⁸.

For Hodgson (1998), like Amin and Thrift (1994), notions of habit are central to the dissemination of meaning from both formal and informal institutions to society. Thus, in turn, habit is essential to the mediation of the economy in traditional institutionalist approaches. Indeed, Hodgson (1998) states that 'habits form part of our cognitive abilities,' and that these, 'Cognitive frameworks are learned and emulated within institutional structures' (Hodgson, 1998:180). Thus, institutions, through the transferral of habit, shape the frameworks through which one thinks and acts. To paraphrase, it is the institution's ability to transfer habits to the individual that alters the decision making process and thus mediates economic activity. However, Hodgson argues that this successful transfer of habit is impossible without a further process; that of enculturation.

'As the original institutionalists argued, the transmission of information from institution to individual is impossible without a coextensive process of *enculturation*, in which the individual learns the meaning and value of the sense data that is committed'

³⁸ As discussed later within the chapter this is due to the overstating role of culture in new institutional thought. Indeed, new institutionalists over play culture to the extent that it becomes over determinant of actions thus limiting an individual's decision making processes to certain responses.

(Hodgson, 2007a:12 emphasis in original).

Thus, to utilise the terms of Granovetter (1985), in order for habits to be transferred an individual need first be embedded within the social and cultural dynamics of the institution. This process of enculturation works in the same manner for both informal and formal institutions; people first need to be attracted to the institution and then, second, co-opted into it. For instance, in the case of the formal institution of the Church, I will argue that people are first drawn into the Church buildings before they subsequently become indoctrinated with the faith and aligned to the institutions values. Indeed, it is through the practice of aligning the new member to the values of the institution that the transferral of habit and culture occurs. This principle bears similarity to both Callon's (1986) notion of 'translation' and the traditional concept of 'enrolment' (as explained by Murdoch 1998) within Actor Network Theory. Indeed, drawing influence from Martin (2000) – who argued that institutions are 'congealed social networks' – and relativistic approaches the thesis will contend that institutions are 'assemblages' and thus comprised of a series of networks (This will be further developed within Chapter Four). Thus, an institution is inherently a group of people connected within a series of networks and, in order to grow, more people need to be continually 'enroled' into these systems. (Chapter Five will empirically investigate this process of network growth).

Whilst the process of 'enculturation' places an emphasis upon the translation of information from the institution to the individual, proponents of the 'old institutional approach' argue that information also flows in the opposing direction. As explained by Barnes (1999:7-8) Veblen argued that there exists a continual feedback loop, labelled as the 'virtuous circle', between bodies of people and institutions. Within this circle individuals and institutions exist together, each informing and influencing

the other in a constant looped exchange of meaning. For Barnes (1999) this 'virtuous circle' causes a perpetual strengthening or development of views in that these views are constantly performed and thus reinforced.

'Initial beliefs embodied in an institutional form result in more people holding those beliefs, thereby strengthening further the institution'

(Barnes, 1999:7-8)

Consequently, through the linkage of the circle, the development of institutions is, concomitantly, the development of society in that people are collectively influenced by institutions but then the same people influence the institution.

It is possible to identify three further consequences of the 'virtuous circle' that are relevant to the thesis. First, Veblen (1988:191) argues that, whilst the 'virtuous circle' inherently ties institutions to society, the direction in which the circle spins means that the development of institutions is always behind that of the social environment.

'Institutions are products of the past process, are adapted to past circumstances, and are therefore never in full accord with the requirements of the present. In the nature of the case, this process of selective adaptation can never catch up with the progressively changing situation ... in the community itself at any given time.'

(Veblen, 1988:1991)

This is of relevance to this study as I argue that the traditional religious institutions studied within this thesis – the Church of England and the Baptist Union of Great Britain – are seen by popular culture as being old fashioned and unattractive when compared to the contemporary Evangelical and Pentecostal Churches. As highlighted within Chapter Two, this is particularly evident in relation to contemporary religious society, with these institutions struggling to remain relevant to a commercial

religious market place (and thus attract new members), whilst 'new' religions, such as Pentecostalism, are thriving.

Second, Barnes and Gertler (1999) identify the negative impact that the circle has upon an institutions ability to reproduce itself. To elaborate Veblen (1988) – building upon the notion that the development of institutions lags behind that of society – argued that institutions need to continually remain relevant to society if they are to survive as they are required to continually enrol new members. However, Veblen further argues that the process of 'evolutionary selection' has meant that, as society develops faster, it is difficult for institutions to remain relevant in this manner. This, therefore, creates opportunities for different (or new) institutions as these can form to specifically fit the needs of the new societal form. This 'better fit' would mean that the new institution is more attractive than the traditional institutions to new members. This, consequently, causes problems for the traditional institution as without new members the institution would die out as previous members leave. Thus, for Veblen (1976), in order to be reproduced, institutions are required to continually alter their characteristics through the virtuous circle as soon as it is possible because if they do not adapt to new societal forms quick enough new institutions will replace them. Institutional reproduction is, consequently, contingent upon institutions reforming themselves in this manner. Furthermore, Veblen argues that this need to bring in new members is predominantly caused by the need for institutions to acquire new economic capital. Indeed, he argues that the process of maintaining an institution is costly and requires a sizeable amount of money that can only be elicited from new members³⁹. Thus for, Veblen (1988) – in a statement of

³⁹ For instance as noted previously in order to be maintained the institution of the Church requires sufficient funding to pay for its operating costs such as electricity and the maintenance of its buildings.

significant relevance for this study – it is the need to satisfy the economic pressure of reproduction that forces an institution to change.

‘It may be said that the forces which make for a readjustment of institutions, especially in the case of a modern industrial community, are, in the last analysis, almost entirely of an economic nature.’

(Veblen, 1988:193).

However, Hodgson (1998) argues that, in addition to rendering institutions old fashioned, the ‘virtuous circle’ itself further hinders an institutions’ ability to adapt itself by promoting an element of stability and conservatism. Indeed, he argues that, through its continual spinning, the ‘virtuous circle’ causes institutions to be naturally stable entities. This argument relies upon Veblen’s concept of ‘cumulative causation’. For Veblen (1988) the loop of the ‘virtuous circle’ only develops in one linear direction. There are no new inputs to the circle, thus, it only develops the societal form that is already in existence⁴⁰. This entails that one action consequently leads to the next and so on setting the institution upon a certain path of development (Storper, 1997)⁴¹. This creates an element of ‘path dependence’ in the institution as it is set to only to develop in one way. Consequently, it takes a large

⁴⁰ This is best explained through the metaphor of a water wheel where water flows through the wheel and is then pumped back to the start of the cycle and flows through the wheel again. No new water is added, it is the same water processed time and time again.

⁴¹ This exists in contrast to the fluid network post-structural approach of Actor-Network theory. Indeed, this would argue that networks are constantly in flux and, paradoxically, rather than struggling to change a network bodies normally are seeking to render their networks stable. This is further explained in relation to Assemblages in Chapter Four. However, it is argued here that the networks of institutions, particularly the historic ones of the Church, have been performed, through the virtuous circle, they have been artificially locked in place. This is best explained through Deleuze and Guattari’s (1988) notions of the fold. For Deleuze and Guattari an illusion of permanence is created as rhizomatic, or network, flows are channelled a certain direction along folds. As these flows continue these folds become more pronounced and locked into place.

amount of energy for an institution to change its course of development to suit a different societal form (Hodgson, 1998)⁴².

Although little empirical work has been conducted upon the physical process of institutional change – a research gap that this project intends to fill – Schoenberger (1999) does provide an example of this process in relation to the formal institution of the firm. Through studying three multi-national businesses she highlights how transitional periods within institutions are ridden with discontent and inconsistency. She states that it is rare that all of the stakeholders within an institution agree upon the change that needs to occur. Furthermore, she argues that it is often the people upon the peripheries of institutions that lead the process and that it often meets resistance from those at the centre or core. Through applying Veblen's concepts it is possible to argue that this inertia at the centre of the institution is due to the network of people who have, over time, positioned themselves there being more established in the historical habits of the institution. Thus, due to their longevity within the institution, they have been reinforced by the rotations of the virtuous circle upon more occasions.

Third, Hodgson argues that, through the 'Virtuous Circle', present day institutions influence the institutions of the future. Labelling this as 'institutional hysteresis', Martin describes the approach as one that,

'focuses on the complex interaction between institutions and economic activity in a way that recognises the importance of current behaviour in shaping future institutions, but which at the same time takes account of the extent to which this behaviour is constrained by pre-existing institutional structures.'

⁴² Whilst institutionalists argue that the development of society is inherently linked to the development of institutions the number of different institutions, and other influences upon it, entails that society may develop upon a different path to that of a particular institution thus rendering that institution irrelevant.

(Martin, 2000:86)

For Hodgson (2007a, 2007b), the process of 'institutional hysteresis' enables the researcher to study the evolution of economic activity as, through institutions, it is possible to trace developments back through time in a linear fashion. Indeed, in developing his concept of institutionalism Veblen was influenced by Darwin's theory of evolution, arguing that, like animals, society and the economy have evolved gradually over time.

To conclude 'Old Institutionalism' is associated with a strong linkage between the cultures of society, institutions and the economy (Barnes, 1999). Indeed, through the 'Virtuous Circle' the three are inextricably linked. Consequently, Amin (2009:386) argues that the essence of old institutionalism is that it does not see institutions as being separate entities from the economy but as its 'very life and substance'.

3.2.3 New Institutionalism

While the thesis will adopt an old institutional approach to study the three religious bodies it is important to discuss the revisionist theory of 'new institutionalism'. 'New Institutionalism' is traditionally associated with the work of the economist Oliver Williamson (1985) and the economic historian Douglas North (1990). It is possible to identify three main differences between the two approaches. First, new institutionalism does not reject classical or neo-liberal economic thought (Hodgson, 1998:176). Indeed, Hodgson argues that new institutionalism is centred upon the notion of rational action and that this has consequently aided its adoption within the discipline of economics. Granovetter (1985) reaffirms this argument, claiming that classical economic theorists have utilised new institutionalism as a way of 'rationalising' irrational economic behaviour and thereby providing, 'efficient solution(s) to economic problems'. Hodgson (1998) explains this in relation to the use

of Game Theory (the idea that once the parameters of the game have been set the most logical conclusion will be reached through rational action) within mainstream economics. Indeed, Hodgson suggests that classical economic theories have set institutional cultures as being one of the rules of the game that liberal markets have to adhere to. Thus, for adherents to the theory, once these cultural rules have been taken into account all economic activity is inherently rational. To exemplify, while an individual action may be seen as being irrational within conventional free market logic, this action would be made rational when these cultural rules are taken into account. Second, 'new institutionalism' also bears links to neo-liberal and classical economics through placing a priority upon 'the individual'. For Hodgson (1998) proponents of new institutionalism argue that, in contrast to the 'virtuous circle' argument, institutions are a by product of individual action. Indeed, proponents of 'New Institutionalism' argue that institutions begin with an individual action which then becomes ingrained as a way of doing things and in so doing, through repetition over time, forms an institution (Hodgson, 1998). Finally, 'new' institutionalism provides a different definition as to what constitutes an institution. In contrast to the 'old' institutional notion of society – whereby the economy and institutions are intertwined as one entity (Barnes, 1999) – North (1990) argues that 'new' institutionalism is characterized by three separate tiers of economic activity: the economy⁴³, institutions, and organizations. For North, the formal institutions of 'old' institutionalism are not institutions but organizations. Consequently, the category of organizations includes; 'political bodies (political parties, the senate, a city council, a regulatory agency), economic bodies (firms, trade unions, family farms, cooperatives), social bodies (churches, clubs, athletic associations), and educational

⁴³ Amin (2009:385) argues that in new institutionalist discourse, 'the economy is conceptualized as a constellation of firms, markets and institutions, each working to a different logic and with specialist properties.'

bodies (schools, universities, vocational training centres)'. For North, these organizations influence and shape the characteristics of institutions, which he defines as being abstract social phenomenon comprised of societal rules and ways of doing things⁴⁴.

It is possible to identify three main criticisms of the 'new institutionalism approach' that render it inappropriate to this thesis. First, Hodgson (1998:176) argues that the new institutionalism overplays the role of the individual within the formation of the institutions. He suggests that the approach is, 'built upon some antiquated assumptions concerning the human agent, derived from the individualism of the Enlightenment'. Thus, the possibility of individuals existing before institutions is taken for granted. In contrast, he draws upon the work of the 'old' institutionalist approach to suggest that, 'in economic analysis the individual should not always be taken as given. The general use of given preference functions to model individuals is rejected by institutionalists. Individuals interact to form institutions, while individual purposes or preferences also are moulded by socio-economic conditions. The individual is both a producer and a product of her circumstances' (Hodgson, 1998:177). To paraphrase, Hodgson argues that it is impossible to begin analysis at the level of the individual as the individual exists only in relation to the society in which they are placed. Second, Amin and Thrift (1994:12) argue that the new institutionalist approach is, 'radically undersocialized as an approach – a deficiency for which it paradoxically over compensates by producing a radically oversocialized idea of society.' For Granovetter, the approach, 'assumes that people follow customs, habits or norms automatically or unconditionally' (Granovetter, 1992:6) and consequently the role of society is overplayed to the extent that it becomes determinant of individual action. Finally, Granovetter (1985:505) argues that in

⁴⁴ This bears resemblance to Amin's (2004) later description of informal institutions.

attempting to use institutions as a way of rationalizing irrational behaviour 'new institutionalists' have bypassed the need to focus detailed analysis upon the characteristics of the institutions themselves.

3.2.4 Geography, Religion and Institutionalism

Having looked at the theory of economic institutionalism the chapter will now move on to discuss its applications in Geography and in relation to religious bodies.

For Martin (2000) the strong emphasis that the institutionalist approach places upon understanding the impact of culture upon economic behaviour was one of four reasons behind its re-emergence and development within economic geography in the late 1990s. Indeed, Martin argues that this emphasis connected to contemporary debates in Geography in relation to the cultural turn and provided a ready way in which economic geographers could engage with this development. This is also reflected in the work of Barnes and Gertler (1999: XVII) who state that, 'the intellectual credentials of institutionalism, with its roots in American pragmatist philosophy, chime well with the so-called recent 'cultural turn' increasingly found and advocated in industrial and economic geography'. In addition to the implications of the 'cultural turn', Martin highlights the importance that the widespread adoption of Regulation Theory has had upon institutionalism. The institutional approach within Economic Geography is strongly linked to the regulationist idea of a Mode of Social Regulation (MSR) ('the ensemble of rules, customs, norms, conventions, and interventions which mediate and support economic production, accumulation, and consumption' (Martin, 2000:77)). Indeed, Martin draws upon the work of Storper and Walker (1989) to suggest that both theories highlight the importance of culture in a

similar way. However, in making this claim Martin argues that the institutionalist perspective has furthered, rather than replicated, the concept of the MSR. He suggests that although Regulation Theory stressed the importance of society to economic activity, unlike institutionalism, it provided no coherent explanation or studies of it. Third, Martin (2000) claims that the adoption of institutionalism in economic geography was influenced by other cognate disciplines. He argues that it is possible to identify an increasing convergence between the different disciplines of the social sciences. Consequently, the rise of institutionalism within economics and sociology has followed through to its adoption within geography. Finally, Martin proposes that the characteristics of the economy at the time of the adoption of the theory were important to its development. Indeed, the transition, within the UK, from being a Fordist to a Post-Fordist economy clearly highlighted the roles that different institutions play as previously prominent institutions, such as labour unions, were rendered powerless and redundant. This, thus, brought the approach to the attention of economic geographers.

As argued earlier the majority of institutionalist work within Geography has concentrated upon gaining an understanding into how institutions can help explain uneven regional economic growth and decline. This work has brought about further contributions to knowledge including Storper's (1997) notion of untraded interdependencies (the idea that institutional links mean that firms do not seek out the best price for a product but prefer to utilise a trusted partner), lock-in (the concept of the adoption of a method of doing something that is outdated or no longer the best way (Amin, 2004)), and path dependence (how institutions lock certain places onto a certain economic evolutionary path). Less work has been conducted on institutions from a Geography of Religion perspective. Possibly the best work within the Geography of Religion area is that of James' (2005) investigation into

the impact of the dominant religious culture of Mormonism upon innovation and company growth within the struggling high-tech industrial sector of Salt Lake City, Utah. James found that there were four principle intersections at which the religious culture and economic action of the locality interacted. First, he observed strong networks of trust between Mormons in the economic system, identifying a preference for inter-firm, Mormon to Mormon trading which made it difficult for non-Mormon businesses to develop within the industrial district. Second, he suggests that the Mormon dislike for debt translates into the work environment. Mormon firms are reluctant to seek outside capital and, despite maintaining their independence, consequently reduce their growth capabilities. Third, Mormon tendencies for self-sufficiency led to in-house working environments that prohibited the development of sub-contracting relationships within the district. Fourth, and finally, the Mormon way of life – which placed family, and then Church, above all other priorities – created both a shorter working day for Mormons than is conventional and a lack of work based social activities. For James, this lack of social activity has proved to be inhibitive to the development of the region as it provides a key arena for the distribution of tacit knowledge (Polanyi, 1966). A second example of the interaction between religion and industry is provided by Quakerism and in particular by Cadbury's (a British confectioner recently taken over by the large American firm Kraft) and this has been examined by Bailey and Bryson (2006a, 2006b). They show how the religious ethics of the Quaker faith affected culture in the model village of Bourneville. Indeed, although they broaden the discourse from the conventional narrative that Bourneville was an exclusively Quaker space, Bailey and Bryson highlight the role that dominant Quaker thinking played within the locale. They argue that this specifically manifested itself in relation to the temperance movement about the avoidance of alcohol.

Very few attempts have been made within the literature to consider organized religions as if they are formal economic institutions, as done in this thesis. Key exceptions to this are Hamnett's (1987) consideration of the financial property dealings of the Church of England, Lightbody's (2000) study of an Anglican communion Church within Australia, Micklethwait and Wooldridge's (2009) discussion of the evangelical 'mega-Church' within the USA, and Drane's (2005) investigation into the 'McDonaldization' of Christianity. First, studying the property dealings of the Church of England's Commissioners⁴⁵, between 1948 and 1977, Hamnett (1987) highlights the continual financial stress that the institution is under to financially reproduce itself. In so doing, he shows that the Commissioners need to maintain a high profit margin from their land holdings in order to pay for the sustenance of the clergy. However, for Hamnett, this has resulted in a financial policy of concentrating upon high profit commercial undertakings in preference to more actively religious social housing obligations. This finding is mirrored within Chapter Seven. A similar approach is shown by Spencer (2000) who links the investment policies of the Church Commissioners and the Oxford Colleges. Both of these historical bodies have attempted to commercialise their historical land holdings in order to achieve better investment returns. Second, Lightbody (2000) investigates the handling and generation of finance within an Anglican Communion Church in Australia. In so doing, she mirrors the findings of Schoenberger (1999); identifying distinct and opposing groups of people within the same institution. Indeed, Lightbody suggests that the issue of finance is divisive within the Church, with one group of people seeking to direct all of the bodies' money towards religious activities as soon as possible, while another group, predominantly comprised of the people responsible for the management of the money, seek to store it for the future. Third,

⁴⁵ The Church Commissioners, in essence, are fund managers who control the Church of England's historic assets. They will be introduced at length in Chapter 5.

Micklethwait and Wooldridge (2009) investigate the growth of the Evangelical Mega Church 'Willow Creek' within the USA. They argue that this Church, along with others of its type, has been utilising modern advertising and business techniques to grow.

'Willow Creek has a mission statement ("to turn irreligious people into fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ") and a management team, a seven-step strategy and a set of ten core values. The Church employs two MBAs – one from Harvard and one from Stanford – and boasts a consulting arm. It has been given the ultimate business accolade: a Harvard Business School case study'

(Micklethwait and Wooldridge, 2009:183).

As part of this blurring of boundaries between business and religion Micklethwait and Wooldridge identify the growth of the 'pastorpreneur'; that is, a religious leader devoted to growing the Church in a business-like manner. Furthermore, they argue that these Megachurches (a Church with 1000 or more members) are dominated by the principle of, 'total service excellence'⁴⁶, and seek to serve every possible 'market niche' (Micklethwait and Wooldridge, 2009:185).

'These pastorpreneurs don't just preach on Sunday's. They don't just provide provide services for the great rituals of birth, death and marriage. They keep their buildings open seven days a week from dawn to dusk, and provide a mind-boggling array of services: some megachurch complexes even contain banks, pharmacies and schools.'

(Micklethwait and Wooldridge, 2009:185).

⁴⁶ The notion of 'total service excellence' derives from management discourses and thus provides an interesting example of the convergence of capitalist and religious practices in itself.

The result of this, for Micklethwait and Wooldridge, has been immense growth in the number of people attending these Churches. This bears links to the growing commercialization of religion as discussed through the works of Karner and Aldridge (2006) in Chapter Two. Finally, Drane (2006) criticizes the developments identified by Micklethwait and Wooldridge, arguing that the organization of the Christian Church has recently changed to fit the four guiding economic principles of McDonalds; efficiency, calculability, predictability and control (Ritzer, 1997). While Drane acknowledges that such shifts have brought into existence the concept of the 'mega-church', especially within the USA, he argues that it has also reduced the core values of Christianity and disenfranchised people with organized religion. Indeed, Drane (2006:200) argues that, 'If we were to substitute 'religious' for 'economic,' 'institution' for 'market,' and 'gospel' for 'democratic,' we would have a statement which for many people encapsulates the predicament in which the Church now finds itself.'

3.3 Religion and the Economy

Whilst very little research has been undertaken on religion from an institutional perspective there is a large body of work that has investigated its wider relationship with the economy. I will now discuss this through investigation of four interrelated literatures. These are; the historical work of Max Weber, contemporary investigations into the relationship between religion and capitalism, Church accountancy practices, and religious financial investment.

3.3.1 The Work of Max Weber

Perhaps the most notable work upon this relationship between religion and the economy is that of Max Weber's (1971) early twentieth century *Protestant Ethic and Spirit of Capitalism*. Drawn out of his attempts to discern 'the combination of circumstances responsible for the cultural uniqueness of Western civilization' (Nevaskar, 1971), Weber argued that capitalism was a by-product of extreme Puritan Protestant religious beliefs. For Weber, the protestant belief system provided the ideal social environment for the development of capitalism, being 'the cradle of the modern economic man' (Weber, 2004:29) and explains the temporal and geographical location of the industrial revolution.

It is possible to note four ways in which Weber asserts that Protestantism shaped early Capitalism; asceticism, industriousness, rational action and the 'Spirit of Capitalism'. First, the puritan notion of asceticism – the principle of being against, 'the *spontaneous enjoyment* of life and the pleasure existence has to offer' (Weber, 2004:25 emphasis in original) – led, in part, to the development of early notions of capitalist accumulation. Indeed, Weber argued that this belief manifested itself in the handling of money, suggesting that British people at the time held an attitude that,

'[man] must ... give an account of every penny entrusted to him [sic], and it is at least hazardous to spend any of it for a purpose which does not serve the glory of God but only one's own enjoyment'

(Weber, 2004:27).

To paraphrase, Weber's argument is that this restriction upon the use of money led to it being saved rather than spent and therefore, he argues, certain members of society accumulated large pools of money. Meanwhile, Nevaskar (1971) draws attention to the second aspect of Weber's argument; that Puritanism did not solely

lead to the stockpiling of wealth but that it also led to its generation. This argument is based upon two specific protestant doctrinal beliefs pre-eminent at the time; 'pre-destination'⁴⁷ and 'justification by faith'⁴⁸. Weber argued that both of these principles led to an individualization of faith and the promotion of an industrial spirit. By this it is meant that both pre-destination and justification by faith, for different reasons, placed great importance upon the worthiness of the individual soul. Thus, due to this individual focus, people were keen to highlight how they were more worthy than others. This is important from an economic perspective as the virtuosity associated with human labour meant that people attempted to highlight their worthiness by working harder than their compatriots.

'The Puritan objection to the pursuit of wealth was based on the theory that since the believer's destiny is in the world to come, while he [sic] is here on earth he [sic] should work hard in order to be certain of his [sic] state of grace. Activity, not frivolous enjoyment, serves to increase the glory of God.'

(Nevaskar, 1971:41)

For Clarke *et al* (2004), this highlights an elective affinity between productivity and religion which placed 'Godliness as being next to Industriousness'. This led to the development of a labour force willing to work hard for little financial reward and in so doing created the ideal conditions for the generation of capital.

⁴⁷ The belief that God has already decided the fate of an individual before they were born and that an individual could do nothing to alter her or his fate as preached by the puritan protestant reformer John Calvin (Worrall, 1988)

⁴⁸ The Lutheran idea that one could be saved through her or his individual actions (Worrall, 1988). Both of these theological positions are discussed in more depth within Chapter Two.

‘the power of religious ascetism placed at his [the capitalists] [sic] disposal sober, conscientious, and unusually industrious workmen, who clung to their work as to a life purpose willed by God.’

(Weber, 2004:30)

Third, Nevaskar (1971) highlights the importance of rationalism within Weber’s theory of the development of capitalism. Weber stated that,

‘modern rational capitalism has need, not only of the technical means of production, but of a calculable legal system and of administration in terms of formal rules. Without it adventurous and speculative trading capitalism and all sorts of politically determined capitalisms are possible, but no rational enterprise under individual initiative, with fixed capital and certainty of calculations. Such a legal system and such administration have been available for economic activity in a comparative state of legal and formalistic perfection only in the Occident. We must hence inquire where that law came from.’

(Weber, 1971:25)

According to Nevaskar (1971) Weber once again found the root of this difference to be post reformation religion.

Finally, Weber argued that the fourth link between Protestantism and the early economic system was, ‘the spirit of capitalism’. This was a moralistic, and ethical framework, based upon Christian teachings through which all economic transactions were conducted. Indeed, Weber argued that the shared moral system of Protestantism acted as a guarantee of character and meant that one could be confident in the satisfactory completion of a transaction as the fear of punishment by

God provided a deterrent against dishonesty. However, Weber also argued that once it was institutionalized Capitalism no longer required 'the spirit'. Trust in the system was established and the rational, capitalistic tendency for competition, based upon providing the same item for a lower price, replaced religious ethical considerations. This notion of the 'spirit of capitalism' will be a recurring theme within the thesis. Indeed, although Weber argued that notions of religiosity and the economic system became irreconcilable the thesis will argue that the two remain inherently interlinked. The chapter will now move on to investigate several works into this contemporary faith-economy relationship.

3.3.2 Contemporary Links between Faith and the Economy

Many contemporary authors have suggested that, contrary to Weber, Christianity is still very much an active agent in the performance of present-day capitalism. One example of this is provided by Connolly (2005), who argues that.

'no political economy or religious practice is self contained. Rather, in politics diverse elements *infiltrate* into the others, metabolizing into a moving complex'.

(Connolly, 2005:870)

Utilizing this framework he makes a link between evangelical Christianity, 'cowboy capitalism' [a highly politicised right wing version of neo-liberalism], the electronic news media, and the Republican Party to argue that the USA's economic policy, under the presidency of George W Bush, was being re-shaped along the lines of 'radical faith'. Indeed, according to Connolly,

‘The right leg of the evangelical movement is joined at the hip to the left leg of the capitalist juggernaut. Neither leg could hop far unless it was joined to the other.’

(Connolly, 2005:874).

Therefore, due to the right views of the evangelical church, Connolly argues that a link between this form of Christianity and capitalism poses a grave threat to contemporary democracy within the USA.

Moreton (2007) also investigates the link between evangelical Christianity and Neo-Liberalism, arguing that the faith forms the soul of the economic system. Citing two specific examples, she argues that Christianity was important within the initial adoption of neo-liberalism and its continued prevalence in the USA. First, she argues that Pentecostal and Evangelical Churches were amongst the first to respond to the collapse of Bretton Woods and immediately began to give advice to congregations about the new system, preaching ideas of ‘spiritual, material and physical abundance’. She argues that such messages became particularly popular amongst the middle classes and helped to cultivate, ‘a transnational, free-market, white-collar class with a marked affinity for revived forms of Protestantism’ (Moreton, 2007:105)⁴⁹. Second, Moreton suggests that there was a strong, symbiotic, link between early service economy entrepreneurs, such as Sam Walton of Wal-Mart, and evangelical colleges. Business leaders such as Walton invested large sums of money into these colleges in order to have their staff educated. Furthermore, Moreton argues that the particular message of Christianity in regards to ‘servant leadership’, as taught by these educational establishments, was seen as being apt for the new service economy. Indeed, she argues that these colleges helped to provide a

⁴⁹ This provides an example of how these institution’s ability to quickly alter themselves

heroic or masculine dimension to previously feminine jobs as, by likening Christ to a 'servant leader', they provided a rhetoric of heroism and strength to serving others, a skill that was in demand following the switch from Fordism. Consequently, the funded colleges furthered the teaching of the Christian faith and aided the development of a service economy.

Whilst both Connolly and Moreton concentrate upon the effect of evangelical Protestantism, Keister (2007) analyses the effect being a Roman Catholic has upon wealth mobility in the USA. She argues that, whilst the majority of the population remain relatively stable in regards to wealth distribution⁵⁰, Roman Catholics appear to be upwardly mobile. Furthermore, she suggests that this wealth generation is aided by five characteristics of the Roman Catholic faith. First, Keister argues that Catholic marriage patterns are likely to aid accumulation in that their marriages are characterised by high stability and low levels of divorce. In addition, she suggests that Catholics tend to marry other Catholics and so perpetuate shared values. Second, she contends that one of these shared values is a focus upon saving, with the Church preaching the importance of avoiding debt⁵¹. Third, the paper suggests that levels of fertility have an effect upon wealth, with larger families being at a disadvantage. Consequently, she argues that the decreasing numbers of children within Catholic families in the developed world, as identified recently, has increased levels of wealth. Fourth, Keister argues that Catholics place a great deal of emphasis upon education which lead to good exam results and increased social capital. Finally, she suggests that Catholics have a strong work ethic with the motivation to work coming from the family.

⁵⁰ That children will not exceed the income earned by parents.

⁵¹ Although this statement is somewhat undermined by the current sovereign debt conditions in many, predominantly Catholic, southern European nations.

In addition to identifying the commercial foundations of the mega church, as discussed within the institutional section of this chapter, Micklethwait and Wooldridge (2009) also explore the relationship between religion and capitalism through the development of a mass market for Christian products within the USA. Concentrating upon the religious media industry they argue that 'the religious market is booming within America' as exemplified by 'The *Left Behind* series of novels⁵² on the end of the world (which have) brought in \$650 million' and the Bible which is, 'the bestselling book of all time' (Micklethwait and Wooldridge, 2009:177). The commercial success of religious media items has moved them away from being the products of niche businesses to being adopted by the mainstream media companies. They exemplify this process with the case study of Zondervan Books, which began as a small Christian publishing company but was taken over by the large transnational publishing house HarperCollins in 1988. The commercialisation of Christian products is also reflected within the film industry, with the authors identifying a growth in Christian film. Micklethwait and Wooldridge (2009) argue that this growth is exemplified in two ways; first, Christian films are now produced by mainstream studios. An example of this is provided by the partnership between 'Walden Media' and Disney to produce an explicitly Christian version of *The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe*'. Second, they highlight the development of explicitly religious subdivisions of mainstream film studios such as 'Fox Faith'⁵³. Micklethwait and Wooldridge suggest that the Christian consumer market is attractive to 'global' businesses due to the ability to engender large financial returns. Indeed, they argue that it is an attractive market niche for three reasons; first, within the USA there is a

⁵² These focus upon the biblical prophecy of 'the rapture' where the world will end and every person will be judged by God.

⁵³ It is also important to highlight the important presence that scientology, as a faith, has upon Hollywood with a number of high profile film actors, such as Tom Cruise, publically promoting the faith.

large consumer base with millions of Christians residing in the country. Second, they argue that Churches provide a readymade distribution network.

‘Religious Americans are also willing to do much of the marketing, spreading the message by word of mouth. The *Left Behind* series, initially published by a tiny Chicago [publishing] house, was passed from Christian to Christian.’

(Micklethwait and Wooldridge, 2009:178).

Third, they argue that religious Americans are willing to do much of the marketing for products themselves. Due to their passion for spreading the faith, congregational members tell their friends about products that they have enjoyed and preachers recommend them in their sermons. Finally, Micklethwait and Wooldridge argue that there is also a strong geography to the production of these religious products. The city of Nashville, Tennessee functions as the, ‘global powerhouse in the religion business’, with the two authors likening it to Alfred Marshall’s famous description of Sheffield; ‘the religion business is clearly “in the air” in Nashville’ (Micklethwait and Wooldridge, 2009:172). Furthermore, Micklethwait and Wooldridge argue that the history and tradition of the USA, as a whole, (in relation to the country being founded by Puritan Christians) ‘gives it a competitive advantage when it comes to religion’ (Micklethwait and Wooldridge, 2009:174).

However, the introduction of major capitalist companies into the religious market place has not been unproblematic. In regards to HarperCollins’ purchase of Zondervan, Micklethwait and Wooldridge identify concerns from religious groups about the secular nature of many of the parent company, News Corporation’s, other businesses. These concerns include the use of Page Three girls within News Corp newspapers and publishing books such as *How to Make Love Like a Porn Star*. Furthermore, they argue that religious consumers are wary of companies utilising

God for purely Capitalist gains; labelling this 'Godsploitation'. This tension highlights both how Christianity and Capitalism remain inherently interlinked, as argued throughout the thesis, but that this interlinking causes concern and unease. The chapter will now continue to explore works upon this uneasy interaction between faith and capitalism and identify ways in which Church groups have sought to manage it.

3.3.3 Accountancy, Giving and the Secular Sacred Divide

Whilst very few geographers or economists have empirically examined the relationship between Christianity and Capitalism there is a history of work on the subject within the discipline of Critical Accountancy. Indeed, the relationship between accountancy and Christianity is discussed in depth within this literature with authors stressing different degrees of connectivity between faith and the fiscal practice. First, while accepting the need for accountancy within the Church as a functional tool, Laughlin (1988) argues that religion and capitalism are dialectical opposites. Placing the argument within the seminal writings of Durkheim (1976) and Eliade (1959), Laughlin argues that accountancy and religion are irreconcilable. Indeed, the idea of a divide between religious and profane activities can be argued as being central to Durkheim's religious thesis seeing that, as argued within Chapter Two, he defines a religion as being different to the secular society that surrounds it. For Laughlin (1988) this causes opposition to secular accountancy practices within Church groups as, in order to maintain their identity, they are required to retain a sense of being 'other' to the secular world. Consequently, Laughlin argues that the Church has developed practices to separate the influence of accountancy from its religious function. This has taken the form of creating a religious core that is isolated

from secular financial activities; restricting these to the periphery of the organization. This religious core is further explained by Irvine (1998) who argues that the priests and other religious staff are removed from the financial activities of the Church so as to protect them from secular contamination.

Second, whilst also identifying a strong dislike for accountancy within the Church, Booth (1993) argues that these religious spaces provide a fascinating insight into the relationship between society, space, and the financial practice. Indeed, Booth states that the Church provides a clear indication of how accountancy functions as a situated practice⁵⁴ as, within this setting, it becomes inter-dependent and entwined with the social contexts of faith. To exemplify, Booth argues that, despite being disliked, the predominantly secular practice of accountancy has to be implemented in Churches if they are to survive and fulfil their religious function (as, without a rational approach to spending, resources would be wasted and bills unpaid). This, thus, entails that the continuation and reproduction of religion, in this instance, is dependent upon, and thus bound up with, accountancy practice. Likewise, through this implementation, prevalent faith cultures modify accountancy techniques within the religious spaces in that Church users incorporate a degree of religiosity into the practice in order to render them specific to their needs. Thus a specific version of accountancy practice is created at each religious site.

Third, Irvine (2005) critiques the conception of finance and accounting in Churches as being a purely secular phenomenon. Within her investigation of the process of budgeting inside an Australian Anglican Church, Irvine suggests that, in contrast to Booth and Laughlin, accountancy is not seen as being a secular infringement. Rather, she suggests that it plays a significant role in deciding the

⁵⁴ By this it is meant that the techniques used to keep accounts vary dependent upon the social setting in which they are located.

religious priorities of the Church. The budgeting procedure provides a forum for 'visionary decision making' and brings the whole Church together to decide their spiritual priorities. Furthermore, Irvine suggests that the financing of the Church itself is also a spiritual matter as without it the explicitly religious function would not be possible. This mirrors Kong's (2005) conception, as discussed in Chapter Two, that religious support activities such as administrative tasks (which she labels as being the politics of religion) should be viewed as being religious in themselves. Without these support activities, religions would be unable to function. Consequently, although their interaction creates tension, notions of religion and finance are inherently intertwined.

A further example of the inter-relation between religion and finance is provided by the religious use of money. This is exemplified by the notion of religious gift exchange and special money (Zelizer, 1989). For Osteen (2002), the principle method of funding the Church (as discussed in Chapter Five), the offertory⁵⁵, is an inherently sacred practice. He draws upon the work of Mauss (2001) to conceptualise the offertory as being part of a two-way religiously motivated gift exchange. This can be explained as follows: Mauss argued that all gift exchanges exist in a continual loop between givers and receivers, with receivers becoming indebted to the giver until they return a gift of equal, or greater value. Thus, Osteen suggests that the offertory is part of a gift exchange between the Churchgoer and God. The Churchgoer is attempting to repay God's gift of life itself through financial contributions to the Church. However, he argues that, such was the vastness of God's original gift, the transaction will never be rendered equal and the giver will continue to be obligated to give to the Church every week. In addition to binding the recipient into a relationship with the giver, Mauss (2001) argues that a gift retains some of the

⁵⁵ Where Church goes place money within a collection basket within a Church service

properties of the person who gave it. Labelling this concept as 'hau' he states that a spiritual element of the giver attaches itself to the gift and consequently restricts the uses of the item to those for which it is intended. For instance, should a child receive a present of money from a relative, then that money retains the 'hau' of the giver. Consequently, it can only be utilised to buy a product that they would believe to be acceptable. Mauss' concept of 'hau' bears similarities to Zelizer's notion of 'Special Money' (1989; 1995). Within her critique of rational concepts of money, Zelizer argues that currency interrelates with society to be restricted to certain purposes. Money does not remain alien to the people or organization controlling it, but becomes part of their social fabric. Consequently, Zelizer argues, the social rules that apply to the owner of the money also transfer, and get applied, to the money itself. To illustrate this Zelizer highlights religious money. The particular social environment, within a religious organization, connects with the money and, thus, the money is restricted to uses that are befitting of the social status of a religion. In summary, the arguments of Osteen, Mauss and Zelizer highlight how money can be endued with religious properties and that these religious properties can impact upon how money is generated and used. This is in contrast to the conventional argument that money represents a neutral, rational financial instrument divorced from societal contexts (Simmel, 2004).

3.3.4 Religion and Finance

This integration of religious properties into money is reflected in the characteristics of different religion's participation in financial markets. The majority of work upon this subject has been conducted upon Islamic Banking. In their attempt to de-centre and de-Westernise economic geography, Pollard and Samers (2007)

investigate the rise of the Middle Eastern banking system, arguing that it is strongly based upon many tenets of the Islamic Shari'a law⁵⁶. First, interest, a staple of conventional banking, is illegal within the Islamic system due to the prohibition of *riba* (translated as being increase). Within the system interest is considered to be 'exploitative and unfair' and while loans are not banned, 'The provider of capital is not permitted to fix a predetermined rate of interest, but should be allowed an adequate return by having a financial stake in the project to be undertaken' (Pollard and Samers, 2007:314). This is indicative of the Islamic view that the provision of finance, or indeed finance itself, should not be seen as a product. Instead, it is an immaterial item. In contrast, Pollard and Samers (2007) argue that the principles of Islamic finance state that all financial transactions should be linked to the real economy of material possessions.

'A key aspiration in IBF (Islamic Banking and Finance) – in sharp contrast to interest based finance – is a close coupling of the financial and the 'real' economy. Financiers are encouraged to invest in promising projects, to share profits and losses with entrepreneurs and, in so doing, promote development.' (Pollard and Samers, 2007:314).

This has led to the development of several different Islamic financial products. For instance, while a traditional mortgage would be unacceptable in IBF due to the *riba* that it would incur, Maurer (2005) identifies the Islamic alternative, known as *Murabaha*. This is in essence a 'cost plus' transaction where 'a bank first purchases the item to be financed before selling it to a client on a cost-plus basis' (Maurer, 2005:58). Before the transaction is conducted a profit margin is agreed upon by both the financier and the customer. While this profit margin would appear to be similar

⁵⁶ Shari'a Law is the Islamic religious system of law

to interest, Pollard and Samers (2007:315) argue that it represents 'the price of a 'service', not *riba*.' 'the financial institution seeks out the lowest price for a product on behalf of the customer' and, in initially purchasing the product, the bank takes on a degree of risk. Consequently, the profit is a legitimate return for the bank's endeavour and represents both 'a finder's fee' and adequate recompense for the risk that they have undertaken. Furthermore, Pollard and Samers (2007) suggest that notions of risk represent the second key concept of Islamic Finance. Within the system excessive risk taking is prohibited; this concept is known as *gharar*. Third, they argue that the most explicit religious tenet of Islamic finance is provided by its system of regulation.

'Islamic banks or financial institutions are regulated by *Shari'a* boards, comprising one or more Islamic scholars, which offer a *fatwa* (opinion) or statement of guidance interpreting Islamic law.'

(Pollard and Samers, 2007:315).

This religious oversight is used to decide whether a new IBF product complies with Islamic law. Indeed, for Pollard and Samers (2007:314), 'If it is not clear whether a particular financial practice is acceptable based on a ruling from the *Qur'an* or from the *Hadith*⁵⁷ and the *Sunnah*⁵⁸, then authority is given to Islamic scholars to invoke *Ijithad* (which literally means 'effort', but is essentially the interpretation of *Qur'anic* texts.)' Thus, Islamic scholars provide a key role in the system. Whilst the laws of Islam are undoubtedly influential within IBF, like the previously identified notion of 'Godsploitation', a body of literature has grown suggesting that, through the

⁵⁷ Traditions derived from the words of the prophet Mohammed

⁵⁸ Traditions derived from the life of the prophet Mohammed

development and internationalization of IBF, a degree of its religiosity has declined in favour of a profit making function.

While Geographers have paid it little attention, it is also possible to identify the growth of a Christian method of conducting financial investments through the wider Socially Responsible Investment (SRI) movement. Whilst the chapter will discuss more mainstream approaches to SRI and ethical finance within the final section, it is impossible to provide a conclusive review of literature upon the relationship between capitalism and religion without mentioning it here.

Sparkes (2002) highlights the significant role that the UK Church investors have played within the development of the UK SRI industry. This is highlighted through the role the Methodist Church and Society of Friends played as 'the main sponsors behind the foundation of the UK ethical research service EIRiS in 1983.' (Sparkes, 2002:27). Furthermore, Kreander *et al* (2004:411) argue that religious participation in the SRI system represents an attempt to try, 'to put religious beliefs into practice.' For example, they argue that the practice is based upon five theological principles: 'creationism'; 'stewardship'; 'agapism'; 'engagement', and; 'witness'. Creationism is the starting point of ethical investment and argues that God created and thus owns the world. This, consequently, leads to the second principle of ethical trading; Stewardship. Kreander *et al* suggest that this refers to the notion that as it is not our world our actions within it must not harm it. Therefore, any 'ethical' investment must not be in a business that harms either the planet itself or those who live within it. However, Seddon (2000) (as cited in Kreander *et al* (2004)), argues that there is a second side to the principle of Stewardship. He argues that due to everything being a gift from God we have to have make use of its full potential. Therefore, he suggests that religions should be 'encouraged to make fruitful use of

economic resources', thus legitimizing such investment programmes as long as they are, indeed, ethical. Incidentally, the first UK ethical Common Investment Fund, incorporated by Friends Provident in the 1970s, was entitled 'Stewardship'⁵⁹. Third, Kreander *et al* suggest that ethical investment is influenced by Agapism⁶⁰ in that these programmes aim to promote the welfare of humanity. Fourth, as mentioned above, ethical investment provides a forum in which the Church believes it can utilize its values to engage with the world. Both Kreander *et al* (2004) and Clark and Hebb (2005) highlight how the positive utilization of voting rights can force a company to behave more morally. Finally, Kreander *et al* (2004) suggest that ethical investment provides a forum for the Christian Church to act as a witness within the wider investment community, providing a good example as to how such dealings should be conducted. The commitment of the various institutions to ethical investment practices is shown through the significant sums of money that are invested. For example, as of 2002, the Methodist Church of Great Britain had £900 million invested in nine different funds and in the same year the various departments of the Church of England managed £6 billion worth of assets (Kreander et al, 2004).

However, once again fitting with the findings of Schoenberger (1999), it is possible to argue that the development of SRI within the Church institutions was not a coherent or unproblematic development. This is shown by the court case between the Right Reverend Richard Harries, the Bishop of Oxford, and the Church of England's Church Commissioners. In October 1990 a group of clergyman, led by the Bishop of Oxford, challenged the ethical investment policy of the Church of England's Church Commissioners in the High Court of Justice. The bishop, amongst others, had

⁵⁹ Although originating as a specifically religious concept stewardship has become a key term within the wider SRI industry. This provides an interesting example as to how a religious concept has infiltrated and shaped conventional investment practice.

⁶⁰ This is the principle of a communal, Christian, love of everyone and everything.

become frustrated by the Church Commissioners stance on ethical investment especially in relation to apartheid South Africa. For him the ethical policy, as written in 1972, that proscribed investments, 'directly in companies operating wholly or mainly in certain trades – armaments, gambling, breweries and distilleries, tobacco, newspapers, publishing and broadcasting, and theatre or films – or in Southern Africa' (The Church Commissioners of England, 1972 as cited in Peart-Binns, 2007:141) was not satisfactory as it did not totally preclude companies operating within, and profiting from, the apartheid regime. While that the Commissioners agreed, 'that lists of banned investment categories were of limited usefulness' (Peart-Binns, 2007:142) they argued that any further ethical stance would be against their legal fiduciary responsibility to maximise returns upon their investments. Instead, they advocated a constructive engagement with the companies, in their portfolio, who operated in South Africa.

'We believe that our policy of constructive engagement is the only practicable policy for a major Fund with our particular financial responsibilities and that it is the right policy. By encouraging British companies to pursue enlightened employment policies in South Africa, we believe we are making a contribution, however small, to the eventual dismemberment of the system of apartheid that we all abhor.'

(Sir Douglas Lovelock (First Church Estates Commissioner), 1985 as cited in Chandler, 2006:302)

This policy consequently allowed the Commissioners to keep these companies within their portfolio and thus maintain their investment returns. For Davies, this position was against the views of the wider Church and consequently he began legal proceedings against the Church Commissioners. Although the subsequent High Court

case ruled in favour of the Commissioners, as their policy was seen to be addressing concerns sufficiently about South Africa as not to be against the Church's teaching, Peart-Binns (2007) argues that it was to prove significant in relation to both the Church and the wider charitable investment sector. First, he argues that it, 'jolted the Church Commissioners into taking the ethical dimension more seriously' (Peart-Binns, 2007:152-153) and led to the formation of the Church of England's Ethical Investment Advisory Group (EIAG). Second, Peart-Binns argued that the court ruling highlighted that,

'It is right and proper for trustees (of charitable bodies) to take ethical into account, provided this does not lead to any financial detriment. More strongly, it is right for them not to invest in companies that clearly contradict their core purpose, even if doing so is financially less than the best that could be achieved'

(Peart-Binns, 2007:152).

This ruling has subsequently become a foundation of the UK SRI industry as it enabled charities to ignore their fiduciary obligation to maximise returns in order to remain coherent to their values.

The Bishop of Oxford case further highlights the lack of unity and conformity throughout the institution of the Church of England with the investment bodies being separate autonomous organizations. Chapter Four, will argue that this is due to the assemblage nature of the Church.

Whilst SRI provides an example of religion and capitalism intertwining to create a new approach to finance, this interaction, again, also provides a number of tensions. For Kreander *et al* (2004) the Church's investment within SRI has been

criticised as being financially rather ethically motivated. Indeed, the prime function of religious institutional ethical investment is to procure finance rather than pursue an active religious goal. Furthermore, they argue that this has meant that the Church bodies have invested in companies unfitting of ethical status. Such a position is shown empirically within the works of Chandler (2007) and Hamnett (1987). First, Chandler (2007) highlights the problems faced by the Church of England due to its profitable share holdings in the Midland Bank during the South African Apartheid era. The bank was seen to be actively engaging and profiting from the repressive South African government and public opinion suggested that, by holding this financial interest, the Church was condoning apartheid. Consequently, a public protest was launched against the Church. This episode highlights how a charities' shareholding can reflect upon its public image. Indeed, Peart-Binns (2007) argues that holding an investment within a company bestows upon it the notion that the shareholder believes its actions are legitimate. Thus when the Church, or any other charity, holds a stake in a company it is risking its reputation. Similarly, Hamnett (1987) attacks the property investments of the Church of England during the period 1948 – 1977, suggesting that their focus upon making money was to the detriment of the social welfare of their tenants.

These issues again reflect the limitations that are placed upon the use of money by religious organizations. Again the characteristics of their faith interact with the money to create a notion of a legitimate use.

3.4 Institutional and Socially Responsible Investment

While Sparkes and Cowton (2004:45) further identify the importance of Christian bodies within the development of Socially Responsible Investment (SRI)

they argue that the practice, 'has become more complex and begun to enter the mainstream of investment practice.' Consequently, this final section of the chapter will investigate the ways in which SRI has been utilised within wider investment bodies and the issues that are surrounding this.

It is possible to identify three reasons for the growth of SRI within the UK mainstream investment community. First, Sparkes (2001) identifies the important role UK government legislation has played within the development of the nation's SRI industry. The 1995 Pensions Act acted as a catalyst for the wider adoption of SRI amongst institutional investors as, after the deadline of July 2000, it made it obligatory for all private sector pension funds, 'to consider socially responsible investment rights as part of their overall investment policy' (Sparkes, 2001:194). The Act amended the Statement of Investment Principles (SIP), that all pension funds need to make, adding a disclosure as to, 'the extent to which social, environmental or ethical considerations are taken into account in the selection, retention, and realization of investments,' and their policy in regards to, 'the exercise of the rights (including voting rights) attaching to the investments' (Sparkes, 2001:194). Second, in accompaniment to the legislation change, Clark and Hebb (2004) highlight the impact of the growth of private pension funds as institutional investors. They argue that the previously unthinkable pooling of capital under the control on institutional investors has given them the immense power to, 'aggressively challenge the management of corporations in which they invest' (Clark and Hebb, 2004:143). This, they argue, represents a 'fifth stage of capitalism' where pension funds and institutional investors are the key decision makers within the global economy. Furthermore, as a response to the 1995 Act, they argue that much of the mediation being conducted by these funds is along the lines of SRI policies. Through the principle of 'engagement' – where the pension fund will sit down and work with the business with which they

have an investment – and the utilisation of voting rights Clark and Hebb (2004) argue that institutional investments and rendering corporations more ethical. Finally, Clark and Hebb (2005) argue that the rise in importance of notions of ‘brand value’ have added a financial incentive to being ‘ethical’. Consumers are placing more emphasis upon the image of the companies they buy products from and as a consequence companies are doing their utmost to maintain a positive image. This has led to the development of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), where businesses are attempting to be seen to be doing good within the environs in which they operate, in the hope that this will reflect positively upon their brand value. Consequently, Clark and Hebb argue that institutional investors look to invest in companies with CSR programmes as it is believed a positive brand value will result in good investment returns. As a consequence they argue that investors have begun to investigate firm’s production practices and are avoiding, or engaging with, unethical businesses.

In addition to institutional investors, Guay et al (2004) identify four important roles that Non-Governmental Organizations have (NGOs) played within the development of SRI within the UK. First, they argue that they function as advisors and research bodies for institutional investors. Charities such as EIRiS monitor company activity and feedback information to investors. This consequently enables investors to make informed ethical decisions. Second, Guay et al (2004) recognize the way in which NGOs can act as advocates for SRI policies. They suggest that often these bodies can place pressure upon investors to engage, or disinvest, with a certain company citing a specific ethical concern. Third, the authors highlight the role that NGOs have played in initially creating ethical funds by acting as sponsors and seed funders. Fourth, and finally, Guay et al argue that NGOs often act as shareholder activists. For Sparkes (2001) shareholder activism represents the arena within which NGOs radically differ to the more commercial investors. For him NGOs are able to be

more 'militant' in a criticism of a company as often their holding is bought purely to gain a political standpoint. In contrast institutional investors have to maintain the value of their investments and thus engage with businesses in a quieter manner.

While applauding the growth of mainstream institutional SRI Sparkes (2001) argues that it remains systematically different to the 'ethical' investment techniques of Churches and Charities. The key division between the two relates to returns whereby institutional investors are not willing, or able to, sacrifice returns in favour of social benefit whereas charities are. As a consequence he proposes that the two techniques should be given different titles with 'SRI' referring to mainstream institutional investors and 'ethical' remaining the realm of the Churches and charities. However, the thesis will criticise this distinction arguing that Church investors are both ethical and socially responsible and consequently it is impossible to distinguish between the two.

Having investigated the rise of SRI within the UK I now turn to look at how it is practiced. Sparkes and Cowton (2004) identify three principle methods of conducting SRI. First, they identify the principle of exclusion whereby an investor identifies an investment area within which they do not wish to purchase stocks. For instance, as noted before, the original Church of England ethical investment policy precluded stocks in alcohol, tobacco, armaments and publishing (Peart-Binns, 2007). For Sparkes and Cowton (2004), exclusion is an unpopular practice as it reduces the investable universe (the number of stocks that one can invest in) and thus reduces potential investment returns⁶¹. However, this concern has recently been allayed through the ability to 'back fill' investment portfolios (Sparkes and Cowton, 2004). By this it is meant that investment managers have been able to identify stocks that

⁶¹ If one reduces the diversity of investable stocks this consequently reduces the potential to raise money and heightens the risk of investments failing.

perform in the same way as those that are excluded. For instance, it is argued that tobacco stocks operate in a defensive manner (where sales increase as the economy worsens). Thus, it is possible to offset this restriction by purchasing other stocks that operate in this way. Second, Sparkes and Cowton (2004) identify the practice of 'best in class' investment. Unlike exclusion 'best in class',

'means that socially responsible funds do not exclude whole sectors from their portfolios but include those companies in previously excluded sectors that are making the most effort to improve their social responsibility''

(Solomon et al., 2002:3).

This consequently leaves a large proportion of the investable universe open for Socially Responsible Investors. Third, Sparkes and Cowton (2004) identify the principle of engagement whereby, as described earlier, investors sit down and work with firms in order to render them more ethical.

Finally, while the majority of SRI has focussed upon equity investment, Pivo (2005) investigates the development of a nascent manner of conducting socially responsible investment in property and Cumming and Johan (2007) identify SRI techniques in private equity. For Pivo (2005) SRI within commercial property investments has mainly been related to the development of buildings with low environmental impacts. For him such buildings have, of late, provided investors with greater returns than conventional commercial property and consequently more people have been entering the market. Furthermore, he identifies four ways in which the industry may move forwards. First, the possible development of specific SRI Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITS) could widen participation in the market by attracting individual or small fund investors. Second, he suggests that there may be a growth in publicly tradable companies, 'that make conservation, urban revitalization

and sustainability a key part of their corporate strategy' (Pivo, 2005:18). This would provide a further ethical stock within the investable universe. Third, he argues that private funds may be developed to provide SRI property management to institutional investor and, fourth, socially screened real estate mutual funds would buy and sell SRI compliant property stock. In relation to private equity, Cumming and Johan (2007:395) identify the growth of fund managers who, 'act as intermediaries between institutional investors and entrepreneurial firms.' These investment managers provide the link between fledgling ethical businesses and SRI investors who are looking for private equity investments that fit within their ethical restrictions. However, they argue that the ethical component of these investments varies dependent upon geography and institutional structure. First, they suggest that, as investments become increasingly global, investors are unable to play such a 'hands on' role and consequently ethical considerations suffer. Cumming and Johan (2007) argue that this is especially prominent in regards to private equity investments in Asian firms. Second, they argue that 'fund of funds' investments again tend to be less ethical as the control of the original investor diminishes. Both property and private equity Socially Responsible Investments will be examined empirically within the thesis in relation to the investments of the Church of England.

3.5 Summary

In this chapter I have sought to introduce the economic theories and research that will be drawn upon in the rest of the thesis. Having identified the religious bodies that are to be studied within Chapter Two I continued by identifying the way in which these will be conceptualized; economic institutionalism. Indeed, the chapter argued that a 'formal', 'old institutionalist' approach will be adopted in order

to investigate the Church of England, Baptist Union of Great Britain and the Assemblies of God as being capitalistic entities. This will provide a clear framework for studying the bodies and their ongoing attempts to reproduce themselves. Having identified this framework I moved on to discuss work upon the key topic of the thesis; the relationship between capitalism and religion. However, it was argued that whilst these two ideologies have to interact if a religious institution is to be reproduced. Yet, this interaction, although essential, is problematic and causes tension. It is this tension that the thesis will move on to investigate empirically.

4. Studying God's Institutions

Having introduced the relevant literature, this chapter will further provide the context for the thesis by outlining the research methods used within the project. It consists of three sections. First, in line with the arguments of Bruno Latour (2005), I will argue that the research has been influenced by a theoretical approach; assemblages. In so doing, I will identify how Latour has argued that the related approach of Actor-Network-Theory has altered from being a philosophy to an overarching methodology. I will also highlight how this methodological framework has shaped the practical and theoretical approach to research, particularly in relation to the previously identified tensions surrounding the need to adopt either a scale or network approach. Second, I will highlight the research methods used within the project – informal interviews and participant observation – and discuss their strengths and weaknesses. Finally, I will reflect upon notions of researcher positionality and highlight how this has affected the empirical data presented in Chapters Five, Six, and Seven.

4.1 Theoretical Methods

In his 2005 work, 'Reassembling the Social', Latour proposed a new approach to social science research and, in so doing, repositioned his Actor-Network-Theory (ANT) from being a philosophy to a methodology. In this volume he critiques traditional social science methodologies as being flawed due to inherent notions of 'the social' as being both a pre-conceived and separate entity. Indeed, for Latour,

this, traditional, research approach treats 'the social' as being an established, isolated, organism that mediates the outside behaviours it comes into contact with.

'There exists a social 'context' in which non-social activities take place; it is a specific domain of reality; it can be used as a specific type of causality to account for the residual aspects that other domains (psychology, law, economics, etc.) cannot completely deal with'

(Latour, 2005:4)

Due to this, perceived, isolation of social phenomenon he argues that sociology, and sociologists, have traditionally taken the approach of being outside of the entity that they are researching. Furthermore, it is argued that it is only through this 'outsider' view that one can establish a comprehensive understanding of 'society'; with those included in it blinded by their participation. This, thus, prioritises the outside position of the researcher providing them with a 'God's eye view' of the events studied. However, against this notion of 'sociology', Latour argues that;

'There is nothing specific to social order; that there is no social dimension of any sort, no 'social context', no distinct domain of reality to which the label 'social' or 'society' could be attributed; that no 'social force' is available to explain the residual features other domains cannot account for; [and] that members know very well what they are doing even if they don't articulate it to the satisfaction of the observers'

(Latour, 2005:4)

Latour sees everything as connected together through a series of networks. This has several implications for sociology. First, due to everything being interconnected, Latour argues that it would be wrong to argue that any particular activity is mediated

by society, as mediation invokes notions of initial separation. Instead, any imaginable activity is already inherently bound up in, and a part of, the 'social'. This is in contrast to traditional social science approaches which have sought to investigate the effect of society upon phenomenon⁶². It is in this way that Latour (2005) has investigated the development of science, arguing that the 'natural' and 'social' sciences are co-constituents within each others' make up. Thus, the ANT approach entails that both everything, and nothing, is 'social' as everything is included in the same network. Therefore, Latour summarises that there is no such distinct entity as the 'social' for 'social scientists' to study. Second, the interconnection of everything within networks has a significant effect upon the role of the sociologist researcher. They are no longer able to establish their independence from 'the society' that they are studying as, through participation in the same network, they are also included within it. This reduces the sociologist to a position similar to that of any other actor within the network and, consequently, renders redundant any claims to an objective or 'God's eye view'. Instead, Latour suggests that the researchers' view is, in the same manner of any other network actor, partial. Thus, Latour argues that a new method of approaching social science research is required where the researcher seeks to gain an overview of a phenomenon by 'patching together' a number of partial viewpoints; a role that he argues ANT may fulfil.

'The duties of the social scientist mutate accordingly: it is no longer enough to limit actors to the role of informers offering cases of some well-known types. You have to grant them back the ability to make up their own theories of what the social is made of. Your task is no longer to impose some order, to

⁶² In traditional sociological perspective the social scientist seeks to find the effect of society on a studied item. So institutionalism would be studying how the social element of institutions mediates economic behaviour. However, by arguing that they are part of the same network it is impossible to study the influence of one thing upon the other as they are co-constituent.

limit the range of acceptable entities, to teach actors what they are, or to add some reflexivity to their blind practice. Using a slogan from ANT, you have 'to follow the actors themselves', that is, try to catch up with their often wild innovations in order to learn from them what the collective existence has become in their hands, which methods they have elaborated to make it fit together, which accounts could best define the new associations that they have been forced to establish.'

(Latour, 2005:12)

This necessitates that the researcher embraces his position within the network to follow flows so as to steadily build up a pattern, or overview, of the studied behaviour. Indeed, Latour (1999) argues that the acronym ANT is appropriate as the sociologist becomes like an ant; in order to research one needs to 'scurry' around following actors and network flows wherever they are and wherever they go in order to build up a 'bigger picture' of the entity that one is studying. This, thus, repositions ANT as being a methodology rather than being a post-structuralist theory.

This conceptual and methodological, approach was adopted within the conduct of my research. Each of the three religious institutions were conceptualised as being assemblages of networks made up of flows of actors and resources. Thus, in conducting the research, I identified the key actors within each institution and followed the network flows through and around them (The practical implementation of this approach will be further discussed later in the chapter).

However, the adoption of a Latourian approach to 'social science' research created a number of problems and conflicts for this project. First, institutional approaches have traditionally been associated with the sociological approach that Latour critiques. Indeed, institutional researchers have traditionally – albeit indirectly

– set up a dialectic between the entities of the institution and the economy, thus following the idea that ‘society’ is a separate entity. For instance, James (2005), (who looks at the impact that of the Mormon Church upon the development of business within Salt Lake City), separates the culture of Mormonism from the practical aspects of the economy. By highlighting the moderating effect Mormonism has had upon the local economy, he is implicitly separating the social culture as being distinct from the economy. To further exemplify; if Mormonism is to influence the economy it must initially be different from it. Thus, institutionalism, as an approach, implicitly separates the ‘society’ from the ‘economy’. Instead, a Latourian approach to institutionalism would theorise institutional culture and the economy as being part of the same, constantly reproduced and performative, network with the two entities fusing together every time that the network flows or is refreshed. Furthermore, the thesis will argue that these particular institutional-economic cultures, in line with notions of institutional space, are spatially constrained as the extent to which their networks extend are limited. Second, as briefly discussed within Chapter Three, institutions have traditionally been theorized as being stable and consistent entities. For instance, James’ approach suggests that the Mormon Church provides a stable and unchanging influence upon the economy. He argues that every Mormon believes, and puts into practice, every element of the Church’s faith system to the same extent. Furthermore, this line of argument seems to suggest that the principles of the Mormon Church have not changed, nor will they change over time. This runs in contrast to the post-structural element of Latour’s theory, which argues that the networks of society are constantly in transition as the pattern and direction of network flow is consistently changing. This means that, for Latour, every element of the network is always in flux and, as a result, no entity is stable. This provides a further conflict between Latour’s approach and the treatment of institutionalism

within geography. However, this thesis argues that it is possible to reconcile the two approaches through the work of Veblen (1988). As discussed within Chapter Three, Veblen argued that institutions, through the virtuous circle, need to consistently alter themselves if they are to stay relevant to a changing social environment. Thus, they need to consistently alter their networks rather than remain a stable entity. Consequently, this alternative approach to institutionalism fits more closely with the post-structural work of Latour. The final conflict arising is that of the current debate around the use of scale within Geography. Whereas, Latour's (1987; 1999) approach reduces everything to the flat ontology of a network, thereby negating scale as a concept, the three institutions studied are organized around a clear scalar platform (Cox, 1995). Therefore, whilst the institution may take on a network form, they also inherently, and contradictorily, contain scale. The chapter will now move on to discuss this conflict in more depth and suggest that the modified ANT approach of 'Assemblages' may provide a solution.

4.2.1 Scalar Approaches

As discussed in Chapter Five, each of the Assemblies of God, Baptist Union of Great Britain and the Church of England's institutional structures are strongly premised on scalar hierarchies. Indeed, each institution is comprised of a national, regional and local body. Consequently, this section will provide an overview of work upon scale in this form before contrasting it with the flat ANT approach.

While there is no theoretical agreement as to what is meant by the term 'scale' (Marston et al, 2005), Marston (2000:220 emphasis in original) draws upon Lam and Quattrochi (1992) to identify four broad schools of thought. First, '*Cartographic Scale* is the relationship between the distance on a map [and] the

corresponding distance on the ground.’ Second, ‘*Geographic scale* refers to the spatial extent of a phenomenon or a study’. Third, ‘*Operational Scale* corresponds to the level at which relevant processes operate’. Finally, ‘scale also refers to measurement or the level of resolution, such that large-scale studies incorporate coarse resolution while small-scale studies are based on fine resolution.’ As suggested by Marston (2000) and by Brenner (2001), geographers have traditionally utilised scale in Lam and Quattrochi’s second sense; that is, scale (in a manner resembling Euclidean or Cartesian theory⁶³) as being a, ‘fixed, bounded, self enclosed and pre-given container’ (Brenner, 2001:592). To paraphrase, within this treatment, the boundaries of the different scales become absolute in that nothing passes between them⁶⁴. For Marston (2000) and Marston et al (2005), this notion of scale as, ‘fixed, bounded, self enclosed and pre-given’ has meant that scale has taken on a hierarchical form with higher scales formed by the grouping together of various smaller bounded spaces.

‘We find at the base of all of these corrections and extensions [geographical works on scale], ... a foundational hierarchy – a verticality that structures the nesting so central to the concept of scale.’

(Marston et al, 2005:419)

Thus, space is ordered in a ‘stepped’ level of scales, ranging outwards from the body of the individual, to the local, the regional, the national and the global. This is often

⁶³ The Greek philosopher Euclid created a rigid geometric system that has become known as Euclidean or Cartesian space (Russell, 2007). This created a system of reducing the three dimensional real world into two dimensional maps so that this space can be visually represented. For Pickles (2009:220) this treatment of space has been adopted within geography as ‘absolute’ and ‘homogenous’ in that the areas that are visually represented, and thus segregated, become distinct from and alien to others.

⁶⁴ Authors from a regional studies perspective have, thus, utilised this approach to scale to argue that each region has a particular institutional culture that is contained within, and does not travel beyond, its boundaries (Amin, 2004)

explained via the metaphor of a Russian doll that decreases in size each time one opens it. In addition, the Euclidean notion of these scales as being absolute means that there is no interaction between each of these steps⁶⁵. Consequently, within geographical research notions of global and national have traditionally superseded the smaller scales of regional and local as it has been believed that the larger scales hold more power and thus more interest⁶⁶ (Leitner and Miller, 2007).

This hierarchical approach has been subject to major criticism. Authors such as Marston et al (2005) and Latour (2005) have attacked it as being preordained and that it has thus rendered any research material subservient to the theory.

‘Levels of scale are in danger of becoming ‘conceptual givens’, reflecting more the contingency of socially constructed political boundaries and associated data reporting than any serious reflection on socio-spatial process.’

(Marston et al, 2005:422)

For Cumbers et al (2003), despite its flaws, institutional approaches have traditionally been associated with this Euclidean approach to scale. Indeed, they argue that, within the UK, the particular regional development policies of the government have seen the prioritization and development of the region as a key scale of government. This has consequently been mirrored by the development of the theoretical concept of ‘new regionalism’ within economic geography and fits with the, prior, identification of ‘institutional space’ (Martin, 2000) (which argues that an institution’s influence is tied to a certain area). Furthermore, and of particular

⁶⁵ This is refuted by the work of Brenner (2001) who attempts to take a structural approach to scale. Indeed, he argues that each scale is formed by its relations to the other. This work represents a compromise between work upon Euclidean notions of scale and network relativism.

⁶⁶ This is especially shown within conventional work upon globalization.

interest to this thesis, Isin (2007) argues that the Medieval Church played a key role within the development of this manner of scalar thinking:

‘It should also be mentioned that the legislative, administrative and judicial organization of the medieval Church between the twelfth and sixteenth centuries was certainly a precursor to the birth of scalar thought’

(Isin, 2007:216).

Indeed, Isin argues that the administrative system of religion was adopted by many nations, as is reflected in the UK where ‘Parish Council’ remains a contemporary scale of governance.

However, in relation to this project, I argue that both the hierarchical and absolute nature of the scalar argument is of limited use for understanding the Churches in question for three reasons. First, although the institutions are organized in a scalar sense (with each displaying a local Church, regional and then national body), in contrast to the hierarchical model, the national scale is not necessarily the most powerful (this will be further developed within Chapter 5). Indeed, within the Baptist Union the national scale of the organization is subservient to the local. Second, a key part of the thesis seeks to identify the financial and knowledge flows between the entities at the different scales of the institution⁶⁷. In a bounded approach this is not possible. Third, whilst Cumbers et al (2003) have identified the theoretical links between economic institutionalism and hierarchical scale, Allen and Cochrane (2007) (through critical study of systems of regional governance and scale⁶⁸) argue that this approach is not necessarily appropriate. Although institutions

⁶⁷ For instance within the Church of England these different scalar entities include the local Parish Church, the Diocesan Board and the national Church bodies.

⁶⁸ Allen and Cochrane (2007) critically study concepts of scale through the level of governance of ‘the region’ in the UK. They argue that although this scale is embedded into the UK political

are limited to their particular institutional space, they argue that this area of influence can transcend the Euclidean boundaries of the region. Instead, they suggest that when studying institutions one should adopt a network perspective in order to trace the institutions particular paths of influence.

4.2.2 Social, Relational and ANT Approaches to Scale

Following the arguments of Allen and Cochrane (2007) I wish to now return to discuss the validity of alternative approaches to scale. As argued by Leitner and Miller (2007), many geographers have rejected the pre-ordained notions of scalar hierarchy, arguing that these are not appropriate to the study of geographical activity. Indeed, Leitner and Miller suggest that scalar approaches have, 'resulted in inadequate attention to the practices and spaces of everyday and not so everyday life' (Leitner and Miller, 2007:116). Consequently, in contrast to pre-ordained notions of hierarchical scale, many authors have attempted to approach the debate in a more nuanced manner. This has commonly taken the form of the argument that scale is a socially produced, rather than a pre-given, phenomenon (Marston, 2000; Brenner, 2001; Latour, 2005). Instigated by the rescaling effect of globalization⁶⁹ (Cumbers, MacKinnon and McMaster, 2003; Brenner, 2001; Leitner and Miller, 2007) this argument has developed in two stages. First, Marston (2000), Brenner (2001), and Isin (2007) highlight the importance of the work of Smith (1984; 1992; 1995; 2003; 2004) in the development of the 'politics of scale'. Marston (2000:221) argues that Smith's thesis is best described by the notion that scale is not only artificial but that it

system, it is not self serving. Instead, they state that 'the region' was formed, and is continually influenced, by factors outside of its area. Consequently, they re-conceptualise 'the region' as being a part of a multi-scalar assemblage with network flows that continually transcend its boundaries.

⁶⁹ Each of these authors has argued that the growth in influence of globalization has caused change within the conventional hierarchies of scale rendering their inadequacies visible.

'is a political process endemic to capitalism.' Smith contends that scale is created due to capitalist practices. Indeed, he argues that it, 'is part of a systematic hierarchy that maintains and facilitates the different processes involved in the accumulation and circulation of capital in a fully integrated space-economy' (Marston, 2000:229). To paraphrase, Smith argues that the endemic forces of capitalism have created scale as a method of ordering the labour market, and society in general, so as to allow for money to be accrued. Furthermore, this argument highlights that, unlike the Euclidean argument, scales are not fixed or pre-given. Rather, scales are seen to be continually mutating as they 'develop within the development of capital itself' (Smith, 1984:147). Second, Marston (2000) pushes the argument further to suggest that scale is socially produced. In addition to capitalism, wider notions of society, and social interaction, have been instrumental in the creation of scale.

'[T]here is nothing ontologically given about the traditional division between the home and locality, urban and regional, national and global scales [rather] [t]he differentiation of geographical scales establishes and is established through the geographical structure of social interactions'.

(Smith, 1992:73)

To further exemplify, Marston draws upon the creation of the scale of the home to suggest that this is produced by a number of factors including, primarily, the gendered role of the matriarch. Thus, whilst Euclidean notions argue that the scale of the home is pre-given within a hierarchical system, it is actually produced by the social interactions of the family and guided by a motherly presence.

These critiques of scale have led geographers to adopt different theories in response; including those of relational thinking, networks and, the aforementioned actor-network theory (Marston et al, 2005: Legg, 2009). For Marston et al (2005:417),

these approaches have sought to 'unravel the hierarchy at the heart of scalar theorizing.' Furthermore, they argue that the concepts have sought to draw 'sustained attention to the intimate and divergent relations between bodies, objects, orders and spaces' (Marston et al, 2005:424). Consequently, the focus of relational approaches is not upon scale itself but, rather, on the relationship between different entities irrespective as to what 'scale' they function at. Concentration is thus placed upon understanding the direct links between entities, rather than separating them through scalar boundaries. Due to this focus upon interaction the associated approaches have traditionally been termed as relational as they study each object through its relations and interconnections with another (Massey, 1994). As previously argued, this relational focus is mirrored within the work of Latour and wider notions of Actor-Network Theory. Indeed, in Latourian thought scale does not exist at all. Instead, every actor exists on a flat plane of networked relations. Thus, in contrast to building hierarchies and placing bodies within the associated power relation, the Latourian researcher simply draws lines connecting the different bodies (Marston et al, 2005) and investigates the flows between them. Therefore, for Marston et al (2005), relational and scalar approaches are consequently irreconcilable binary opposites and the researcher has to, consequently, choose between them.

'We reject recent attempts to produce hybrid, both / and solutions that link hierarchical [scale] with network conceptualizations of socio-spatial processes. In a nutshell, our argument is that hierarchical scale comes with a number of foundational weaknesses that cannot be overcome simply by adding on to or integrating with network theorizing.'

(Marston et al, 2005:417)

Turning back to the empirical focus of the thesis, as argued at the outset of this section, the 'relative' concentration of Actor-Network theory would have provided a useful way of theorizing the institutions within the project. Indeed, the concentration upon tracing the relationship between the differing bodies of the institution and their financial flows would allow for the process of institutional reproduction to be highlighted. However, like explicitly scalar approaches, this ANT approach has a number of conceptual flaws; primarily those of the lasting effects of scale and power within the institutions. First, despite concentrating upon the relations between the different bodies in the institution the aforementioned scalar organization continues to have an effect⁷⁰. This continued legacy of scale is highlighted within the network literature by both Legg (2009) and Allen and Cochrane (2007). In contrast to Marston et al (2005), Legg (2009) argues that notions of scale cannot be entirely ignored.

'Their [Marston et al] abandonment of scale, however, hints at a utopianism that wishes away the effects of scalar arguments and practices on the materialities to which the authors are committed.'

(Legg, 2009:237)

Legg argues that by including scale within a networked perspective one is able to provide a solution to the second conceptual problem of relational approaches; that of power. Indeed, both McFarlane (2009) and Leitner and Miller (2007) argue that network approaches, by creating a flat ontology, ignore notions of power inherent within scalar thought. For them, the theoretical metaphor suggests that power is shared evenly throughout the network. However, through analysis of empirical material, both papers argue that power is not evenly distributed in this manner but

⁷⁰ This is further argued within chapter 5

that several network nodes play a dominant role. It is in this manner that Legg (2009), amongst other authors, argues that notions of scale can enrich network approaches.

‘The unequal distribution of power relations in the world make a human geography without scale both idealistic and unrepresentative of the lived and historical specific hierarchies which scalar rhetoric and technologies create, both epistemologically and ontologically. This is not to insist that processes operate at scalar levels, or that there are higher or lower scalar planes. Rather it is to acknowledge both the vital nature of scale as a narrative for describing the world (Jonas, 2006), and the impact of scale on practices of government, capitalism, patriachalism and numerous other forms of power relation’

(Legg, 2009:237)

The manner in which this reconciliation between scale and networks is proposed is through ‘assemblages’ (Legg, 2009) and it is to this that the chapter now turns.

4.2.2 Assemblages

Legg (2009) contends that assemblages provide a modified version of ANT that allows for both the inclusion of scale and the notion of entities being conglomerates of multiple networks. Indeed, Escobar (2007) parodies de Landa to define assemblages as the following:

‘Wholes whose properties emerge from the interactions between parts; they can be any entity: interpersonal networks, cities, markets, nation-states etc

... The idea is to convey a sense of the irreducible social complexity of the world. Assemblage theory is thus an alternative to the organic and structural totalities postulated by classical social science.'

(Escobar, 2007:107)

Consequently, an assemblage is a number of inter-connected networks that make up a body. While this will be discussed further in relation to empirical material within chapter five, I will argue that formal institutions are assemblages in this style; they are interconnected networks of distinct bodies that make up a formal whole. Thus, the Church of England is an assemblage made up of connections between disparate networks at the level of the Parish Church, Diocese, and the National Church bodies. This reflects the dissimilar nature of the institutions discussed by Schoenberger in Chapter Three, as each of the differing bodies she discusses would have a network of its own.

Like ANT, the ideas of assemblages have their routes in post-structuralist theory. Hence, it is argued that the particular networks that make up an assemblage are not stable or permanent, but constantly in flux (Legg, 2009; Allen and Cochrane, 2007; Isin, 2007; Escobar, 2007; MacFarlane 2009; Marcus and Saka, 2006; Latour, 2005). Indeed, the component elements of an assemblages' network are constantly changing and thus so is the assemblage itself. This returns to one of major tensions of adopting a post-structuralist approach within this work; many of the phenomenon studied as assemblages, such as institutions themselves (Allen and Cochrane, 2007), are seen to be stable entities. For Marcus and Saka (2006), this represents the major paradox of assemblage theory in that a post-structural entity, the assemblage, takes on a fixed structured form.

‘The term itself in its material referent invests easily in the image of structure, but is nonetheless elusive. The time-space in which assemblage is imagined is inherently unstable and is infused with movement and change. Assemblage thus seems structural, an object with the materiality and stability of the classic metaphors of structure, but the intent in its aesthetic uses is precisely to undermine such ideas of structure.’

(Marcus and Saka, 2006:102)

For Legg (2009), Isin (2007), and McFarlane (2009) this apparent structure is caused by the presence of ‘apparatuses of capture’ within the assemblage’s network. These are elements that attempt to temporarily fix network in place, thus allowing for, an element of, stability. This concept is reflected within the work of Isin (2007) upon the nation state.

‘To institute the state as an assemblage requires apparatuses of capture that will territorialize flows and reterritorialize those that escape its capture and always threaten it with deterritorialization.’

(Isin, 2007:217)

To paraphrase, ‘Apparatuses of capture’ consequently render the networks of an assemblage more stable by sticking them in place.

It is as an ‘apparatus of capture’ that both Legg (2009) and Isin (2007) reintroduce scale to the network approach. Within this approach, like the work of Marston (2000), scale is seen as being a social creation; however, it is purposefully created in networks by people in order to stabilise flows in a certain direction. Thus, as argued by Smith, scale is manipulated for political ends by those seeking to control

the properties of networks. Isin (2007:217 emphasis in original) exemplifies this as follows,

‘Scalar thought produces scale as an apparatus of capture because scale is not merely a way of seeing the world *merely* produced by intellectuals, intelligentsia, scholars, literati and cognoscenti. Rather, it has been legally and politically instituted by creating nested and tiered hierarchies with exclusive territorial domains that grounded the formation of legitimate authorities for the appropriation of various forms of capital such as economic, social, symbolic and cultural by different social groups.’

However, it is important to remember that, while scale is socially produced, Jessop, Brenner and Jones (2008) argue that it be wrong to place this development outside of the network. Indeed, they argue that the development of scale itself can be a process of the networks flows. This is reflected in the arguments of Legg (2009). While he reintroduces scale into networks, he does so in a flat rather than hierarchical form. Using Latour (2005), Legg argues that networked scale remains ontologically flat and refers to the various size of a network. Thus, to use a Church analogy, the network of the scale of a Parish Church would contain fewer nodes than that of the regional diocese or national Church. Thus, scalar ‘apparatuses of capture’ within assemblages are groupings of networks of different sizes.

The thesis has implemented this assemblage approach to understanding institutions in three ways. First, the institutions are considered to be assemblages of various disparate networks. Second, these disparate networks are organized in a scalar ‘apparatus of capture’. Thus, to, again, relate this to the empirical case studies, The Church of England, The Baptist Union, and The Assemblies of God are comprised of links between disparate networks at the national, regional, and local level.

However, as argued by Latour (2005) these are not hierarchical levels but networks, of different sizes and extents, that exist on the same flat ontology. These links enable the Churches to display a coherent institutional structure whilst sharing financial resources throughout. Adopting an assemblage approach thus enabled the author to concentrate upon the relations, and network connections, between the various bodies of each institution and, in so doing, study the effect that their scalar organization has had upon this. Third, the adoption of an assemblage approach has had consequences for the particular approach to the research. As argued at the outset of the chapter, network research entails that the researcher is embedded within the topic that they are studying. Thus, rather than having an objective God's eye view, one is limited to the partial viewpoints available at the different nodes of the network. To exemplify, when studying, and positioned within, the networks of the local Church one is unable to see all of the wider network connections in the institutional assemblage. Instead, one has to map out the network at that point before moving on to another network elsewhere in the institution and doing the same. Thus, in order to achieve an oversight the researcher has to investigate the institution from a number of different sites and viewpoints. The chapter will now move on to investigate the effect that this approach has had upon the adoption of the practical research techniques used for data collection.

4.3 Justification of Chosen Methodologies

The research itself was characterised by a multiple methods approach, which was adopted for five reasons. First, Parry (1998) argues that network research often entails conducting investigation in several different sites and contexts. Thus, in order to see the partial viewpoints of the network the researcher is required to be flexible

in methodology. Therefore, by adopting multiple methods I was able to approach the partial viewpoints, embraced within network research, in two ways. This, consequently, allowed insight into the same phenomenon from two different perspectives at each different network position. Second, with the exceptions of the work of Pollard and Samers (2007) and James (2005), very little work has been conducted upon religion from an economic geography perspective. Accordingly, there is no acknowledged method for his type of research. A multiple methods approach therefore allowed the researcher to merge approaches from a variety of disciplines⁷¹ in order to obtain the necessary results. Third, England (2001) identifies the historic change of perception in relation to objectivity and notions of rigour in research. For her the 1990s were characterised by a rejection of objective, positivistic, quantitative methodology and an acceptance of more qualitative approaches. Like the arguments of Latour (2005), this embraced the notion that the researcher is a part of, and not detached from, the subject researched. In so doing, England (2001) argues that this has allowed the researcher increasing freedom to approach a subject from different perspectives. Finally, multiple methods allowed for the triangulation of results. While being no guarantee of rigorous practice, Berg (2001:4) suggests that this enables the researcher to, 'obtain a better, more substantive picture of reality; a richer, more complete array of symbols and theoretical concepts and a means of verifying many of these elements.'

The chapter will now turn to investigate the particular individual methodologies that make up this multiple method approach (the semi-structured interview and participant observation) and identify how these were used.

⁷¹ Of particular use here is a research guide produced by Booth (1998) on how to research within Churches from a critical accountancy perspective.

4.3.1 Participant Observation

For Kumar (1996:105) participant observation is best described as being, 'a purposeful, systematic and selective way of watching and listening to an interaction or phenomenon as it takes place.' It entails the researcher participating in the activity under study for a period of time in order to gain a firsthand comprehension of it and recording their experiences of doing so.

It is possible to identify five advantages for the use of participant observation within a study of this kind. First, Evans (1988) argues that participant observation is a naturalistic approach. Indeed, he argues that the approach attempts to capture, and describe, reality as it is (hence naturalistic) rather than manipulating it – for example through statistical analysis – in order to create results. Therefore, Evans argues that the approach, through the physical process of participation, allows the researcher to blend into the environment and record it as it is rather than purposefully disrupt it. This is appropriate to the assemblage approach as it allows the research to integrate and position themselves within the network that is being studied. Second, in a related argument, Burgess (1984) proposes that the naturalist perspective of participant observation gives the researcher access to the meanings actors assign to their own social situation. By this it is meant that it is possible for the researcher to gain an understanding of a particular situation from the perspective of those involved. Furthermore, this enables the researcher to elicit the particular language used by participants in the setting observed, thus enabling them to describe it within 'practitioners' terms. Third, Kumar (1996) argues that participant observation is ideal for studies that are interested in behaviour. Indeed, Burgess (1984) suggests that through this approach it is often possible to understand irrational behaviour, rendering it rational. This is believed to be of particular importance for the study as it

focuses upon personal opinions. This is reflected within the key topics of financial giving to the Church, the choice of Church to attend, and the 'irrational' behaviour of 'special money'⁷² (Zelizer, 1994). Fourth, for Evans (1988), the methodology allows the researcher a great deal of flexibility, rendering them able to adapt their approach on the spot. This is important within network analysis as what is deemed appropriate at different nodes of the network may differ. Finally, Burgess (1984) argues the greatest advantage of participant observation is that it allows the construction of a rich, detailed data set, based around an account of actual events.

It is also important to note that there are a number of significant criticisms attached to the use of participant observation. Kumar (1996) identifies four problems to be considered when conducting participant observation. These are: the 'Hawthorne Effect'; Observer bias; varying observations, and; the conflict of observing and recording. First, the 'Hawthorne Effect'⁷³ occurs when people alter their behaviour once they recognise that they are being watched. This offers a dilemma to the researcher, posing the question as to whether investigation should be conducted in a covert or overt way. Within this project participation observation was conducted in an overt manner so as to empower the people studied with the ability to choose to opt out of the research and thus avoid associated ethical problems. Consequently, it is accepted that all of the results produced within the thesis may have been modified due to this effect. Second, Kumar suggests that observer bias can affect observational recordings. According to Evans (1988) this ties into the most important aspect of participant observation, the relationship between the researcher and the researched. What is important, he argues, is a great deal of introspection on the part of the researcher in order to discover and highlight any bias

⁷² The concept of 'Special Money' is described in Chapter Three

⁷³ Diaper (1990) argues that the term 'Hawthorne Effect' allegedly originates from a study into worker productivity at the Western Electric Company in Hawthorne, Illinois where the effect was first noted.

that their character may have had within their work. However, as mentioned earlier, England (2001) notes how attitudes towards research methodology have changed. Indeed, one criticism of positivistic quantitative work is that it does not allow for researcher bias. In contrast, some researchers believe that acceptance and acknowledgement of bias, as is the case with participant observation, is favourable (Evans, 1988). Third, Kumar argues that observations will differ from person to person. In order to counter such a situation Burgess (1984) argues that the observer should produce a set of instructions, including details of his or her attitudes to the bodies studied, that would enable another researcher to produce the same results. Finally, Kumar highlights the problem of recording versus observing, believing that is impossible to do both and thus some data is lost.

Participant observation was conducted at a minimum of four Church services at both the Baptist Union and Church of England case studies. Unfortunately, whilst members of staff were willing to be interviewed, it was impossible to negotiate access to conduct participant observation in the Assemblies of God Church. As a result, the Assemblies of God have not been studied in this manner. Due to both of the Anglican and Baptist Churches operating a variety of different services to their congregation⁷⁴ it was deemed important to attend each of these services, at least once, so as to get a feeling for the whole Church rather than just a part of it. Furthermore, every attempt was made to engage with members of the congregation rather than sit at the back of the Church and observe. This enabled me to ascertain the views of a wide range of people, thus engaging with more partial network

⁷⁴ As discussed within Chapter 6 the particular Church of England parish studied within the project operated a model of three different services, at 9am, 10:45am, 7pm. Each of these services had a different emphasis with the early morning one being traditional in focus and aimed predominantly at the elderly members of the congregation, the 10:45 was rendered appropriate to young families and the 7pm was evangelical in nature and attracted a youthful congregation approximately between 16 and 40 years of age. In contrast, the Baptist Church offered two services; one in the morning for families and a more theologically engaged one in the evening for adults.

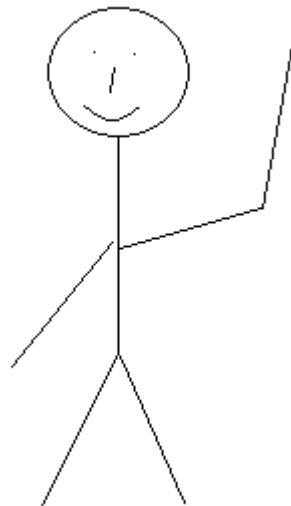
viewpoints, and to participate more fully in the Church activity. Consequently, in each instance a seat was taken towards the centre of the Church and I arrived early so as to allow time to interact with the congregation before the service began. This process of interaction varied in success depending upon the involvement of the clergyman or pastor. Indeed, congregational members were more open to interact and share views with me when I had either been personally introduced by a senior figure within the Church or an announcement was made highlighting my presence. Consequently, much more data was obtained from the Baptist rather than the Anglican Church as the pastor repeatedly informed the whole congregation as to who I was and encouraged them to talk to me at the beginning of each service.

In line with the arguments of Burgess (1984), every attempt was made to produce an account, or diary, of the event observed as soon as possible after it had finished (an example of a diary is included as Appendix 1) However, her argument that one should negate data loss by taking notes during the event was deemed implausible. Due to the active nature of worship, particularly within the Baptist Church – where congregational members were regularly asked to stand and to participate in worship through moving their bodies – a notebook would have proved to be prohibitive to participation. Consequently, emphasis was placed upon remembering details and producing the diary in the form of a ‘chain of consciousnesses’⁷⁵. Whilst inevitably the data was compromised by this, it is argued that the consequences of utilising a notebook would have been more severe. This prohibitive movement is documented within my research diary as shown below.

‘During the hymns the congregation joined in when they felt moved to, indeed several people stood up at certain points and sat down at others.

⁷⁵ This entailed returning home and producing a long list of things that happened as I remembered them. These were then written up and incorporated within the formal diary.

There was no rigid structure to the music. Generally the songs began low key and gentle with a gently 'grooving' bassline, many of the congregation were swaying from side to the side along with the music. As the segment moved on the songs got more powerful, perhaps a better way of explaining it would be that they had a greater intensity, although they all maintained along the same emotive Chords [sic] (I think they were minor chords of the type that are emotionally stirring). Initially, this was greeted with general swaying (and singing) along amongst the congregation. As the songs moved on people were raising their hands in the air and several were representing emotion through raising both arms as if lifting (see dancing diagram below)'



(Research Diary, Baptist Church, 03/02/2008)

Finally, again, following the work of Burgess (1984) a statement of positionality and ethics was created in order to set the mindset and approach to the faith that I would be using when conducting this research. This will be discussed further within the positionality section of this chapter.

4.3.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

Eyles (1988) argues that a semi-structured interview is, in essence, a 'conversation with a purpose' between a researcher and a person, or people, involved with the topic that is being studied. This is used to ascertain a comprehensive amount of information about a subject that, due to a wide range of possible parameters, cannot be covered in a simple tick box questionnaire (Valentine, 1997). Consequently, Valentine (1997:111) suggests that 'they take a conversational, fluid form, [with] each interview varying according to the interests, experiences and views of the interviewees.' The process is driven by the researcher who produces a list of topics to be covered and attempts to guide the conversation in that direction.

This approach has four primary advantages for a study of this type. First, as a large proportion of the research aims to elucidate views, opinions, and feelings it was deemed important to adopt a methodology that allows participants to explain themselves within their own words. Valentine (1997:111) argues that the semi-structured interview has the advantage of being 'sensitive and people-orientated, allowing interviewees to construct their own accounts of their experiences by describing and explaining their lives in their own words.' This is important in network research as the researcher is seeking to partial viewpoint of the person being interviewed. Second, in line with this, Hughes (1999) notes that it is important to empower the people being researched with a degree of agency. By allowing a conversational format the respondent is able to talk about things that are important to the study that the researcher may have been unaware of (cf. Latour, 2005). As previously discussed, in network research one needs to allow actors the opportunity to shape the research rather than imposing a prior order upon them. Semi-structured interviews are thus congruent with the thesis' attempt to map the assemblage of each institution. Third, Schoenberger (1991:183) argues that the key advantage of

semi-structured interviews is that they make respondents 'think things through'. By this it is meant that whilst a respondent may not initially think something is significant, after further thought they may do. Thus an item that may be glossed over in other research approaches is fully discussed. Finally, the semi-structured interview allowed for the identification of further contacts through the process of snowballing (Valentine, 1997). This is especially useful within projects tracing the flow of something, as again the concentration upon assemblages entailed, as it was possible to ask someone as to where the next stage of the network is.

Several criticisms have been levelled against the utilization of semi-structured interviews. McDowell (1998) identifies problems relating to power structures within interviews. Within the context of the corporate interview the researcher can often be put in a position as being inferior to the subject. For example, this can result in problems in relation to the negotiation of access (McDowell, 1998), establishing control over the interview (Schoenberger, 1991) and can lead to demands to see transcripts of interviews as well as final works. Buchannon *et al* (1988) argue that the best way to counter such a situation is through the development of a rapport with the interviewee. Similarly interviews were conducted with people who are not considered to be 'elite'. This created a problem in relation to a different power relation; where the researcher was cast in a relative position of power and thus may seem threatening to a respondent. Second, as with participant observation many authors have highlighted a perceived lack of objectivity within the interview process. This is of particular significance given the positionality difficulties involved with studying religion (as discussed below) (Valentine, 1997). However, as identified earlier, academic trends are changing towards an acceptance that some bias will be included within every study and that, instead of aiming for objectivity, the researcher should be reflexive about his or her own views (Eyles, 1997).

I conducted 41 informal interviews with 50 respondents. Several of these interviews were conducted with more than one person and some people agreed to follow up meetings. All of these interviews are listed in Table 4.1. Where permission was given these interviews were recorded on a Dictaphone and subsequently transcribed and analysed. An example of a transcript is included as Appendix 2. These interviews were conducted in a variety of settings, ranging from Investment Banks, to the national offices of the Church of England and the local Churches themselves. In addition, seven short interviews were conducted with congregation members before and after Church services as part of the programme of participant observation. Whilst it was impossible to use a Dictaphone to accurately record these conversations, details were included within the research diary.

As highlighted above, due to the large variation in the social status of interviewees, a variety of different power relations were involved in the conduct of these interviews. When researching elite groups, such as investment bankers and officials within the Church, I had significantly less power in this relationship. As a result it proved difficult first to negotiate access – this was attempted predominantly through the practice of sending both letters (containing the University of Nottingham's letter head) and emails, following these up with phone calls in an attempt to book an appointment – and subsequently to retain control of interviews. Consequently, as suggested by Buchannon et al (1988), attempts were made to build rapport and generate a level of understanding between myself, the interviewer, and the respondent. This took two forms; first, in order to allow respondents to talk freely, negotiations surrounding anonymity and the right to edit took place before every interview. Indeed, as recommended by Schoenberger (1991), all interview respondents were offered, and sent, a completed version of the interview transcript. While this offer was only taken up once, respondents were free to highlight any areas

that they did not wish to be included in the thesis. This allowed interview respondents to talk freely about controversial matters knowing that they had the right to recall their words and that they would not be manipulated in a way so as to cause offence. In addition, interviewees were promised an appropriate level of anonymity. This anonymity varied between the different organizations. The 'local' Church was awarded total anonymity (apart from that of their denominational affiliation) but key bodies at other scales (within the apparatus of capture (Isin, 2007)) were named due to the impossibility of keeping them secret⁷⁶. However, although levels of anonymity at the organizational level varied, all individuals were granted total anonymity so as to protect them from any negative impacts of the research. Second, it was notable that my positionality altered so as to enable the generation of trust. This will be discussed further within the positionality section of the chapter.

In contrast to the negative power relation of elite interviews, it is argued that I was in a position of power when conducting conversations with members of the congregation. However, again this created problems in relation to the enrolment of interview respondents. It was possible to detect a reticence from the institution's members to talk to me and a distrust as to what it was that I was doing. Consequently, as mentioned within the Participant Observation section of this chapter, more success in conducting these interviews occurred following a personal introduction from an 'elite' member of staff or from a notification as to my presence.

⁷⁶ For instance it was deemed impossible to write about CCLA and the Church Commissioners without the reader realising who these bodies are. Indeed, as the only investment managers responsible for those investments their identity is immediately recognisable.

Table 4.1 - Interviews Conducted

Interview Number	Position	Organization	Institution
1	Senior Manager	Church Commissioners Property Investment	Church of England
2	Senior Manager	Pension's Board	Church of England
3	Manager	Regional Trust Company	Baptist Union
4	Director	Kingdom Bank	Assemblies of God
5	Manager	Pension Fund	Baptist Union
6	Manager	CCLA SRI Department	Church of England
7	Investment Director and SRI Employee	CCLA	Church of England
8	Manager	CCLA SRI Department	Church of England
9	Manager SRI Department	Investment Bank	
10	Charity Sector Investment Manager	Investment Bank	
11	Senior Employee	Church Commissioners Policy Unit	Church of England
12	Manager Baptist Loan Fund and Senior Manager	Baptist Union Corporation	Baptist Union
13	Clergyman	Parish Church	Church of England
14	Finance Manager	Local Church	Assemblies of God
15	Pastor	Local Church	Baptist Union
16	Finance Secretary	Parish Church	Church of England
17	Pastor	Local Church	Vineyard Movement
18	Church Administrator	Local Church	Baptist Union
19	Lay Leader	Parish Church	Church of England
20	Senior Pastor	Local Church	Assemblies of God
21	Mission Coordinator	Archbishops' Council	Church of England
22	Workplace Chaplain	Diocese	Church of England
23	Clergyman	Mission Department	Baptist Union
24	Clergyman	Parish Church	Church of England
25	Lay Leader	Parish Church	Church of England

26	Treasurer	Local Church	Baptist Union
27	Business Manager	Local Church	Vineyard Movement
28	Stewardship Officer	Archbishops' Council	Church of England
29	Manager	Home Mission	Baptist Union
30	Treasurer	Regional Association	Baptist Union
31	5x People including Operations Manager	Baptist Insurance Company	
32	3 x People including Finance Director	Diocese	Church of England
33	2 x People Apportionment	Archbishop's Council	Church of England
34	Investment Manager	Investment Bank	
35	Investment manager	Pension's Board	Church of England
36	Retired Clergyman		Baptist Union
37	Director of Charity Programme	Local Church	Assemblies of God
38	Clergyman	Parish Church	Church of England
39	Manager Mission Department	Diocese	Church of England
40	Co-ordinator: Fresh Expressions	Diocese	Church of England
41	National Director: Fresh Expressions		Church of England

4.4 Access Constraints

When I initially adopted the multiple methods approach it was envisaged that the research diary would play a much more overt role in the thesis. Influenced by non-representational theory I intended to study the ways in which the different Church institutions had mobilised emotional practice in order to attract and embed religious consumers (Thrift, 2007). Thus, by providing a medium for recording my different thoughts and feelings as they were manipulated in the different Church services and then, subsequently, reflecting upon them, the research diary would have provided a useful method of collecting data. However, this particular area of

analysis had to be removed from the thesis due to the inability to negotiate sufficient access at the network node of the Church. At this node I was not granted permission to conduct participant observation on the Church services of the Assemblies of God nor was I able to encourage religious consumers to participate in semi-structured interviews. These constraints would have rendered the study into the use of emotions both partial and over reliant upon my own experience. Indeed, due to the missing participant observations, it was thought that the data set would be incomplete and that this would have rendered a comparative study impossible. Furthermore, the lack of semi-structured interviews with religious consumers meant that there would have been no insight into other participant's emotional experiences against which mine could have been compared. This would have entailed placing too large an emphasis on my own views. Again this was thought to be a terminal lack.

This difficulty in negotiating access at the network node of the local Church also meant that plans to conduct case studies of multiple Churches for each institution had to be abandoned. It was initially intended that the research would study two religious sites for each institution in order to identify the impact that the geography of a Church's location had upon its reproduction. However, unfortunately insufficient numbers of Churches were willing to be studied in this manner.

It was thought that the inability to attract interview participants at the network node of the Church may have been due to the particular subject matter of the thesis. It was possible to identify a clear difference in the perception of the acceptability of the study between the Churchgoers and the other people (such as investment managers, diocesan secretaries, and, to a lesser extent, the clergy) that were studied. On reflection it is thought that this may have been due to the different ways in which these potential interview respondents related to the topic. Whereas,

‘professional’ Church employees and office holders (such as the position of treasurer) were asked to talk about the Church as an organization that they were slightly removed from, the individual Church goers were being asked to reflect upon their own faith and belief systems. It appeared that this level of self-reflection and introspective examination was something very few people felt comfortable with or were willing to do. To some extent, the perception that one’s ‘faith’ is a private matter held sway. Consequently, it is my argument that this specific need to ask people to reflect upon their own beliefs explains the inability to gain sufficient research access at this node of the network.

4.5 Positionality

Due to their position of being placed within the network that is being researched notions of researcher positionality are of importance in both semi-structured interviews and participant observation. However, it is argued that notions of researcher positionality have been recast from a negative constraint upon research to being a positive enabling factor. Indeed, Phillips (2000:29) argues that geographers are now embracing their own ‘situatedness’⁷⁷. Drawing upon Hartstock (1983), he argues that researchers are actively using their positionality as an advantage, implementing ethnographic research methods (such as those used within this thesis), in order to position themselves within the studied phenomenon so as to gain richer, more comprehensive data. Thus, the researchers own character becomes an asset in attempts to integrate oneself within the studied network. Phillips argues that the personal characteristics of the researcher are increasingly important within the research itself;

⁷⁷ By this it is meant the particular identity, cultural background and any other factor that may influence the research results that are achieved.

‘Who we are influences what we can see, what we can research’, which means that, ‘(research) findings are dependent on others and their views of us (researchers)’ (Phillips, 2000:33 - 37).

The arguments of Phillips (2000) mirror the wider movement towards the importance of acknowledging positionality within all research. Indeed, Mullings (1999:337), paraphrasing Haraway (1991), argues that, ‘A researcher’s knowledge is ... always partial, because his/her positionality (perspective shaped by his/her unique mix of race, class, gender, nationality, sexuality and other identifiers), as well as location in time and space will influence how the world is viewed and interpreted.’ Likewise, Valentine (1997) suggests that all research findings are shaped in some way by the specific characteristics of the researcher conducting them. Consequently, this section of the chapter will discuss issues surrounding my positionality within the PhD research and how this has affected, not only the results obtained, but also myself as a person. It will, first, discuss notions of the importance of self reflexivity within research conduction before, second, discussing notions surround insider or outsider research.

4.5.1. Self-Reflexivity

For Rose (1997) the principle advantage of acknowledging the role of researcher positionality is that it grounds the work for a reader. By this it is meant that it enables the author to avoid notions of false neutrality and universality, common within so-called objective and positivistic research methods. Further, Rose (1997) suggests that the best method for achieving this grounding is by providing a self-reflexive account of the role of the researcher, and their specific positionality, within the data collection process. To allow the reader to ground the work in this

manner I will now provide a reflection upon the authors' own positionality. This will be influenced by the work of both Schweber (2007), and her research into Judaism and Christianity, as this provides one of the few methodological accounts of conducting ethnographic work within a religious setting. Researching teaching practices within fundamental religious schools, Schweber (2007) identified the important role her own faith, Judaism, played within the study. She argued that the positionality of the researcher is particularly marked when dealing with religious subjects, as one's faith immediately marks one as possibly being aligned to, or alien from, the subject under investigation. Whilst the specific details of how her faith interacted with data collection will be discussed in greater detail in the following section, this highlights the need to be aware of one's own beliefs, and the effects thereof, when investigating religion. Consequently, the chapter will now outline my own religious faith so that the reader can take this into account when studying the thesis.

I am a practising member of the Methodist Church, a Protestant denomination of Christianity, in Nuthall, Nottinghamshire and during the conduct of this research I attended their services approximately once a month. Despite broadly agreeing with the theology of this Church – including the Priesthood of all believers⁷⁸, interpretation rather than literal acceptance of the Bible and a focus upon individual notions of faith – and the Protestant interpretation of the faith in general, I do hold several reservations and feel uncomfortable with some parts of the faith. First, I do not agree with several aspects of evangelism. This particularly involves the practice of actively trying to 'convert' non-Christians. Second, I feel uncomfortable around public displays of faith and extroverted religious practice in general. This is due to my belief

⁷⁸ This is discussed in Chapter Two, however, in contrast to Catholic teaching, the 'Priesthood of all believers' generally refers to the notion that everyone can have a personal relationship with God.

that one's faith is a personal thing and should not be forced upon others. Third, while whole heartedly agreeing with ideas of missionary work, both local and global, that provides charitable relief, I do not believe that this should be attached to attempts to convert the beneficiaries. Finally, I am inherently concerned about the way in which the faith has been used within state politics. Instead, I believe that Church and State should be kept irrevocably separate along the lines of Humanism. Specifically this involves, but is not limited to, disagreements with faith schools and the teaching of Creationism within science.

In addition to notions of faith and belief, Mullings (1999) identifies the need for researchers to be reflexive about the effects of their body and personality. She found that her body, being both feminine and of Afro-Caribbean descent, and her middle class demeanour, allowed her to conduct research on several sensitive subjects (and, although she does not specifically place her within an ANT context, integrate networks) that other people may not have been able to study. However, she argues that this positionality also impinged negatively upon what information respondents divulged with them seeking not to say things that may contradict her character. Due to the importance that this places on image and upbringing I will now outline my personal characteristics. At the time of the research I was a 24 year old, White Male⁷⁹ and had been brought up within a middle class background. This has had two practical consequences for the thesis. First, as discussed earlier within the chapter, it had a bearing upon the institutions that were selected to be studied. It was deemed that these particular traits, coupled with my faith background, would prove to be a barrier should one have considered to study other faiths such as Islam. Second, as shown within the following section, it is argued that this positionality

⁷⁹ Subsequently only my age has changed.

assisted the research project as the members of the three Churches studied predominantly shared a similar background to me.

Whilst accepting the importance of self-reflection within research, there are many flaws to the technique. First, Harvey (1993), as quoted by Phillips (2000), suggests that self reflection has solely been used as a method to establish researcher superiority over the views of respondents.

‘Harvey (1993: 57-58) argues that such conceptualisations are frequently used as a rhetorical device ‘either to enhance the supposed authenticity and moral authority of one’s own accounts’ or else, ‘to deny the veracity of other accounts since she is black and female and of rural origins she cannot possibly have anything authentic to say about conditions of life of the white bourgeois in New York City’ (Phillips, 2000: 46)

However, as argued at the outset of the chapter, in adopting an assemblage approach I have attempted to downplay my role as the architect of narratives within the production of the research material. Instead, every attempt has been made to empower the research subjects to speak for themselves. Second, several authors have suggested that it is impossible to be reflexive about the researching ‘self’ as no such stable entity exists. Indeed, Fielding (2000) highlights how he utilised a large number of different versions of himself during the conduct of his rural field research. For example, in order to gauge reactions, and reach different participant demographics, he constantly changed his appearance during the period of data collection. Subsequently, he noted that different socio-economic and gendered groups responded positively to different versions of himself. Furthermore, Phillips (2000) suggests that the positionality of research respondents reflects back on the

researcher, consequently altering them in turn. For Rose (1997), this is due to the relational nature of identity. She argues that

, ‘...a sense of self depends on a sense of being different from someone else. Identity is theorized as based on *difference* from others but not on *separation* from others’

(Rose, 1997:314 emphasis in original).

This was particularly evident within the conduct of this research. As argued earlier, a wide range of people were interviewed within different contexts. This subsequently affected the way in which I presented myself as a researcher and also, consequently, altered my own positionality. As shown by the quotes from the research diary below, the characteristics of an interview respondent altered the way in which I presented myself. Furthermore, these differences were particularly evident dependent upon the location of an interview. Indeed, it is possible to identify clear differences between interviews conducted with investment managers in London and those carried out with religious members of staff at local churches. This was evident in dress and the presentation of my religious beliefs. In relation to dress:

‘On the way to London to conduct an interview with the SRI team at the CCLA. Very excited. Have bought a copy of the Financial Times as the Church of England are being accused of hypocrisy over their attack upon short-selling, should prove to be useful to stimulate debate ... Am wearing the same suit as the last time I visited, as the pin stripes seem to suit the City, that is what everyone appears to be wearing and I like to blend in. However, I am having to wear a Pink Striped shirt and predominantly pink tie as my favourite black and white shirt and tie combo is dirty. Shouldn’t be a problem.’

(Research Diary, City of London Interview)

‘ After much deliberation I dressed in Brown Cords, a predominantly Black Shirt (with white stripes) a grey cardigan, black coat and brown shoes. I decided that the best way to dress would be to dress as if I were going to Church on a Sunday myself’.

(Research Diary, Interview with Pastor, The Baptist Union)

In relation to religious beliefs, I found myself ‘turning on and off’ my Christian upbringing. In Church (and within explicitly Christian investment⁸⁰) settings my religious beliefs were accentuated in order to help with the process of building a rapport with the research subject. However, in conventional investment banks, where respondents were more sceptical about religion, this element of myself was hidden.

‘The leader of the worship group was discussing how she feels in relation to different styles of music within Churches expressing a displeasure for the traditional organ and piano based services. Having learnt how to play the organ myself I shared my preference for organ music and worship stating that I felt that this created a triumphant feel.’

(Research Diary, Music Group Interview, The Baptist Union)

‘Following the interview I was feeling quite set back, affronted and almost offended. The respondent [based within the charity investment sector] did not change her facial expression once during the interview. Furthermore she

⁸⁰ Such as the CCLA and the Church Commissioners

had been ... attacking ... notions of Christian investors being better [more ethical] than any other. This had led me to be quite defensive and to underplay my own religious beliefs in order to try and extract this view more'

(Research Diary, Charity Investment Interview, City of London)

Third, England (1994) suggests that the process of self reflection is actually a process of self discovery. Furthermore, she argues that this process of reflection alters the characteristics of a researcher. Similarly, Rose (1997) suggests that self reflection is actually a process of self creation. It may tie disparate parts of the researchers' personality together or alter it through introducing new concepts. Schweber (2007) highlights this process in relation to the modification of her religious beliefs. She argues that the exposure to a different interpretation of her religion, Judaism, (and the associated process of self reflection) altered her religious sentiments. This, consequently, provides a further critique of the idea of the self as being a stable, accountable, entity. Indeed, Rose (1997:313) argues that, 'If the process of reflexivity changes what is being reflected upon, than there is no transparent self waiting to be revealed.' Again this transformation was reflected in the impact of the research upon my personal religious beliefs. Indeed, the research made me feel both more and less religious. Having attended Churches that were more evangelical than my own, I felt my faith in the religion grow. However, in conducting several of the investment interviews and learning about some of the holdings that the Church possessed, a sense of my belief, and trust, in institutional religion was eroded.

Finally, Mullings (2007) argues that, irrespective of how one presents oneself or how much one reflects upon ones' own identity, it is impossible to control, or even

gauge, how others will react. By this it is meant that the researcher is not able to control how they are received, as individual respondents may interpret their positionality in a different manner to another. Again in order to counteract such a position detailed notes were taken in the form of a diary documenting each research interaction. Indeed, despite not being used overtly throughout the thesis, the research diary played a critical role in monitoring how my positionality and relationship with the religion was altering and how this was affecting the research. To this extent the research diary operated as something of a I control mechanism and enabled me to identify not only my own differing selves but also the different ways in which respondents reacted to me.

4.5.2 Insider or Outsider Research

A third aspect of the positionality debate is whether the researcher should attempt to frame themselves as either an 'insider' or 'outsider' to the organization that they are studying. Indeed, whilst Latourian approaches argue that the researcher is bound up in the networks they are researching, the insider/outsider debate raises the question as to whether one should attempt to further align oneself with the activities conducted within the network. For Schweber (2007), this dilemma is of paramount importance when researching within religious contexts, as there is the question as to whether one should participate in the rituals that faiths involve. The question as to whether she was an 'insider' or 'outsider' to her research was inherently intertwined with her background. Indeed, Schweber notes that being Jewish enabled her to function as an 'insider' within a Jewish school, allowing her to partake in shared ceremonies, whilst it consequently caused her to be an 'outsider' within a Christian one. However, this created several key methodological questions

and had a serious implication upon her work. Indeed, she suggests that the research process was much 'cleaner' in the Christian context, due to the detachment that it brought from her own faith and upbringing.

' should I pray with the students when I know the prayers? Should I be praying as a researcher? When Mrs. Barrett prayed, I felt perched on the edge of her world, looking in from a safe distance rather than swayed by a worldview, swimming against the riptides of emotional currents.'

(Schweber, 2007).

In contrast, her sheer presence in the Jewish school led to reflexive questions about her own beliefs. However, she also notes that this ability to function as an 'insider' benefitted her research in two ways. First, she suggests that the shared religious background enabled her to feel more at home within the research environment. Second, she suggests that it led to the development of a greater degree of trust on the behalf of her research subjects. Finally, she argues that her greater knowledge of Judaism allowed for a more comprehensive research project as she already knew the appropriate specialist vocabulary and what questions to ask. The question as to the extent to which one should integrate their religious beliefs in academic research is further discussed, in an inverse manner, by Cloke (2002). He argues that notions of spirituality should be brought to the forefront of academic debate in order to align it with pertinent issues surrounding ethics. Thus, religion should be an 'insider' to academic work.

However, Mullings (2007) argues that researchers are neither permanently an 'insider' or an 'outsider'. Like my experience of interviewing, she argues that whatever position one adopts they only do so for a temporary period. Further, again like my experiences, Fielding (2000) argues that these statuses are 'place dependent'.

Whilst one may be seen as being an 'insider' to an organization in one location, one may not be so outside of such confines. Fielding (2000) expresses this in relation to his research in a public house. He argues that, within the confines of the building, his research subjects considered him to be an insider. However, once outside, he was repositioned as an outsider. Schweber's (2007) experiences also reflect the problematic nature of the 'insider'/'outsider' binary. Indeed, whilst within the Christian context she was predominantly perceived as being an 'outsider' the shared associations of Judaism and Christianity led to her being offered partial insider status.

Thus, returning to the practical implementation of this research project, it was decided that, following the arguments of Mullins (2007), it would be wrong to adopt the position of either an 'insider' or an 'outsider' as the two are not mutually exclusive. However, the insider/outsider debate did raise questions as to the extent that I should participate in the religious activity that I was studying. To reflect my position as both an insider and outsider it was decided that, when undertaking the research, I would attempt, as much as possible, to only participate in Christian activities that I would do within my own daily life. However, despite this, it is still possible to identify two marked examples of when I was unsure how to act. First, during my first ethnographic visit to the Baptist Church I was unsure whether or not to join in the practice of communion. Although I would do this in my own Church I felt uncomfortable doing so within a strange and unfamiliar environment and consequently turned to an acquaintance for advice who suggested that I should. In this instance I did join in the communion; however, having done so, it did not feel right and I refrained upon future occasions. Second, when visiting the Mission Department at the Baptist Union I was invited to join them for lunch. Lunch was served in a buffet format and I returned to the table first, once everyone in the group had returned I picked up the knife and fork to eat, as is the custom in my family, and

found everyone looking at me expecting me to wait for them to say grace⁸¹. I found this practice uncomfortable as not only did they thank God for the food they asked for a blessing upon me and my work.

A final point about insider/outsider research must be made here. Following the completion of the research and production of the thesis chapters I was approached by CCLA, one of the investment bodies studied within the thesis, with an offer of employment that I accepted. While this has not affected the arguments made within the thesis as all research material had already been collected, analysed and turned into narrative, it should be noted that professionally, during its completion, I have become an 'insider'.

4.5 Summary

This chapter has sought to introduce the conceptual and practical way in which the research was conducted. It introduced the conceptual approach that the research had adopted (assemblages and networks) through discussion of the work of Bruno Latour (2005) and subsequently identified how this research approach was applied. Whilst it was acknowledged that conventional Actor-Network approaches did not allow for the presence of scale I argued that the assemblage approach allowed one to map out the different relationships inherent within each of religious institutions financial structures. Chapter Five will now move on to begin to map out these structures empirically.

⁸¹ The practice of thanking God for the food that one is about to eat.

5: Reproducing the Church: Identifying the Institutional Funding Networks

5.1 Introduction

Having laid the theoretical context for the work this chapter will now move on to consider the empirical research material. As previously argued, this thesis aims to determine how the religious spaces, and institutional structures, of the Church of England, the Baptist Union of Great Britain, and the Assemblies of God are reproduced within the UK. Drawing upon the work of Veblen (1988), as discussed in Chapter Three, I argue that these religious bodies are economically determined; that is, in order to continue to operate and reproduce themselves, the institutions are required to raise sufficient funds to cover their operating costs. Indeed, in order to continue their activities and maintain their religious spaces each of the religious institutions are required to obtain significant funds. For instance, within England alone The Church of England⁸² requires an annual income of approximately £1billion in order to maintain itself in its present form (The Church of England, 2006). Meanwhile, the individual Assemblies of God Church has to raise funding to cover an annual expenditure of £1,980,420 (The Church, 2009). Within this chapter I will begin to engage with empirical research findings in order to discern the key operational costs that Churches incur as well as identifying the institutional funding structures, and income sources, that enable these costs to be covered. The chapter will examine

⁸² Whilst this figure provides an indication as to the amount of money that the Church of England requires as a whole, it is wrong to theorize it as a cohesive body. Indeed, each of the individual Parish Churches and dioceses within the organization are legally separate charitable bodies thus whilst the Church nationally may obtain the £1bn that it requires this does not mean that every Church will have sufficient resources to be reproduced.

these in relation to each institutions' culture in order to identify the impact that theology and historical background has upon the ability of different types of Church to reproduce themselves.

5.2 Understanding the Church Institutions

As discussed in Chapter Three, the thesis has adopted a formal institutional approach, following Veblen (1988) and Amin (2004), to investigate the three Church bodies. Furthermore, Chapter Four argued that formal institutions should be seen as being a group of networks in an assemblage, rather than being cohesive organizations in themselves. This chapter will, consequently, now examine these theories empirically. Indeed, having identified the need for each institution to continually reproduce itself financially, I now turn to examining the institutional structures that allow for this to happen, studying each of the Church of England, the Baptist Union of Great Britain and the Assemblies of God in turn.

5.3.1 The Church of England

The Church of England is the largest denomination of Christianity in the UK with 1,225,000 people registered upon the Church's electoral role⁸³ (The Church of England, 2007). Due to its size the institution has the largest financial need of any UK Church denomination, requiring an income in excess of £1billion annually in order to reproduce⁸⁴ itself (The Church of England, 2007).

Figure 5.1 shows the destination of this expenditure. As shown by Figure 5.2, this sum is met by income from five main sources: those of voluntary giving from

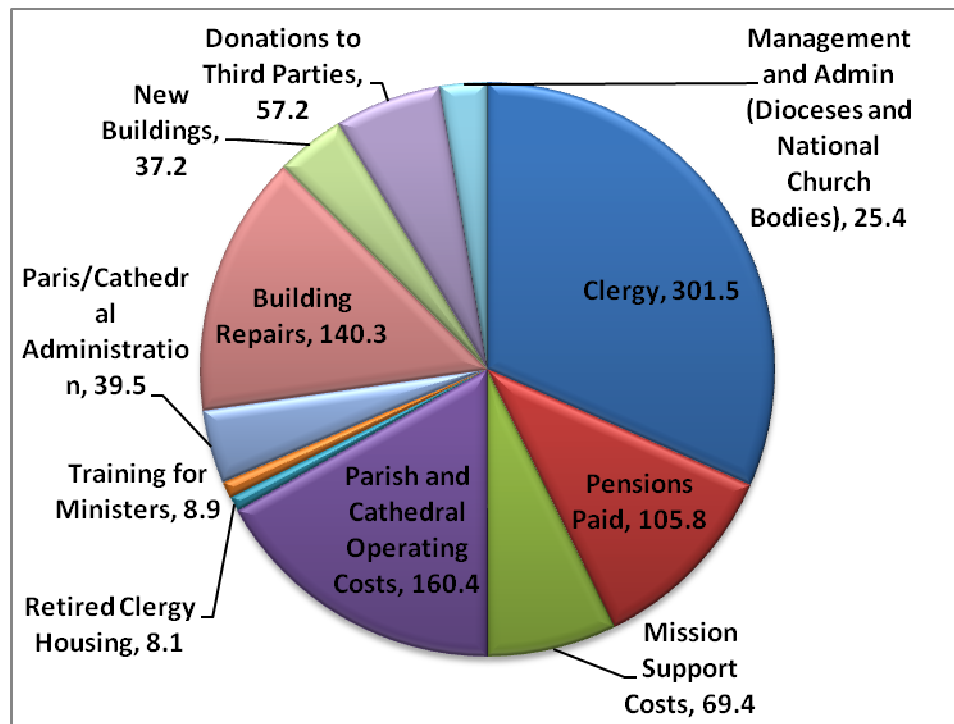
⁸³ This is a list of people who regularly attend the Church. It is similar to the notion of Church membership as utilised within a Baptist perspective. However, due to the fact that the Anglican Church is the established Church of the nation it sees everyone within the parish as being a member of the Church.

⁸⁴ The process of institutional reproduction is discussed in depth in Chapter Three.

congregations (providing approximately £560m); investments (£220m); fundraising and training (£140m); fees (£50m), and; the sale of Church assets (£20m). However, these income figures relate to the Church nationally and are inaccurate in doing so. The reason for this is that rather than being one body, the Church of England is an assemblage of various autonomous entities⁸⁵. As a consequence, like Clark's (2005) notion of money being like mercury, finance does not flow smoothly around the institution to where it is most needed but gets trapped in various locations. Thus, whilst the institution may, as a whole, engender the required annual income to be reproduced, this does not guarantee that all elements of the Church will receive the funding that they need. The chapter will now closely examine the structure of the institution in order to test this premise. It will identify the areas in which income is generated; costs are incurred; and finance flows and pools within the institution (Clark, 2005)

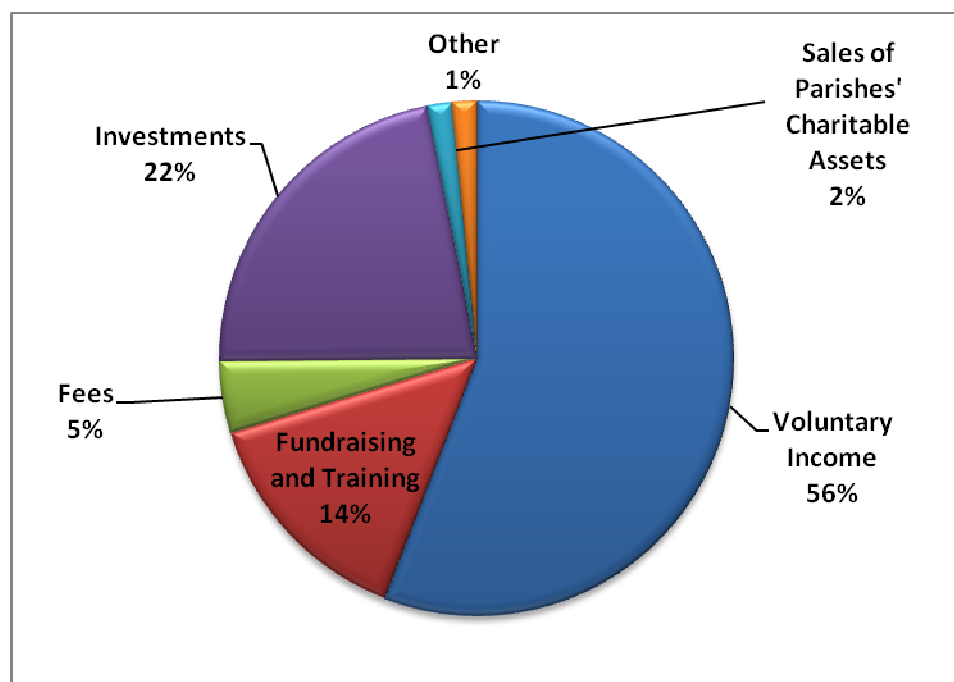
⁸⁵ As argued later, these autonomous entities include every Parish Church, the Dioceses and the National Church boards.

Figure 5.1 - Church of England Expenditure by Destination 2004 (Total = £1059.2m)



Source: The Church of England (2006)

Figure 5.2 - Church of England Income by Source 2004 (Total = £1bn)



Source: The Church of England (2006)

As discussed within Chapter Two, the Anglican Church occupies a theological position between Protestantism and Catholicism. Indeed, Rosman (2003) notes that the political situation at the time of the Reformation, when the Church was inceptioned, led to the retention of a Catholic institutional structure and a prioritization of notions of ceremony in worship in order to placate the largely Catholic population of the UK. This is in contrast to other protestant bodies, such as the Baptist Church who (as discussed later) rebelled against the continued presence of Catholic values within the protestant Church. The Catholic institutional structure remains a key factor in the Church of England's organization today with the institution invoking a clear hierarchical system of scale as an 'apparatus of capture'. Indeed, the various networks of the Church are organized, and separated, by this scalar model⁸⁶. As shown by Figure 5.3, this organizational structure is comprised of three levels: those of the local parish Church; the regional diocese, and; the National Church bodies. However, this model creates a conflict between the practical hierarchical organization of the Church and its theological values. As a Protestant faith the Church recognises the primacy of the relationship between the individual and God. Consequentially, this theology requires that the congregation of the Local Church are recognised as being the key layer, and driver, of the institution⁸⁷. This is in conflict to the hierarchical scale, as this system of governance implies that the Archbishop of Canterbury (as the head of the National Church) has control and leadership of the institution. Despite being the cause of this problem the scalar 'apparatus of capture' also acts, in part, as the solution. Indeed, the scale system is organized in such a way to invoke a sense of separation between the differing entities of the institution; thus

⁸⁶ To exemplify the scale model artificially separates the networks of the Parish Church, Diocese and National Church bodies. Furthermore, as argued in chapter Four, the thesis conceptualises scale in a manner similar to Latour (2005) scale relates to the different size of a network. So, to again place this within the context of the Church of England, the network of a Parish Church would have significantly less connections than that of a diocese.

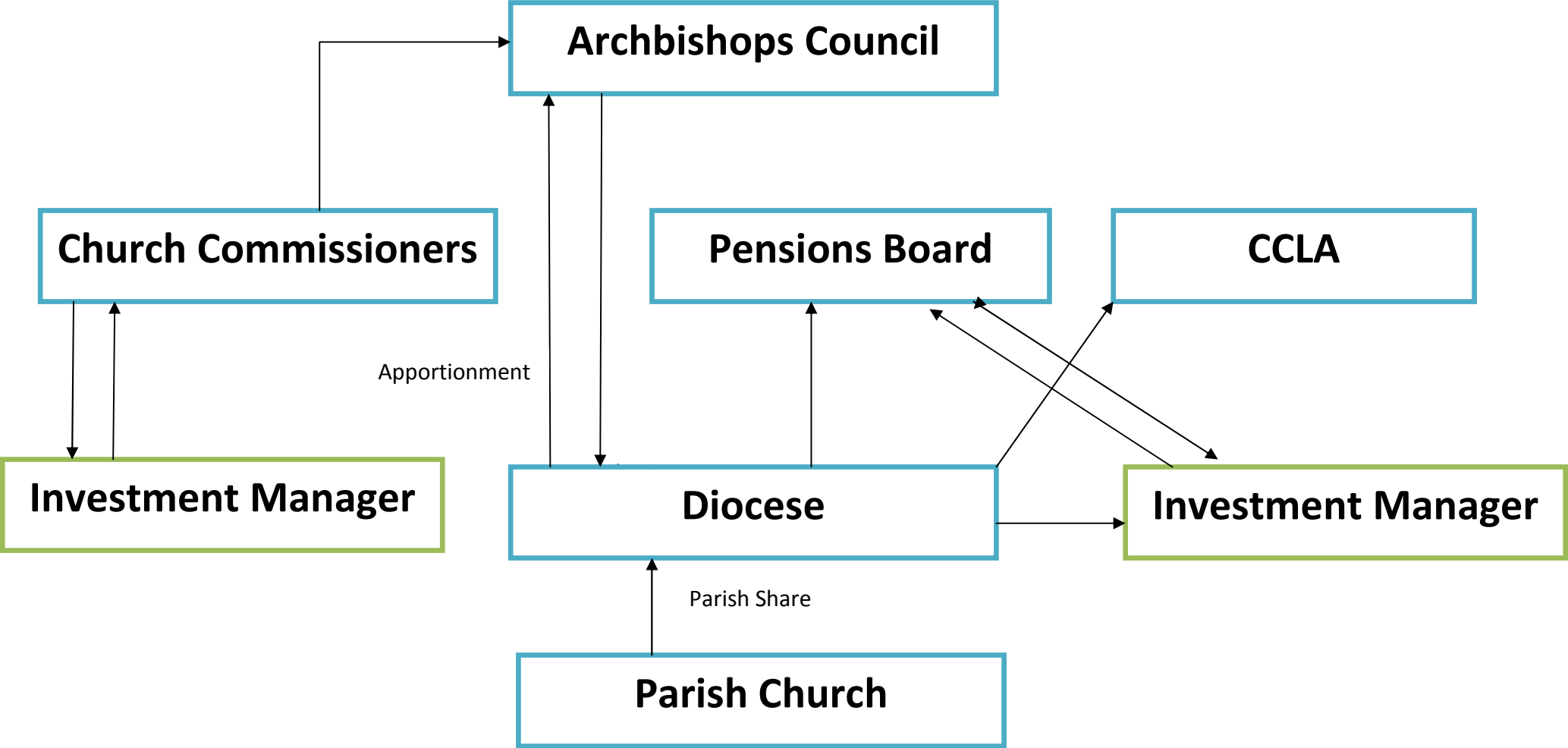
⁸⁷ Although this stress is not as strong as that within the Baptist Union and Assemblies of God

meaning that each body is an, affiliated, independent entity. Thus, whilst the Archbishop remains in a position similar to a chief executive, each Parish Church is, in theory, autonomous. Thus, the practical aspect of the Church remains congruent to the institutions' theological values. To paraphrase, as an assemblage rather than a cohesive body, the Church of England is made up of a wider network of independent networks. Furthermore, these networks are organised around different scales with the Parish Churches, Dioceses, and National Church bodies. This consequently allows for the Parish Church, and also the dioceses and national bodies, to be both autonomous (theologically) and yet, through the wider network connections, practically a part of a hierarchical institutional structure. These scalar networks, and links between them, will now be explored in more depth; beginning with those of the Parish Church.

As a separate network, in the wider assemblage of the institutional structure of the Church of England, each Parish Church has to be self-sustaining (Interview #32, 2008). The Parochial Church Council (PCC) – the governing board of each Church⁸⁸ – are responsible for ensuring that the Church meets its financial obligations. These obligations are comprised of paying for the working expenses of its clergy (although unlike both the Baptist and Assemblies of God Churches they are not responsible for paying the salary of ministers as this is provided by the diocese) the maintenance of the Church buildings, the cost of insurance, and also the Parish Share. Each of these costs will now be discussed in more specific detail through the accounts of the individual Church studied within this project.

⁸⁸ The PCC is comprised of the minister of the Church and several elected members of the congregation

Figure 5.3 - Church of England Institutional Structure



Despite being a relatively large Anglican Church, with approximately 400 people attending its services every Sunday, as of 2008 the studied Parish Church operated upon a negative budget. Indeed, its income of £354,000 per annum did not cover the Church's expenditure of £410,000 (Annual Report, 2009) and thus the Church ate into its reserve capital. The largest of these costs related to the Church's Parish Share which amounted to an outgoing of £124,800 (approximately 30% of total expenditure) (Annual Report, 2009). Parish Share represents the financial link between the different networks of the Church of England. It is calculated by, and is payable to, the diocese as a form of financial transfer within the institution and, as argued within the subsequent section, is the primary form of resource sharing around the Church as a whole. The method of calculating this differs from diocese to diocese⁸⁹. However, within the studied region, Parish Share is calculated by the following two stage formula. In the first stage, the diocese calculates the amount of money that has to be raised from each deanery⁹⁰ and, in the second, the deanery breaks this down into a cost per parish.

'Parish Share, I mean it depends upon which diocese you go to as to how they assess Parish Share. We introduced a new formula three years ago which is based upon what we call the three key elements ... The number of ministers by deanery ... We also look at what's called average adult attendance in the Churches on the Sundays and we also take into account the socio-economic conditions in the parish. [To look at socio-economic conditions] we drew down data from Experian⁹¹ in Nottingham and looked at

⁸⁹ Each diocese is a separate autonomous body and can consequently calculate Parish Share in any manner that they wish.

⁹⁰ The deanery is a scale of the Church institution in between the diocese and the local Church. It is normally comprised of a small group of Churches within a certain area.

⁹¹ Experian are a global credit rating company, who have created a product called Mosaic that geographically maps socio-economic data to determine the relative affluence of an area.

what we call a social economic factor, areas of deprivation and affluence, mainly deprivation by Parish. So the assessment for parish share is based upon those three key factors: there's your number of ministers, almost a cost per minister, the attendance through the ... Parish Church door, and a measure of their wealth and their ability to give. The performance based on those three key factors is driven down to Deanery level and then we say to the deaneries right your target is, for the sake of argument half a million pounds you go talk to your parishes about how you would like to share that out.'

(Interview #32, Finance Director, Diocese, Church of England)

'Now even at a deanery level there are a variety of ways in which deaneries can say to parishes this is how we would like to share it out. Three deaneries operate a bids system ... and they'll round up all of the Parish Treasurers into one room and say, "Right we'll lock the door throw away the key. Tell us what you can afford to pay as a Parish", and, you know, they operate that sort of system. Other deaneries use a variety of other methods of portioning out the deanery contribution down to parish level. So we have a variety of systems in place for the payment and assessment of Parish Share.'

(Interview #32, Finance Director, Diocese, Church of England)

Attitudes from Parish Churches towards Parish share vary.

'Some see it as a huge imposition, some see it as a necessary evil and some see it as their contribution to the Church in Nottingham, and anywhere in between those extremes really. And in the Parochial Church Council you'll have those extremes as well.'

(Interview #32, Resource Officer, Diocese, Church of England)

However, despite it being their major expense, respondents at the case study Church were very positive about Parish Share, seeing it as being an important way in which they can support the wider role of the Church of England as a whole. It was felt that it was especially important for them to contribute as they are one of the larger Churches within the diocese.

‘Because we are a big thriving Church by Anglican standards ... the taxation system that Parish Share represents hits us hard and rightly so and this was a little piece of work that I was required to do to undo some of the moaning of one of my predecessors here. It is completely right that if we believe in ministry to all people everywhere, if we believe that ministry to the Broxtowe estate is just as important as ministry here in [place] then it is right that a Parish like ours pays out more than it receives.’

(Interview # 13, Member of the Clergy, Local Church, the Church of England)

This is consequently symptomatic of the high levels of institutional identity and shared ethic within the Church of England, something that is not present in either the Baptist or Assemblies of God Churches.

Second, the cost of manning the building is significant with £106,000 (26% of total expenditure) spent upon five staff. Indeed, whilst the minister is funded by the diocese – by the money received through Parish Share – the Church employs five additional staff to assist in the ministry and the operation of the Church. Third, £110,000 (27% of expenditure) was outlaid upon maintaining the Church fabric and rendering this relevant to modern day worship. Indeed, the particular socio-historical

characteristics of the Church of England necessitate that many of the Churches have high maintenance bills. This is particularly due to the age of Anglican Church buildings. This was highlighted in two ways; first the Anglican Church studied predominantly within the research project was constructed within the Victorian era. This meant that the Church was equipped with pews. However, it was decided that these pews were no longer acceptable for the use of modern worship as they were impinging upon the way in which the Church could be used as they wished to adopt a more evangelical, active, style of worship. Consequently, a large sum of money was invested in the Church fabric to replace pews with modern, removable chairs in order to render the religious space more flexible and, thus, appropriate for more uses. Second, many Anglican buildings are significant historical landmarks and have consequently been registered as listed buildings. This has a consequence for the cost of Church maintenance as appropriate fixtures and fittings have to be used in order to not change the characteristics of the property. This can be hugely expensive.

‘The fabric of the building ... that’s a minefield in itself because the English Heritage will say that you can do this and you can’t do that. So a good example of this is [historic Church] we replaced some fencing around the Church and we couldn’t just replace the fencing we had to replace it with the original type that had been there before. So we had to track down the wrought iron from somewhere, because people don’t use wrought iron any longer. So that became a very expensive exercise in terms of doing that but the major challenge is how do you manage all that and ... make it so that it’s not really making you bankrupt because I think some of these things can make you bankrupt simply because of the cost of doing it.’

(Interview # 19, Lay leader, Local Church, The Church of England)

This problem is specific to the Churches of the Church of England due to their age with many pre-dating the reformation.

The final two main expenses of the Anglican Church relate to charitable giving (8%) and the support costs for ministry (6%). In common with the wider funding of the institution, 88% of the Church's income is received through the voluntary gifts of the congregation with the remainder being provided by income from lettings and bank interest. Furthermore, whilst the Church ran a deficit budget, it has a large enough capital reserve for this not to be a threat to its reproduction. However, whilst the Church can easily cover its day to day operation costs, there is a fear that should it be hit with an unexpected cost, such as a severe maintenance issue, it would not be able to afford this. Consequently, the diocese runs a service which seeks to aid Churches in this situation by finding them grants.

'Where I tend to get involved is when something else hits them [the Church] which they may not be expecting. Obviously the Quinquennial report [5 year investigation into the Church's condition] ... comes to them ... [and they] realise that there's a gaping hole ... or beetles in the roof. So there's issues every five years when someone actually comes and lifts a few slates up and checks the stonework and realises that there's a major issue there which Churches haven't got the money to do. Some are lucky and have some reserves but in the main most Churches these days are struggling to meet large capital expenditure ... so that is where I come in. I try and look for grants to help pay for this work, there's money out there [although] there's nowhere near enough money to go around everybody.

(Interview #32, Resource Officer, Diocese, Church of England)

Many of the larger Anglican Parish Churches, particularly those within City Centres, have assets gifted to them by historical benefactors⁹². This provides these Churches with an extra income compared to newer parishes as these assets are not shared around the wider Church of England (Interview #24, 2008). This is an example as to how finance, congruent with Clark (2005), can get trapped, or pool, within certain areas of the institution.

In addition to financial concerns, a significant threat to the continual reproduction of many Anglican Churches is a lack of skills. Whilst the case study Church has a large enough congregation so as to have the necessary skills it requires⁹³ (Interview #13, 2008), many Anglican Churches do not. Furthermore, it is suggested that these necessary skills are unevenly distributed across the parish system, with several, wealthy, parishes having a surplus of skilled members within their congregations (such as accountants to serve as Church Treasurers, for example) with other, more socially deprived locations, having none (Interview #24, 2008).

J: I was talking to another Anglican Church and they find it frustrating that ... the parish system does sort of trap skills in certain Churches and that one Church may have a plethora of accountants who are able to function as Church treasurers but if you cross the parish divide there will be a Church that does not have those skills.

R: Yes ... most Churches are as starved of skills as they are of money ... I know some Churches that would say they would much rather, for example, have

⁹² The case study Church did not have any additional historical assets and thus did not benefit from their own investment income.

⁹³ The Church requires many skills amongst its congregation in order for it to be reproduced. These include financial skills for the treasurer, administrative skills for the continual running of the Church and teaching and leadership skills for the running of youth programs.

somebody who is a gifted Children's worker join them than they would somebody with a big bank roll.'

(Interview # 13, Clergymen, Local Church, The Church of England)

Thus, in addition to Clark's argument about finance, this thesis argues that skills can become spatially pooled within an institution.

Having explored the level of the Parish Church the chapter will now shift scale and move up the institution in order to investigate the network of the diocese. The diocese is the regional level of the Church of England governance system, with the country split into 43 different bodies. It is the key administrative level of the Church, employing, paying and allocating priests to the Churches within its area, with the money collected by the Parish Share. Unlike the Baptist Union, or the Assemblies of God, this model of employment allows Churches that would not be able to afford a priest upon their own resources to be allocated one and have them subsidised by the other Churches within the area.

J: Each parish has to be seen as an independent body in itself, it has to be sustainable itself but the minister is ... funded by the diocese. Is that right?

R1: Yes

R2: Which means that poor parishes can still have a minister. They wouldn't officially be able to afford it if they had to pay for it themselves. I mean, perish the thought that the only Parishes that can get cover [are the ones that can afford it] but [fortunately] the way it works is not like that.'

(Interview #32, Finance Director, Resource Officer, Diocese, Church of England)

‘The wealthier Churches are helping to fund ministry in the poorer Churches, that’s basically what it’s about. There’s no other way of doing it. It would be outrageous if only rich Churches got their own [clergy]’

(Interview #32, Resource Officer, Diocese, Church of England)

This resource sharing is enabled by the strong institutional links of the Church of England when compared to the outright primacy of the local Church as displayed by the Baptist Church (as discussed in the following section). Thus, due to its particular historical context (in regards to adopting a Catholic institutional structure) the Church of England has stronger links between the various networks of its assemblage than the more, theologically radical, Protestant Churches. Consequently, these stronger links enable more flows between the different networks and thus a greater amount of resource sharing.

The diocese also plays a key role in allocating priests to the parish Churches. However, this practice is governed by the nationally implemented Sheffield Formula⁹⁴ which places a limit upon how many Priests each diocese can have.

‘As far as deployability, there is something called the Sheffield formula after the bishop who devised it which says we think there is going to be 9,000 ministers or however many there are, and this is our recommended share across the dioceses. But that’s guidance rather than binding. Some dioceses say as a matter of policy we are going to try and stick to that number, we never get exactly there but there or there about. Others take note of it but say, “Well our deployment plan is we need this many people to deliver the

⁹⁴ This is a formula, named after the Bishop who devised it, that divides the number of available priests around the country equitably.

ministry and if that means we are 10% over or 10% under that Sheffield number then so be it”.’

(Interview # 33, Senior Manager, Archbishops Council)

Indeed, because each dioceses is an independent body, the national Church bodies cannot legally enforce the Sheffield formula. However, it uses its network links to provide a financial incentive for dioceses to do so. This prohibits the wealthier dioceses from employing more than their share of priests.

R1: There is a nationally determined formula about the number of stipendiary clergy you can be allotted and so...

R2: We're penalised if we go above it or below it aren't we?

R1: Yes in 10% of funding

R3: The wealthy dioceses could obviously snap up all of the clergy if they were available and other people, leave the poorer dioceses, which are generally a sort of South/North thing, ... with no one because the rich southern dioceses with more money would have bought all of their clergy.'

(Interview #32, Finance Director, 2 Resource Officers, Diocese, Church of England)

Like the parishes, it is possible to identify a significant disparity in wealth between the different diocesan bodies within England. This is due to two factors. First, parishioners within the Dioceses located within the south of the UK are more affluent than those in the north. Consequently the southern dioceses receive more money from their Parish Churches through the Parish Share (Interview #32). Second,

the more historical dioceses⁹⁵ have significantly more investment assets than those that have been formed more recently. Indeed, like the City Centre Parish Churches, these old diocesan boards have been bequeathed assets and these now provide a significant income through investments.

‘We’re within the top ten [poorest dioceses] because amongst other things the areas of deprivation in terms of coal fields and one thing or another and ... resource income. So if you go next door to the Lincoln diocese you’ve got huge plots of what they call Glebe agricultural land and they generate a rent for the diocese ... we’ve got [some] Glebe holdings ... in terms of agricultural land but we don’t generate anything near the investment return that Lincoln would because we’re a far smaller diocese and we’re a relatively new diocese in most senses.’

(Interview #32, Finance Director, Diocese, Church of England)

This again provides evidence as to how money pools within several spatial areas within the institution rather than flowing freely to where it is required.

The particular diocese studied within this project has an annual income and expenditure of approximately £8,000,000 (Interview # 32, 2008). As previously argued, the majority of this income (66%) is derived from the Parish Share. A further 14% is provided by the Church Commissioners (a national Church investment body) through the process of Selective Allocation. Selective Allocation is a grant to the poorer dioceses within the institution as an attempt to negate wealth imbalances.

⁹⁵ Many of the Church of England dioceses were formed at different times (Rosman, 2003). For instance, the diocese studied was formed as a reaction to the changing population patterns of the Industrial Revolution. However, these, relatively, young dioceses do not benefit from the same historical gifts and endowments that the more historical ones have accumulated over time.

Thus, as the studied diocese is one of the lesser resourced regional boards in the country, it benefits from this distribution.

‘We’re at the moment fortunate in that we still get money from the Church Commissioners in recognition of the fact that this is still a deprived diocese due to the coal field to the North.’

(Interview #32, Resource Officer, Diocese, Church of England)

Again, this resource sharing shows the strong links between the various networks in the assemblage. Another 10% of the diocese’s income is engendered through investment income with the diocesan board employing two outside investment managers, and the Church based CCLA, to invest money on their behalf. Finally a small amount is raised through parochial fees, where ministers have to return any fees they may get for conducting weddings and other religious ceremonies. In regards to expenditure, the key outgoing for the diocese is ministerial staffing costs with these accounting for 80% of their budget. The second largest outgoing is that of apportionment (5%). Like Parish Share, this redirects some of the diocese’s income to the networks of the National Church bodies in order to allow for their financial reproduction. Apportionment amounts are calculated by a formula at the Archbishops’ Council. This formula takes into account the relative wealth of the diocese in order to provide a small amount of wealth equalization throughout the institution as a whole. Consequently, rich dioceses pay more for the upkeep of the national Church than those that are less well resourced (Interview #33, 2008). The final 15% of expenditure refers to the maintenance of diocesan property and the staff employed in their offices.

The third scale within the ‘apparatus of capture’ of the Church of England is that of the National Church Bodies. The National Church Bodies are comprised of

four separate organizations; those of the Archbishop's Council, the Church Commissioners, the Pension's Board, and CCLA Investment Management. The chapter will now turn to each of these in turn.

Incepted in 1999, the Archbishops' Council fulfils a number of the administrative tasks that enable the Church to function. Funded by the apportionment money collected from the dioceses it has four main responsibilities (each referred to as being a vote⁹⁶), and consequently four main costs. These are as follows. First, Vote One refers to the training of the ministry, which is funded by the National Church.

'Vote One is training for ministry, the vast majority of ordinands training costs are met centrally and grants and bills are paid by the council rather than directly occurred by the colleges around the country ... There is an argument that the dioceses could do it themselves or the regions could do it but that goes a bit against the philosophy of a national Church and people aren't trained to go serve in Parish x or diocese x they're a national resource.'

(Interview #33, Senior Managers, Archbishops' Council, Church of England)

Vote two covers the working costs of the national bodies. This includes staffing and maintenance costs. Vote three relates to grants such as the Selective Assistance grant previously identified in order to provide a degree of resource sharing within the institution. Finally, Vote four provides retirement homes for the clergy.

Formed in 1948, The Church Commissioners are the largest of the three internal Church investment bodies and are responsible for the redistribution and

⁹⁶ These are referred to as votes due to the historical system where the resolutions were voted on by the members of General Synod which is the parliament of the Church of England.

management of the institutions historic assets. As of 2007 these assets totalled approximately £5.7bn (The Church Commissioners for England, 2008) and were derived from the amalgamation of two historical bodies The Queen Anne's Bounty and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. The Queen Anne's Bounty was devised in 1704 as a fund in which to pool and re-distribute a tax provided to the Church by the monarch to fund parish Churches within areas that could not afford them (Chandler 2007). In contrast, The Ecclesiastical Commissioners, formed in 1836, were created to manage existing money within the Church. The organization served two roles: first, it managed the Churches' existing estates and the revenues they derived, and; second, it was able to confiscate money and land from wealthy bishops⁹⁷ (Chandler 2007). It was intended, again, that this money should be used to benefit the provision of religion within the poorer parishes.

The legacy of both the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and the Queen Anne's Bounty remain, with the original purposes of these two organizations shaping the work of the present day Church Commissioners. Indeed, the utilization of the Commissioners' current assets is still constrained to the original purposes for which they were gifted in 1704 and 1836. This is reflected in the current mission statement and key responsibilities of the Church Commissioners, which are as follows:

'The Church Commissioners' mission is to support the Church of England's ministry, particularly in areas of need and opportunity. The Commissioners responsibilities are:

- To obtain the best possible long term return from a diversified investment portfolio in order to meet our pension commitments and

⁹⁷ At the time bishops were amongst the wealthiest people in the country whereas the Church was struggling to fund Churches in the developing cities. Consequently the Ecclesiastical Commissioners were awarded the powers by parliament to redistribute this wealth. (Chandler, 2007)

to provide the maximum sustainable funding for other purposes such as support for the work of bishops, cathedrals and parish ministry.

- To pay particular regard to making ‘additional provision for the cure of souls in parishes where such assistance is most required.’
- To administer the legal framework for pastoral reorganisation and settling the future of closed Church buildings.’

(The Church Commissioners for England 2008)

These responsibilities are further reflected in Table 5.1 which shows the destination of money derived by the Commissioners investment practices. The predominant use of this income is to provide the retired clergy with pensions, with the Commissioners responsible for financing the Church of England’s pension scheme up to 1998 (after this date responsibility for pensions switched to the pensions board). Other large expenses include financing the salaries and costs associated with bishops, cathedrals, as well as support towards financing poor parishes where it is needed. As the predominant creator of income at the level of the National Church⁹⁸ the Church Commissioners also play a key role as the only organization able to provide funds for national Church initiatives. This is reflected within two campaigns; the first of which is the current endeavour to create (utilising the language of the Church itself) ‘fresh expressions of Church’ (discussed in Chapter Two). Second, the ‘Church Urban Fund’ campaign provided funding for the provision of religious teaching in UK inner city neighbourhoods in the 1980s. Both of these initiatives were predominantly funded by the Church Commissioners investment returns. However, this also provides an

⁹⁸ Investment is the only money generating activity that takes place at the level of the National Church. All other income flows through the Church institution from the Parish Churches and Diocesan bodies.

example of how the performance of investments can affect the religious aspects of the Church. Indeed, the funding of these initiatives was contingent upon the successful performance of the Commissioners investments and, in the case of the 'Church Urban Fund', when returns did not meet the required level, funding was redirected to the Commissioner's core priorities of the pension fund and sustaining bishops and the cathedrals.

'The Church Commissioners were one of its [The Church Urban Fund] funders at [the] early stages. They put a million pounds a year into it for all of three years, it was going to be longer but, you know, late 80s, all the property dealings and that⁹⁹ we had to cut back and that's one of the things that had to go.'

(Interview # 11, Senior Employee, Church Commissioners Policy Unit)

Consequently, the state of the financial markets affects the extent to which the institution can carry out its core function of offering a religious service.

⁹⁹ In the late 1980s and the early 1990s the *Church Commissioners* lost a significant amount of money on a number of property developments in the City of London.

**Table 5.1 - Destination of Financial Distribution from the Church Commissioners
(2007)**

Recipient	Amount (£m)
Clergy Pensions	105.5
Parish Mission and Ministry Support	32.9
Bishops	24.9
Cathedrals	6.8
Other Costs	7.7
TOTAL	177.8

Source: The Church Commissioners for England (2008)

The third major body of the National Church is that of the Pensions Board who manage assets of approximately £866.5million (Pensions Board for the Church of England, 2008). Although created in 1926, the main responsibility of the pension's board today is to manage the clergy and support staff pension money generated after 1998¹⁰⁰. This represented a shifting of the Church of England's reproduction costs down the institution to the level of the Parish Church and is one of the main reasons why the Parish Share is such a significant proportion of each Church's money.

'When I was first ordained in 1980 we were still on the tail end of [the Church Commissioners'] historic income being a very significant factor, such that most Church quotas of Parish Share was only a fraction of the running cost.

But two things happened really; one is that historic income dries up and the

¹⁰⁰ When the Church decided that the historical assets, as managed by the Commissioners, would not be sufficient to cover its pension liabilities and for the first time Parish Churches had to pay pension contributions for its staff

other is things like Pensions which actually [suddenly require] all of the Central income.'

(Interview # 13, Clergyman, Local Church, The Church of England)

The network of the Pension's Board has, however, retained a strong overlap with that of the Church Commissioners with several of the investment staff working for both bodies (Interview #35, 2008).

The final body at the scale of the National Church is CCLA who are a part Church owned (60%) Investment Management Company. Any level of the Church, be it parish or diocese, are able to invest money with CCLA through their CBF Fund products that are specifically designed for Churches. These are specifically designed to provide Churches with income from dividends to supplement declining congregational giving (Interview #17).

In summary, within this section of the chapter I have empirically mapped out the distinct networks of the assemblage of the institution of the Church of England. I have argued that the institution is characterised by a scalar 'apparatus of capture' that allows it to function efficiently. This is characterised by distinct networks at the local, regional and national level. Furthermore, a strong sense of institutional cohesion was identified, retained from the Church's Catholic root, which was reflected in the number of financial links between the networks of these disparate bodies. However, in so doing I also identified a tension between this institutional structure and the Church's protestant theology. This theology stresses the primacy of the local Church and thus conflicts with the hierarchical scale model adopted. Again the 'apparatus of capture' enabled a practical compromise between these values giving the Parish Church both a degree of autonomy but also a strong institutional affiliation. However, the section also argued that the assemblage nature of the

institution meant that neither money nor skills flow freely to where they are needed. Instead, they get pooled within several distinct entities and geographical areas. This represents a significant threat to the institution's reproduction because while certain Churches and dioceses may hold significant assets, others may be struggling to generate an income to cover their costs.

5.3.2 The Baptist Union of Great Britain

Having explored the Church of England the chapter will now turn its attention to the Baptist Union of Great Britain. The Baptist Union is one of the larger Protestant denominations within the UK with 131,536 active members worshipping within 1932 Churches (The Baptist Union of Great Britain, 2004-2005). As highlighted within Chapter Two, the Baptist Union provides a case study of a non-conformist protestant institution. By this it is meant that it was created as an alternative to the established religion of the Church of England. Consequently, the institution was created upon the lines of a different, more radical, interpretation of the faith (Rosman, 2003). This has had two significant consequences for the development of the institution; first, the Baptist Church has traditionally been associated with the theological position of a 'voluntary adoption of faith'. By this it is meant that one has to choose to come to the Church in order to become a member (this is in contrast to the Church of England model where, according to the Church, everyone in a Parish is automatically affiliated to the network of their local Church). Second, the acceptance of Calvinist teachings has led to a stronger emphasis being placed upon the local Church as being the most important element of the institution (Worrall, 1988). Commensurate with the protestant principle of everyone being able to have a direct relationship with God, the institution has adopted a 'congregationalist' model,

whereby it is the Churches congregation who control the Church, and the wider institution is subservient to them. However, Shier-Jones (2004) notes that, again, this prioritization of the local provides significant tension for the institution as a whole. Indeed, like the Church of England, she argues that a balance needs to be struck between empowering the congregation of the individual Church and the need to fund the provision of Baptist Churches in areas that cannot afford to economically reproduce one themselves. Thus, a strong institutional structure is needed in order to provide Baptist Churches within a wider geographic area than wealthy neighbourhoods (Payne, 1958). This section of the chapter will now empirically examine the institutional structure of the Baptist Union in order to identify both how this tension is played out and, again, identify the key costs and sources of income that enable it to reproduce itself.

As shown by Figure 5.4, the institutional structure of the Baptist Union is, again, an assemblage based upon an ‘apparatus of capture’ of three scales; those of the National Baptist Resource Centre, located in Didcot, Oxfordshire, a regional body, (of which there are thirteen throughout the UK), and the local Church¹⁰¹. However, given the congregational model, the key scale of the institution is that of the local church. Whilst this stress is similar to that of the Church of England, the Baptist Church’s radical history means that, unlike the Anglican Church, the wider organizational bodies play a subservient role.

‘R1: If you look at the normal structure of any organization it is very [like a] pyramid. So you start with people at the top telling you lower down, whereas in the Baptist environment it is reversed so each Church can make its own

¹⁰¹ Commensurate with the principle of the ‘voluntary adoption of faith’ not all Baptist Churches are members of the Union. Instead, each Baptist Church has to decide as to whether to join the institution or exist as an ‘independent’ Baptist Church

decisions and they filter that upwards through various places towards an assembly so effectively one Baptist Church could influence how the Baptist Union as a whole operate.

R2: Just to say that Didcot here is a resource centre rather than like a head office. So [a] commercial organization would have the directors and so forth pushing out whereas we are here to serve the Churches which is a slightly different concept from that.'

(Interview # 12 Manager, Baptist Loan Fund, and Senior Manager, Baptist Union Corporation)

This, thus, provides a critique of hierarchical models of scale as the particular culture of the Church dictates that the highest scale of the national is not necessarily the most powerful. Given, this prioritization of the local Church the chapter will begin its exploration of the institutional assemblage here.

As a consequence of the congregational model of the Baptist Union, each Baptist Church is, in itself, autonomous and registered with the Charity Commission individually. This has a number of implications for the governance and reproduction of the Church. First, the Church is governed by the Church Meeting, which is a representative board of members of the congregation.

'The Baptist Church is governed by the Church Meeting so if there is an important decision to be made like appointing a new minister, sacking a minister, taking somebody out of membership, taking somebody into membership or spending over a certain limit of money it has to be proposed at the Church meeting and they have to agree.'

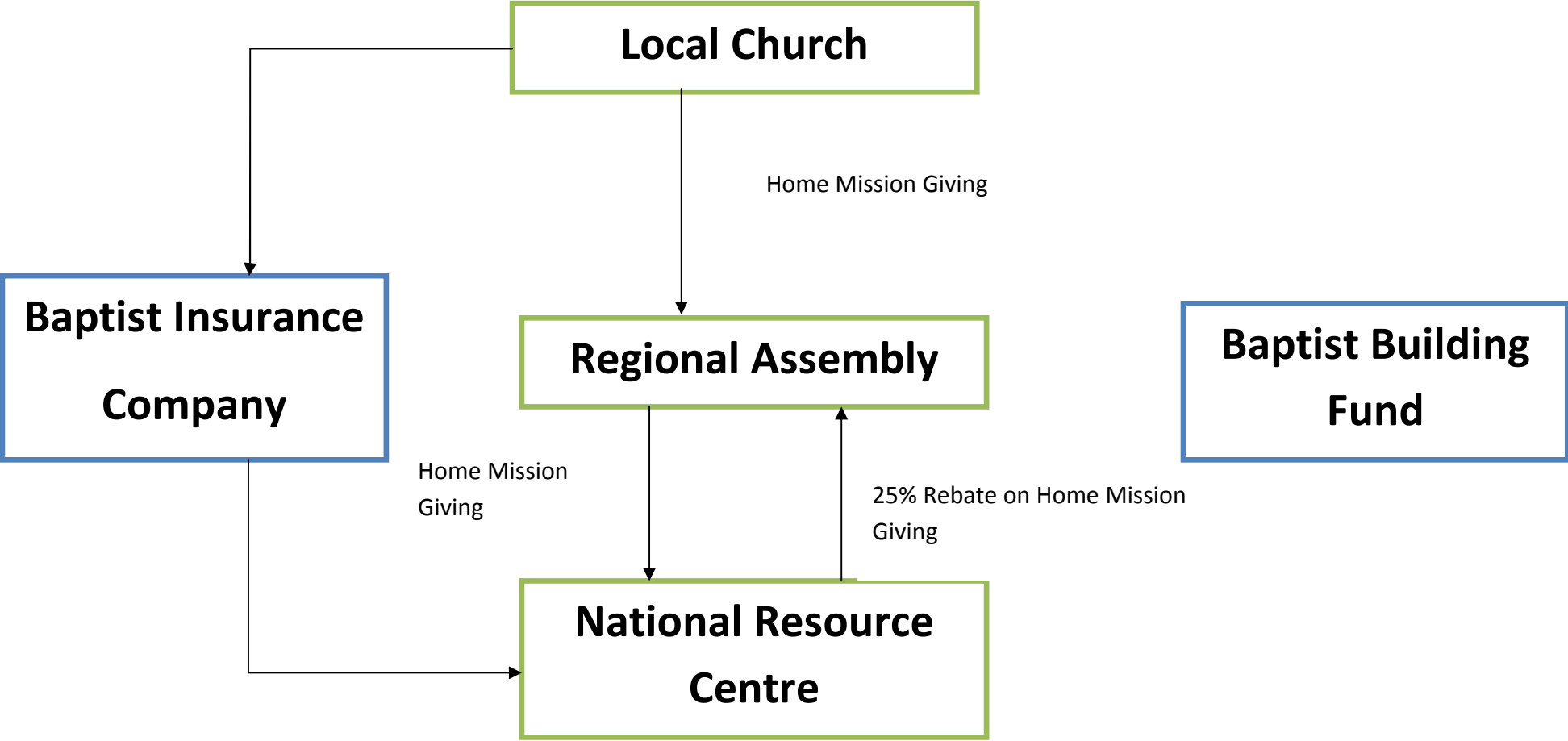
(Interview # 26 ,Treasurer, Local Church, Baptist Union)

Consequently, the members of the Church are able to control the future direction of the Church. Second, unlike the Anglican Church, the General Meeting is responsible for selecting, employing and paying the minister themselves.

‘Baptists are congregational-led so in a sense it’s the membership that hire and fire me [the minister]. So the members could in the future say we think that it’s time for you to move on.’

(Interview # 15, Pastor, Local Church, Baptist Union)

Figure 5.4 - Baptist Union Institution Structure



This status as an employer consequently necessitates that the members of the Church have skills in relation to managing a payroll, as the congregational model necessitates that this needs to be done within the Church itself rather than at the regional level (as is the case in the Church of England). This was a major concern for the Church's treasurer as he is not a financial professional but a financially literate volunteer. Indeed, as an employer the Church is governed by UK employment law and he, as Church treasurer, is consequently obligated to ensure that they comply with all that this entails. For him this is a significant responsibility.

'At the moment I am doing all of the wages and stuff. Yes. National Insurance, pensions everything because that is the way that it has been left to me ... It's not something I look forward to and to be fair in my work, I'm looking for a job, a better job, a different job to what I'm doing and one of the things I am concerned about is having to deal with people's wages. I have paid people's wages and I've had no worry with it but it was in a different situation all together. In the UK with the laws and everything that governs these things I am concerned.'

(Interview # 26, Treasurer, Local Church, Baptist Union)

Furthermore, as the only person within the Church with the knowledge set to pay staff in this manner it is possible to identify a concern that should something happen to him or should he leave the Church, it would be unable to pay its staff. This situation is further exasperated by recent changes to charity law that necessitate the Church treasurer re-registering the Church with the charity commission, arranging for accounts to be audited and the adoption of an accruals system of accounting¹⁰². It is argued that this additional responsibility is making it difficult for Baptist Churches to

¹⁰² A method of accounting that represents liabilities and non-cash assets on a balance sheet.

find people who are willing, or indeed have the necessary skills, to take on the role of treasurer, or of trustee¹⁰³ of the Church. This, again, represents a significant threat to the Church's reproduction.

JC: I was going to ask you about the changes in the Charity Commission Regulation

R: Well there is a requirement to produce annual accounts even if you are not an accepted charity, it is good practice anyway, but the requirements become more and more onerous not only being the treasurer but being a deacon, a trustee of the local Church. Every document you read these days refer to trustee responsibility, it is scary, it is frightening therefore it puts people off in a lot of ways because they don't understand the rigmarole. ... Church treasurer; it is a very onerous job and therefore often [Churches] struggle to recruit them.'

(Interview # 30, Treasurer, Regional Association, Baptist Union)

Third, and finally, due to its autonomy each Church, in effect, has to derive a large enough income to cover its own expenses as there is very little resource sharing amongst the institution¹⁰⁴. Whilst the members of the Church itself were unwilling to provide copies of their accounts they did make available a percentage breakdown of both the sources of income and expenditure for the Church. It is possible to identify four main sources of income. First, like both the Anglican and the Assemblies of God Churches, the key source of income (approximately 60%) was provided by the regular voluntary giving of the congregation. Second, a further 16% of the Churches income

¹⁰³ The Trustees are like the company directors of the Charity. It is they who are responsible for the successful financial running of the organization.

¹⁰⁴ Although each Church is indeed economically independent from each other there is a grant making body, labelled as Home Mission, which does allow for a degree of resource sharing within the institution. This will be covered later within the section.

is derived from the government's 'Gift Aid' scheme. However, as previously argued there are significant concerns as to the longevity of this income. Indeed, although this has now been deferred for a short period of time, government plans are to reduce the amount of tax relief that charities can claim in line with the basic tax rate. This would thus have a significant effect upon Church finances.

'I've worked it out and we are going to lose something along the lines of fourteen hundred pounds in a year. Yeah it's not a great amount but it is an amount but it's an amount and the question has to be posed, what do we do? Do we spend less or do you give more?'

(Interview # 26, Treasurer, Local Church, Baptist Union)

Third, 10% is raised through giving to the fellowship fund with a further 6% given through the Churches targeted gift day. Finally, a small figure is raised through gifts to cover caretaker fees by people who hire the Church hall. In regards to expenditure, 41% of the Churches outgoings cover maintenance of the building and utility bill costs. This figure is particularly high due to the historical context of the Church. Indeed, unlike the modern Assemblies of God Church, the particular Baptist Church was built in 1898 and was built to a size that was appropriate for large Victorian congregations. Consequently the age of the Church necessitates substantial maintenance and also costs a lot of money to heat to a comfortable level.

'It takes a lot of heating. Yeah, it's lovely and warm but you see the bill at the end of the month, it's a lot. It would be better, that area could be better used with a more user friendly [building]. But then you might lose the charisma of the Church actually being there, you know, we've got a big building.'

(Interview # 26, Treasurer, Local Church, Baptist Union)

In addition, 45% of the Churches outgoings relate to mission activity. Included within this is funding for several overseas 'mission' activities by members of the Church in countries, such as the Philippines, and the subscription costs for the Baptist Union. Indeed, in order to remain a member of the Union the Church has to pay certain fees in order to reproduce the wider institutional structures. This takes two forms; a subscription fee and Home Mission giving. First, each Baptist Church has to pay an annual subscription of £1 per member. In addition to this nominal fee Churches are encouraged to give voluntarily to what is entitled 'Home Mission'. Whilst 'Home Mission' funding will be discussed later this is, in essence, the money that flows through the wider institution in order to fund the regional and national bodies and to provide for an element of resource sharing.

'Home Mission Funding is largely the Baptist Union purse, where most of the money comes from on a day to day running basis for the Union ... That money is used [to fund the National Resource in] Didcot largely, and a massive proportion is to help Churches. To give them mission grants to help them to afford full time ministers or other projects.'

(Interview # 30, Treasurer, Regional Association, Baptist Union)

Congruent with the congregational model the voluntary nature of this giving empowers the local Church when it is deciding as to how much it wishes to contribute to the reproduction of the wider institution.

'The vast majority [of Home Mission money] is given voluntarily. It is not a subscription, it is not a demand, it is not a Parish Share that you have to pay it is a voluntary contribution.'

(Interview # 29 Manager, Home Mission, National Resource Baptist Union)

The voluntary nature of Home Mission Giving is also indicative of the weaker network ties between the different networks that comprise the assemblage. Again, due to their more radical protestant heritage, there are less links between the Churches of the Baptist Union and the wider institution. The third largest source of expenditure for the Church is that of youth work, with 7% of all outgoings paying for this. Finally, 4% of outgoings pay for the caretaker.

Whilst these financial outgoings are significant, respondents argued that the Church can comfortably meet these requirements. However, again, there is a concern that should an unexpected financial burden be placed upon them they may not be able to cover this.

‘It’s not like we are short of money, as such, but you have to have a contingency for things that you may have to pay out.’

(Interview # 26, Treasurer, Local Church, Baptist Union)

Indeed, instead of financial concerns it is argued that the major unease regarding the ongoing reproduction of the Church relates to the skills of the congregation. In addition to the lack of financial and legal skills it is argued that over the years several manual skills, essential to the reproduction of the Church fabric, have been lost.

‘... years ago the old Sunday School building was gutted and rebuilt... inside by Church members who had the skills. We had carpenters; we had joiners who were able to make stairs. We don’t have that anymore, we don’t have the people with the time and commitment and the skills to do it.’

(Interview # 26, Treasurer, Local Church, Baptist Union)

Consequently, whilst previously maintenance would not have cost the Church much finance it now does.

Having covered the 'local' Church, the chapter will now investigate the regional association. The aim of the Regional Association is to act as a link between the national resource body of the Church and the local Churches themselves. It has several key roles. First, as a Chartered Accountant, the treasurer of the regional association seeks to help Church treasurers with accountancy skills that may be lacking in their congregation. Second, the regional association offers a trouble-shooting service for Churches that may be having financial or spiritual difficulties. They employ two ministers to give advice to Churches when they are needed. However, again due to the congregational model these ministers are subservient to the views of the congregation in each Church. Third, they provide mission advice to try and help Churches grow their congregations. Finally, the association plays a key role in attempting to strengthen the network links between the disparate Churches and the wider Union through the promotion, and dispersion, of Home Mission Funding. For the association treasurer this is the key role of the association as they seek to persuade each individual Church that, despite their autonomy, they should be financially supporting the wider Baptist denomination.

'I think we have a responsibility which is always under review of encouraging our Churches to be Home Mission thinking ... we are all Home Mission Churches by virtue of what we are about: mission. So that's sort of our strap line: 'Every Church is a Home Mission Church'. But people need to be aware of that because there is again [if you] think about smaller Churches their officers, trustees if you like, are often lay people, particularly [the] treasurers. They've not got a lot of commercial experience, they don't appreciate the

sort of structure of the association of the Baptist Union ... So we help communication in that to make them feel that we are part of one family and [that] we have all got a common aim and we can resource each other.'

(Interview # 30, Treasurer, Regional Association, Baptist Union)

Indeed, it is widely argued that the congregational model is symptomatic of a lack of denominational identity amongst the Churches of the Baptist Union. Furthermore, this lack of denominational identity means that very little funding is redistributed through the union and instead pools in the richer Churches (Interview #29, 2008). Consequently, the Regional Association plays a key role in developing a sense of institutional cohesion and resource sharing amongst the many autonomous Churches within the Union. However, in addition to helping raise Home Mission Finance to fund the wider institution, the regional association also assists Churches with applications for Home Mission grants from the National Resource Centre itself¹⁰⁵. Indeed, whilst final decisions on grants are taken at the national level, as will be discussed later, these are vetted by the regional association.

Home Mission also plays a key role in the funding of the regional association. Each of the 13 associations are funded by an annual grant from the Baptist Union of £50,500 and the receipt of 25% of the Home Mission money collected within their area. This funding structure has two main consequences; first the associations do not have a stable, predictable, income as the amount of Home Mission funding varies from year to year depending upon the generosity of the Churches.

¹⁰⁵ In addition to providing the funding for the reproduction of the regional and national institutional structures Home Mission money is also provided to certain Churches to enable to afford to carry out certain projects. These often include providing a poorer Church with the finance to employ a minister.

‘[The funding] is largely out of my control because if, say for sake of argument, the [Asian] tsunami [disaster of 2004] Churches made big donations and perhaps that impacts then on what they give to Home Mission. So if they give to the tsunami and not Home Mission that year ... my funding takes a cut.’

(Interview # 30, Treasurer, Regional Association, Baptist Union)

This variation in funding is problematic in that each association has particular fixed costs and these funding variations can mean that they are not met. This is a further weakness of the Congregationalist system in that, unlike the Church of England, due to the voluntary nature of Home Mission giving, wider institutional structures are not able to accurately predict their income and budget accordingly. This is, again, symptomatic of the weaker status of the institution’s scalar ‘apparatus of capture’. As this is not engrained in the institution to the same extent as the Church of England the network displays more characteristics of the flux associated with ANT approaches. Thus, the institution is not as stable. Second, the regional funding structure of the institution creates a disparity of wealth amongst regional associations. By returning 25% of Home Mission funding to the originating region, respondents argued the regional associations that include a number of rich Churches become wealthy to the detriment of the poorer associations. Indeed, it is argued that the larger, wealthier, Baptist Churches give larger sums of money to the Home Mission Fund and that, consequently, associations that include a number of these wealthy Churches benefit repeatedly from 25% of this extra giving. Thus, money gets trapped spatially within the confines of these association regions, with the rich associations growing increasingly affluent and the poorer associations becoming poorer (cf. Clark, 2005).

'The way that it is working at the moment, the Home Mission refund, if you think about it you have an association with a lot of wealthy Churches they [the wealthy Churches] give more [consequently] they [the regional association] get more back. Poorer Churches are on a downer. The large associations with wealthy Churches are on an upper because they are wealthy areas.'

(Interview # 30, Treasurer, Regional Association, Baptist Union)

Having explored the Regional Association I will now move on to exploring the National Resource Centre. Like the Regional Associations, and in common with the congregational model, the National Resource Centre of the institution is not the headquarters of the institution but exists in order to serve the Local Churches and to enable them to function to the best of their ability.

J: What do you think the role of the Baptist Union is ... as a national organization?

R: It is to resource our Churches in the best way possible ... as a national resource rather than a national headquarters where everything comes to us. Our part mainly is to be servants of the Churches. So servants to 2,150 Churches [which are] obviously incredibly varied. You would think that we were an homogenous group but actually there is a wide variation of theology, ecclesiology, and practice.'

(Interview # 23, Clergyman, Mission Department, Baptist Union)

Consequently, the resource centre takes on a number of administrative roles, including financial, legal and spiritual tasks, (which the local Churches may lack the skills for) thus enabling them to reproduce themselves. In order to produce these

resources the Centre is split into six departments: Mission, Ministry, Communications, Faith and Unity, General Secretariat, and Finance and Administration. Whilst emphasis will be placed upon the financial tasks performed at the national resource centre, the chapter will also now quickly run through the key activities of each of these departments. First, the Mission Department seeks to equip Churches with strategies as to how to attract new Church members (this will be discussed further in Chapter Six). This, consequently, helps the Baptist Churches to reproduce themselves as these new members would provide additional gifts through the practice of the offering. Second, the Ministry department plays a key role in the training and accreditation of ministers providing them with the skills required to conduct their job. Furthermore, the department seeks to facilitate the placement of ministers; linking the requirements of local Churches with the characteristics of ministers who are available. However, as previously mentioned, due to the Church itself being the direct employer, the Baptist Union can only act in an advisory role, suggesting potential candidate for jobs. This is different to the system within the Church of England where ministers are allocated to Churches by the regional diocese. Third, the communications department attempts to publicise the union nationally and also provides advice for Churches that are, for whatever reason, engaging with the media. Fourth, the Faith and Unity department works with other denominations of the faith in order to create ecumenical partnerships to lobby government and businesses on Christian and social justice issues. Fifth, the general secretariat provides leadership to the Union and sets agendas. However, again due to the congregational model, Churches do not have to implement these strategies. Sixth, and finally, the finance department provides three key functions: first, it provides Churches with financial and legal help; second, it administrates the Baptist Union's pension fund, and; third it manages the national resource centres accounts (Baptist

Union, 2010). Due to the critical role that these activities play within the reproduction of the institution these roles will now be explored in further depth.

The finance department is comprised of three separate components: the finance office; the grants office, and; the Baptist Union Corporation. First, in accordance with the Congregationalist model, the Finance office offers a number of services to aid the Local Church. These include both offering Baptist Ministers, and other Church employees, access to a pension fund and offering accountancy training and advice to Churches that do not have the necessary financial skills. Both of these services seek to aid the reproduction of the local Church. However, the Church itself has to opt in to them rather than being automatically affiliated. This is best explained through the Baptist Union Ministers Pension Fund. Unlike the pension fund offered by the Church of England, Baptist Ministers do not automatically become a member on employment. Instead, each individual Church has to enter its minister and pay the pension contributions for him. Thus many Baptist Ministers have pension provisions outside of the institution.

‘All of the Baptist Churches are independent, it is up to them whether they take it out. Some Churches may not be able to afford to pay the premiums, some might just say to their minister no we’ll give you 5% [added percentage of salary to make up the pension] and that’s it and if they can’t pay our 12% [the annual subscription for the Baptist Pension Fund] well again they can’t join the scheme.’

(Interview # 5, Manager, Pension Fund, Baptist Union)

Currently, approximately 65% of Baptist Ministers within the Union are members of the pension scheme (Interview #5, 2008). This ability to source pension products outside of the institution is, again, symptomatic of the Congregationalist model with

the Church itself, as the minister's employer, able to decide pension plans. This right has been exercised by the case study Baptist Church as both their minister and Church administrator are not a member of the Baptist Union pension scheme. However, in relation to the pension fund, the primacy of the local Church causes significant issues. By not accepting the Baptist Union pension plan, ministers may be avoiding the ethical restrictions that would normally cover investments by the Baptist Union. Indeed, the institution adopts an ethical investment policy upon all of their investments including those of the pension fund. This precludes investments in businesses engaged in sales of alcohol, pornography, tobacco, gambling, or armaments (Baptist Union, 2009), as the Baptist Assembly argues that these activities are in contrast to the Churches message. However, by accepting a private pension plan ministers may be benefitting from financial returns in these areas thus weakening the institutions collective principles (the investment activities of the institution will be further discussed within Chapter 7).

'I took my pension out as a young engineer, so I just took it out with Standard Life and I didn't really think of it [ethical investment] when I took it out. It's something that now I would consider ... I think it is a weakness of a lot of Churches like ours, Baptist Churches, we are big on personal ethics and weak on corporate ethics.'

(Interview # 15, Pastor, Local Church, Baptist Union)

In addition, the network flows of the Congregationalist model place the pension fund administrators in an awkward position between the, often unskilled, volunteers of the local Church and the tight regulation and law surrounding pension funds.

'This is one of the problems that we find. Churches are run by people who could essentially be a club of friends if you take the sort of religious side out

of it. So they are all mates and they all get on OK, hopefully, and then they deal with us [pension fund administrators]. But we have rules that are set down by the Inland Revenue, the HMRC as it is now, and we have rules that are set down by the pension's regulator. We can't bend those rules if somebody forgot to send us a cheque or the treasurers gone on holiday this month: "Well, I'm sorry, but the law says that pension premiums must be paid on time or we should report you to the regulator". You know, so it's quite difficult dealing with people who are amateurs who are friends and very nice people when they ring up, but you have got to say to them, "Look, the Inland Revenue won't let us do this", and because of the culture of Baptist Churches all doing their own way they can't understand.'

(Interview # 5, Manager, Pension Fund, Baptist Union)

Thus, again, the primacy of the local Church has severe consequences for the everyday operation of the institution.

The second key part of the Finance Department is that of the grants office which is responsible for promoting, collecting, and disseminating Home Mission Funding. Like the regional association, a significant section of this work involves encouraging Home Mission giving at the local Church by promoting a sense of denominational identity and, thus, more network links between the different institutional entities. As a part of this, the grants office is responsible for facilitating a degree of resource sharing between the different Churches in the institution. This takes the form of Home Mission Grants that enable Churches with insufficient financial resources to employ a minister the opportunity to do so as well as providing funding for a number of mission projects (Interview # 29, 2008). Approximately £1.8million worth of funding is available to be allocated to Churches in this manner,

representing one third of the national resource centre's total annual expenditure (Interview #29, 2008). A wide range of Churches benefit from these funds, as shown by the following interview quote:

'There are all sorts of different Churches, some of them are in deprived inner city areas. Some of them are small rural Churches, some of them are new Churches if there is a Church plant and we want to do that.'

(Interview # 29, Manager, Home Mission, National Resource Baptist Union)

In order to be eligible for a grant a Church has to fulfil several criteria. This includes demonstrating either how employing a minister would help to significantly 'grow' the Church by attracting new members or how the grant would help them make a bigger impact upon their community. However, perhaps the most significant criteria is that a grant-receiving Church must show a strong commitment to the wider Baptist institution by being a supporter of Home Mission themselves. Thus, while under the congregational system each Church is under no obligation to give to Home Mission, not doing so precludes it from benefitting from the unions institutional structure.

'It's one of the criteria that the Church has to give to Home Mission and to Baptist Missionary Society World Mission¹⁰⁶ at the acceptable amount. Now there is a bit of a debate going on about that because obviously it is voluntary but there is a recommended figure so in the past that was £30 per member. We are trying to move away from that nationally and our current Union treasurer is trying to encourage Churches to give at least 5% of their income. So it is one of the things we look at and it is one of the things [that]

¹⁰⁶ This is a further organization that collects money from Baptist Churches in order to fund overseas mission work.

we go back to Churches and say we think you should have given a bit more. It is interesting how many Churches will suddenly start to give to Home Mission when they are applying for a grant.'

(Interview # 29, Manager, Home Mission, National Resource Baptist Union)

This, again, highlights the tension between the development of a wider institutional structure and the prioritization of the Local Church.

The final major body of the finance department is the Baptist Union Corporation. Formed in 1891 the Baptist Union Corporation Limited concentrates upon the property aspects of the institution. The Corporation acts in three ways: first, it provides a place where Church property deeds can be held; second, it acts as a resource body to provide legal advice to local Churches, and; third, like the Home Mission Grants, it allows for a degree of resource sharing within the institution through the Baptist Union Loan Fund. Each of these modes of action will now be studied in turn. First, the Baptist Union Corporation originated historically as an organization that enabled groups of Baptists to register land in a simple manner. Indeed, due to the Baptist Churches position as being an 'unincorporated association', a different registration to that of both the Anglican and Methodist Churches, it was problematic at the time for Churches to operate as any land that they owned had to be registered in the name of every member of the association (i.e. every member of the congregation) rather than in the name of the Church itself. Consequently, the Corporation was formed as a national body that could be the registered owner of Church property in order to simplify any subsequent economic transaction (Interview # 12, 2008). Subsequently, in addition to this role of property trustee, the Corporation has taken on a further role of being a source of advice for

local Churches on property and charity law. Indeed, as previously argued, the congregational model of the Baptist Union requires that each Church is a legally distinct self controlling entity. However, this means that the Church is required to have wide breadth of legal and financial skills that are required in order for it to operate, something that many Churches lack. Consequently, the Corporation seeks to offer advice to Churches in order to supplement the skills of their members. However, due to the congregational model the Corporation can only offer advice to Churches and not directives. For instance, in relation to the problems caused by the changing Charity Commission laws the Corporation has sought to assist Churches in their attempts to comply. In so doing the Corporation, in partnership with the Charity Commission, have developed a generic registration document that all Churches can use, however it is the decision of the Church itself as to whether it does so.

‘The Manager and the Directors of the Corporation have put together what the Charity Commission call an approved governing document for Baptist Churches to use and we have just recently finished that work so there is now a sort of streamlined document that they can use if they feel they want to and so hopefully that help them through that process. But again it is about this provision of support and guidance ... and it will be there for them to use if they want to, they don’t have to.’

**(Interview # 12 Manager, Baptist Loan Fund, and Senior Manager,
Baptist Union Corporation)**

Furthermore, as a Baptist body the Corporation is able to provide tailored support for Churches on issues that particular effect Baptist Churches. One example of this is guidance on how to maintain listed property.

‘Most [Baptist] Churches because of their age and when they were built [have] become quite distinct landmarks in the community and they [have] become what is known as listed buildings. So therefore we give them a special helpful set of guidelines on this because obviously there are legal constraints on what they are allowed to do there.’

(Interview # 12 Manager, Baptist Loan Fund, and Senior Manager, Baptist Union Corporation)

However, the Corporation also has a third function as it acts as a deposit account for Churches with spare financial resources and offers a set rate of interest. Rather than investing such resources, as do CCLA, the Baptist Union Corporation uses this money to provide loans to Churches undergoing capital projects, engendering returns by charging a set rate of interest that is generally below that of the market. Whilst the deposit rate is not traditionally competitive, compared to that offered by high street banks, the Baptist Union advertise their fund as a way of contributing to the wider Baptist Family. Indeed, once again the theology of the institution, by prioritising the local Church, does not allow for the national bodies to share resources between Churches as each is individually governed. Consequently, the loan fund provides a method in which one Baptist Church can aid another whilst still satisfying their own fiduciary responsibility to gain a return on any assets they hold.

‘**JC:** Why do Churches deposit money in the deposit account with the corporation? Is it a kind of way of resource sharing or [is] the interest level you pay important to them?’

R: The interest level at the moment is 4.1% which is not brilliant¹⁰⁷ but there is a feeling that if they deposit with the Baptist Family then the money is being used to help fund the loan fund. So it is an altruistic sort of feeling as well. As good stewards they have got to look for the best return, but the balance against that is ... they are helping other Churches'

**(Interview # 12, Manager, Baptist loan fund, and Senior
Manager, Baptist Union Corporation)**

Finally, in addition to the organizations within the institution of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, it is possible to identify a number of other, independent Baptist Bodies that have only weak network ties to the official institution. Of particular interest is the Baptist Building Fund and the Baptist Insurance Company. The Baptist Building Fund is an independent historical body that provides loans to Baptist Churches in order for them to complete building projects. These loans are for a maximum of £100,000 and have no interest charged upon them. Instead Churches are encouraged to provide an additional repayment after the debt has been reconciled as a thank you gesture. The body is again indicative of the institutional nature of the Baptist denomination as it is not affiliated with the Union itself. Consequently, its loans are accessible by both Baptist Union churches and Baptist Churches who have not opted into the Union (Baptist Building Fund, 2008). Second, the Baptist Insurance Company provides insurance products tailored for Baptist Churches. It is argued that this speciality in insurance is essential for Churches as they have specific needs. One example of this is the need to insure lead roofs, common upon many Baptist Churches due to the time at which they were built, due to a spate of costly lead thefts (Interview #31, 2008). Operated by the larger body Ecclesiastical Insurance,

¹⁰⁷ This interview took place before the onset of the Financial Crisis and the collapse in interest rates.

which is in itself owned by a Church charity, the insurance company gifts its operating profits to the Baptist Union.

In summary, the institutional structure of the Baptist Union is characterised by the theological principle of the primacy, and independence, of the local Church. This is born out in several factors. First, it necessitates that each Church needs to be able to reproduce itself upon its own accord. Consequently, the wider structures of the institution have been developed in order to aid the Baptist Churches with the reproduction process. These bodies provide skills, knowledge and in some cases finance to Churches that are lacking these attributes. However, second, as noted by Shier-Jones (2004), the primacy of the local Church is also causal of a tension that exists between the Church and the institution. Indeed, this stress upon the local Church has led to a weak sense of institutional identity and thus few links between the various networks of the assemblage. This is particularly prevalent within the funding for the national and regional bodies of the institution. As they are subservient to the local Church these bodies cannot place a subscription fee upon their services and are consequently reliant upon charitable gifts. These weak ties represent the method in which the Baptist Union attempts to resolve the theological conflict between the congregational model and being a national institution. Indeed, many of these assemblage links are optional with each empowered Church to decide the extent to which it participates in the wider institutional network. This is in contrast to both the Anglican model identified previously and the Assemblies of God institutional model, which is considered below.

5.3.3 The Assemblies of God

The Assemblies of God (AOG) is a Pentecostal Christian denomination with 600 Churches spread across England, Scotland and Wales (email communication with National Secretary, 2008). It is part of the Assemblies of God World Fellowship, which began in the USA state of Arkansas in 1914 (The Assemblies of God USA, 2009). The denomination first appeared in the UK in Birmingham in 1924 and subsequently spread around the country (Assemblies of God, 2009). As a Pentecostal faith the organization places a very strong theological emphasis upon the primacy of the local Church. As a consequence, the institutional structure of the Assemblies of God (AOG) differs radically from both the Church of England and even the local Church based Baptist Union of Great Britain. Within the AOG Churches are affiliated to the institution in the style of a franchise, which enables them to use the AOG brand, rather than being a member of, or belonging to, the organization in the conventional sense (email communication with National Secretary, 2008). Thus network ties between the entities within the institution are very weak.

In order to become affiliated to the institution a Church is required to fulfil two criteria one spiritual and one financial. First, like Veblen's (1988) identification of a 'settled pattern of thought', in order to become a member of the institution a Church has to conform to a standard statement of beliefs (this statement is included in Chapter Two). This provides the institution with a degree of cohesion and identity. However, the priority placed upon local worship (rather than institutional structures) means that this is interpreted individually by each member Church.

'So we're Assemblies of God which is, let me get to the right phrase, we are affiliated [that] is the way the denomination works you're not a [member] ... So we all work autonomously, allegedly subscribing to a standard statement

of principles, whatever they call them, but we all operate under our own individual charitable trusts ... But we are fundamentally autonomous.'

(Interview # 14, Finance Manager, Local Church, Assemblies of God)

Second, every Church has to pay a membership fee. This money provides the funding for the AOG national office, located in Ruddington Nottinghamshire, and several regional bodies to continue to operate (email communication with National Secretary, 2008). The subscription charges for these bodies are as follows: two percent of the Churches income is to be paid to the national body and a further half of a percent to the regional organization. However, it is argued that the weak position of the national office within the institution means that the interpretation as to what constitutes Church income, and thus the amount of subscription a Church has to pay, is decided by the local Church itself.

R: It's a little bit undefined as to a percentage of what and they're a bit weak at head office in trying to determine it because, well I guess when that was set up Churches thirty years ago had nothing else much going on it was a percentage of what came in...

J: Yes, just congregational [giving]

R: So we work on that principle. We pay a percentage of tithes and offerings that come in ... some other Churches might base it on something else. It's not as defined as it could and should be frankly.'

(Interview # 14, Finance Manager, Local Church, Assemblies of God)

Furthermore, the primacy, and independence, of the local Church causes resentment towards this charge.

‘So we were paying one and a quarter percent centrally and quarter of a percent locally ... that’s just increased to, if we call that one and a half, that’s just increased to two and a half and they have a push on to three or three and a half, that I’m personally not thrilled about.’

(Interview # 14, Finance Manager, Local Church, Assemblies of God)

As a consequence of this, theological approach, and the associated franchise model, each individual AOG Church, ‘operate[s] autonomously and handle[s] all [of] their own finances and are registered as individual charities’ (email communication with National Secretary, 2008). Thus each Church has to act as an individual financial body, with little resource sharing around the institution. Furthermore, this autonomy is reflected in weak institutional links between the AOG and its member Churches. The chapter will now turn to investigate this institutional structure centred on the case studied Church.

The studied Church is one of the largest centres of worship within the AOG with approximately 1400 members (Interview #14, 2008). As of 2005, the Church had financial outgoings of £2,082,000 and an income of £1,858,000, although both of these figures were distorted due to an ongoing building project. Furthermore, the Church held financial assets in reserve of approximately £2,000,000 (Interview #14, 2008). The four largest outgoings related to gifts that the Church had made to other charitable bodies (£417,000), support costs including maintaining and heating the building, (£456,000), staffing costs (£330,000), and costs related to the new building project (£879,000) (AOG Church, 2006). Whilst these outgoings are sizeable, unlike

the Church of England and Baptist Union, the Church benefits from a relatively modern building meaning that maintenance costs are significantly less than those incurred by traditional buildings. Furthermore, the third largest outgoing related to voluntary giving to other charities, a cost that could be cut should insufficient income be returned. Similarly, it is possible to identify four main ways in which the Church engenders an income to cover these expenditures. First, as with both the Baptist Union and The Church of England the largest source of income, approximately 39%, is provided by the tithes and offerings given by the Churches congregation. Due to the size of the Church congregation this is a significant sum with £731,000 raised in 2005. Second, like the Baptist and Anglican Churches, the Church claims a further £170,000 through tax relief on the congregations' giving through the governments Gift Aid scheme. However, as mentioned previously it is possible to identify severe concern as to the long term sustainability of this income source.

JC: What do you think this reduction of Gift Aid is going to do? Is it going to be a problem at all?

R: When Gordon Brown [then Chancellor of the Exchequer] in his last budget announced basic rate tax was dropping from 22% to 20% I swore quite loudly which probably wasn't appropriate but I knew what the sums were it cost me about £21,000 per annum but obviously it doesn't kick in until April so it's about £16,000.'

(Interview # 14, Finance Manager, Local Church, Assemblies of God)

Furthermore, it was argued that as a large professional body, with a full time financially trained staff, the AOG Church would suffer more than other Churches as it was already able to promote and administer the Gift Aid scheme as it was.

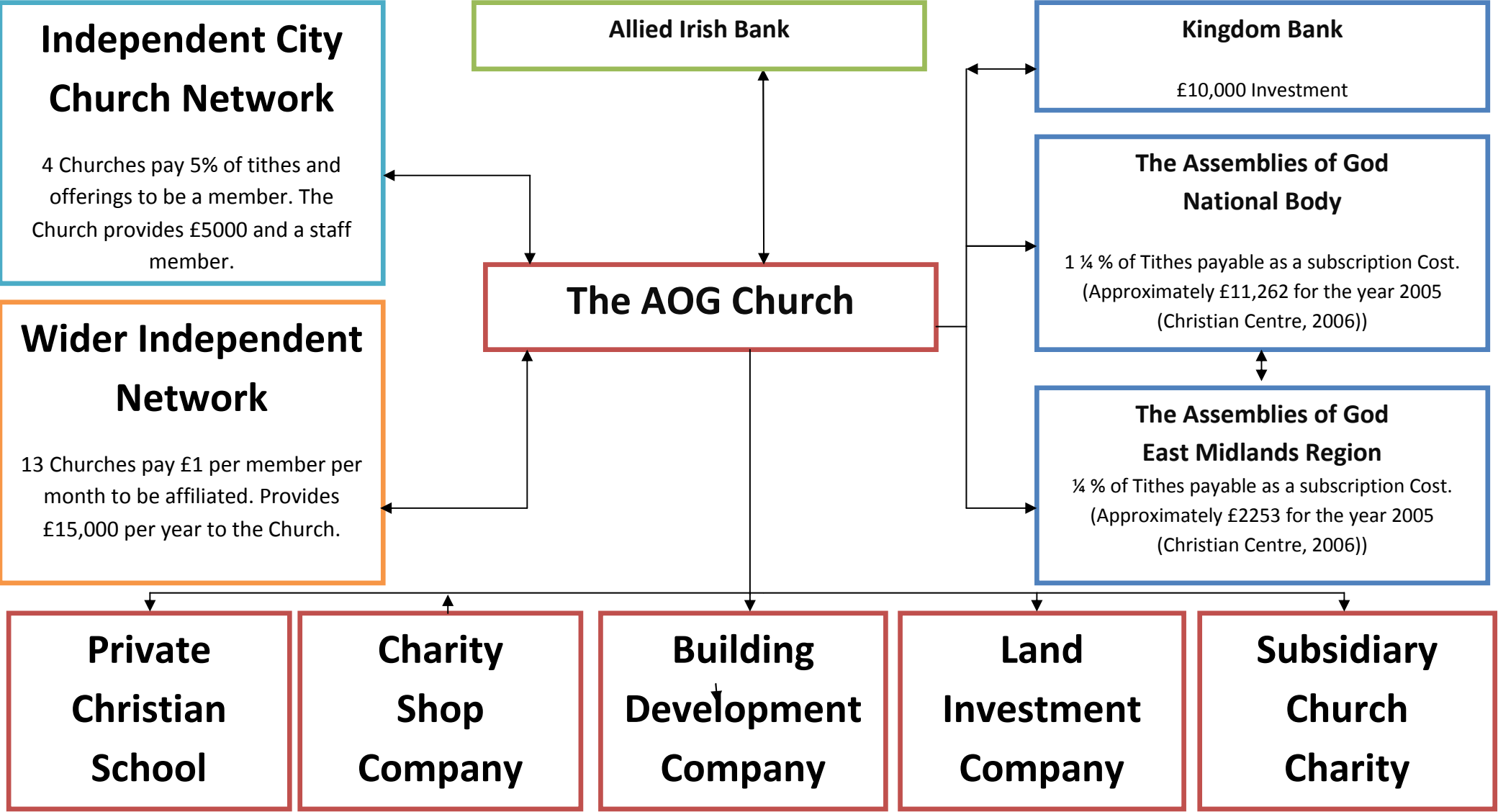
Consequently, the Church would not benefit from the additional funds the government had allocated to promote awareness of the scheme. Third, £457,000 was raised from gifts towards the Church's new building. Fourth, fund raising through the Churches network of charity shops (discussed further later) raised £86,000 and other income provided £414,000 (Christian Centre, 2006). These figures highlight the size of the Church in comparison to both the Church of England and Baptist Union Churches and exemplify how, despite running a deficit budget, the Church has little problem reproducing itself economically.

Having introduced the Church itself, the chapter will now move on to explore the Church's financial and institutional networks in more detail. First, as shown by Figure 5.5, the Church has five affiliated subsidiary companies. This corporate structure is enabled by the Churches financial size as, unlike the local Churches of both the Baptist Union and The Church of England who have to rely on volunteers, the AOG Church is able to employ a skilled financial manager and access legal advice. First, the Church has set up a subsidiary company to manage their charity shops so as to comply with Charity Commission law.

'[Company name] operates our charity shops for the reason that ... Charities are not allowed to trade over either 25% of their income or more realistically if they're going to be trading £50,000 it has got to be vested in a trading subsidiary with a separate board of directors.'

(Interview # 14, Finance Manager, Local Church, Assemblies of God)

Figure 5.5 Institutional Structure of the AOG



Second, the Church has developed a company shell in an attempt to minimise any tax due on their building project.

‘[Company name] was because of our building project and all of the VAT implications related to that. If you are building a purely charitable building that a Church would be you would have to pay full VAT on your professional costs which you incur 70-75% [of] before a brick gets laid. Your architect’s fees, your structural engineers, your mechanical engineers and your quantity surveyors. All of those bills you would incur full VAT on them but 0 VAT on the physical construction bills unless you are in danger of breaking the 10% threshold. The 10% threshold is if there is going to be trading activities in a charitable building you can trade up to 10% ... you have to declare that with customs. If you break the 10% it is no longer a charitable building and you have to pay VAT on the construction costs. So in that we were building a not insubstantial building [and] that we were going to be incurring significant professional fees before we laid a brick we didn’t want to be suffering the VAT on [the construction costs] so we were going to enter into a relationship with [company name] then as the Charity [the Church] would have leased the entire building to [company name], [company name] would have traded the building including a sub lease back to [the Church] for our use.’

(Interview # 14, Finance Manager, Local Church, Assemblies of God)

The third subsidiary company relates to the investment practices of the Church. Unlike the Church of England and the Baptist Church, the AOG Church holds enough assets in itself to make substantial investments. Furthermore, the lack of a clear investment structure within the wider AOG, (unlike the tailored products CCLA offers

the Church of England) and the autonomy afforded to the local Church, means that these investments can be managed by the Church itself. Thus, a Special Investment Vehicle was set up to manage a particular property investment.

‘[property company], this is our big one. It is in the accounts but vastly understated. The Church own 56 acres of land on the west side of the City ... and we’ve been trying to promote [development] out of Greenbelt for a while to try and raise some significant income. Residential land is £1million per acre we own 56 acres [and] it’s very interesting at the moment ... Very soon we will be selling [the Church] we’ve got a lot of tax advice [and] again [the Church] will sell all of the land to [the property company] in order to avoid some Capital Gains implications tax implications, potentially when we finally sell it on.’

(Interview # 14, Finance Manager, Local Church, Assemblies of God)

In addition to the three subsidiary companies, the Church also operates two charities. First, it provides funding and oversight to an independent Christian School within the City. Second, they operate a charity as a subsidiary of the Church. This offers several ‘social responsibility¹⁰⁸’ programmes within the City. These include work with prostitutes, drug abusers, and feeding the homeless (Interview #37, 2008). However, it is argued that as a Christian organization, with a large amount of financial reserves, the Church is precluded from applying for several grants that would enable this work to continue and grow. Consequently, the charity was

¹⁰⁸ Social Responsibility is the phrase that the Church itself uses to describe the charities activities.

divorced from the corporate structure of the Church so as to enable it to apply for such funding.

‘Now we’ve got a vibrant social responsibility programme, there’s all of this money out there and a lot of it is [in] trusts [and] although they would like to give it to us [they] are precluded because they cannot give it to a religious organization and also in terms of the asset value that we are carrying here on our balance sheet ... on their we’re a couple of million. [So] if you’re going after a grant of £20,000 to help prostitutes and you’re a religious organization with a £2,000,000 balance sheet [they’re] not going to give you the money. So we took a view and opened up a new charity that under the old rules had relief of poverty as it’s object, it didn’t have religion anywhere ... it’s not smoke and mirrors – if somebody says to us you’re a Christian organization we’ll say yep ... but it delivers our social responsibility programme it’s got a much smaller balance sheet and ... it doesn’t have religion and therefore we’ve attracted significant funding into that rolling through to deliver our objectives.’

(Interview # 14, Finance Manager, Local Church, Assemblies of God)

This comment brings to mind the work of Du Gay (2000) on the power of bureaucracy. He argues that bureaucracy is more than an administrative task; it enables the people who control it to do things that they wouldn’t be able to do otherwise. Thus, by formally separating the network of the charity from the Church itself, this bureaucratic practice enables the attraction of significant outside funding.

As previously mentioned the Church is financially linked to the wider assemblage of the AOG through subscription costs to the regional and national

bodies. In return the National AOG operates six departments that are intended to supplement and aid the work of the individual Churches. These are as follows: first, the Church Planting department seeks to grow the AOG institution through the creation of new Churches. Second, 'Youth Alive' provides training for leaders working amongst young adults and offers residential activities that members of the congregation can attend. Third, like 'Youth Alive', the 'Children's Department' provides training for leaders and residential activities for children. Fourth, 'Christian Action' aims to promote charitable programmes in AOG Churches, such as the one discussed above. Fifth, 'World Ministries' sends missionary workers overseas to provide charity work and preach the Pentecostal faith. Sixth, and finally, 'Mattersey Hall' is the centre where AOG pastors are trained and gain accreditation in order to preach in member Churches. However, again like the Baptist Union, these departments exist solely to guide the member Churches as the principle of autonomy means that they cannot issue directives. To exemplify, an AOG Church Pastor does not have to have trained at Mattersey Hall but can be employed from any other background dependent upon the selection process of the employing Church.

The Assemblies of God institution also includes an investment and financial services organization known as 'Kingdom Bank'. Similar to the Baptist Union Corporation Loan Fund, Kingdom Bank (also located in Ruddington in Nottinghamshire) offers a range of deposit accounts which are used to provide loans, in the form of mortgages, to Churches. As of 2008 these deposit accounts totalled approximately £50million (Interview #4, 2008). Again like the Baptist Union, interest on these accounts is generated from the loans and the returns are passed on to the depositors. However, in contrast to the BUC Loan Fund the deposit accounts are not just limited to bodies affiliated to the Assemblies of God but are available, and strongly advertised, to the Churches of other denominations and the wider public.

Through actively advertising itself to the wider Christian networks of both Church bodies and Church goers Kingdom Bank attracts consumer deposits that are used to originate further loans. This advertising is targeted at Christians and takes the form of suggesting that any investment placed with them both actively furthers the faith whilst also providing a return upon their capital.

‘We use the strapline ‘the natural choice for Churchgoers’. You know if you go to Church and you believe, and you have a faith, and you want to put that faith into action then one of the simple things you can do is to put your money into a bank that is used to support that and you earn the same interest rate you would do where [sic] it was before.’

(Interview #4, Director, Kingdom Bank)

Consequently, as the bank offers products to actors outside of the institution it, unlike the BUC Loan Fund, has to register and comply with the regulations of the Financial Services Authority. Kingdom Bank further reflects the lack of a strong sense of institutionalism within the AOG. Indeed, AOG Churches are not obligated to place investment capital within the organization. Indeed, the Church studied within this project chose to place the majority of its investment capital within the conventional ‘Allied Irish Bank’, placing just a ‘political investment’ of £10,000 within ‘Kingdom Bank’ itself.

‘The Assemblies of God have their own bank, Kingdom Bank it is called, FSA registered, millions of pounds worth of investments and I’ve got a deposit with them [of] £10,000. It’s a political investment, that’s all that is and then I’ve got over £1,000,000 invested in my bank AIB because I want to. It’s just a strategic decision ... If I was sat here as a fully paid up AOG, all singing all dancing supporter and member and not interested about this Church’s

position as a wider corporate body I would have every penny with them, definitely. Not bothered, I'm not bothered and I'm under no pressure to do that.'

(Interview # 14, Finance Manager, Local Church, Assemblies of God)

That this is purely a 'politically donation' reflects the obligations of the institutional network link, but that these links are not firmly established in the Church's structure.

Finally, as again shown by Figure 5.5, in addition to the AOG the Church is part of a further two institutions; those of a network of six Churches within the City itself, and a wider network of thirteen churches around the UK. Enabled by the weak institutional ties of the Assemblies of God and the size and influence of the Church itself these institutions have formed in two different ways and display two different sets of characteristics. First, the city group of Churches developed as a direct consequence of the Church seeking to reach out to different areas of the City. Indeed, of the six Churches that are part of the institution three were directly planted by the Church itself. The group seeks to provide a similar sense of worship extending the Church throughout the City with the large AOG Church providing the guidance and staffing resources to allow for that to happen. Consequently, the institution is seen as being a close partnership.

'Yeah, so City Church, the strap line would be one Church meeting in six places.'

(Interview # 14, Finance Manager, Local Church, Assemblies of God)

'The DNA that holds it together is vision, common beliefs. What we say is that it is a network of Churches with shared values. Those shared values are

providing strong relationships for Church leaders, equipping Churches and leaders and their teams, and giving resources to strengthen the Churches.'

(Interview # 20 Senior Pastor, Local Church, Assemblies of God)

However, to allow for this staffing each member Church has to pay approximately 5% of their tithes and offerings to the AOG Church in order to be affiliated. In contrast to the City based network, the national network evolved as a result of the size of the Church with other Churches seeking to learn from their example. As a result, a group of Churches was formed that had access to the leaders of the main AOG Church who would provide training in Church growth. However, for this each affiliated Church has to pay £1 per congregation member per month (Interview #20, 2008). Both of these small institutions provide a significant income to the Church of approximately £15,000.

Overall, the key characteristic of the AOG is the primacy of the local Church. Indeed, within the theology of the institution the Church is so powerful as to resent its wider connections to the institution, preferring to operate in an independent style. Furthermore, the size, and modern characteristics, of the particular Church studied meant that reproduction is not a serious concern as they have enough members and financial reserves to cover any outgoing costs.

5.3 Summary

Within this chapter I have sought to empirically examine the institutional structures and reproduction methods of the Church of England, The Baptist Union of Great Britain and the Assemblies of God. In so doing I have empirically tested the notion that formal institutions (Amin, 2004) are not cohesive bodies but are instead

an assemblage of various autonomous networks. However, despite each institution fitting this model, sharing the same overarching aim (teaching society about Christianity), needing to reproduce themselves in the same manner, and using the same scalar 'apparatus of capture' to stabilise their networks, they display radically different characteristics. Indeed, the key finding of this chapter is the extent to which each Churches culture, both theological and historical, has affected the connections between their various networks and, consequently, their reproduction patterns. A second key finding of the chapter was the extent to which financial resources flow within the institutions. Indeed, the three religious bodies provided a useful forum in which to test the argument of Clark (2005) that money does not flow in a uniform manner and pools in certain areas. As assemblages of various autonomous entities each of the Church institutions reflected this pattern. For instance, within the Church of England the Euclidean division of space of the parochial system meant that some geographical regions (both at the parish and diocesan levels) were resource rich and others resource poor. Again, it was argued that this was due to contextual factors with historical parishes and dioceses being bequeathed assets over time that now provide an investment income. Furthermore, as these bodies were, in theory, autonomous very little money transferred across their boundaries to the less well resourced regions.

In addition to Veblen's argument that institutions require sufficient financial resources to be reproduced, it was argued that each institution requires volunteers to conduct necessary tasks. These tasks include manual labour, such as the physical upkeep of the Church building, and financial services such as book keeping, auditing and employee management. Like finance however, the assemblage nature of each institution, meant these resources also pooled geographically within certain Churches and were not spread evenly around the networks.

Despite their many differences the three institutions derived the majority of their income from the same sources. In each instance congregational giving (Chapter Six) and investment returns (Chapter Seven) were the two largest sources of finance. The thesis will now move to consider each of these in turn.

6: The Shop Front: Attracting Religious Consumers and the Business of the Local Church

6.1 Introduction

Building on the previous chapter I will now move on to examine the principle form of revenue generation for each of the three institutions; that is congregational giving. In so doing the chapter will concentrate upon the network of the local Church and identify the key role the 'shop front' plays in the economic reproduction of the wider institution. More particularly, I will investigate the techniques that are utilised to attract more people to the Church services – thus creating a larger consumer base from which to extract funds – and to optimise the income that the respective churches are able to draw from existing Church-goers.

As argued in Chapter Five the institutions of The Church of England, The Baptist Union of Great Britain and the Assemblies of God derive the majority of their income from the voluntary giving of their congregations. The importance of this practice is highlighted by the amount of funding it imparts. For the Church of England nationally, the voluntary giving of congregations engenders approximately £560,000,000 a year (The Church of England, 2006) and the particular Assemblies of God Church (studied in this thesis) collected £1,380,000 from their congregation in 2008 (The Church¹⁰⁹, 2009). This giving takes three forms: 'the collection', where a basket is passed around Church attendees and monetary gifts are given; 'regular

¹⁰⁹ To allow for anonymity all references to documents published by the individual Churches themselves, such as Annual Reports, are cited as The Church.

accountable giving', where people set up direct-debit and standing order arrangements to regularly give money to the Church; and one-off gifts for special causes, such as building projects, or from occasional visitors. However, as highlighted in Chapter Two, authors such as Bruce (2002), Martin (1978), and Barnett (2004) argue that the process of secularization has meant that less people in contemporary society are attending Church. Consequently, Laughlin (1988) argues that less people are voluntarily giving to the Church; thus funds from this income source are declining. This chapter will utilise the assemblage and formal institutional approaches (outlined in Chapters Three, Four and Five) in order to examine how a case study, 'local' Church from each of the three institutions (supplemented by interview data from other Churches) has sought to counter the process of secularization and maximise revenue from voluntary giving.

To this end the chapter is comprised of four sections. First, I will further develop and refresh the theory upon which the chapter rests. In particular, I will re-examine the existing academic work on the nature of religion within contemporary society and the ways in which this work can be related to the institutional approach of the thesis. Second, I will discuss the specific techniques that the Churches have developed in order to attract people to their services and embed them within their respective institutional networks. In so doing I will be influenced by work concerning a possible consumerization of religion (Karner and Aldridge, 2004; Aldridge, 2007; Aupers and Houtman, 2006). Through engagement with this consumer literature I will argue that the local Church, as the place where religious services are delivered, functions in a manner similar to a shop as it is the primary location where the religious consumers interact with the institution. I will thus state that the network node of the local Church plays the key role of being the 'shop front' of the institution.

Third, I will move on to investigate the ways in which the Churches seek to optimise the giving from their congregations before, finally, providing a summary.

6.2 Theory

Congruent with the rest of the thesis I will argue in this chapter that the three religious institutions studied – The Church of England, The Baptist Union of Great Britain, and the Assemblies of God – can be conceptualised as formal institutions. As previously explained, the thesis argues that these institutions are comprised of a series of different networks that are linked together to form the assemblage of the wider Church organization. This reflects the work of Martin who argues that institutions are ‘congealed social networks’ (Martin, 2000). Thus, as institutions, the three Church denominations are comprised of various networks of people grouped together out of a shared interest in Christianity. However, as repeatedly argued, these institutional assemblages need to be constantly reproduced. This drive for reproduction ties the institution into a recursive loop. This loop exists as follows. First, the process of reproduction is expensive and, thus, places the institutions under a degree of economic pressure. Second, the only way in which institutions can satisfy this pressure is by attracting new members as these bring new resources and funding opportunities (Veblen, 1988). However, third, in order to attract these new members Veblen (1988) argues that an institution needs to remain appropriate to a continually changing society. Indeed, by appropriate, it is meant that the institution must be seen as an attractive proposition to prospective new members as it serves a particular, needed, purpose. For instance, should an institution become inappropriate to the needs of society it would no longer serve a required purpose and would thus become unattractive and irrelevant. If this were to

be the case the institution would cease to enrol new members, thus isolating itself from the capital resources that they would bring. This would, in turn, entail that the institution would be unable to satisfy the economic pressure of reproduction and cease to exist. Reproduction is, thus, contingent upon an institution's ability to continually modify itself to remain relevant to society (Veblen, 1988). Veblen (1988) further explained this process by reference to the theory of 'evolutionary selection'; that is, a particular institution will become dominant by virtue of the fact that they succeeded in becoming more relevant, than other institutions, to the changing social environment. Consequently, Veblen (1988) argues that if a historic institution is to remain prominent throughout a period of time, it needs to evolve at the same pace as society or it will be replaced by new, more socially relevant, institutions¹¹⁰.

To apply this theory to the formal Church institutions, it is my argument that the Churches need to continually alter themselves to remain relevant to developments in religious society if they are to continue to attract new members and, increase levels of congregational giving. If they fail to do so the institution will cease to attract sufficient income to reproduce itself, and will thus wither to be replaced by new religious beliefs and institutions. Thus, a Church institution that satisfies the perceived spiritual needs of modern society is more likely to be able to enrol new members into its network and thus thrive, than a church that fails to adapt to societal changes.

Consequently, in order to remain economically viable, the Churches studied within this project are required to alter their characteristics in order to remain appropriate to the societal developments identified in the sociology of religion perspective as discussed in Chapter Two. Buttner (2006) argues, however, that

¹¹⁰ This resembles the evolutionary concept of 'survival of the fittest'

while religious institutions have to continually transform themselves in order to remain relevant to society in this manner, they also have to simultaneously remain faithful to their original purpose:

‘Once structured ... [religious] institutions often [take] on a life of their own, as it were, their political, cultural, and economic survival and growth [become] more important than the cultivation of the original idea’ (Buttimer, 2006:200)

Thus, Buttimer (2006) stresses that the institutions have to strike a balance between their survival induced economic needs, and their religious and spiritual characteristics.

As a final contribution of this theoretical section I will now discuss the process that the religious institutions use to attract new members. As the thesis has adopted an assemblage approach, theorising the religious institutions as being a series of interconnected networks, I will argue that this process resembles Callon’s (1986) notion of ‘translation’ and Murdoch’s (1998) interpretation of ‘enrolment’. At the heart of both the work of Callon and Murdoch is a concern with how objects and individuals are first attracted to a particular network and then internalised within it. Indeed, both Callon and Murdoch highlight that it is only through internalising new entities into the network that it will grow. However, to take a social perspective, again, for this integration to occur there is a requirement for an element of synergy between the needs and values of the person joining the network and the network itself. Indeed, enrolment only occurs when the two entities share a similar need or value. To exemplify, a newly converted Christian is more likely to be translated into the network of an institution of the Christian Church than one of another faith as

they share similar values. This process of enrolment will thus be examined empirically within the chapter.

6.3 Attracting Religious Consumers

Having identified the need for institutions to remain relevant to society, this third section of the chapter will empirically examine the ways in which the Churches in question have actually sought to adapt in this manner, and, subsequently, the methods that they have utilised to 'enrol' 'consumers' into their respective institutional networks.

6.3.1 'The Customer is Always Right': Creating a Religious Product

I will first concentrate upon outlaying the physical processes of change that each institution has adopted to remain relevant to, and required in, contemporary religious society. Congruent with the arguments of Karner and Aldridge (2004), it is possible to identify two ways in which the Church of England, the Baptist Union of Great Britain, and the Assemblies of God have sought to adapt themselves to a more commercial religious culture. First, this is achieved by transforming their existing services within Church buildings to be more acceptable to prospective Churchgoers and, second, by taking the practices, and the network, of the Church out of designated religious spaces, and into the wider community.

The chapter will first consider the ways in which the Church institutions have adapted their existing services in order to enrol prospective new members who approach them in the designated religious space of the Church. Each of the Churches studied within this project has identified the practice of 'Church shopping' (or

‘Church hopping’) as a key driver among new Church attendees. Church hopping describes the process whereby prospective religious consumers, who are new to an area, visit several Churches before deciding which one they wish to ‘buy into’ by becoming a member of that institution:

‘My assumption is that they [Christians new to an area] would Church shop, Church hop, but that comes from a little bit of exposure to how the student Christian Union¹¹¹ literally take people round week by week because they are so keen that Christians will find a Church’

(Interview # 17, Church Pastor, Large Evangelical Church)

‘A story that I quite often hear from people is that we moved in, we decided to look around, we went to Saint so and so’s [example Anglican Church] last week, we came to you this week and actually we don’t think we are going to be looking anymore, you are fine. So what they do, in a sense, is they ‘Church hop’ without a particularly critical spirit. They just say is this going to be alright? Yes it is going to be alright. So they may make a mistake on the first one and other’s will say we tried you as a local Church, it’s fine.’

(Interview # 13, Clergyman, The Church of England)

Consequently, the different Churches within the case study locale have sought to attract these (s)hoppers into their networks by differentiating themselves from competitors; creating their own market niche and appealing to different tastes. This has been achieved by adopting a different theological or practical approach to worship in order to target a different consumer demographic. The main manner in

¹¹¹ Although this quote refers specifically to the Student Union the interview respondent was using it to provide a specific example of the widespread practice of Church shopping.

which this differentiation is achieved is through the utilization of different styles of music in worship:

JC: Do you think the type of music attracts a certain type of people?

R: I think it does to a level [sic] and I think that on a human level everyone has a preference so I would think ... [that] there will be some people who will not go to a Church that has got loud music or lot's of instruments, there would be some people who would maybe not choose to go to a Church that has an organ... But yeah in terms of style I think different things do attract different people.'

(Interview # 18, Church Administrator, Baptist Union)

Thus the large evangelical Church studied – who sought to attract a congregation of students and young professionals – deliberately framed its worship in a musical style that would attract this particular socio-demographic:

'We are very contemporary and strive ... not to have any religious or traditional hurdles which people have ... to kind of clamber over before they can access what they are delivering here so ... the worship pastor [name], his [vision] is that people can be listening to Radio One or XFM [youth orientated UK radio stations] or whatever as they drive to Church and as they walk in they are not hit by [a] thirty or forty year time warp ... He wants the songs to be relevant and contemporary. That might not appeal to the older generations who are more Churched [sic] ... my stepfather came and said he felt assaulted by the worship, he loves the Church, but just couldn't handle the volume,'

(Interview # 17, Church Pastor, Large Evangelical Church)

This deliberate selection of a musical style echoes, in interesting ways, some of the findings of DeNora and Belcher's (2000) research on clothes retailing. DeNora and Belcher (2000) found that clothing stores deliberately select certain songs to play that are coherent with the perception of their particular brand so as to help differentiate it from competitors and encourage consumption of their products.

However, whilst the Baptist Union, and the independent evangelical and Assemblies of God Churches are freely able to pick a style and, subsequently, a consumer base in this manner the Churches of The Church of England – due to the institution's particular historical and social role – are much more restricted in how they tailor their services. As the national (or established) Church institution, each Church of England Church is under an obligation to provide for the spiritual needs of all Christians within its parish boundaries. This is illustrated in the following exchange:

R: Anglicanism is distinctive I think in having a really strong sense of ministry to the entire community such that, you know, we wouldn't number our congregation naturally at 400 [the largest total number of people who have attended the Church over its three services on a single Sunday] we would number our parish at 17,000

JC: The people that you have got a duty to?

R: Yes, so the average Anglican Minister who is going to be worth his or her salt when you [ask] the question 'where do you minister' would [answer] I minister to 17,000 people in the suburbs of [the city] and they wouldn't be choosing that because it is the largest number they would be choosing it

because it relates to their thinking about who they serve and I think that is healthy [and] that is one of the distinctive features of our denomination really.'

(Interview # 13, Clergyman, The Church of England)

Consequently, Anglican Churches are unable to develop their own market niche in the same way as their competitors for, to do so, would invariably exclude certain members of the wider community. In order to compensate for this one Parish Church adopted a specific 'business model' that involved offering three different religious services or 'products' every Sunday:

'What will happen is that you say well our Church exists for [three] distinctive types of people [and] we cater for those at different times. Our evening service [which is an evangelical service aimed at younger parishioners], where we get between 70 and 90 people, most of these people do not come at any other point because that is their service and that's their congregation and our 9 o'clock people [a more traditional service for the older segment of the parish] do not come at 10:45 [the service aimed at family groups]. So what we are saying is that unfortunately ... you can't do everything at once.'

(Interview # 13. Clergyman, The Church of England)

These changes are consequently designed to align the Church to the needs, values, and lives of prospective new members. Indeed, as previously argued if the Church institutions were out of sync with society people would not enrol themselves into them.

However, mirroring the work of Buttimer (2006) – into the need for religious institutions to manage a balance between the need to transform themselves in order

to stay relevant to society and remaining congruent to their original teachings, principles, and practices – I also found that this consumer orientated approach to providing Church services has not been without problems. Indeed, it is possible to identify, in the case of all three of the institutions studied, a dissenting view that states that, in seeking to tailor services to consumers, the Church in question was in danger of diverging too far from their spiritual purpose. This is illustrated in following quotes:

‘We live in a consumer society but you kind of think a Church service shouldn’t be consumer led’

(Interview # 19, Lay Church Leader, The Church of England)

‘We don’t put on something to attract people, we want to make it relevant we certainly want people to feel welcome we are deliberate in that, but in getting our packaging right, and I’ve got quite a strong resonance [sic] that we should get our packaging right, our substance is what we believe.’

(Interview # 20, Senior Church Pastor, Assemblies of God)

The second manner in which the Church institutions, particularly that of the Church of England, have sought to engage prospective new consumers is by altering the geography of the Church. As argued previously in Chapter Two, the Church of England, in conjunction with the Methodist Church, has adopted a policy of looking for new consumers by taking services out of the designated religious spaces of Church buildings and providing services in different places, and at different times to the traditional Sunday morning and evening. This initiative has been labelled as the creation of ‘Fresh Expressions of Church’. Fresh Expressions, which developed out of

the Archbishop of Canterbury's¹¹² call for the Church of England to adopt a 'mixed economy'¹¹³ approach to Church, is explicitly premised on the idea that the onset of post-modernity has altered society to such an extent that the traditional parochial system¹¹⁴ is no longer, singularly, adequate to provide for the religious needs of the entire population (The Church of England, 2004). Instead, the Church of England argues that there is now a need to offer a variety of different ways of attending Church if it is to remain active and provide for the needs of society.

This view is best represented and has been primarily disseminated throughout the Anglican Church as policy by the influential 'Mission Shaped Church' report of 2004¹¹⁵, which has since become the best selling Church of England publication in history (Interview # 21, 2008). Mission Shaped Church, which draws on the work of authors such as Bauman (2002), Castells (2000), and Beck (2000), seeks to consciously integrate academic theory and Church practice in order to identify new ways in which the Church could operate in a way that is more relevant to contemporary society. Mirroring many of the arguments of Karner and Aldridge (2004) the key finding of the report was that the Church needed to alter its services to accommodate a society that functions around networks rather than place bound, neighbourhood, communities (Castells, 2000):

¹¹² The head of the Anglican Church worldwide

¹¹³ By Mixed Economy of Church it is meant that the institution needs to develop a number of different approaches to the Christian Religion that can co-exist. It is especially interesting to note that the Church is purposefully using economic language, thus likening itself to business in this manner.

¹¹⁴ This is the manner of organizing space within the Church of England. It is characterized by three primary scales; those of the parish, the diocese, and the National Church. This is discussed in Chapter Two.

¹¹⁵ Mission Shaped Church is further discussed within Chapter Two

‘The Western world, at the start of the third millennium, is best described as a ‘network society’. This is a fundamental change: ‘the emergence of a new social structure’. In a network society the importance of place is secondary to the importance of ‘flows’.

(The Church of England, 2004:5)

For the authors of the report one consequence of this network society has been the separation of community and place. Indeed they argue that,

‘Geography no longer seems to be the primary basis of community. People define their communities through leisure, work and friendships. It is not that locality, place and territory have no significance. It is simply that they are now just one layer of the complex shape of society.’

(The Church of England, 2004:6)

This separation of community and place is extremely problematic for the Anglican Church as their historical parochial system is organized in such a way as to cover fixed geographic, rather than networked neighbourhoods¹¹⁶. By this it is meant that the institution has built a material religious space at the heart of nearly every community in England. However, if people no longer live the majority of their lives in these geographically bounded places, such religious spaces are less and less relevant. Consequently through ‘Fresh Expressions’ the institution has sought to supplement its traditional approach to attracting consumers – that of seeking to attract, and then translate and embed, people into its own institutional network – with a new approach whereby the institution attempts to translate and embed itself into the everyday networks of society (Interview # 21, 2008). This endeavour has resulted in

¹¹⁶ As discussed in Chapter 5 this rigid division of space is part of the Churches firmly entrenched ‘apparatus of capture.’

the creation of Church groups in spaces such as School Halls, Drum and Bass nightclubs, and Churches within city centre coffee shops (The Church of England, 2004; www.cafechurch.net, 2009).

A number of these 'Fresh Expressions of Church' were identified in the study area. First, in the City Centre a number of Anglican Churches' pool resources to fund both a workplace and a Internet chaplaincy programme. Within the workplace programme the Churches employ a member of the Church of England clergy to visit employees in a number of City Centre businesses and offer spiritual and religious guidance without the need for employees to leave their desks (Interview # 22, 2008). Similarly, the Internet chaplaincy service provides an opportunity for individuals to gain the advice of a clergyman by emailing them, and the diocese pay for the employment of another full time member of the clergy to respond and provide Christian guidance to those who make use of this service¹¹⁷ (Figure 6.1). In both instances the Church is keen to highlight that the idea of the chaplaincy service is not to attract people to the traditional Parish Churches, but to offer a religious product to people in the spaces of their everyday life. Second, the Anglican Church, in partnership with a number of the evangelical and independent Churches within the City, has purchased a bar in order to engage with people who visit the City Centre at night to drink (Interview # 16, 2008)¹¹⁸. Third, and finally, a Church in the suburbs of

¹¹⁷ The funding of this service is problematic from a geographic perspective as the service was originally intended solely for the use of people within the diocesan boundaries hence the provision of capital by the diocese. However, subsequently, due to the global reach of the internet, the Internet chaplain has been having to respond to enquiries from many diverse locations. Consequently, alternative funding is being sought from the central Church body.

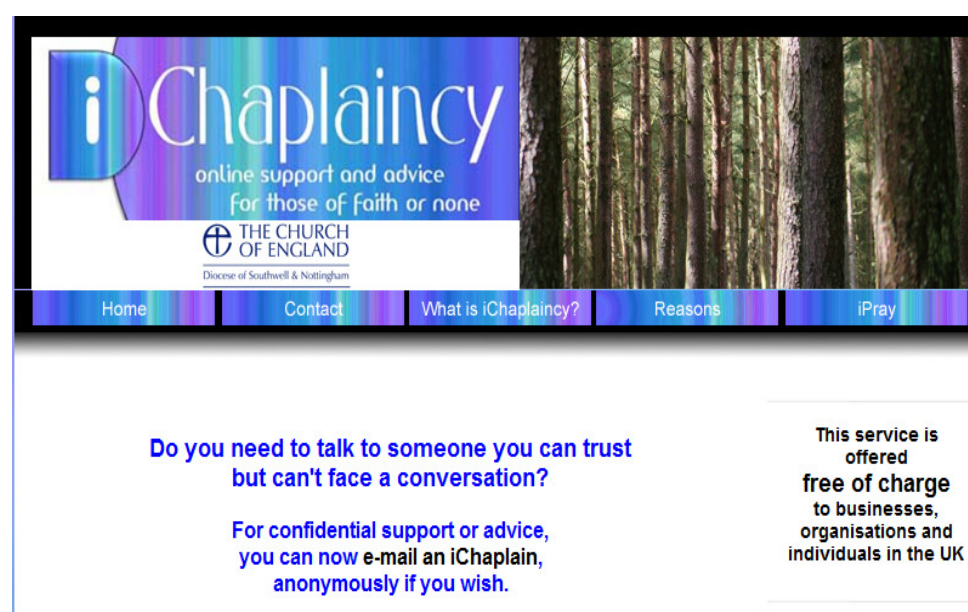
¹¹⁸ This provides a further example of the assemblage structure of the Church. Whilst the autonomous bodies of the Church finance boards consider alcohol to be an irreligious investment the dioceses and parish churches are able to make their own judgement about how to deal with alcohol.

the study area has sought to engage with overseas students at a local college through the provision of a café church¹¹⁹:

‘[name of college] on this campus seems to have quite a large percentage of Far Eastern [sic] students. Therefore we have some links with [them]. We do a ‘Globe Café’, we call it, and the congregation would have four [or] five Chinese students, a couple of whom are Christians, a couple of whom are sympathetic but are also taking the opportunity to look at British culture through Church there.’

(Interview # 13, Member of the Clergy, The Church of England)

Figure 6.1 - iChaplaincy Service



(Source: <http://www.ichaplaincy.org.uk/>)

¹¹⁹ A Cafe Church is a group of people who meet to worship over a drink in the informal surroundings of a coffee shop or other like establishment.

However, again, this approach has attracted criticism because of the extent to which it has abandoned the traditional Church model and the perception that the message of the Church is becoming subservient to the need to adopt popular culture:

‘The paradox is that on one level the Church must be confident, and face, and engage with culture [sic] with enthusiasm and on the [other] we’ve got to confront culture [sic]. Now some Churches out of the wrong motivation – fear – embrace culture ... If you take the thing in Sheffield a few years [ago] the 9 o’clock service [a fresh expression of Church in a club night] where you’ve got basically another club in the City Centre with a dog collar on it and there were drugs ... So that’s embracing culture with a sense [of] look we’re modern without confronting culture.’¹²⁰

(Interview # 20, Senior Church Pastor, Assemblies of God)

In summary, here I have sought to highlight the ways in which each of the three Church institutions have attempted to negotiate a balance between the need to change in order to remain relevant to society – in order to continue to attract new people to the institution – while at the same time remaining faithful to Christian theological beliefs and traditions. In the next section I will investigate the way in which the Church institutions have attempted to attract new religious ‘consumers’.

6.3.2 Techniques to Grow the Church

This section of the chapter will more explicitly adopt the network approach of the thesis to identify the techniques that the Church of England, the Baptist Union of Great Britain and the Assemblies of God, use to attract people to their services,

¹²⁰ To add the context to this quote, the respondent had become angry at the Church of England’s conduct and took a superior moralist perspective.

and subsequently 'enrol' them within their networks. In each instance the studied Churches conduct this in two stages; first, each Church seeks to bring people into contact with the institutions network (for instance this can be an attempt to bring prospective Church members into the Church building) and, second, once a prospective new member has been brought into contact, the institution seeks to make them a full-time member by 'enrolling' them permanently into the Church's networks (Interview # 19, 2008).

It is possible to identify at least six techniques that are utilised to bring non-Churchgoers into initial contact with an institutions social network. First, as noted above, through the Fresh Expressions initiative the Church of England has actively sought to take its network to people wherever they may be. This represents a radically different geographical model to all of the other approaches adopted by the three institutions in that it physically moves the institutions network out of the explicitly religious space of the Church and into the secular spaces of the community. Indeed, whereas the following five initiatives seek to attract people to the institutions' network at the Church, 'Fresh Expressions' takes the Church network to the people it is seeking to attract. Second, according to research conducted by Tearfund (2007:32), a UK Christian charity, 'a personal invitation or encouragement [to attend Church] from a family member or friend is much more powerful than anything that the church can do' to attract new people. Based upon a sample of responses, Tearfund argue that should everyone within the UK receive a personal invitation from a friend or family member to attend Church, 2,970,000 non-Church goers would accept. Consequently, each of the Church institutions studied sought to actively encourage members of their existing congregations to invite people in this manner:

R: I think that probably our people are [our] greatest advantage...

JC: Kind of word of mouth and...

R: Word of mouth, word of kind ... Lifestyle, the way that they live the whole kind of, 'do you know you should come to my Church' and people are like, 'I'm not good enough to come to Church', 'no really why don't you just come for a drink in our bar or come to the Christmas service or something like that.'

(Interview # 17, Church Pastor, Vineyard Movement)

Furthermore, a number of strategies have been developed in order to encourage, and maximise the potential for, this method of growing the Church. One example of this is the cross denominational 'Back to Church Sunday' initiative. Originating in the Manchester Diocese of the Church of England, the campaign involves Churches giving their congregations pre-prepared invitations to hand out to their non-Churchgoing friends and family for a special Church service on a nationally designated Sunday (www.backtochurchsunday.co.uk, 2009). This scheme was adopted by both the Baptist and Anglican Church studied, as illustrated in Figure 6.2.

Figure 6.2 - Back to Church Sunday Leaflet



(Source: www.backtochurchsunday.co.uk)

A third method that has historically been employed by the traditional institutions¹²¹ of the Baptist Union and the Church of England is to promote a sense of familiarity with the brand name of their denomination. Each Church has historically sought, through their 'brand', to promote a sense of denominational identity that may appeal to a particular type of religious consumer. To exemplify, the brand name of the Church of England will, for some people, invoke connotations of a particular type of traditional worship. Thus, like the work of Lury (2004) – who argued that brand names function as a method of communicating meaning about what a product is between a producer and a customer – the brand of the Church of England will prove an attraction to some religious consumers seeking this style of worship. Furthermore, many religious institutions have traditionally used this process of branding to create a sense of denominational (or institutional) identity and invoke a feeling of belonging amongst their members. For instance, in relation to the Baptist Union, this would have entailed the development of a particular Baptist approach to the religion (a Baptist religious product) which members of the institution would then commit themselves to. However, commensurate with the work of Davie (1994) – into a change in the characteristics of religious society from belonging to believing – it is argued that this sense of denominational belonging is of a declining importance for contemporary religious consumers. Indeed, interview respondents argued that whilst people may have historically chosen to attend a Baptist Church out of a sense of belonging to the institution, this is no longer the case. Instead, as previously identified, people are disregarding any notion of denominational identity in favour of 'Church shopping' for a Church that mirrors their individual religious needs.

'It doesn't matter what the denominational range is people are choosing
[where to worship] according to style of Church and that's the key. So people

¹²¹ By traditional institution it is meant that these bodies have a long heritage in the UK. This is described in Chapter Two.

are joining a local Church and they look around and we get ... a number of people who come here and will say 'I've moved into the area [and] I'm just looking around', so they try all the different Churches and the one that suits their needs is the one they choose. Not their denomination.'

(Interview #15, Church Pastor, Baptist Union)

Similarly, it is argued that declining numbers of people are attending the Anglican Church out of a sense of institutional belonging or simply because the Anglican Church is the official national Church:

'I would agree that there is, whether we like it or not, a diminishing sense in the population ... of the established Church and parish etc but when people do come for that reason it is one way into full Church membership and faith.'

(Interview # 13, Member of the Clergy, The Church of England)

However, the Anglican Church does benefit from this historical positioning by being the default venue of choice for the traditional 'rite of passage' ceremonies of weddings, baptisms and funerals¹²². These mean that a number of non-Churchgoers who attend these festivals come into contact with the institutions' network:

'In an Anglican Church we are kind of privileged because there are lots of reasons for people bumping up [sic] to the [institution], as I say weddings, funerals, [and] baptisms.'

(Interview # 19, Lay Church Leader, The Church of England)

'We had an example yesterday of, well five examples in a way yesterday, a family has joined our morning congregation because they were seeking

¹²² Although changing UK regulation has affected this as it is now possible, and increasingly popular, to marry in spaces other than the Church or the Registry office.

baptism. It was a family that had been [formed from] a second marriage and they discovered that none of the children had been baptised ... one of them [parent] with a [Christian] upbringing ... had raised that issue so they came and said do you do job lot [sic] baptisms with a two year old, a four year old, and a ten year old so we baptised all three of them ... That family now, you know there's always a fall off about these things, but if you asked them right now they would consider themselves to be worshipping members [of the Church].'

(Interview # 13, Clergyman, The Church of England)

Both the Assemblies of God and Evangelical Churches studied also utilised this concept of institutional identity in an attempt to attract members. However, this is conducted in a way so as to establish their difference from the traditional institutions. Indeed, the Assemblies of God and Evangelical Churches manipulate the images invoked by the brands of the Baptist Union and the Church of England to state that they are old fashioned. Thus much of their own marketing establishes the ways in which they differ from these images and how they offer a modern alternative to Church going. This is exemplified by both Figure 6.3 and the following interview material:

'I mean the common response from first time visitors, not Christian visitors, to our services [is], 'I never knew Church was like this'. So that's one of the things that's [a] big challenge. There is a mindset out there which is ... conditioned by the media and the government, you know, the Church [is] the Church of England. And [in addition] of course the parody of the Church because whenever you get a drama or comedy that brings the Church in [it] lampoons it. You know, all vicars are effeminate, half of them are queer [sic]

... and I am not trying to be vulgar and I'm not trying to make a moral comment but it's actually ... a statement about the weakness of the Church and ... it is far from the truth.'

(Interview # 20, Senior Church Pastor, Assemblies of God)

While the use of such language is surprising it can, in part, be explained (if not condoned) by the conservative nature of the Pentecostal Church (as discussed in Chapter Two). Indeed, the Pentecostal Church consciously endeavours to differentiate itself from more liberal Churches (which includes the Church of England and the Baptist Union) by adopting what it sees as being a more 'masculine' and forthright worship style (Aldridge, 2007).

Figure 6.3 - Evangelical Church Advert¹²³



(Source: <http://www.outreachchurch.co.uk>)

Fourth, each of the three institutions utilise the religious space of the Church itself in order to attract new religious 'consumers'. One method in which this is

¹²³ It was decided to display the advertising of a Church that hadn't been studied due to confidentiality reasons. This meant that the advertisement could be shown in full, rather than removing sections to allow for anonymity.

achieved is through the creation of a partly secular space within the Church building that the local community are invited to use. The idea being that non-religious members of the community enter the Church building to use the space and, in so doing, come into contact with key members of the Church's staff, such as a member of the clergy, and become familiar and comfortable with the religious environment. The assumption behind this approach is that once this familiarity has been established it is possible to more readily enrol the person in question into the religious life of the Church itself. The secular space within the Church building thus acts as a soft entry point for possible Churchgoers through which they can gently come into contact with the institutions religious network:

'I think the theology of the frontage of the Church, of every Church, ought to have a badminton court or a restaurant, something that is social, something that is easy access like the tabernacle [old testament example¹²⁴] without being ashamed that actually it gets more difficult to follow Christ ... the first step should be the easiest of all it should be a soft entry point into the life of God's community and so I think Churches all over are thinking well how can we make these soft entry points.'

(Interview # 23, Clergyman, Mission Dept, Baptist Union)

An example of this is provided by the Baptist Union Mission Department. This is a central organising body of the Baptist Church who strongly promote the creation of coffee shops and restaurants precisely for this purpose:

'I did almost all of my serious keen pastoral work in our restaurant, we didn't have a coffee shop we had a restaurant, and that is where I met the real

¹²⁴ This was a Temple with a large outer area where anyone could go but with a sacred inner sanctuary that was reserved as an explicitly Holy Space.

community, the taxi drivers, the drug dealers, the addicts, they would all come in there and whilst I didn't engage all of them obviously that was where the key relationships were made.'

(Interview # 23, Clergyman, Mission Dept, Baptist Union)

The same method has been adopted by the evangelical Church. However, in keeping with attempts to present itself as a contemporary Church targeted at the student and young professional consumer market, the Church have constructed a bar rather than a coffee shop:

'We really love it [the bar] as a means to, in some ways, surprise people with that. We are a Church with a bar which is a little counter-cultural in some ways. It is a brilliant evangelistic outward looking tool that you can invite people along and say, 'Oh come to my Church service, there is live music and a bar, just stop for a drink', or even, 'Why don't you just come for a drink and meet some of my friends', and they are like, 'This is a Church?' and they come next week for the service and for a drink and then the following week, 'I just think I'll keep coming back.'

(Interview # 17, Church Pastor, Vineyard Church)

The second manner in which it is argued that the building of the Church can help, or hinder, a growth in congregations is through architecture and image. Again, the Evangelical Church is deliberately styled in a contemporary manner that does not resemble the stereotypical image of a traditional Church. This helps to further establish its difference from its 'competitors'. Furthermore, it is frequently stressed by members of the clergy that the traditional buildings of the Church of England and

Baptist Union are no longer appropriate, or attractive, for contemporary churchgoers:

‘To a certain generation that [traditional Church building style] would be a positive image to another generation [for] younger people it may be a negative issue, you know, they may not ever walk into the Church or have ever been into a Church other than for maybe a wedding or funeral or like that.’

(Interview # 25, Lay Church Leader, The Church of England)

‘One of the problems we have we think is that it’s a big imposing Church and maybe that puts people off from coming in.’

(Interview # 26, Church Treasurer, Baptist Union)

Of particular concern is the intimidating ‘gothic style’ of many Anglican Churches with the gargoyles (Figure 6.4), originally intended to scare away evil spirits, now scaring away potential Churchgoers (Interview # 24, 2008).

The fifth method utilised by Churches to attract religious consumers is that of the implementation of commercial advertising techniques. It is possible to identify three methods in which this is achieved. First, both the Baptist Union and Anglican Church have traditionally utilised billboard and notice board advertising in the area immediately outside of the Church premises in order to gain the attention of passersby, and convey a message about the mission of the Church:

Figure 6.4 - Gothic Church Gargoyles



(Source: www.sacred-destinations.com)

‘The boards we put up [are put together by] one of our members ... and I keep saying to him [that] I meet a lot of people who say’ ‘Oh I know your Church, you’re the ones that has the [signs], because at the morning the traffic is piled down the street so [people] have to read it.’

(Interview # 15, Church Pastor, Baptist Union)

These notice boards are comprised of messages and puns (see, for example, Figure 6.5) that proclaim the Christian faith in an unconventional and provocative way in order to encourage people to attend the Church:

‘We had one out here ... it was Christmas and you had the picture of the stall and the angels above and it said ‘Glory, glory man united with God’. Because it’s a big Man Utd [Manchester United football team] song, it’s a theme of

Man Utd ... I thought wow. So we bought the poster and then Tony reproduced it and the amount of comments that got.'

(Interview # 15, Church Pastor, Baptist Union)

Figure 6.5 - Example of Church Notice Board



(Source:<http://www.eligr.com>)

Consequently, these advertising boards take the message and network of the Church onto the street.

All of the three Churches also made frequent use of the technique of leafleting the local area so as to raise awareness of their services. This predominantly occurred during the Christian festivals of Easter and Christmas, although the Assemblies of God Church also produced leaflets for a particular recruitment campaign:

'We designed a flyer and called it 'Imagine' [and] a website imagineaplace.com and this was all about coming to Church. We put one

through every door in [the City] we gave everyone one of these things. People joined the Church as a result of it.'

(Interview # 14, Church Finance Manager, Assemblies of God)

Once again the Evangelical Church, as part of a new institution, sought to differentiate itself from the traditional Church by creating a new, innovative, method of leafleting. Instead of handing out conventional leaflets they give small gifts to people in the city centre bearing the name of the Church.

'We will do more kind of innovative stuff on the streets where we give out chocolate bars and we pray for healing and just chat to people ... and if we are giving something away like Easter Eggs recently, or advent calendars, or whatever it might be, we often have a little business card or sticker which just has our website on it and says something like, 'This is a token of God's love for you, let us know if we can help in any other way.' ... Although that is not specifically advertising [it] does get out there a little bit and hopefully offers a tiny bit of explanation as to why we do what we are doing.'

(Interview # 17, Church Pastor, Vineyard Church)

Finally, due to their particular target market both the Vineyard and the Assemblies of God Churches placed a great stress upon their websites as they believe that these are important to young people:

'The website would be primarily [the main way we publicise ourselves] I mean obviously anyone can access that. We've been hacked a few times so

anybody can really. So anyone can access us through that and a lot of people find us through that.'

(Interview # 17, Church Pastor, Vineyard Church)

The sixth, and final, way that the Churches seek to attract members is through engagement with their local community. Both the Anglican and the Baptist Union Church argued that the only way that they could compete with the larger Evangelical and Assemblies of God Church was by being a key part of the local community:

'One of our strengths is [that] we are a local Church and I think that's what I think all Churches must do. They need to find out what they can do in their area, they [need to have] a vision and a purpose for their area.'

'We all want to be Christ's salt and light¹²⁵ in our own community but the key question is how? And that's what we are looking at, at the moment. The how. So we have got a number of things in the Church, we have mothers and toddlers groups which are expanding ... we have a luncheon club on a Wednesday, we're opening up on Thursdays for healing rooms for the local community so people come in and be prayed for etc etc and Friday night we have Church youth groups so we have local kids coming in.'

(Interview # 15, Church Pastor, Baptist Union)

By providing these services to the community the Church is once again providing a soft, secular, entry point through which individuals can come into contact with the Church's network.

¹²⁵ This is a biblical reference

Having identified the techniques that each of the institutions use to bring people into contact with their social networks I will now move on to explore the methods utilised to subsequently enrol new people into the institution. First, each Church stresses the importance of welcoming and establishing a personal contact with newcomers and have devised particular strategies to this end. In the Anglican Church concerted effort has been placed upon training a team who are responsible for identifying new people and greeting them:

‘People do want that sort of warmth and welcome and there [sic] is quite a skill. I mean one of the teams that we have [are] a large number of people who ostensibly are responsible for standing on the door helping people through the door, handing out notices. But it should go far beyond that in extending a welcome and explaining how we do things so setting people at their ease.’

(Interview # 19, Lay Church Leader, The Church of England)

Whilst it is argued that welcome techniques are easier to implement in the smaller Churches (Interview # 26, 2008), as it easier to identify an unfamiliar face, the larger Churches also attempt to implement this practice to the best of their ability:

‘We do an awful lot to make people feel comfortable and welcome at the Church in terms of stewarding¹²⁶ quite astutely ... So when they [new people] come in you have got people [existing members of the congregation] actively directing [new] people to chairs.’

(Interview # 27, Church Business Manager, Vineyard Church)

¹²⁶ Stewarding is the practice of having people responsible for looking after and guiding the congregation.

Second, it is argued that having children engaged in Church youth groups, such as Sunday School, further embeds their parents within the respective networks:

‘So I think [there is] deeper buy-in when you’ve got a child in one of the children’s groups and you [the parent] say[s] ‘I think we might go and look at Saint so and so’s this week’ they [the child] say, ‘but we’re doing model making’ ... So they [consumers] anchor [become established in the network] through family and that kind of thing.’

(Interview # 13, Clergyman, The Church of England)

Third, and finally, reflecting the work of Aldridge (2007) and Percy (2003) – upon the reasons for the continued growth of the Charismatic Church (of which the Pentecostal faith is a variant)¹²⁷ – it is argued that strong charismatic leadership from religious authority figures, such as pastors and clergyman, is required in order to embed people within the Church. Indeed, Percy (2003) argues that, within consumer based religious cultures, a strong charismatic leader is seen to be key in installing a sense of loyalty amongst members to a particular Church. Furthermore, Aldridge (2007:73) argues that this loyalty is installed through a process of ‘charismatization’, which he defines as being the establishment of the leaders’ authority. Each of the Churches studied stressed the role that their respective leaders have played. However, this appeared to be particularly important in the growth of the Vineyard and Assemblies of God Churches:

‘I think it [the growth within the Church] is to do with the leadership in the Church. [name] and [name] and the rest of the leaders here, but particularly [name] and [name] are not just very talented leaders and highly gifted but also very well read, very well trained, and so they have a real gift in

¹²⁷ This is discussed further in Chapter Two

leadership and one of the things that I think is unique about [the Church] ... is that we are so focussed on leadership and being better leaders.'

(Interview # 17, Church Pastor, Vineyard Church)

While all these respective techniques enable the three institutions to attract new members and, partly, satisfy the economic needs of reproduction by increasing the size of the congregation (and thus the potential for congregational gift giving), all of the Churches were also keen to highlight that the process of growth is not purely motivated by monetary matters. Contrary to Veblen's concept of 'evolutionary selection' – whereby likeminded institutions have to compete against one another for members in order to survive – it is possible to identify a sense of cooperation between the Churches. This is highlighted in the reluctance to steal members from another institution. Labelled as 'transfer growth' – where one Church grows to the detriment of another by stealing their consumers thus resembling a more commercial market place where businesses fight for customer share – the research identified a marked reluctance in particular on the part of both the larger Assemblies of God and Vineyard Churches to engage in this practice:

'Is [transfer growth] a concern? Yeah, definitely for us as well as for them [the Church that would be losing members] and I know that [the leaders] went out of their way ... when they first moved to [the city] to build a relationship with the other Church leaders and to communicate with them that they weren't looking to steal their people because obviously [they] are protective over their people.

(Interview # 17, Church Pastor, Vineyard Movement)

‘We don’t want people to come to us from another Church unless they feel that it is time to leave that Church ... We want to see people come because they have become Christians. That’s why we want to see people come.’

(Interview # 14, Church Finance Manager, Assemblies of God)

This is symptomatic of the shared purpose of the institutions. Although they are separate individual entities each shares the same common purpose; to bring people into the Christian faith. Thus each institution is loathed to conduct activities that are detrimental to others. Consequently, a number of techniques have been developed to try and restrict consumers switching from one institutional network to another:

‘We actively discourage people from joining us from another Church. So if we do things like [a] carol service Christmas party [and although] any central events are invite your friends we always say to them [the congregation] don’t invite your Christian friends. Don’t invite people from any other Churches.’

‘When they [new people to the Church] come to one of our newcomers events [the leader] says if you are coming from another Church you need to go and see your former Church leader get their blessing, explain the reasons why, and if you get their blessing than you can come and join us, but don’t just sneak away and do it underhand. He wants everything to be very transparent’

(Interview # 17, Church Pastor, Vineyard Movement)

‘We would go through a process with them [new members from another Church] where we would ask them to give us their previous Church pastor’s name [and] we would write to them and say that, “this person is coming have they left you properly in good order.?” There’s a point where that is our

business and there's a point where that is polite and good protocol, because we are not going to turn anyone away, we're not going to say, "alright now you can't come because you've maybe fallen out there", but what we would want to know about [is] perhaps we could help in that situation.'

(Interview # 14, Church Finance Manager, Assemblies of God)

This concern about acquiring members from other Churches also informs the advertising techniques previously discussed. Each of the three Churches stressed that by advertising themselves they are purely trying to attract new people to the faith, and are happy if, once converted, these new religious consumers were to choose to subsequently attend another institution to that of their own. This is highlighted, for example, in the case of 'Imagine' which was a leafleting campaign run by the Assemblies of God Church. Although the campaign was focused on attracting new people to the Assemblies of God, efforts were made to be inclusive of other institutions

'R: We wrote to every Church [in the City] and said this is what we are doing please do not be upset with us if this goes through a member of your congregation's door, we are not looking to poach them. Give us your website or contact details...

JC: And we'll link it in...

R: ... on the 'imagine a place' website ... So I am hoping that demonstrates to you where we are at. We do not advertise the [Church] as being the best Church in Nottingham, you won't hear anyone say that'

(Interview # 14, Church Finance Manager, Assemblies of God)

To relate this to the assemblage approach of the thesis this element of partnership would suggest that although they are economically independent each institutional network is part of an even wider assemblage of the Christian faith. Thus each institution plays a whole in growing the wider assemblage of the faith as a whole. However, despite this concern there remains a strong perception from the smaller Anglican and Baptist Churches that 'transfer growth' from their own Churches to the larger evangelical and Pentecostal Churches is occurring and affecting them negatively.

In summary, this section of the chapter has sought to identify the ways in which the three institutions have sought to satisfy the economic pressure that they are under to reproduce themselves by attracting new people to their institution. It has continued to theorise the institution as a social network and has identified that the process of growth has two stages: first attracting religious consumers to the network, and; second embedding them therein. However, despite the fact that all three institutions, and the additional evangelical Church, implemented a number of similar strategies to provoke institutional growth they have not been uniformly successful. Significant growth has only occurred at the relatively new institutions of the Assemblies of God, and the Vineyard Movement. This appears to be as a result of their greater ability to adapt to the changing societal and religious environment of today due to a relative absence of 'historical baggage'. Furthermore, this increased ability to adapt reflects the argument of the institutional perspective and the work of Hodgson (1998). As previously discussed in Chapter Three, Hodgson argued that historical institutions are less able to respond to changing environments as they inevitably become more conservative over time. This is borne out by the findings of this study as the newer institutions seemed better able to develop more innovative growth techniques necessary in a consumer market. Consequently, they are able to

attract a younger generation of members than the older institutions of the Church of England and the Baptist Union.

6.4 Optimising Giving

Having identified the way in which the Church institutions seek to obtain new funds by attracting additional members, I will now explore how each institution seeks to maximise revenues from existing churchgoers. This practice is of paramount importance for the traditional institutions, in particular the Church of England, as they have been unable to attract significant numbers of new people. Many of the aforementioned strategies of growth have failed to work and instead the institution has continued to be affected by the process of secularization¹²⁸. Consequently, the burden of raising the one billion pounds required annually to finance the Anglican Church has fallen upon fewer members who are consequently being called upon to give more money. Thus, the Anglican Church has had to develop new techniques to try to maximise the financial contribution provided by a shrinking congregation (Interview # 28, 2008; The Church of England, 2006).

As stressed previously, a major source of revenue for each of the institutions is the regular giving of members through either 'the offering', or by other methods such as direct debit. Whilst each Church sought to clearly emphasise that attracting these monetary gifts is a secondary concern to attracting worshipping Christians, new methods have been mobilised to encourage members to give increasing amounts to the institutions. The main method through which the Churches have sought to do this is by creating the perception of a link between levels of regular giving, and the nature of the individual's relationship to God. However, the extent to which this tool

¹²⁸ Please see the statistics for Church growth within Chapter Two

of revenue maximisation is utilised, and giving encouraged through it, varies between institutions. Whilst representatives of the Baptist Church were at pains to stress that there is no such thing as a Church membership fee (Interview # 26, 2008) both the evangelical and Assemblies of God Churches adopt a quite different approach. In order to be considered a member of each of these respective institutions, a Churchgoer is expected to be a regular giver:

‘We have four criteria for membership. There [are] no forms to fill in ... membership is [first] to do with attending on a Sunday and we get ... maybe up to 1500 people. [Second] attending a small group and you have probably got about 75% of people in a small group ... [Third] if you are a member we expect people to serve in an area at least once a month on some kind of rota and again about 70% of people are serving. And the fourth one, which is more open to what you are doing I guess, is that we expect them to give in an accountable way¹²⁹ either through standing order or through cheque.’

(Interview # 17, Church Pastor, Vineyard Movement)

Furthermore, when appointing people to leadership positions the Vineyard Church takes levels of giving directly into account:

‘Most committed members we would expect to give in an accountable way so ... in the finance team we know who is giving what. So when we appoint leaders we want them to be members and to fulfil those criteria and so we will ask the finance team if they are giving, we won’t ask how much or

¹²⁹ By accountable manner it is meant a form of giving that can remain on record in contrast to the anonymous collection.

anything like that but just so that we can check that they, in a sense, [are]
kind of putting their money where their mouth is.'

(Interview # 17, Church Pastor, Vineyard Movement)

Thus members of the institution are placed under an obligation to give money to the Church in a regular pattern so as to prove the strength of their bond with God, and to feel a committed Christian.

It is possible to identify a further difference between the institutions, namely in terms of the minimum level of financial contribution that is considered appropriate for an individual member to give. Both the Vineyard and Assemblies of God Churches apply much more stringent criteria in the assessment of an appropriate level of giving than those of either the Anglican or Baptist Union Churches. Indeed, both the Assemblies of God and the Evangelical Church preach the biblical law of tithing. This states that the minimum acceptable financial contribution that a committed Church member should make is ten percent of their income. In contrast to tithing, the Church of England has adopted a policy of advising its members that they should give the institution a minimum of approximately five percent of their disposable income. The idea being that the remaining five percent should be donated to other non-Church charities. These high levels of giving reflect the findings of Osteen (2002). As described in Chapter Three Osteen (2002) applied Mauss's (2001) concept of the gift economy to the Christian religion to argue that every Church member is part of a two-way gift transaction with God. Within Osteen's (2002) argument God has given the Churchgoer everything he owns and thus, consequently, the Churchgoer owes God everything that they have:

'We believe in the principle of tithes, tithing ... We would be very strong in teaching tithing as a starting point ... As a new testament Christian, an

expression of our love for Christ and of who we are as Christians is [that] everything belongs to him [Christ]. It's not a case of what's ours and he can have a bit, everything in our lives belongs to him and we are just grateful that we have got a bit back to spend on ourselves.'

(Interview # 14, Church Finance Manager, Assemblies of God)

Therefore, each Church member is asked to give as much money as they can afford to the Church in order to make the best attempt possible to repay God's kindness.

Related to this notion of the importance of repaying God interviews with members of the respective Churches suggest that the belief that it is possible to judge a persons' 'spiritual health' (i.e. the extent to which a member believes in God and are embedded within the institution of the Church) by the amount that one donates runs strongly through all three institutions. Indeed, in this argument, if everything belongs to God a committed Church member would be seeking to repay as much as they possibly can:

'The bottom line is, you know, that money is a good arbitrator of your values. The Bible says something quite powerful that is often misquoted. It says where your treasure is your heart is. People often misquote it and say where your heart is your treasure is but its where your treasure is your heart is. You know, you find out what a man [sic] is passionate about [by] where he spends his cash.'

(Interview # 20, Senior Church Pastor, Assemblies of God)

'One of the interesting questions is whether the clergy should know how much their people are giving because there is part of the scripture that says

you should keep it secret but actually ... people's giving reflects their spiritual health [so] the clergy need to know.'

(Interview # 28, Senior Stewardship Officer, The Church of England)

Consequently, it is implied that a Churchgoer should strive to continually give a greater proportion of their income to the institution of the Church in order to reflect their spiritual growth as a Christian. Building upon this premise the Church of England, as a national body, has developed this relationship between levels of giving and religious commitment into a programme that encourages people to give more.

'We talk about six steps ... the first step being right on the outside, people who seldom come to Church but just want the Church to be there. They will give a cash amount. [These are] people on [the] supermarket level who will probably come over Christmas, Easter, Harvest, Weddings funerals [who] just dip in and out, 'I'm just going to chip in', 'Yeah, yeah that is fine'. Now the fifth level is mission where you say I'm a disciple of Jesus I want to follow [and] I realise that that has all kinds of claims on my life including financial ones and very often I'll place people who are tithing at this level and that shocks them because they say hang on there are six levels and you only put us at level five to which my response is you haven't told me enough to get to into level six. Level six is sacrificial [whereby the member gives a significant portion of their income to the Church so as to negatively affect other aspects of their life.]'

(Interview # 28, Senior Stewardship Officer, The Church of England)

This programme consequently gives the Churchgoer a benchmark against which they can judge their current level of giving and how this relates to their level of faith whilst

also providing incentives to strive to improve. Furthermore, the Church of England's 'six steps' also encourages members to compare the amount of money that they give to the Church with that of other expenditures such as gym fees, for example. The aim of this exercise is to see whether the Church is given the same priority in a member's personal accounts and finances as it is in their everyday life. Indeed, the programme contends that the majority of Church goers would state that their relationship with God is of more importance to them than being a member of the gym. However, often the same member would pay more money to the gym through membership fees than they would give to the Church. The programme thus aims to help members to readdress this balance by increasing their giving to the Church. To aid this process a number of Excel accountancy spreadsheets were developed. These helped members to visually represent their major financial outgoings and were made available to be downloaded from the website of the Church of England. However, while the 'six steps' is a national campaign by the Church of England it must be stressed that the specific Anglican Church which formed part of the current study had decided not to implement the approach. As an autonomous entity within the wider assemblage of the Church of England – as discussed in Chapter Five – they reserved the right to implement their own approaches and initiatives to raising levels of congregational giving.

Second, in addition to encouraging members to give a larger percentage of their income to the Church, each institution seeks to promote methods of regular giving that enable them to claim tax rebates from the government. The principle method by which this is achieved is through promoting the UK government's 'gift aid' scheme to givers. Gift aid enables the Church to treat donations as if the basic rate tax had already been deducted and thus significantly increase the value of the donation to the Church ([www. hmrc.gov.uk](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk), 2009):

‘The most strong level of commitment that you would express as a member would be giving and engaging in the Gift Aid scheme so that those people ... are giving money regularly and then them saying to the Church, if they are tax payers, we would like you to recover the tax paid on this income and the biggest slice of our income does arise from that.’

(Interview # 27, Church Business Manager, Vineyard Church)

Third, and finally, on top of regular giving, each Church institution has sought to increase the amount of money that they receive from their members through encouraging ‘one off’ special gifts. This policy has been implemented in three ways: the creation of giving campaigns for special items of expenditure; annual gift days, and; encouragement for Church members to leave the institution money through making provision for legacies in their will. Each of these will be discussed in turn. First, each of the Anglican, Vineyard, and Assemblies of God Churches had recently sought to raise funding for capital building projects. Furthermore, interview respondents argued that these campaigns, aimed at a single purpose, are able to raise sums of money significantly in excess of those raised by regular giving.

‘[in] a Capital Project, if you can raise three times your tithe and offering figure, your general figure, if you can raise that [then] you have achieved the norm.’

(Interview # 14, Church Finance Manager, Assemblies of God)

This increased level of giving is possible due to the members of the institution ‘buying in’ to the project as they are able to see a tangible output from their investment. However, once again, the Church institutions have adopted a method to try to

maximise this gift giving; this is called 'envisioning'¹³⁰. Envisioning takes the form of the institutions' leaders endeavouring to actively 'sell' the project to the members of the institution and making them feel emotionally attached to, and passionate about, the project in question:

'If you haven't won the hearts battle they [the congregation] won't give money anyway so at some point during that you have to vision cast [sic] and you've got to describe the scenario. If you use battle language you describe the hill that you are trying to take and at some point there has to be a pep talk.'

(Interview # 13, Clergyman, Church of England)

A good example of this 'envisioning' process is provided by the Assemblies of God Church and their campaign to create a new Church building. This campaign raised pledges of approximately £4 million from members, and the success of this fundraising campaign was seen to be due to their particular 'envisioning' process. This was implemented as follows:

'We ran something like thirty meetings ... where we sat the people down and talked, gave them [the Church members] a one to one opportunity to speak to us [in] rooms for about thirty people. [We] show[ed] them films of these old guys knocking the old building down, what we were trying to build, what the aim of it was, interviews with people of why we were doing it, why we did it before , people got envisioned and now people are brilliant and are excited about the building going up.'

¹³⁰ Resembling the work of Micklethwait and Wooldridge (2009) – see Chapter Three – the process of 'Envisioning' originated in the corporate mega-churches of North America where highly skilled business people and entrepreneurs are employed to develop techniques to maximise Church revenues. Thus, the process of, 'envisioning' itself provides a further example of the corporate religious culture of the USA being incorporated into the UK.

(Interview # 14, Church Finance Manager, Assemblies of God)

Second, due to the ability to raise significant sums from members through one-off giving campaigns both the Anglican and Baptist Union Churches have attempted to replicate this giving process annually through regular 'Gift days'.

'Once a year we have a thanks offering. The emphasis is it is an opportunity for you to give more than you would normally give if you feel that way inclined.'

(Interview # 26, Church Treasurer, Baptist Union)

For the Anglican Church this is labelled as the 'Momentum Campaign' and takes the form of two specific Church services; one where the campaign is announced and congregation members are 'envisioned' and handed a form asking them to give additional funds to the Church, and a second where these gifts are subsequently received. The Church leaders argue that the campaign reminds the congregation of the imperative to give funds and also provides them with an opportunity to do so:

'I find, on the whole, that most committed Church members want to give [and] one of the reasons that giving falls off is because they don't get round to it. So I think that there is a natural [inclination to give], well I know there is because I feel it, when you fill in the [momentum] form and give it back to the Church treasurer ... you feel the same sense that you do ... if you've known your life insurance is inadequate and you've got the guy round and said can you add me to the premium. What you are actually signing out is ... £20 a month from your money but you feel good about it because you feel, yeah, that needed doing.'

(Interview # 13, Clergyman, Church of England)

However, 'Momentum' is not purely a financial campaign. Should a member of the congregation be unable to give in a financial sense they are encouraged, instead, to offer their time and services to the Church so as to help its reproduction in a different way (Interview # 13, 2008).

The third, and final, method in which the Church institutions have sought to attract one-off gifts from their members is through legacies. However, it is widely argued that, as institutions, they have not been very successful in this endeavour:

'We still haven't cracked legacies. I mean we as a Church still haven't cracked legacies because ... [for] some charities , National Trust [and] other things, [a] huge percentage [of their income] comes from legacies. We still can't persuade people to think ahead and that's obviously ... because it is uncomfortable, but actually to say even given a bit of a downturn there are very few of you out there who don't have some kind of handle on quarter of a million pounds worth of assets.'

(Interview # 13, Clergyman, Church of England)

Consequently, the particular Anglican Church studied developed a strategy in order to try and encourage their members to give in this manner. This has taken the form of spending legacy money on visible items that can be a reminder of the life of the person who has died:

'So what we have tended to do while we are breeding this culture is actually [if] you leave us some money it won't just go to pay the Church insurance bill or whatever. You leave us some money and we'll do something with it. We won't put a plaque on it that says this was Harry George but we will say to

your relatives because Mavis remembered us we've got a new side chapel, we've got a member of staff.'

(Interview # 13, Clergyman, Church of England)

In summary, in this section of the chapter I have sought to identify the manner in which each institution has attempted to maximise the money that it receives through giving from their congregation. In so doing I have identified how the newer institutions of the Assemblies of God and the Vineyard movement, through their perceived greater relevancy to the norms of contemporary society, are able to place higher financial demands upon their members and thus raise more money from them than the traditional institutions of the Church of England and the Baptist Union. In addition, I have also explored a number of strategies that are utilised to raise further income in order to help reproduce the Church.

6.5 Summary

This chapter has sought to provide an in-depth examination of the process through which the religious institutions reproduce themselves by focussing upon the activities that generate finance in the network of the Local Church. As shown in Chapter Five congregational giving at the local Church represents the largest single income source for each of the studied institutions. Consequently, the chapter found that each of the Baptist Union, the Church of England, and the Assemblies of God have sought to develop techniques to increase this giving. These techniques have broadly taken two forms; first, each institution seeks to engender funding by attracting new people to their services and, second, they all attempt to optimise levels of giving amongst existing members of the institution.

First, the chapter utilised the work of Veblen (1988) to argue that the economic pressures of reproduction have forced each of the institutions to modify their practices in order to suit the characteristics of contemporary society. This has entailed the Churches altering their everyday practices in order to become more appropriate to a religious culture that is increasingly dominated by principles of consumerism so as to attract new members. However, the chapter identified differences between each institution, both in the techniques that they used to attract people and the success they achieved in doing so. In particular the 'newer' institutions of the Assemblies of God and the Evangelical Church were better able to develop innovative advertising techniques and relate to a larger section of religious society. Consequently, they were more successful in attracting new members than both the Baptist Union and the Church of England. This reflected Veblen's (1988) discussion of institutional development as occurring by way of 'evolutionary selection'. While it is possible to identify the influence of this consumer model through institutional competition for new religious consumers, the chapter has argued that a degree of cross-institutional cooperation is also evident. In particular, the Churches studied were at pains to prevent the 'poaching' of one another's existing members. This is symptomatic of wider network connections between the institutions through their shared faith and purpose.

Furthermore, the chapter argued that the process of institutional metamorphism, in order to adopt the principles of consumerism, provided an opportunity to empirically test the arguments of Buttmer (2006). As discussed in Chapter Two Buttmer (2006) argued that, in seeking to ensure their reproduction, religious institutions often compromise their original purpose and spiritual beliefs. This concern was evident in the chapter with interview respondents expressing the reservation that the message of the Church was being diluted to fit in with popular

culture. Thus the Church of England has been attacked by other institutions for 'reducing' its religious values.

Second, in addition to attracting new members, the chapter also identified practices implemented by the institutions to maximise the giving of existing members. Again the thesis argued that, due to their relevance to society the new institutions were able to adopt more innovative techniques to enhance this revenue stream than those employed by the Anglican and Baptist Churches. This, consequently, entailed that the traditional institutions derived comparatively less funding from the practice. When coupled with their inability to attract new members the Anglican and Baptist Churches continue to be faced with a significant income shortfall and are thus required to look for income from other sources. This search for alternative sources of income will be taken up in the next chapter where the practice and networks, of Church institutional investment will be investigated.

7: Caught between a Rock and a Holy Place: Investigating the Practice of Faith Consistent Investment

7. 1. Introduction

As highlighted in Chapter Five financial investment is a major activity for The Church of England, The Baptist Union of Great Britain and the Assemblies of God. As of 2007 the Church of England, the largest UK Church investor, held investment assets totalling approximately £8.5bn (The Church Commissioners for England, 2008; The Pensions Board of the Church of England, 2008; CCLA, 2007a; CCLA, 2007b; CCLA, 2007c; CCLA, 2007d; CCLA, 2007e). This incorporated holdings in several different investment classes including equities (the Church Commissioners' largest ten investments are listed in Table 7.1), commercial and residential property (including the Hyde Park residential estate and several large office complexes in central London), land, government and corporate bonds, and cash investments (The Church Commissioners for England, 2008). Furthermore, these investments extended globally with the Church of England having economic interests in Eastern Europe, North America and Scandinavia in addition to holdings in the domestic UK market (The Church Commissioners for England, 2008; Interview #1). While both the Church of England, and to a lesser extent the Baptist Union of Great Britain, have long been involved in investment activity, Laughlin (1988) argues that income from these investment practices has taken on a greater significance of late due to the process of secularization. As discussed at length in the previous chapter, Laughlin argues that secularization has created a shortfall in the Churches finances through a reduction in

congregational giving and has, thus, placed a further stress upon the need to engender investment returns. This is illustrated in Figure 2.2, which shows that investment returns were the Church of England's second largest income source in 2004 after voluntary giving.

Table 7.1 - Church Commissioners Ten Largest Equity Holdings

Company	Holding (£m)
Royal Dutch Shell	180.2
BP	144.3
Vodafone	133.7
HSBC	125.6
GlaxoSmithKline	87.2
Rio Tinto	70.7
Royal Bank of Scotland	59.3
Anglo- American	53.3
BG	53.2
Tesco	48.0

Source: The Church Commissioners for England (2008)

Despite the large sums of money involved, very little research has been conducted on the various investment practices of the institutions of the Christian faith and the associated wider practices of Socially Responsible Investment, within Economic Geography. While, as argued in Chapter Three, authors such as Clark and Hebb (2004; 2005) have studied institutional investment to argue that pension funds

have the power – through the utilization of the voting rights that are allocated to them as shareholders – to impose changes upon the businesses in which they invest, Clark and Hebb's focus has been restricted to studying the practice from the perspective of increasing shareholder value in the long-term¹³¹ (Froud and Williams, 2000). This narrow focus on shareholder value has limited discussion to mainstream investment techniques. In contrast, originating from other disciplinary perspectives (such as Critical Accountancy and practitioner literature), Sparkes (2001; 2002) and Kreander et al (2004) have placed this institutional investment approach in a religious context. Both authors note that Church investors have been utilising the same practices as mainstream institutional investors in an attempt to reshape the economy, not only for fiscal gain, but to reflect their respective faiths. However, the key argument of this chapter will be that through participating in financial markets religious institutions not only alter the economy but that the need to engender returns also alters the characteristics of the institutions themselves. Indeed, I will argue that the practices of these institutions are shifted in favour of mainstream investment practices in order to ensure their successful economic reproduction (Veblen, 1988:193)¹³². This approach will, again, be related to Buttimer's (2006) conceptual work into how the imperative of institutional reproduction can erode longstanding religious values. In this manner, I will seek to identify how each of the institutions studied manage the simultaneous demand to achieve a financial return from investment activities whilst remaining true to their religious values and

¹³¹ These include looking at issues such as Corporate Social Responsibility to ensure that the firm is acting ethically so as to avoid any potential consumer scandal and the negative affect that this could have upon the brands' reputation.

¹³² Whilst it is important to note that the research areas of economic institutionalism and institutional investment have traditionally been seen as being quite distinct it will be the argument of this thesis that the adoption of a formal definition of institutions will allow for fruitful dialogue. Indeed, like Schoenberger's (1999) treatment of the firm it is argued that institutional investors such as pension funds fit the characteristics required to be considered an institution. It is, however, acknowledged that other institutional approaches would not allow such reconciliation.

objectives. As such the chapter is split into five sections. First, I will identify the extent to which the studied institutions of The Church of England, The Baptist Union and the Assemblies of God participate in financial investment practices. In so doing I will map out the key organizations involved in the business of Church investment, identifying their role and historical context. Second, the chapter will discuss the mechanisms by which Christian investors have sought to embed their investment practices in religious beliefs. Third, it will utilise the work of Durkheim (1976) and Kong (2007), amongst others, to identify the key problems and tensions that arise from being a faith organization in the secular financial world. In so doing the paper will identify how a compromise has to be achieved between the spiritual and secular contents of investment portfolios. Having done so, the fourth section of the chapter will argue that the specific nature of this compromise alters in relation to two factors; first those of the particular networks of the institution in question, and; second, geography. In the fifth, and final, section the chapter will conclude.

7.2. Context and Practice

In order to provide the context to what follows it is important to first discuss the extent to which the Church of England, the Baptist Union and the Assemblies of God participate in financial investment practices, and to identify the role and historical context of the key organizations involved. In so doing, this discussion will build on the previous work in Chapter Five.

7.2.1 The Church of England

The Church of England is the largest investor of the institutions studied with a combined total of approximately £8.5bn of assets (The Church Commissioners for England, 2008; The Pensions Board of the Church of England, 2008; CCLA, 2007a; CCLA, 2007b; CCLA, 2007c; CCLA, 2007d; CCLA, 2007e). As identified in Chapter Five, the Church of England's investment pot is managed by three semi-autonomous bodies: the Church Commissioners; CCLA Investment Management, and; the Pensions Board (Laughlin, 1988; Kreander et al, 2004). However, while each of these investment bodies is affiliated to the wider assemblage of the Anglican Church they display very different network qualities and thus different characteristics.

As of 2007 the combined assets of the Church Commissioners totalled approximately £5.7bn (The Church Commissioners for England, 2008). As the Church Commissioners' fund is sourced from historical assets it is considered to be closed, in that there is no new money being added to it (www.cofe.anglican.org, 2009). This means that, unlike CCLA or The Pension's Board, there are very few network connections to the current Church (Figure 7.2). Consequently, although there are slight capital losses¹³³, the fund is treated as if it is an endowment and should exist for the benefit of the Church in perpetuity. As shown by Figure 7.1, this fund is invested in six different asset categories with their respective weightings being decided at the annual asset allocation meeting. In managing these investments the Commissioners operate as both a direct, and indirect investor. The UK property dealings are, with the help of outside advisors, managed by employees within the Church of England's offices in Church House. The same team of people are also responsible for employing and monitoring outside managers who invest on their behalf in overseas property opportunities. It is in this, indirect, manner that the Church Commissioners conduct all of their equity and other dealings (such as private

¹³³ In that the initial fund left for endowment purposes is reducing in size.

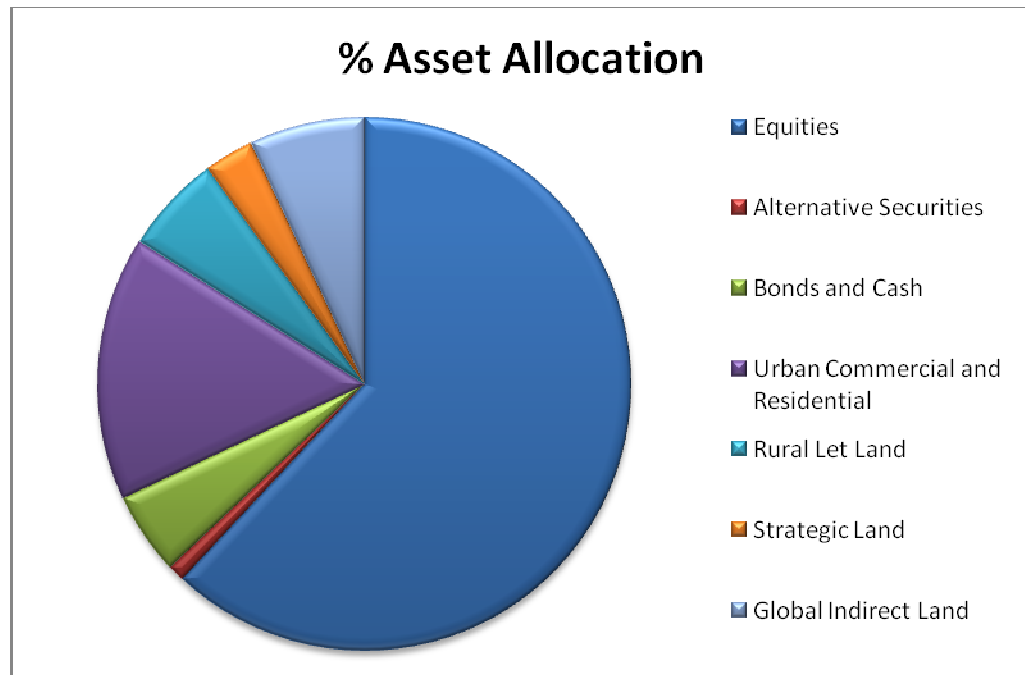
equity and infrastructure funds) with mandates being held by companies such as Legal and General.

The second major body responsible for managing the Church of England's assets is the Pensions Board who manage assets of approximately £866.5million (Pensions Board for the Church of England, 2008). As argued in Chapter Five, although the Pensions Board was created in 1926, its main responsibility is to manage clergy and support staff pension monies generated after 1998. As a result, the Pensions Board displays a different network structure to the Commissioners with investment capital being sourced directly from dioceses in the form of pension contributions. However, day-to-day investment management is outsourced to a roster of external investment houses. As of 2007 these included: Insight Investment Management, who are responsible for bond and gilt investments; GMO UK Limited and UBS Global Asset Management, both of whom manage overseas equity portfolios; Legal and General Assurance Limited, UK equity portfolios; DTZ Tie Leung, property investments; and the Church's part owned investment managers CCLA who are responsible for the charitable funds (Pensions Board of the Church of England, 2008). The selection of investment managers is influenced by several factors:

'You are looking for a good blend which, as I say, gives you some risk mitigation as well. If you put all of your eggs in one basket and that ... fund manager does badly you are sunk. ... So you are looking for that kind of blend, clearly you are looking for their performance record, you're looking for a good rapport with them [and a] kind of cultural mix that they understand what it is we are about and why we have got an ethical policy [and] how we would expect them to conduct themselves in that sense.'

(Interview # 2, Senior Manager, Church of England Pensions Board)

Figure 7.1 - Church Commissioners Asset Allocation 2007



Source: The Church Commissioners for England (2008)

This quote above illustrates some of the key criteria that the Pensions Board uses to enrol an investment manager into its wider investment networks.

The final Church investment body is that of the Church, Charities and Local Authorities Investment Management Limited (CCLA) who are responsible for managing the current Church assets which totalled some £2billion as of 2007 (CCLA, 2008). These 'current assets' are comprised of surplus funds held by Parish Churches, dioceses and Church charities which can be invested in a number of funds that are restricted for Church of England use. CCLA also offers investment opportunities for wider charitable bodies and local authorities and is owned by its members. As a

consequence the Church of England has a controlling stake of roughly 60%. The architecture of CCLA varies significantly from that of both the Church Commissioners and the Pensions Board in two significant ways. First, due to CCLA being a provider of retail funds it has strong links with the wider institutional networks of the Church of England through the Parish Churches and dioceses. However, these links are not as secure as those of the Pensions Board as Parish Churches are under no obligation to invest with CCLA and can use other investment managers. Second, CCLA actively manages the majority of its investments in-house. As a consequence CCLA's institutional networks are shorter than the other investment bodies in that the network does not extend to include outside fund managers. As well as offering investment opportunities to the Church, CCLA provides a key role in the formation of the Church of England's ethical investment policy.

The institutional investment structure of the Church of England can be understood in relation to the work of Zelizer (1989, 1995) on 'Special Money'. Central to Zelizer's thesis is the argument that 'culture and social structure mark the quality of money by institutionalizing controls, restrictions, and distinctions in the sources, uses, modes of allocation and even the quantity of money' (Zelizer, 1989: 342). This is played out in the Church of England in two ways. First, the origin of each of the Church of England's investment bodies' stock of capital influences, and restricts, the purposes for which it can be invested. For instance, the use of Church Commissioners' investment returns for the purposes identified in Table 5.1 are an example of the social environment of the 19th Century influencing the modern day Church¹³⁴. Consequently, this reduces the ability of the Church to use the money in new and innovative ways. Second, as illustrated in Figure 7.2, each of the three

¹³⁴ By this it is meant the money is restricted to be used for the purposes that were identified in this period. Furthermore, these purposes may no longer be as relevant to the needs of the institution today.

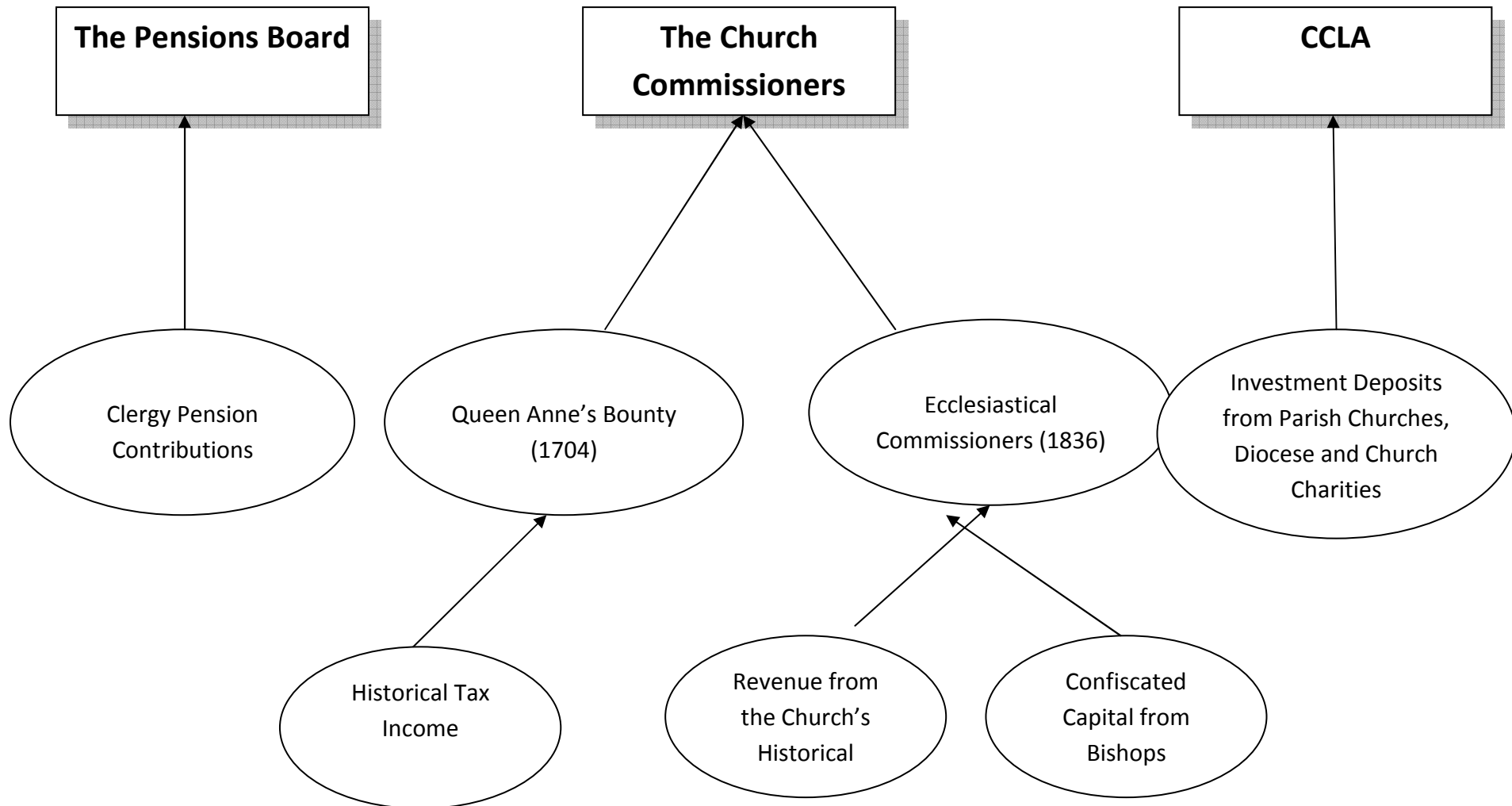
investment bodies is responsible for managing assets from different sources. Thus, the Church, as an institutional body, has recognised the different properties that these monies display and has demarcated their networks from each other. To rephrase, the importance of the demarcation of money has influenced the shape and character of the institutions' financial network.

7.2.2 The Baptist Union of Great Britain

The investment network of the Baptist Union is less extensive than that of the Church of England due to both its physical size and theological stress upon the congregational model. As a much smaller institution, with a smaller assemblage featuring fewer networks and network links, they do not have investments of an equivalent size and thus do not require the same level of infrastructure. The Church's finance committee are responsible for managing the collective assets that the Baptist Union does hold and do so by selecting and monitoring outside investment managers. Currently, their assets are managed by two investment houses, one specialising in equity investments and the other bonds. The finance committee are also responsible for developing the Baptist Union's ethical investment policy. The majority of the Church's investment assets are comprised of the pension funds for ministers and lay employees of the Church. These are administered from the institution's offices in Didcot, Oxfordshire. As highlighted in Chapter Five, although it does not invest in equities or other conventional investment processes, the Baptist Union does have a second financial body; the Baptist Union Corporation. The Baptist Union Corporation provides individual Baptist Churches with surplus assets deposit accounts upon which they can receive a rate of interest. This interest is raised by the Baptist Union Corporation lending money at a small cost to other Baptist Churches

for capital projects. By remaining within the wider network boundaries of the institution this practice does not have to be regulated by the Financial Services Authority.

Figure 7.2 – Church of England: Source of Investment Capital by Investment Body



Source: Chandler, 2007; Author's own Research

7.2.3 The Assemblies of God

Like the Baptist Union the theological approach of the Assemblies of God places a great priority upon the primacy of the Church and consequently only a very small institutional investment network has evolved. As discussed in Chapter Five these networks are limited to investments at the level of the local Church and the affiliated Kingdom Bank.

7.3. What is Christian about Christian Finance?

Having presented a general overview of the principle organizations involved in the management of Christian institutions' investments, I will now consider how faith influences their investment practices. For Kreander et al (2004:411), participation in financial markets by Christian institutions represents an attempt to try, 'to put religious beliefs into practice'. They argue that the institutions, 'base their ethical investment programmes on theological principles derived from the Bible' (Kreander et al, 2004:413). A similar sentiment is echoed by Sparkes (2001; 2002) who argues that although it is possible to identify the rise of Socially Responsible Investment (SRI) within the mainstream investment community, the label 'ethical investment' should be reserved for value driven organizations like 'churches and charities'. Indeed, for him the key division between 'SRI' and 'ethical investment' is that of ethical investors' willingness to substitute financial returns for the implementation of their values and convictions in investment practices.

With regard to current practice Kreander et al (2004) argue that five theological principles form the core of Christian institutional investment: 'creationism'; 'stewardship'; 'agapism'; 'engagement'; and 'witness'. First, creationism is the premise that God created and thus owns the world. This connects

to the second key principle of ethical trading, that of stewardship. For Kreander et al stewardship refers to the notion that it is not our world, but God's. Therefore whatever actions we take must not harm creation. Consequently, to comply with the principle of stewardship any ethical investment must not be in a business that harms either the planet itself or those who live on it. Third, Kreander et al suggest that ethical investment is influenced by Agapism – defined by Kreander et al (2004) as being the principle of a communal, Christian, love of everyone and everything – in that ethical investment programmes aim to promote the welfare of humanity. Fourth, ethical investment provides a forum within which the Church can utilize its values to engage with the world. Indeed, the Church Institutions can use their position as shareholders to demand meetings with the company's management to discuss any particular areas of concern. Finally, Kreander et al argue that the Church's role as an ethical investor allows it to act as a Christian witness within the wider investment community, highlighting how investment management should be conducted.

The model proposed by Kreander et al (2004) is borne out by the empirical findings of this study. Interview respondents stressed the importance of implementing religious values within investment practice and the utilization of the theological positions of both 'stewardship' and 'engagement'. First, within the Church investment community it is widely accepted that the way in which the Church institutions derive their investment income should be congruent with the values that they teach upon a Sunday.

'I've always argued that ... for a Church the way it makes its money is as important as what it spends it on. Whereas for a pension fund in the purely secular world it doesn't necessarily have to be ethical; it has to be legal but it

does not necessarily have to be ethical, that dimension doesn't come into the picture. And I think that therein is a challenge because business isn't black or white; the whole thing is grey and it is very difficult, I think, for a Church that supposedly lives by spiritual values to actually make money and live within the temporal world. So, by that, I simply meant that as far as possible your whole investment strategy should be geared towards what the objectives of the Church are so that it is mission directed in a sense.'

(Interview # 6, Manager, CCLA SRI Department)

This quote bears out the argument of Sparkes (2002) in that Christian investment practices differ to those of the wider SRI sector in that they are driven by a religious conviction. Consequently, this conviction necessitates a higher 'ethical' content within their investments than those displayed by mainstream institutional investors. In regards to implementing this higher level of ethical investment both of Kreander et al's (2004) notions of stewardship and engagement play a key role¹³⁵. First, 'stewardship' is reflected in the negative screen¹³⁶ implemented by the Baptist Union Pension Fund:

'We can't invest in alcohol, arms, gambling or pornography... We're not allowed to invest in that so they set that overall policy for the investments committee and then take it to the investment managers. So yes the Christian side of it does have an influence on how the money is invested.'

¹³⁵ It is important to note here that both the words of 'stewardship' and 'engagement' have become key rhetoric within the wider SRI community. It is the argument of this paper that this is due to the key role Christian institutions played within setting the agenda of the original SRI movement and that consequently the use of these outside of a religious context is due to the whole movement being embedded within the faith.

¹³⁶ According to Sparkes and Cowton (2004) negative screening is the process whereby an investor identifies an area within which they do not wish to purchase stocks as it contravenes their values. For instance, the initial Church of England ethical investment policy precluded stocks in alcohol, tobacco, armaments, and publishing (Peart-Binns, 2007).

(Interview # 5, Manager, Baptist Union Pension Fund)

Indeed, companies who derive a substantial amount of their turnover from alcohol, arms, gambling or pornography are deemed to be inconsistent with the values of the Church and consequently the fund manager's of the Baptist Union are precluded from including them within their portfolios. This further fits Sparkes' (2002) definition of ethical investment, as the practical implementation of these values can have a negative impact upon the fund's performance.

'Originally ethical investment was a problem you know. Our earlier investment managers, without giving too much away, were unhappy and I think one of them did make a comment that if we did put this money into cigarette companies we would have made a lot more by now. It's that sort of issue.'

(Interview # 5, Manager, Baptist Union Pension Fund)

Second, whilst CCLA, working on behalf of the Church of England, also implements a negative screen on their investments, they argue that this practice does not necessarily adequately represent the Christian religion. Instead, they believe that the principle of 'engagement' should form the bedrock of any investment policy that is guided by Christian principles.

'[Negative Screens] are simply a matter of trying to determine what companies do, matched against what the Church considers to be acceptable and unacceptable. That I have to say is a relatively sterile approach because you are sort of turning away from the nature of the problem, which of course is a very un-Christian thing to do because the Church is supposed to be a

militant position on earth¹³⁷ and therefore the very idea that you ignore something and find it unacceptable upsets and frustrates the ambitions of the chunk of the Church who would like to see us much more involved in ... engagement.'

(Interview # 7, Investment Director, CCLA)

For CCLA, engagement operates in two ways. First, engagement is conducted in the same manner as any institutional investor, as described by Clark and Hebb (2004; 2005), in an attempt to safeguard investment returns.

'We will go and see corporate entities and policy makers and we will say well actually guys we think this is what you should be doing and here's why, and some of this is relatively mainstream such as good governance so we believe that it is appropriate to separate the roles of Chairman and Chief Executive in a PLC for example, absolutely mainstream, and we believe that there is ample evidence in both academic literature and practitioner experience that adherence to good governance does deliver superior shareholder returns.'

(Interview # 7, Investment Director, CCLA)

Second, once again the Church, as an institutional investor, moves beyond conventional investment practice in order to try and implement their religious values in the corporate world.

'On the positive engagement we will engage with companies on the governance but also on Christian issues as well and you can argue that in the

¹³⁷ By 'militant position on Earth' the interview respondent meant that the Church was not there to accept society as it is, but to challenge and better it.

broader political-economic environment that is important because what it is trying to do is to drive an agenda that is positive and supportive.’

(Interview # 7, Investment Director, CCLA)

However, when engaging with businesses upon matters involving their Christian agenda the Church of England attempts to frame dialogue in a business, rather than a religious manner, in an attempt to avoid being perceived as preaching.

‘We don’t wear theology on our sleeves, you know it’s a kind of back driver of what we are about but they also understand that you are an institutional shareholder and you have questions to answer. I mean, it is possible that a new company might be a little worried [that we are] going to preach at [them], but I mean I’ve never done that in my life so you very quickly establish trust and a platform for having a logical debate about CR [Corporate Responsibility] issues.’

(Interview # 6, Manager, CCLA SRI Department)

Consequently, the Church of England’s SRI unit, based at the CCLA¹³⁸, plays a key role in translating the spiritual concerns of the network of the wider Church into the language of business so that the engagement process can succeed.

JC: So ... the SRI unit does act as kind of like a translation device in between the language of business and the language of the Church in that...

R: That’s a very good way of putting it, I’ve never thought of it like that but I think it is because essentially I think our job is to translate concerns, worries, problems, dilemmas, upsets, and sheer misunderstanding in the Church, who

¹³⁸ The Church of England SRI Unit has since been moved to the Church Commissioners’ offices in Church House, Westminster.

don't understand finance and business and articulate that in a way that you can actually talk to business commercially and somehow in the middle it kind of changes from gobbledygook into English and it is very interesting. Yeah I hadn't thought about it like that but it is a kind of translation, yeah.'

(Interview # 6, Manager, CCLA SRI Department)

An example of this engagement process working to further Christian values is provided by dialogue between British Airways and the Church. In November 2006 a British Airways employee was suspended from work as she refused to remove a crucifix necklace, a Christian symbol, from around her neck. This angered the Church of England, with the Archbishop of York declaring the company's policy to be 'nonsense' (BBC News, 2006). Subsequently, the institution's SRI unit engaged with the business and a mutually agreeable compromise was reached.

'The BA issue was an interesting one because the Archbishop of York who was the really forceful voice in all of that was insistent that he would not settle for anything less than an absolute climb down by British Airways. And, you know, British Airways isn't going to do that and so somehow you have to arbitrate a sort of compromise in the middle where by everybody saves face. So I had the Archbishop in one ear and Willie Walsh [Chief Executive Officer of British Airways] in the other which was quite, quite trying, but you know, you come to a point where accommodation can be reached. But I suspect that if the Archbishop of York had had those conversations directly it would have broken down quite quickly because he would have shouted at British Airways which just would have closed up and actually you have got to talk to a company in a language they understand in order to solve the dilemma you have so that was quite an interesting test case actually.'

(Interview # 6, Manager, CCLA SRI Department)

Furthermore, it was argued that once the relationship between the Church and British Airways had been developed both parties remained in dialogue over other issues including the environment, a core message of the wider Church of England.

‘We helped Willie Walsh an awful lot but he now wants to talk to us about climate change, fuel efficiency and anything to do with that kind of, other business responsible issues, because he can have a dialogue with us that is very grown up.’

(Interview # 6, Manager, CCLA SRI Department)

In addition to the model identified by Kreander et al (2004), it is possible to identify one other method in which Christian religion informs the institutions’ investment practices; that of oversight. In both the Church of England and the Baptist Union investment decisions are somewhat overseen by selected members of the clergy. These provide a religious and ethical oversight to ensure that the investment practices are not overly contradictory to the teachings of the Church. There are parallels here to Pollard and Samers’ (2007) argument that Imams provide an oversight role for Islamic finance. Indeed, Pollard and Samers (2007) highlight the key role Imams play in judging the practices and innovations of Islamic finance against not only the Qur’an¹³⁹ but also the Hadith and the Sunnah. This ensures that there is a direct link between the faith and its financial system. Thus, the role the Anglican clergy plays in the Church’s investment practices provides a similar oversight and direct link between religion and investment.

¹³⁹ The Qur’an is the Holy Book of the Islamic faith from which its Shari’a law system is derived. The Hadith and the Sunnah, though not as important as the Qur’an, are also Holy books outlaying the practices and teachings of the prophet Mohammed.

Whilst Kreander et al's (2004) identification of the five principles of religious investment is broadly accurate in relation to both the Baptist Union and The Church of England it does not fit Kingdom Bank, the investment organization of the Assemblies of God. In contrast to engagement with the wider secular world the investment policy of Kingdom Bank is restricted to spiritual matters as they only provide loans and mortgages to Churches themselves. For Kingdom Bank this represents the purest ethical investment policy possible as it is fully focussed on furthering religion, as Churches both benefit from the mortgages they supply and the interest rates that these mortgages create. This means that the organization's investment network remains internal to the spiritual Church, unlike the other organizations who extend their networks into wider investment practices.

7.4. Christianity and Finance, Identifying Contradictions

Having identified how the religious beliefs of the Christian institutions inform their investment practice, the chapter will now examine the counter argument; that is, that religious beliefs are incompatible with secular investment practices. In so doing it will be informed by the classical arguments of Durkheim in relation to how the sacred and profane form an irreconcilable dialectic, arguing that this dialectic is exemplified by a number of contradictions and tensions that arise through the religious institutions' participation in financial investment.

As discussed in Chapter Two, Durkheim (1976:36 emphasis in original) argues that a religion is only defined as such due to the spiritual values it promotes being fundamentally different to, and cut off from, the wider secular world. To paraphrase, he argues that a religion is only a religion because it is different to the everyday. This is, therefore, inherently problematic for the Church which, as an institution, needs to

raise funds to maintain and reproduce itself. This need to obtain funding consequently requires participation, and thus assimilation into, the networks of the capitalist economic system, a profane entity. However, by integrating itself with the secular in this manner the Church reduces its necessary isolation, thus causing numerous problems and a crisis of similarity. Christian institutional investment provides an example of this interaction between the networks of the sacred and profane and the tensions that it can cause.

As argued in Chapter Three, a good deal of work upon this relationship between capitalism and religion has been conducted from the discipline of critical accountancy. An example of this work is provided by Booth (1993) who, following the arguments of Durkheim, identifies widespread opposition to contemporary accountancy practice within Churches. These practices are seen as being a secular intrusion into the spiritual world of the Church. Echoing the findings of Booth, Laughlin (1988) identifies a begrudging acceptance of the need for accountancy, as there is a recognition that the Church needs to successfully generate and manage finance if it is to survive. Therefore, Laughlin argues that the Church has attempted to develop a compromise that maintains the purity of its religious function whilst also allowing it to partake in the necessary secular financial activities. For Laughlin (1988) this has taken the form of establishing a religious core that is isolated from secular financial activities. This notion of a religious core and a secular periphery is reflected in the work of Lily Kong (2001), who, as discussed in earlier chapters, has written on the politics and poetics of religion.

The findings of this thesis, in relation to the financial investment activities of the Church institutions, bear similarities to the accountancy findings of both Booth and Laughlin. First, there are a number of tensions and contradictions that arise as a

result of being a spiritual institution engaged with a secular pursuit and, second, it is possible to identify an attempt to manage a compromise between these tensions.

Within the empirical interview material it is possible to identify three main ways in which the Church's position as a spiritual entity interacts with the secular practice of finance to create a contradiction. First, there is a widely held belief amongst the Church investment community that the media are constantly watching and waiting for signs of hypocrisy (by way of a disconnect between the Churches teachings and its practices) within their investment portfolio. This was highlighted during the 'short-selling scandal' of September 2008. During this period intense media coverage had been placed on the role that short-selling¹⁴⁰ had played within the huge falls in the share price of several major high street banks. This had provoked the Archbishop of York, John Sentamu, to deliver a sermon decrying the people involved in selling the banks short as being, 'bank robbers and asset strippers' and Rowan Williams, the Archbishop of Canterbury, to write extensively about it within the *Spectator* (Williams, 2008:27). However, the following day the front page of the *Financial Times* was dominated by the story that the Church of England was itself involved in the process. The newspaper suggested that:

'The Church of England faced charges of hypocrisy yesterday over its leaders' attack on short selling and debt trading after hedge funds pointed out that it uses some of the same practices when investing its own assets ... Hedge funds pointed to the willingness of the church commissioners to lend foreign stock from their £5.5bn of investments - an essential support for short selling - and derided the pair for not understanding shorting.'

¹⁴⁰ Short selling is the investment practice of selling shares that one does not own in the hope that the price would fall before making a profit by re-buying the shortfall later at the new lower price—

(Mackintosh, Burgess and Burns, 2008:1)

Furthermore, it is argued that this notion of hypocrisy is exacerbated for the Church, in comparison to other charities, due to the wide breadth of subjects upon which it has views and teachings. Indeed, whilst a charity may only have views or lobby on a single issue the Church has diverse views and opinions. Consequently, it is very difficult to stay congruent to each of its views and teachings.

‘...for an organization like the Church of England that doesn’t have one clear [message], it is not a [sic] cancer research, it is much harder to pin down what is the Church, what is the Church’s mission that can be reflected in its investments.’

(Interview #8, Manager, CCLA SRI Department)

Second, related to charges of hypocrisy, the Church institutions are high profile, public entities and thus should there be a problem with their investments, they face the issue of reputational risk.

‘...reputational risk is always at the forefront of what I am thinking because whilst that might sound as though you are just trying to manage PR it is actually about integrity and understanding where the flashpoints are and how you can respond to those through a process.’

(Interview #6, Manager, CCLA SRI Department)

Furthermore, like any business or economic entity, it is argued that should the Churches reputation be affected negatively then this would have economic consequences. A degree of public trust in the institution would be lost and, as a

result, less people would attend the institutions Church services and congregational giving would decline.

‘some of that risk I have to say is reputational, before we get on to the replenishment of the Churches finance, clearly it [the Church] is spending money and at the same time there is the Parish Share as well as the hope that [consumers] will participate in bequests and other one off gifts [they] are clearly attached to the reputational integrity of the Church as opposed to simply Christian Mission and Witness. As a body corporate [sic] the Church is in a sense expected to embody Christian mission and witness but there will be those that say [due to its investments] ‘well actually it doesn’t, it is far more concerned in matters of earthly politics rather than the higher challenge’ and the Church therefore needs to ensure that the perception is not grasped whole [sic].’

(Interview # 7, Investment Director, CCLA)

In addition, it is argued that people have a long memory for investment mistakes that the Church has made. One example of this is the enduring legacy of the Church Commissioners’ property ‘scandal’ of 1992. In this instance the Commissioners’ policy of developing high quality office space within the City of London was affected by the wider UK recession at the time and the Churches assets depreciated roughly £642 million (Lovell, 1997). While the Church Commissioners argue that this figure has now, through good investment results, been recovered the memory of the event remains strong.

‘it’s annoying in a sense because last year, well earlier this year, we won an award for our ... ten year performance within property. I think the ten years to December 06 we were ranked either first or second within the IPD. So

yeah, we had an absolutely fantastic last decade, but no one knows that, all they remember is the 80s and the early 90s.'

(Interview # 1, Senior Manager, Church Commissioners Property Investment Department)

This element of contradiction between the Church's message and its financial investments is exacerbated by the implicit acceptance that by investing in a company The Church is seen as endorsing its activities. Chandler (2007) uses the example of Midland Bank to illustrate this. He notes that during campaigns against apartheid South Africa, the Church of England was criticised, and lobbied against, due to its holdings in Midland Bank, which operated in the the country and even provided loans to the South African government. As a shareholder the Church was seen to be tacitly supporting Midland Bank's activities as a legitimate business practice which supported the apartheid regime. This episode was also symptomatic of the wider relationship between the Church and NGO campaigning groups. As a high profile investor the Church of England is often targeted by NGOs who are attempting to make statements about the practices of the wider investment community. In so doing they utilise the supposed tension between the networks of faith and investment to garner publicity for their campaign.

'I've got 11 years experience working in this and literally every twelve to eighteen months there is a crisis where there is ... a campaign, a disinvestment campaign by an NGO that kind of outs you, if you can use that phrase, for doing something unethical or that they perceive to be unethical'

(Interview # 6, Manager, CCLA SRI Department)

The final, and greatest, tension that the Christian Institutions face in regards to investment is balancing the need to resolve all of the tensions identified above, with that of satisfying the Church's fiduciary responsibility. By this it is meant that the institutions need to achieve a financial return from their investments to fund their reproduction. Within the context of the Church of England, it is argued that this creates the need to maximise the returns from their assets.

'The Church of England [C of E] like any Church, well most Churches, is asset rich but income poor and to fund the living Church the size of the C of E costs a huge amount of money and whilst the headline figures of the three bodies [The Church Commissioners, Pension's Board and CCLA] is something like eight to nine billion quid, the income from that is only a small part of the cost to actually run the Church ... So there is a constant desire to sweat the assets and to, you know, squeeze as much income out of the fixed asset base.'

(Interview # 6, Manager, CCLA SRI Department)

Consequently, every investment, irrespective of the degree to which it displays religious content or furthers the Church institution's spiritual mission, has to achieve certain returns in order to satisfy the Church's financial requirements.

'The Commissioners primary objective is to achieve 7% long term and 5% real [rates of return on investments] and everything has to do [this] in order to meet our pension liabilities and our spending commitments to the causes. Property is no different, every single asset that we look at potentially needs to stack up in terms of meeting the 5% return target.'

**(Interview # 1, Senior Manager, Church Commissioners
Property Investment Department)**

This fiduciary requirement has often created conflict between the Church's religious and investment communities. A good example of this is provided by the sale of The Church of England's Octavia Hill social housing estates in 2006. The Octavia Hill estates were vast areas of social housing, comprising approximately 1600 homes, around the area of Maida Vale in Central London, that had been acquired by The Church Commissioners in the late Victorian era in order to provide affordable housing. However, it was decided that these were no longer providing optimal financial returns as land prices in the area were increasing, due to the process of gentrification, yet rental incomes remained low. Consequently, the decision was taken to sell the estate as it did not fulfil the Church Commissioner's fiduciary responsibility and requirements.

'Our objective is to achieve a return ... in order to benefit our beneficiaries, the retired clergy. It is not to subsidise local communities in South East London; there [are] other charities and housing associations that can do that ... So the problem was that the estates had been run in such a way for a number of years that the tenants had got used to us effectively being a bit of a soft touch and so felt that we were there to subsidise their rent, which we were doing. So basically we weren't in a position to be able to maximise that investment so the right decision was to sell it.'

**(Interview # 1, Senior Manager, Church Commissioners
Property Investment Department)**

'The bottom line, as the Commissioners saw it, was that their job basically is to manage assets to bring in the money to support the Churches work and these estates increasingly were failing to do it. They were failing to do it

partly because of the way, you know, [that] property prices were rising and it was an up and coming area and these were not up and coming estates.'

**(Interview # 11, Senior Employee, Church Commissioners
Policy Unit)**

This decision upset a large amount of the wider Church as they believed that the Church of England should operate low income housing. Consequently, a number of debates took place within General Synod, the main parliament of the Church, where the Commissioners decision making process was criticised as going against the spiritual objectives of the Church. However, this did not stop the sale.

'We got a debate on it [the sale of the Octavia Hill Estates] in General Synod; in fact, there were two debates and they all said we don't like it very much. We said tough, we've chewed it over a lot [and] we're going to do it anyway.'

**(Interview # 11, Senior Employee, Church Commissioners
Policy Unit)**

This is symptomatic of the autonomous relations between the networks of the spiritual, 'poetic' Church, and the financial 'politics' of the Church. These networks, although connected, are autonomous and thus, as in the case of the Octavia Hill estates, the investment bodies can act in contrast to the wishes of the wider assemblage.

7.5. Managing the Tensions

Having identified the principle tensions within Church investment practices I will now return to identifying how an uneasy compromise is achieved between the

institutions secular financial and spiritual goals. This is done by two contrasting approaches. First, as identified by Laughlin (1988) and Kong (2001), each of the institutions attempt to separate the networks of finance from the networks of their religious activities in order to avoid contamination.

R1: 'There are other wings of the Church, other bodies within a community, that will take on perhaps these community service remits and that's not quite necessarily the role of the money making arm.'

R2: 'No quite ... I see PID [Property Investment Department] as being on a par with any other blue chip institutional real estate department ... we're not going to go out and buy pubs and arms factories so we are clearly responsible but we are responsible in the same way a Prupim [Prudential Property Investment Management] would be or a Hermes and I personally don't see the religious side comes into it ... We are an ethical investor basically.'

(Interview # 1, Senior Manager, Church Commissioners Property Investment Department)

This approach can broadly be termed as the 'separation' of religion and finance.

Second, the primary method in which the Church seeks to negotiate a compromise is, as discussed earlier, through the active inclusion of religious values in their investment decisions. However, again as mentioned before, this restricts the Church's investable opportunities and thus diminishes its possibilities to create returns.

'My experience is that there is an awful lot of tension at the centre between fiduciary responsibility to optimise returns, they are very keen to talk about

maximising returns but I think with ethical investment you can't do that you optimise returns.'

(Interview # 6, Manager, CCLA SRI Department)

To paraphrase, given the need to remain congruent to the Church's teachings it is impossible to achieve the maximise investment returns.

In both instances a compromise has to be made between the levels of religiosity and return within investment practices. By separating the explicitly religious function of the Church the investors are reducing the level in which their practices are coherent to the teaching of the Church. However, by integrating the religious values the Church's investment managers are reducing investment opportunities and jeopardising the returns needed to fund the institutions reproduction. Thus, a compromise has to be struck between the Church's fiduciary and religious responsibilities. Consequently, this compromise further complicates the difference identified by Sparkes (2002) between 'ethical' and 'socially responsible' investment. Indeed, each Church investment is always a combination of both the religious 'ethical' and the financial 'socially responsible'. This renders these concepts as being a sliding scale of religiosity rather than being the dualistic opposites suggested by Sparkes (2002) and Durkheim (1976). Furthermore, in the remainder of this chapter I will argue that each of the Church's financial investments exist on a different position in this sliding scale dependent on the characteristics of each institutions network. In particular I will highlight the importance of three factors; those of institutional distance, the source of the invested capital, and, finally, the importance of geography.

Institutional Distance

While institutions have traditionally been considered to be coherent consistent bodies that mediate economic activity along the lines of a single and stable core value (Amin, 2004), Schoenberger (1999) highlights how, internally, institutions can be beset by difference and inconsistency. This inconsistency is due to institutions being assemblages comprised of a series of differing networks within which the same thing may have a variety of different meanings and cultural contexts. This is borne out in the work of Latour (2005) who argues that meanings differ as an entity flows around a network due to the different cultural contexts (caused by inter-relations with different networks) at each node. Thus, to paraphrase, if a network was an isolated straight line the same meaning would be passed from beginning to end. However, connections with other networks introduce new meanings. Thus, as an assemblage of various networks these institutions are exposed to a number of different influences. Therefore, as an assemblage each of The Church of England, The Baptist Union and the Assemblies of God are comprised of networks of different views. Furthermore, this institutional dissimilarity plays a key role within their investment practices. Indeed, the particular cultural influences present in the network at the location, or node, where investment decisions are made influences the character of these investments and, thus, their position on the sliding scale of the compromise between religious and financial drivers. In relation to each of the studied institutions, the empirical material would suggest that the key factor in altering the composition of this compromise is 'institutional distance'¹⁴¹. Indeed, as one follows the investment network away from the institutions' core investment bodies – CCLA, The Church Commissioners and the Pension's Board within the Church of England –

¹⁴¹ Institutional Distance is defined here as being the distance that one travels along a network from the core of the institution.

to the periphery, where professional investment bodies – such as UBS, Cazenove Capital, Legal and General and GMO – are appointed to manage some of the Church’s assets, the level of religiosity within the investments falls. This is best exemplified by the concept of the ‘negative screen’. Whereas, as previously highlighted, a director of the CCLA argued that negative screens represent an un-Christian approach to investments the technique is considered satisfactory by the Church at the periphery of the institution.

‘JC: Do your Christian clients come to you and ask you to engage in certain areas?

R: No they don’t actually as a rule clients aren’t driving that ... they see our negative screens they choose the negative screens that they want they will see our engagement policy and process they will care what we do and as a rule they tend to just accept what we do.’

(Interview # 9, SRI employee, investment bank)

In addition, the common practice of pooling the assets of several different charities into one investment fund, as adopted by several of these ‘outside’ investment managers, renders the principle of engagement inherently problematic. Whilst the investment funds of the Church of England’s core bodies, such as the Pensions Board, are often deemed to be large enough to make it economically viable for investment managers to manage them through a segregated mandate¹⁴² the funds of smaller Church investors, like the Baptist Union or the Church of England’s diocesan boards, are often collated with those of other charities in Charitable Investment Funds (CIFs). Consequently, as shown by the following quote, if the

¹⁴² A segregated mandate is the process whereby an investor’s funds are kept separate to those of any other, thus meaning that their wishes can be carried out to the full and not diluted by the wishes of other investors

Church's demands for engagement are to be implemented, they need to be commonly agreed by all of the investors within the trust. This, thus, reduces the ability for the Church to incorporate its religious values within the investment process.

'Within the clients that are based here we do not engage because each client is very different has very different things that they might think are good or bad so we can't make a decision on behalf of clients or on behalf of our charity clients.'

(Interview # 10, Charitable Investment Employee, Investment Bank)

Furthermore, several employees of these investment management companies argued that their investments, on the behalf of the Christian institutions, did not include any spiritual influence at all. Instead they resembled those of any other institutional investor.

'My only comment would be that I don't think that Christian money is invested any differently to other money so I think that you are perhaps going up the wrong path in terms of a topic ... I don't think it really exists if you see what I mean.'

(Interview 10, Charitable Investment Employee, Investment Bank)

'Money owned by a Church will be run as money run by any other big organization with ethical criteria.'

(Interview 10, Charitable Investment Employee, Investment Bank)

This concept of 'institutional distance' is purposefully cultivated by the Church Commissioners of the Church of England. They actively utilise institutional distance to create a periphery to the institution in order to open up other investment opportunities that may not necessarily meet their strict ethical guidelines in the centre. It is argued that by adding an extra layer to the institution, through employing an investment manager, the public scrutiny of the Church's activities reduces thus allowing it more flexibility in regards to what is considered to comply with their ethical investment policy.

JC: I guess the kind of fund managers allow you to get into specialist areas where you might not have specialist knowledge like the UNITE [student accommodation] fund?

R: Yes, absolutely. The UNITE fund. Obviously we wouldn't want to do student housing directly, it could potentially hit the front pages if something went wrong but UNITE ... are the biggest student housing provider and very much a specialist and have a huge experience of managing students and managing property so we are very comfortable investing with them.'

**(Interview # 1, Senior Manager, Church Commissioners
Property Dept)**

To conclude, although the investments made at the centre of the institution contain a high level of religiosity it is the argument of this chapter that this declines as institutional distance increases. Furthermore this refutes the differentiation identified by Sparkes (2001) between 'ethical' and 'socially responsible' investment. Whilst the Church institutions fit his model of an 'ethical' investor at the centre of the institution – in that they are willing to forego financial returns in order to incorporate their values – they do not at the periphery. Instead they resemble his definition of

Socially Responsible Investment. This suggests that ethical and socially responsible are not distinct concepts, as Sparkes argues, but are interrelated and exist together on a sliding scale of ethical content. Furthermore, this once again highlights the problem of treating institutions as being a cohesive body as investment practices vary throughout the institutional network.

The Source of Invested Capital

While it is possible to identify the impact of institutional distance upon the character of religious investments at the periphery of the institution, the context of the network also has a clear effect upon the investments situated in the bodies at the core of the institution. This is clearly highlighted in the Church of England where the three investment organizations at the core of the Church – the Church Commissioners, the Pension's Board, and CCLA – display very different religious investment characteristics. Indeed, despite both being part of the wider institutional assemblage of the Church of England it is possible to identify a strong difference in the level of religiosity incorporated in the investments of CCLA and the Church Commissioners. It is argued that while the investments of CCLA are highly informed by the theological practice of the Church, as highlighted within Section Three, those of the Church Commissioners closely resemble the practices of the more mainstream SRI investors. This difference is borne out of the differing financial flows and networks through which CCLA and the Church Commissioners have acquired their investment capital. Indeed, as highlighted in Figure 7.3, whereas CCLA operates as an open investment fund, within which current Church bodies can invest spare capital, the assets of the Church Commissioners assets are derived from historical gifts and

allowances to the Church. This historical source of income has had the effect of isolating the commissioners from the wider thinking of the contemporary Church.

...it's partly the way that the (Church Commissioners') assets have fallen in a sense that the largest pot is the historic wealth of the Church that kind of came across with the reformation and it's a closed fund it doesn't have any outside beneficiaries such as the clergy. It kind of does what it does and it pays the money to provide the pensions ultimately and in a sense it's sort of divorced from wider thinking.'

(Interview #6, Manager, CCLA SRI Department)

To place this within the rhetoric of the network, the specific source of the Church Commissioners' funds means that has few network connections with the Church's contemporary spiritual activities. Thus, The Church Commissioners, as a body, are only loosely influenced by the Church's spiritual message. In contrast CCLA, due to its specific source of funding, is embedded within the network of the current religious Church.

'The funds we run here is live Church of England money [money that is both actively used and generated] from Parishes, Dioceses so we actually are much closer in touch to people [members of the congregation] ringing up and saying I can't believe you are doing this.'

(Interview #6, Manager, CCLA SRI Department)

Thus, although both the Church Commissioners and CCLA exist as bodies within the core of the institution of the Church of England, the properties of their respective networks create different influences upon their investments.

Furthermore, it appears that the key factor driving this difference is, once again, institutional distance. As the network distance between the investor and the local Church increases, the degree of religiosity within the investment falls. To exemplify, whereas the characteristics of the network of the Church Commissioner's separates it from the local Church, the network of CCLA places the investment body in much closer proximity. By offering investment practices directly to Churches the funds have to pass through less mediating intermediaries that will reduce this level of religiosity. This reflects the work of Durkheim upon the importance of ritual within the formation of religious beliefs. For him ritual is vital to reproducing the spiritual element of a religion,

'Religious representations are collective representations that express collective realities; rituals are ways of acting that are generated only within assembled groups and are meant to stimulate and sustain or recreate certain mental states in these groups.'

(Durkheim, 1976:11)

Thus, through the characteristics of their network, the investments of CCLA are closer to the ritual practices of the Church and are thus closer to the spiritual aspect of the Church. Consequently, they contain a higher degree of religiosity than those of the Church Commissioners.

However, the role of ritual can also be detrimental to the ethical content displayed in Church investment activity. Indeed, investments placed by the local Churches themselves display less of an SRI influence.

'We go strategic rather than ethical or something like that. Would I put my [sic] money into an AK47 producer or something like that? Absolutely not. If I

knew that we would pull it out straight away, do I actively check that out? No I don't. I don't.'

(Interview #14, Finance Manager, AOG Church)

'Again it's teaching, our Church is big on environmental issues and ethical issues regarding the individual [but] I think it's a weakness of a lot of Churches like ours, Baptist Churches, we are big on personal ethics and weak on corporate ethics and that reflects, perhaps, on ministers like myself who recognise that I struggle with the big corporate ethics of it.'

(Interview #15, Pastor, Baptist Church)

A further example is provided by a Church of England Church within the centre of Nottingham. This Church, at the time of the interview, invested in a local brewing company and thus contravened the institution's wider ethical policy in relation to the avoidance of alcohol ¹⁴³(Interview #16, 2008).

This would suggest that investments at the local scale are less ethically informed than those at the national level. This is due to the particular characteristics of the networks at the different scalar apparatuses of capture. Whereas, the national Church networks have contacts with a number of outside investment professionals the local Churches do not. This means that investment techniques are subsumed by the more pressing religious fervour as this has a larger presence within the network at this level. Consequently, it is my argument that, in order to achieve the optimum level of religiosity within investment practice, the investing body needs to be situated in a particular position in the institutional network between the ritual of local Church and the capitalistic practices of the wider economy.

¹⁴³ The Church argued that this investment was promoting local business rather than condoning the alcohol sector.

The Impact of Geography

In addition to the impact of both the network characteristics at both the core and the periphery of the institution, and the importance of the source of investment capital, the third, and final, key variable that effects the degree of religiosity present within Christian institutional investment is that of spatial distance. Indeed, as the distance between the Church and the company in which it is investing increases the ability to engage upon Christian matters diminishes. As shown by the quotes below, this is especially relevant in regards to the Church of England's investment overseas.

'I think, to be absolutely candid, you can't do it [engage with businesses overseas] to the same degree of intensity that you would a company that is based here that you can go and see ... I mean I think we can do America to some extent, we can do Europe pretty well I think, Asia-Pacific is almost a dead loss because the culture is so different and they are not even sure what engagement means.'

(Interview #6, Manager, CCLA SRI Department)

'...English companies are really easy to talk to because they have their offices just around the corner then we'll make a call [and see] what's happening [the problem] is that our products are more global and we have to start engaging with Chinese companies or even French companies ... they don't have the right structure in place so it's much harder to get in touch with them. Chinese companies just never respond to you...'

(Interview #7, Employee, CCLA SRI Department)

This problem has been further exacerbated as the Church has sought to invest within international markets as a way to diversify its UK portfolio and benefit from returns in emerging markets.

7.6 Summary

The practice of Christian financial investment provides an important, yet understudied, arena within which culture and economy interact. This chapter has attempted to investigate this interaction through the perspective of economic institutionalism. However, unlike the majority of work conducted from an institutionalist perspective it has sought to argue that, in addition to mediating the wider economy, the economy also actively alters the properties of institutions. The chapter identified how the need to engender investment returns has affected each of The Church of England, The Baptist Union of Great Britain, and The Assemblies of God with the secular practice of finance diminishing the institutions' spiritual purpose. In making this argument the chapter has made three further conclusions. First, the chapter has identified how each of the institutions has attempted to incorporate elements of their faith within their investments. Second, congruent with the traditional arguments of economic institutionalism, the institutions, through 'engagement', have actively sought to reshape the wider economy along the lines of their faith. However, at the same time this economic participation has also altered the institutions themselves as they are obliged to invest in things and make financial decisions that may not be wholly fitting with the religion. The chapter thus argued that each of the institutions had to manage a balance between the need remain congruent with the faith and achieving a return on investments. Finally, the chapter argued that the composition of this balance altered dependent upon the original

source of the invested capital, and institutional and geographical distance. . Each of these factors, again, highlighted the inability to refer to an institution as being a coherent entity.

8. Conclusion

‘God is dead. God remains dead. And we have killed him.’

(Nietzsche, 1882)

8.1 Maintaining Religious Spaces

Within the thesis I have sought to provide an answer to the question as to how the religious spaces of the Christian Church continue to exist within the contemporary capitalist system of England. Indeed, despite many authors, such as Bruce (2002), arguing that the process of secularization is causing a terminal decline for the religion in the UK (a claim borne out by Church attendance statistics as shown in Table 2.2) the Church of England alone continues to operate some 16,550 places of worship within England (www.achurchnearyou.com, 2010). In addition, new Pentecostal and Evangelical Churches are growing in the nations’ major cities (Aldridge, 2007) and the traditional Free Church institutions (such as the Baptist Union and the Methodist Church) remain prominent. Furthermore, the Church remains a highly significant economic actor. The ecumenical Church Investors Group (a partnership between the major Christian institutional investors that includes, amongst others, representatives from the United Reformed Church, the Methodist Church, the UK dioceses of the Catholic Church, the Baptist Union and the Church of England) represents combined investment assets totalling over £12billion (www.churchinvestorsgroup.org.uk) and, again, as the largest UK Church institution, the Church of England, as of 2008, held investment assets of over £8 billion. In addition, the relatively nascent institution of the Assemblies of God has developed a significant economic turnover. Indeed, the single Church studied within this project received gifts of over £1.3million in 2008 (The Church, 2009). Thus, although

aggregate Sunday Church Service attendance has experienced significant decline and several Churches have closed (Bruce, 2002) these are hardly the signs of a faith that is dead or dying.

In order to understand how, approximately 2000 years after its inception into the British Isles, the spaces of the Church still exist today the thesis examined three denominations; the Church of England; the Baptist Union of Great Britain; and the Assemblies of God. Following the works of authors such as Amin (2001; 2004; 2009) and Hodgson (1998; 2007a; 2007b) these denominations were considered to be 'formal economic institutions'. By 'formal economic institution' it is meant that each of the Church of England, the Baptist Union and The Assemblies of God are 'settled habits of thought' (Veblen, 1988) that have been organized into a physical form. Thus, in each body a particular interpretation of the faith of Christianity has been organized into a structure and channelled into the buildings of Churches. This conceptual understanding of the Churches as being institutions recasts the question of 'how do the spaces of the Christian Church continue to exist in the UK' to 'how are the spaces and institutions of the Christian Church reproduced?' Indeed, as argued by Veblen (1988), in order for institutions to continue to exist they need to be economically reproduced. It is thus the question of how this reproduction occurs within the Christian Church that the thesis has answered. This final chapter will, thus, identify the key contributions that the research has made to the literatures of the Geography of Religion and Economic Geography and wider notions of knowledge.

8.2 Empirical Findings of the Research

The chapter will now focus upon the key empirical arguments and contributions of the research. The primary empirical contributions to the thesis are threefold; first it provides an overview of the process of institutional reproduction, second it investigates the relationship between religion and the economy, and third it discusses the characteristics of religious institutions. Furthermore, each of these contributions is related to the others as they are all essential to the process of ensuring the reproduction of institutional religious space.

8.3.1 The Process of Institutional Reproduction

Within the thesis I primarily sought to provide an overview of the process of institutional reproduction as experienced by the Church of England, The Baptist Union of Great Britain and The Assemblies of God. This discussion was framed by the classic work of Veblen (1988), as examined at length in Chapter Three. Through engagement with the work of Veblen I argued that the process of institutional reproduction occurs in three stages. First, Veblen (1988) argued that the reproduction process is contingent upon an institution raising the necessary finance to cover its costs. This was borne out in each of the three studied religious institutions. For instance, as highlighted in Chapter Five, in order for the spaces of the Church of England to be reproduced the institution, as a national body, was required to ascertain approximately £1billion on an annual basis. This funding was necessary to cover essential costs such as building maintenance and utility bills (The Church of England, 2006). Indeed, without this income the institution would not have been able to pay these costs and thus the religious space of the Parish Church would have had to close.

Second, Veblen (1988) argued that, in order to raise this money, institutions were reliant upon continually attracting new members. Again this was reflected in the empirical material. As argued in Chapter Six, each of the religious institutions raised the largest proportion of their income from the giving of their congregations. This traditionally occurred through processes such as the collection, where a plate (or other receptacle), was passed around during a Church service and members of the institution were asked to give money to pay for the upkeep of the Church. While this traditional practice has now been supplemented by other forms of giving, such as through the use of Direct Debits, levels of return are still reliant upon their being enough members to raise the necessary funds.

However, commensurate with Veblen's third argument – that in order to attract new members an institution must remain relevant and serve a purpose to a continually changing society – neither the Church of England nor the Baptist Union have been able to attract enough new members to replace those who are leaving. Thus the level of funding that these institutions are receiving from their congregations has been declining. To further exemplify, as discussed in greater depth in Chapters Three, Five, and Six, Veblen argued that the development of institutions and society is inherently linked through the 'virtuous circle'. This meant that both institutions and society are constantly developing and changing together. However, Veblen further argued that the direction in which this circle spins entails that institutions are always less progressed than society. For Veblen, this creates opportunities for new institutions to form and become prominent. This is reflected in the empirical material where I have argued that the three religious institutions have had to adapt their properties to fit a consumer based religious society. Consequently, it is my contention that, as a more 'contemporary' institution, the Assemblies of God has been better able to adapt itself in this manner and has thus attracted significantly

more members than either the Baptist Union or the Church of England. Thus, whilst the Assemblies of God is able to reproduce itself from assets derived solely from their congregation, both the Church of England and the Baptist Union have had to seek supplementary alternative income sources.

As argued by Laughlin (1988) the largest of these alternative income sources is provided by investment practices. Indeed, both the Church of England, and to a lesser extent, the Baptist Union have invested assets in financial markets to provide a supplementary source of income. However, as discussed in the next section of this chapter, these investments have created concerns as to whether the Church is participating in activities that are contrary to its spiritual teachings.

8.3.2 The Relationship between Religion and the Economy

The second key empirical contribution of the thesis has been an in-depth examination of the relationship between Christianity and Capitalism. Indeed, throughout the thesis I have argued that the economic imperative of institutional reproduction (i.e. the need for the Church institutions to generate the required income) necessitated that each of the Baptist Union, the Church of England, and the Assemblies of God participated in wider capitalist practices (such as, for instance, financial investments). As argued in Chapter Three, this need for religions to participate and interact with the economic system has contradicted traditional narratives, such as the work of Durkheim (1976), that conceptualize religion and capitalism as being wholly incompatible and opposing entities. Instead, the thesis noted that religion and money operate together; with the values of both interacting upon, and interrelating with, each other. Furthermore, I argued that this religious-economic interaction has had two significant consequences.

First, commensurate with the traditional arguments of the institutional approach – whereby authors such as Amin (2004) have argued that the cultures of institutions have mediated economic activity in specific locales (this argument is discussed in greater depth in Chapter Three) – I stated that, by participating in economic activity, the institutions of the Christian Church were actively altering aspects of capitalism in line with their belief systems. An example of this was provided by the development of the financial technique of Socially Responsible Investment (SRI), as discussed in Chapter Seven. Whilst SRI began as a niche investment technique, through which Church investors could avoid financing corporate activities that ran in contrary to their spiritual teachings (such as the retail of alcohol, tobacco, armaments and pornography), the investment technique subsequently spread into the wider communities of financial practice. Furthermore, both the Church of England and the Baptist Union have sought to use their position as shareholders to exert leverage over the companies in which they invest. Through these holdings the religious institutions are able to hold ‘engagement’ meetings with senior company executives in order to render the activities of businesses more ‘ethical’.

However, second, through the work of Buttner (2006) – who stated that, once institutionalised, religions compromise their original spiritual purpose in order to ensure that they derive sufficient economic revenue to continue to exist – I argued that this interaction with capitalism had also altered the characteristics of the religious institutions themselves. This was evident in two phenomena. First, as highlighted in both Chapter Six and the previous section of this conclusion, in order to ensure their economic reproduction each of the institutions have had to alter their characteristics so as to be relevant to, and attract new members through, a consumer based religious society. However, many of these changes had been

criticised by other Institutions as weakening the spiritual purpose of the Church. An example of this criticism was provided by the Church of England's 'Fresh Expressions of Church' initiative. Through 'Fresh Expressions' the Church of England had sought to attract new members by taking Church worship out of the religious space of the Church and into wider community spaces such as coffee shops, and nightclubs. However, for critics, this was seen to be rendering the teachings of the Church subservient to popular culture. Second, the practice of religious investment has also been criticised by Church members and the media. Indeed, despite adopting SRI techniques, the Church of England has been accused of a disconnect between its teachings and its investment portfolio. An example of this was provided in 2008 when the Archbishop of Canterbury criticised the investment practice of short selling and the effect that this was having on the financial stability of the banking system only to learn that the Church commissioners facilitated the practice by lending their stock (Mackintosh, Burgess and Burns, 2008:1).

Thus, the thesis argued that the process of institutional reproduction necessitates that institutions manage a balance between the economic needs of capitalism and fund raising against the need to remain congruent with the institutions original purpose.

8.3.3 The Internal Characteristics of Religious Institutions

Third, the thesis has sought to investigate the structure of institutions themselves. In contrast to the majority of institutional research, that treats institutions as being single cohesive entities, I have argued that they are assemblages of different networks. Consequently, different views and behaviours occur at different points in the institution. Furthermore, the structure of these networks

differs according to the particular culture of the institution in question. To explain, although they held the same overarching Protestant principles the networks of each of the Church of England, the Baptist Union of Great Britain and the Assemblies of God differed dramatically due to their different interpretations of the faith. In addition to hindering the reproduction of the wider institution by trapping resources in certain locations, as argued in the previous section of this chapter, the network structure of the institutions entailed that a variety of different practices occurred within each institution. This is best exemplified by financial investment. For instance, Chapter Seven highlights how the degree to which religious values in the Church's investments alters dependent upon where in the network the fund manager is placed.

These findings further highlighted the importance of culture to understanding economic activity. Indeed, while the three institutions shared a very common purpose their particular cultural differences made significant changes to their economic processes.

8.4 Contribution to Academic Literature

Having outlaid the major empirical contributions of the thesis the chapter will now relate these to the wider literature in order the particular contributions to academic knowledge that the research project has made.

8.4.1 Contribution to the Geographies of Religion

The thesis has sought to supplement the burgeoning body of academic work on the Geography of Religion. In so doing it has sought to make three contributions.

First, while authors such as Proctor (2006), Ivakhiv (2006), Holloway (2006), and Buttner (2006) have returned attention to the relationship between religion and space, this attention has not focussed upon the spaces of the traditional institutional religions. Indeed, as argued in Chapter Two, much of the work from the Geography of Religion has attempted to broaden narratives and definitions of what is considered to be a religious space. Whilst this work is worthy, as, due to the growing acceptance of post-modern notions of religious belief, religious activity has moved into spaces beyond the traditional Church, Temple, or Synagogue, the majority of religious spaces within England are still those of the institutional Parish, or local, Church. Thus, I argue that this thesis plays an important role in refocusing academic attention upon the understudied mundane spaces of religion.

Second, again, while proponents of the Geography of Religion have studied the characteristics of religious space Kong (2001) has highlighted the need for study into the everyday, non-religious, support activities that allow for religious ceremonies to take place. Casting these activities as being the 'politics of religion' she argues that without mundane support activities, such as cleaning, religions would not be able to function. By studying the economic reproduction of religious space the thesis has aimed to make a contribution in this area. Indeed, it has sought to add an Economic Geography perspective to the Geography of Religion that, despite the works of James (2005) and Pollard and Samers (2007), has been previously lacking in the sub-discipline. This is believed to be of importance as, without the necessary financing, religious spaces would no longer be able to exist. Thus whilst economic activity may be seen as apart from one's religious life, institutional religion is fundamentally dependent upon it as without participation in the economy there would be no Church.

Third, through this study of the financing of religious space, the thesis has sought to further extending the debate as to what is considered to be religious. Indeed, like Proctor's (2006) notion that the key function of the Geography of Religion is to continually question what renders an activity religious many of the interview respondents involved in investing religious money did so out of a sense of religious conviction. Thus, whilst investment management is predominantly seen to be a secular pursuit many financial employees were using their investment skills to further implement their religious beliefs.

8.4.2 Contribution to Economic geography

In addition to contributing to the Geography of Religion literature the thesis has also made three pertinent points that are relevant to Economic Geography. First, as argued at length throughout the thesis, I have sought to provide an in depth account of the process of institutional reproduction. Indeed, while many economic geographers have highlighted the key role that institutions play in mediating economic activity, particularly in relation to explaining patterns of uneven economic development (Amin, 2004), very few geographers have highlighted how institutions grow, or decline, in prominence. Of particular interest in this is the process of inter-institutional competition. Indeed, whilst Veblen (1988) argued that institutions have to compete against each other for new members, in a manner resembling the 'survival of the fittest', due to their shared purpose of propagating the faith the Christians institutions actively attempted not to steal the religious consumers of other institutions. This highlights that, although the religious institutions have to act in a manner resembling a corporate body in order to continue to attract new members and funding, there are limits to the extent that they would do this.

Second, the thesis has supplemented work that has studied the role that religious institutions can play in mediating economic activity. The most noted of these works is that of Weber's (1979) *Spirit of Capitalism* in which he argues that the economic system itself was born out of protestant religion. Perhaps the most noted contemporary work, within the discipline of Geography, on the impact of religion upon capitalism is that of James' (2004) study of Mormonism in Salt Lake City, Utah. Indeed, James (2005) identified that the particular characteristics of Mormon lifestyles were negatively impacting upon the development of a high-tech industrial cluster of businesses. In a similar way I have studied the way in which the Church of England, the Baptist Union of Great Britain, and The Assemblies of God have altered the corporate landscape of the UK as an investor. This was predominantly achieved through discussion of their role in the development of Socially Responsible Investment techniques. However, through study of the internal characteristics of the three Christian institutions, I have sought to further this literature by arguing that it is impossible to talk of institutions as having a single culture. Indeed, whilst James (2004) talks of the impact the culture of Mormonism has had in Salt Lake City the evidence of the Church of England would suggest that, due to the many different networks that make up the assemblage, there are many different cultures within the institution. Thus it would be wrong to suggest that the Church only mediates economic activity in one way.

The third major contribution of the thesis to Economic Geography is the argument that capitalism fundamentally alters the properties of institutions. Indeed, while authors have predominantly highlighted how institutions alter economic behaviour the need to participate in capitalism in order to engender sufficient economic returns to ensure reproduction entails that the properties of institutions themselves are also changed. This point raises the wider question as to what an

institution is. Whilst each of the three studied bodies has continually managed to reproduce their religious spaces, this reproduction has meant that they have had to alter their institutional characteristics. The argument of this thesis is thus that if one conceptualises a religious institution to be its geographical spaces then each of the three institutions have been successfully reproduced. Their local Churches and wider bodies continue to exist. However, if one reconsiders the institution to be the belief patterns that they represent then it is possible to argue that neither the Church of England nor the Baptist Union has been able to successfully reproduce itself. Indeed, the thesis has highlighted throughout how their belief patterns have been altered in order to ensure an income. Thus, whilst from a spatial point of view an institution may continue to exist, it is possible that the institution contained within these spaces is no longer the same.

8.5 Areas for Future Research

The major limitation of this research project was that of its limited scope. This is manifest in four ways. First, as argued in Chapter One, a cross institutional comparison of the process of reproduction for a number of different faiths, for instance Islam, Christianity and Judaism, would have proved highly productive. However, due to the research period being characterised by high levels of inter-faith tension it was believed that such research would be impossible to conduct. Second, it would have been interesting to include several more denominations of the Christian Church; particularly that of Catholicism. Indeed, it is thought that the Roman Catholic Church would have provided a radically different model of institutional reproduction. However, due to the widely held belief that the Catholic Church was inherently secretive about its economic dealings and the need to research in the Vatican (and the language skills that this would involve) it was felt that the barriers to studying the organization would be too high. Third, the project initially intended to include a

dimension of international comparison by way of studying the reproduction of the same institutions in the different cultural context of the USA. This would have proved particularly interesting in relation to the reproduction of the Anglican Church in a context where it is not the National Church and thus has not benefitted from the same historical assets. Fourth, and finally, the research was limited by different degrees in success in negotiating access. For instance, it would appear that the only Churches that were willing to talk about the process of reproduction were those that had large assets and congregations. Indeed, while interview respondents made many references to the experiences of less well resourced Churches, a case study of this sort would have been welcomed. Furthermore, due to restrictive time constraints, and the inability to negotiate adequate access, I was unable to research the process through which consumers decide which Church they would like to attend. This is a major lacking of the research into the consumer model of religion and is something that I would very much like to look into in the future.

8.6 A Brief Conclusion

The thesis as a whole has argued that the continued existence of the spaces of the Christian Church is dependent upon the different institutions continually reproducing themselves economically. This process is dependent upon each body continually adapting itself to stay relevant to society and if it continues to do so there is no reason, maintenance aside, as to why the same spaces may not still be used for religion in a further 2000 years. However, even if this is the case, due to this need to adapt, there are no guarantees that future Christianity will be recognisable compared to what is practised today. Therefore, the final statement of this thesis mirrors the work of Buttimer (2006) in that, while the religious spaces of these institutions may

continue to be reproduced, if the institution itself has changed beyond recognition
does this represent successful reproduction?

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Appendix A

Baptist Church – Evening Service – 03/02/2008 1815

Research Diary

I was nervous ahead of doing this ethnography study. I was particularly concerned about how I should represent myself to the general congregation, especially those I had not met before, as I thought that I may have been attracted attention and raised hopes of being a newcomer to the Church. My particular concern was to what degree I should present myself as being a fellow Christian. It was decided first and fore mostly that, if asked, I should make it clear that I am here in a research capacity but also that I am a member of a local Methodist Church and was thus also participating in the service as a Christian. I got a lift, and attended the service with an acquaintance of mine and this was especially useful, as being unfamiliar with Baptist practices, I could follow his lead. Physically I dressed smart-casually with brown trousers, a chequered shirt and a jumper as well as a Black overcoat.

Having arrived at the service we took seats towards the centre of the Church, the building was perhaps half full with gatherings of people in certain areas. Having sat down the Pastor of the Church, who I had interviewed during the week came over to say hello and ask me how everything was going. He said that he was very keen to

see the results of my work as it may be useful to him. Generally he greeted the majority of the people in the Church personally to make them feel welcome. Mr X, the treasurer who had agreed for me to shadow, also said hello and introduced me to his wife. This made me feel more at ease with the surroundings especially seen as a brief hello seemed to suffice with other members of the congregation with who I was unfamiliar.

Before the service began in earnest messages as to forthcoming activities were displayed on the large powerpoint screen. This was accompanied with quiet Christian worship music being played through the speakers, occasionally the words to these songs would flash up on the screen as well.

The service began with an address by the Preache, and then led into 45 minutes of worship songs and praise. This was led by a music group consisting of a singer, aged between 25 – 40 female fairly chubby dressed in a black top and trousers, a bassist, 40+ man dressed in trousers shirt and jacket, and a female pianist of the same age and demeanor. These led the service for 45 minutes with the singer approaching the congregation as if in a band. Indeed she talked about how her 5 year old niece had been singing a certain hymn twenty times unprovoked one night during the week, she also read from the Bible and prayed with the other members of the group continuing to play gently. This reminded me of the De Nora article on music and shopping in a manner of When your praying you imagine yourself in a place listening to music like this. The words to the songs were displayed on the Powerpoint projection screen, behind them emotionally appealing images were portrayed. Initially these were ‘nature shots’ and showed mountains, valleys and the Earths in a

manner to suggest that God had created a beautiful world. Later they were replaced with silhouettes of people praying on hills in front of a crucifix, again with an emotive appeal to the congregation.

During the hymns the congregation joined in when they felt moved to, indeed several people stood up at certain points and sat down at others. There was no rigid structure to the music. Generally the songs began low key and gentle with a gently 'grooving' bassline, many of the congregation were swaying from side to the side along with the music. As the segment moved on the songs got more powerful, perhaps a better way of explaining it would be that they had a greater intensity, although they all maintained along the same emotive Chords (I think they were minor chords of the type that are emotionally stirring). Initially this was greeted with general swaying (and singing) along amongst the congregation. As the songs moved on people were raising their hands in the air and several were representing emotion through raising both arms as if lifting (see dancing diagram). Whilst not being spoken about this was generally encouraged by the leader of the youth group who was lifting her hand up and moving her body with feeling as if to engender a repeat emotion amongst the crowd. The focus of this segment was very much on praising God and feeling his presence in the building. Perhaps the most curious aspect of this was the fact that at times it was just the Youth Group performing and everyone else listening along but all of a sudden, and in the middle of songs other people joined in. It was as if people only joined in the singing when they felt emotionally moved to do so. I found this practice rather unnerving, whilst finding my body moving from side to side until I thought about it I was constantly unsure as to whether I should be singing or not and was concerned that I would be caught out and do something out of turn. Again the

example of my friend as a lead was comforting. The music was emotively appealing me and at certain points I found my heart rate raised or myself especially focussed. Perhaps the most emotionally stirring aspect of the service came at the end of the music segment where a period of 5 or more minutes of silence were conducted. The presumption was that this was for personal prayer and contemplation however I found myself emotionally stimulated by the silence with a high heart rate. I was willing anyone to say or shout something to disturb it and found myself wanting to shout out myself. I was relieved when Pastor Milner got up to start to preach.

The preacher, dressed in black trousers, a white shirt and a yellow (crazy) tie, preached with conviction using his body emotively to add conviction to his message. The message initially was based upon a single message from the book of 1 Peter in the New Testament however this moved on to the discussion of the importance of visualising how God would want to see yourself and then the suppression of emotions. Indeed in regards to emotion he argued that we should not suppress them but rather express them feel them and live them openly). During the sermon several members of the congregation were whispering along in self encouragement. For instance that were murmured 'yes's' and the name of Jesus was prominent throughout. In this way several members of the congregation very much continued to perform the service however this made me feel uncomfortable having grown up in a different style Church.

After the message was preached a contemplative song was sung ahead of communion. Again I was unsure as to whether I should take communion but after

being encouraged did so. Everyone waited to eat the bread together and did so sombrely.

Finally the service finished with a rousing and victorious hymn intended to lift an emotion which was again greeted with the hand movements. During this service the offering was taken however was only done so after a reminder from the congregation itself. Wicker baskets were passed round by 2 people, one on each half of the Church and people were invited to give money although no acknowledgment was made of either gift or a lack of a gift. Afterwards I am not sure if the money was blessed or not. The offering appeared to be very much an afterthought and was just added on to the end of the service rather than integrated. However it was obviously a rehearsed phenomena as the people responsible for passing the baskets just sprung up with them.

After the service there was general mirth as to how often the offering is forgotten and conducted in such a manner. Apparently people were reminding the preacher both with words and also by shaking the collection baskets themselves at him but he was not looking.

Once the service had finished I shadowed Mr x as had been agreed. He picked up the offering baskets from on top of the altar where they had been placed and then took them through to a back room which must be a Sunday School room. There we were met by a lady who was learning how to count the collection so that she could take that task on. Mr x remarked that the offering is not always counted at Church

and that he often took it home to be counted later. I asked whether this was allowed as in the Methodist Church there has to be a witness to counting to safeguard the process. He remarked that there were guidelines to such a thing but it was often difficult to find someone else to do it and thus he often took it home. The offering consisted of several notes, coins and envelopes. The envelopes were for Gift Aid purposes and allowed the Church to record who gives what, (each envelope has a number which corresponds to a member of the congregation) a degree of confidentiality was added to this as Mr x himself does not know who the numbers refer to as a separate gentlemen deals with that so he just recorded the amount next to the number. The gentlemen who dealt with the envelopes came and collected them and entered them into his record book and explained he fed back the numbers to the Inland Revenue who then sent the Church a cheque. He particularly pointed out that this was the amount from both Queensberry and Basford Road Churches as Queensberry was the registered charity, therefore all money from Basford Road for Gift Aid, flowed through Queensberry. This would change it was explained as Basford Road was seeking independence, this would help with the changes in the Charity Commission laws.

The money from the collection was added to the morning collection and totalled about £850. This was separated into money bags and placed into a deposit bag. The Church banks with Yorkshire Bank in a particular Charities account but Mr x was unsure why as it was the decision of his predecessor. He did voice dissatisfaction with the bank at present as they are not counting the money accurately, he seemed particularly displeased with the practice of weighing the money having been told that it was not accurate although was pleased that they had been given an extra £5. A

joke about Northern Rock followed. A record of the collection amount was kept on a A4 sheet by the Church along with the deposit slip.

Finally I said thank you to Mr x, he agreed to send a percentage breakdown of the Churches income at the end of the tax year which would be greatly appreciated.

Appendix B

Interview #2

JC: So I was going to ask really how did you come to be Pastor, here?

R: yeah it's in the Baptist system in that I was an associate Pastor in Northampton for seven years because I was fully accredited as a Baptist Minister so I applied for Baptist accreditation because I'd done my degree at Liverpool University in history and theology so I didn't really need to do any further academic studies from that point of view and so the Baptists put me through what they call a recommendation selection committee, five days where you are interviewed about your ethos and so I was accepted from that point of view and then we just, my wife and I and family looked around where we felt God would lead us, the only proviso we put on it was that we would not go to anywhere smaller than Northampton. Northampton at the time had a population of 180,000 I think, so it's a big town and we stipulated we wanted to go to a City, anywhere in the country but a city. Coming from Merseyside originally we missed the city life and so we looked at London, we didn't feel that was right, very good Church in London and then Queensbury asked us to come and have a look here and we came here and we just sensed yeah this is the place and there was agreement with my wife and my daughters yeah this was the place.

JC: Did you have a, sort of, previous career before you came into the...

R: I was an engineer for about 20 years.

JC: And then sort of felt moved to...

R: Well yes it was quite a surprise in the sense that I was very very happy as an engineer I was a shop steward for a couple of years on Merseyside and loved my job, good work mates. But begin to feel just a bit dissatisfied in a kind of sense, of you know, wanting more but wasn't sure what and changed jobs thinking maybe a sort of change I'd been in that factory for so many years. Moved to another factory but very quickly realised it wasn't the job it was something else and then I went away on holiday with my wife and children as usual we went to France, I'm a bit of a Francophile, went to France and it was in France I just, reading the scriptures one morning, my wife and daughters were still asleep and I just sensed God challenged me through the scriptures to give it all up and follow him and I just sensed he was saying pack in your job and trust me. I was very reluctant because I didn't want to be a minister, one of our ministers I got on with very well, but other than that I just struggled with a lot of ministers because coming from a very much lower working class, what I struggled with was I used to meet all these ministers that were nice people but think you couldn't talk to my mates, your just from a different world from my mates and I had this sense that if I become a minister who's going to talk to my mates. I talk to them at the moment but I can't see anybody on the horizon that speaks to lower working class people like me, you know we were rough and ready, and so when I sensed God telling me to go into the ministry I was very kind of oh no, I just really didn't want to do it so I made an agreement with God, I know it might not be the right thing to do, so I made a deal with God and said if this is definitely you I

want you to tell my wife Sue. I felt that Sue would support me if I did it but I was saying to God I want Sue to realise it's not a case of she supports me, she stands alongside me, we're in this together and so that's what happened when over the next, when we got back from France, had a lovely holiday. Over the next two or three months Sue would come to me and say I'm getting some strange readings from the scriptures God keeps on saying like a new work, and I don't know what it is. So I said well you find out tell me, and it was a few months later we had a visiting speaker he preached on something I can't remember what it was, evening service, and she came up to me after the evening service when he'd finished preaching and she said to me I think God is calling you into the ministry. I said yeah he told me while we were in France so I asked him to tell you as well, so there was a real confirmation that this is the right thing to do.

JC: A sort of different angle

R: Yeah a different angle, so I've never doubted which has been very useful at times. I have never doubted that I should be doing this, I think that is important because I've met other people at times that have said to me I'm not even sure whether I should be in this job and I thought, I couldn't cope with that I'd really struggle.

JC: umm, as for, sort of, future plans. I'm not sure how it plays out in the Baptist Church but in the Methodist Church ministers move on every 4-6 years, so as a career plan are you staying here?

R: It's up to, with the Baptist, Baptists are congregational led so in a sense it's the membership that hire and fire me so the members could in the future, sometime in

the future say we think it's time for you to move on. Or alternatively I could say I think it's time for me to move on which is what happened in my previous Church, I was the associate pastor and I just thought it's time now, I'm getting frustrated now, I feel as if I've hit a ceiling I need to move on and I think that's what would move me on from here if I sensed that I'd hit a ceiling and thought ok I've done all I can here I need a new challenge but at the moment I've been here six years, just over six years at present.

JC: What kind of does the role of Pastor mean that you do at the Church on a day to basis.

R: My, I see my primary function is to teach and equip. It's certainly not to do everything myself, and this is a good Church they understand that, and so I've changed the whole leadership structure over the last two years so that we do not have Deacons or Elders now we have leaders and the leaders are of specific areas of responsibilities. John, I mean John is a good example he's the finance person and the beauty of that is what I did last year when they'd all been voted in, the new leaders, I called them all forward to the front of the Church not only to pray for them, which was an aspect of it, but also to say to the congregation if you've got a question about which home group you should be in, see this person. If you've got a question about finance see him so I said to the congregation do not come and see me for any of these issues these are the people you speak to and that releases me then to get on with what I think I should be doing which is spending time in the word, spending time in prayer, sounds very spiritual, but also reading, studying, reading about issues, like at the moment there is a controversy in the government about prostitution, I believe as questions we need to be informed to enter, so I read, get the Cambridge papers

that engage these issues, these Christian periodicals that address these. I think it's essential for a minister for any minister to keep feeding themselves and so actually in feeding myself I am hopefully then able to motivate the people on Sundays and through the home group secretaries with our home group material, and also, I mean an area that I haven't, I'm not successful at yet it's the next phase. In the past six years, five or six years I have led the Church I'm seeking now to break away from that and rather than lead followers I want to lead leaders and in leading my leaders I will release them to touch others. If you lead followers your growth is minimal. If you lead leaders you multiply and I see the need now to bring multiplication into our growth, we are a growing Church but one reason why I changed the whole structure was I was a bottleneck, everything came through me and it just doesn't work.

JC: I guess it's like the disciple thing. If one person goes out you only get so more...

R: If you train twelve you get twelve and I think that's where our next, one of our next phases is I'm now seeking to almost slowly withdraw from, not because I want to, but withdraw a little bit more from contact in order to just throw myself into my leaders and then hopefully as the leadership team grows they touch a wider community as well.

JC: And I guess that sort of fits the Baptist congregation led model as it's the congregation who are very much in charge of running the Church.

R: Yes they do run the Church and it's interesting we had, I gave them a questionnaire recently for the home groups and one of the questions I asked them where do you believe where do you see, where do you believe God wants us to be in five years

time. Something like that it was, a question like that along those lines, where do you think God wants us to be in 5 years time then discuss it. They reported back and the leaders said it was a good discussion but what came out was a number of people in the home groups were quite strongly saying, it's ok for you Pete to get the vision. You get the vision you come and tell us and I was saying no we're a Baptist Church, that's actually more of an Anglican concept where the Vicar comes with the Holy authority, like a Moses figure I have seen the light follow me brothers, whereas I see the Baptist model is far more, you know, we have the mind of Christ, you know as Paul says in the New Testament, and so whilst we are Baptist in many ways there is almost a tendency to sit back and say yeah but you can lead us. The key is there, the reason why I'm keen on not doing that is if it's my vision people may agree with it until it hurts and then they start to pull back and if it's their vision they own it and even if the going gets tough...

JC: yeah they're more committed

R: Because it's their vision. And so that's why I put it to all the home groups first and as leader we're looking at the material that we've got back and we're saying ok where do we sense God wants us to be in five years time because as a, we are a Baptist Church in Old Basford, why, why are we here what does God want us to do here. There are some excellent Churches in Nottingham, you know I'm in contact with a number of Churches in Nottingham, superb Churches why don't we just shut down and join them because they are superb Churches they are in many ways better than us, better equipped than us because God has called us here. Well if God has called us here what should we be doing in this area that that Church can't do and I'm asking the congregation to look at that so we then make an impact on the area.

JC: Yeah on my way in I was sort of lacking at all the plaques on the building 1898 and I guess sort of it's till the same the area to some extent and all the same messages kind of apply.

R: Yeah, we, that's what we. That's one of the strengths of this Church we are not a high motorbility Church, we've got generations we've got families in the Church. I used to joke when I first came here that I had to be careful who I insulted because they're all connected to somebody else and so. That actually gives the Church a stability because you know the people who are here have been here, a lot of them, for generations and therefore you know you're here for the long haul and that's very encouraging, you know, my previous Church in Northampton. Northampton is a massive turning round place and we would have, new people coming in every week but when I started there our membership was 180 when I left 7 years later our membership was 180 but it was virtually a completely different membership because there were that many people who were young, I mean I was late forties when I left there I was one of the older ones of the congregation, very young Church./ So we'd get a lot of young people joining us, young professionals but then disappearing all over the country as their jobs, their careers move them round. We haven't got that here and Basford id the same, Basford isn't really a place where there's high...

JC: turnover

R: And so it's good, you can build with that.

JC: I was going to ask how big is the congregation in terms of numbers?

R: We have a membership of around I think it's around 145, 150 on a Sunday morning we would get a congregation of over 100 adults and then quite a few children. I think downstairs seating is around, I think we seat about 180 downstairs, we're quite full reasonably full. Not uncomfortably full, too full is uncomfortable and again that varies. I mean that's a reflection of the modern time in which we live. We have a number of young professionals in the Church, our growth over the last few years has predominantly been amongst the 20s and 30s and they can disappear for three weeks and then they come back after three weeks and you say to them you ok? They see we've been to visit parents over the last weekend, we've been working, there's a lot of pressure on young professionals these days. So on some Sundays we can be full, uncomfortably full, but other Sundays you think ah no we're ok we're reasonable and then on an evening the last few weeks our evening congregation, which is predominantly quite a different congregation, we get about 70 – 80 on an evening. That's rather grown over the last, that's grown since the New Year, well since Christmas, before that we were getting about 60 but since the new year our evening congregations have been growing and now we're up to about 80 or so, 70 – 80 which is encouraging.

JC: That is really good, I read the average membership for the East Midlands area is about 52, and I go to the Methodist Church. I know the mornings are more busy than the evenings, but I go in the evenings and there tends to be only about 20 or 30 people there.

R: I think it reflects the area as well to a certain extent, we went out. I went out with a local vicar, Nigel, from St Leo's, he's new to the area so we went on a bit of a pub

crawl. We went out round the area to different pubs just to see what was going on in Basford on a Sunday night and what was obvious was that we are the biggest thing happening in here, with 70 – 80 people there is no where anywhere near us in Old Basford. Which I found interesting in a sense we are the entertainment on a Sunday evening, because some of the pubs we went in there was about 4 or 5 others were about 20 I think the biggest one we went into was about 25 people and certainly not just numbers wise but life wise you thought there's more life in our Church on a Sunday night, I'd rather be at Church than come here there's far more life. Yeah I think it's, we went over, I've got a student living with me at the moment, a theological student from Germany, he's just getting experience of an English Church and so he's been shadowing me so I took him to Vineyard Church on Sunday evening a couple of weeks ago, just to give him a taste of Vineyard, and there must have been 800 people there it was just absolutely full, chock-a-block we found seats at the back and, you know I was just saying to him, the English Church, the British Church is not all old people I was one of the oldest ones there at the Vineyard it was really encouraging and of course they are expanding....

JC: yes the warehouse

R: yeah, very encouraging. That's one of the Churches I would say is an excellent Church. I have spoken to John Wright the Pastor, I have great respect for the man, good church.

JC: That was something I was going to ask you about really, in that in a couple of our Church meeting who are saying why are we here, why aren't we at the Vineyard

Church. Is there a sort of general sort of, not competition, but, sort of, fear they can take members away from your Church or....

R: Yeah that does happen, and we've lost a couple of young girls, you know in their twenties to Vineyard, and I can understand from the point of view that, one of them, I mean she's a lovely girl and that, but I think she wants a Christian boyfriend and we've got, we've got only a few spare lads here and they're not her type.

JC: (joking) my friend Andrew

R: yeah (laughter), but at the same time we've also gained people from one or two of the big churches in Nottingham who have come to us and said, because they live in the area, and said they're all good they're not at all critical of the big church they think it's a wonderful Church but they said I want to serve my local community and I can't do that from the city centre. So we are quite a, again one of our strengths is we are a local Church and that's what I think all Churches must do. They need to find out what they can do in their area, they have a vision and a purpose for their area. Now I actually do think you can still, this may be pie in the sky I don't know, I still think you can link into a big Church and get encouragement advice, stimulation off them in order then to serve in your local context. We have to a very small extent here, where we have a very small number of people that come from another local Church in the area, they come virtually every Sunday night, and when they first started coming I approached them and said are you ok, I knew they were from another Church and they were leaders in another Church, they said we've decided that we're going to come here to be encouraged and fed so that we can then go back and serve that. I think the likes of Vineyard would be happy to do that, because knowing the Pastor

there John, he doesn't want to shut down other Churches. So he's, there are a lot of people, a lot of leaders I know go to Vineyard on a Sunday night and then go back into their own Church.

JC: Sort of energised

R: That's right energised and so. I think you can do that but I think the key for a local Church is that you discover what God is saying to you here, and that will energise the congregation. People will serve if they have a reason why they're serving, people will give if they understand why they're giving. Well I think sometimes Church can fall into the trap of maintenance we just keep going for the sake of keeping going so all of our meetings all of our projects, our strategy really is to maintain what we've got. Well after a while you start thinking well why, why don't we just join the Vineyard or Talbot Street or Corner Stone, it's a superb Church Peter Willis brilliant teacher I've read some of his stuff brilliant teacher. Why don't we go and listen to Peter Peter's a fantastic teacher because God has given us a vision for here and we need to fulfil our assignments here. But yes by all means link in, go to the speeches and get encouragement and motivation from them but you serve the local area. That's the key you have to have a vision for the local area.

JC: From what I've been, sort of, seeing although early on in this thing is that there seems to be a particular age group of people who, my age basically, go to the Vineyard Church and everywhere else there seems to be a sort of lack of people in that age bracket. Is that a kind of age range target or do you have sort of target age ranges?

R: We don't target but our growth has been in your age range or, 20s, 30s, and 40s just thinking of those who have come to faith recently, but predominantly 20s, 30s and 40s and obviously there is a reason for that. The younger people are willing to change and are open to change far more than people of my age, we do get stuck in the mud in many ways in our thinking we get comfortable in our lifestyle, there's a radicalness of a younger person that is willing to change if they see the need for it. But also I think, I just think that music plays a major part. I mean Vineyard when I went the other week was good, but one or two of the songs there was a bit kind of ooh don't fancy this, I don't like this one whereas Stephane who was 23, he's the theological student, he was bouncing around he thought it was fantastic he was, I was thinking I couldn't stand this every week and I think that that is an aspect of it, I think your music dictates the age group that you are after and Vineyard music is aimed at, its effective I mean its musicians are young, very talented, very creative and young and therefore there worship reflects that and that's not a good bad, right or wrong thing it's just a reality of taste and I would like to be in a Church that sang old hymns all the time but we have a mixture here of songs and hymns. I think that's all there is, I think, I don't think Vineyard even are targeting that age group but like attracts like...

JC: yes a sort of critical mass type...

R: right

JC: so many people go there you're more likely...

R: As I said the two girls that I mentioned that have gone to Vineyard, ok. There is no hard feelings we're still in touch with them we still speak to them. But they've gone there because there's a lot more of their age group particular singles. Now the people where we've been growing, interestingly where we've grown recently in that age group is couples. We've had a number of young couples come to our Church over the last few years. Some I think have come to faith and some have moved into the areas with their jobs and so they've settled here. But for single people, single girls or single lads it's not the same because, when we have as we do have, we have 20s and 30s nights I don't go there, they organize it themselves, a number of couples go along and I think if you are single it just emphasises the fact that you're by yourself. So I think that's why we've lost one or two because Vineyard have got a plethora of available female...

JC: That's where all the students all the undergraduates they all go out there.

R: it's a good, having said all that it's a good Church, that doesn't in anyway undermine the fact that John is an excellent leader that's the key he is an excellent leader and if there is a critical mass there he was the cause of the critical mass. So...

JC: planting the Church in the first place...

R: well exactly. I've got his tapes of the vision he had I'm listening to the tapes. He's a good guy he know's what he's doing. Again he's come with a purpose and the problem a lot of Churches have got, you know, I do feel like saying to a lot of leaders, you know, what's your purpose and it can be we just took over. Well that's boring...

JC: ...

R: nothing in life remains the same, anything that's alive grows and if it doesn't grow it dies. It doesn't remain the same ad infinitum so why should a Church which is an organism why is a Church very different.

JC: I guess that's another part of the reason why the Vineyard Church is taking this sort of age range, but marketing is the wrong word, but a lot of their mission stuff is almost like a night club, flyers and is radically different to what I've grown up with in the Methodist Church. So having said that, what's your Vision for the Church in the future I know you're involved in the Hope 08 movement.

R: Our vision is to be, one of the questions I've asked several times to the congregation is, if we shut down would the community notice. Partly they may notice that there's, more parking space on a Sunday but otherwise would the community notice and the answer to that is, some would and I think what we need to do, we all want to be Christ's light, salt and light, in our own community but the key question is how and that's what we're looking at at the moment, the how. So we have got a number of things in the Church we have mothers and toddlers groups which are just expanding because we've got a waiting list with mothers and tots waiting to get in. We have a luncheon club on a Wednesday, we're opening up on Thursdays for healing rooms for the local community, so people come in and be prayed for etc etc and Friday night we have none Church youth groups so we have local kids coming in and that is my goal in that the Church is salt and light in a very practical way without losing the, what I would call the evangelical edge in the fact that at the end of the day we preach the gospel and whatever we do, you know, youth or old peoples club,

whatever it is whatever we do is good it needs to serve the community and preach the gospel, we've got to do both and I think sometimes my observation of some Churches is they have fallen into the trap of being excellent servants of the community but never actually preach the gospel, they may live it, but they don't... at the end of the day the gospel needs to be seen and that's my vision for the Church to be a local Church that impacts the community with a light, a light of Christ in practical caring ways but also proclaiming the gospel in words as well as deeds.

JC: I mean again going back to my experience I'm an officer in the Boy's Brigade. There's always the debate as to how Christian should we be on a Friday night, should we get aim to get more kids in if we don't exaggerate the Christian side more kids come but on the other side less come, it's a balance

R: I mean it's not easy we changed, I say we it had nothing to do with me, it was the leaders the youth leaders. When I first came here we had a youth group on a Friday night it was up to about 50 kids would come on a Friday night, none Church, all the local kids from the area. So after about 4 years, 3 or 4 years, the youth leaders came to me and said they we're concerned that, whilst we've got a youth club on a Friday night the reality is we're not touching with the Christian message we're just putting on a sports venue, there's 5 a side, there's basketball there's stuff like that, but there's not actually any impact as far as Christianity is concerned. So they decided to change it so they sat all the kids down, one Friday night before the summer holidays and they said like in September when we open up again we're still going to having football still be having basketball but we will be having a God slot where we talk about Christianity and we're going to have about 10 or 15 Christian message. About 30 didn't come back, But I come in on, I pop down on a Friday and, just occasionally I

pop down and there's about 20, 25 between 20 and 30 local kids and they're playing football, basketball, we've just bought a Nintendo wii to play on, which is great fun, we play on that as well but then they all know that there's a time..., they get a bite to eat and there's sweets on sale and soft drinks and so on and so on, but there's a time when we say ok no we're going to talk about Christianity and... There are other local events on that some of the big Churches in the city and we'll transport them to them occasionally, put a bus on. I think our youth leaders are more comfortable with that now, so they are still getting some of the local kids in but they're also feeling that there is an influence for the gospel in their lives. Otherwise we are just a youth club.

JC: Do you find that, sort of, getting the kids in to youth club makes them more likely to come on a Sunday or their families are more likely to come?

R: We haven't seen that. I don't think we've seen that at all, I mean my experience because before I came here for 30 years, well almost 30 years I was involved in youth group. No matter how good your youth work I never saw any parents, I'm thinking back to when I was on Merseyside we had an excellent youth group in this Church I was in, we had a big youth group and we, we made a big impression to the kids lives and some of the kids would say that they made a commitment to faith in Christ and I would attempt to meet the parents, you know knock on the door and just say, but they were a still a feeling of I'm happy for you to take my child but I'm not interested, just don't bother me with this stuff. I have never actually seen that I it's interesting, there's this Church Willow Creek, you ever heard of Willow Creek Community Church.

JC: I've not heard of it no

R: Well on the web, just Google Willow Creek community Church. There's a Willow Creek UK association, W I double L O W creek. Willow Creek interesting, when they started up about 25, 30 years ago in Chicago, they were quite open and they said we are targeting middle class white males aged 25, I'm not sure they said white, middle class 25-45 in the Chicago area that's what they were aimed at and interestingly they said, they found that hitting that age group they got the wives and the children as well.

JC: That's what happens in Nuthall, because the Boy's Brigade and Girl's Brigade are so strong, people of that age come in and just drop their kids off for an hours of babysitting but a couple of families come back and stay in the Church.

R: We haven't had that at all yet. You know, I can't think of, I think at Christmas we got one or two parents in but that's all, I think with our local parents they're more than happy to have their teenagers, a) know that they are in a safe place but b) that it just keeps them out of mischief for a night, out of their hair so they get a night off. I think that's, like I say, we haven't been able to bridge that yet.

JC: I guess the differences of the local area; like you said Willow Creek we're predominantly middle class.

R: So there services reflect that there services aren't hymns at all they have perhaps one hymn and the rest of the time its far more a service, a Willow Creek community Creek service is more along the lines of you sit down we'll explain to you about Christianity. So there's drama, video, talk, jokes they have singers they do one hymn

have a talk, actually I first saw Willow Creek in 1992 and I was just blown away by how professional it was it was just a case of I would take anybody to see this it was like going to a Christian, a high quality professional Christian community. Dramas good, poignant, funny. The music was top quality and you just thought I'd pay to go and see this. So it's really good strong Christian stuff, so Willow Creek now it started with 18 it's up to 20,000 now. It's a very good Church Willow Creek.

JC: I sort of, I guess it is, but is the sort of congregation drawn from the local area predominantly then?

R: Predominantly yes, we've got a car park and the car park is quite full. But when you get that's also because of people like my wife who only live half a mile away and can't leave the car at home or she's late...

JC: That's what I find, I'm always late.

R: So it's umm. But no I think we've got a map over there, at one time we used to have, we've taken them out now we used to have pins in of where everybody was and it said a lot about the congregation that if you put a mile around the Church the vast majority would be within a mile of the Church. You know you walk around the streets you'll see members of the Church as you walk around the streets which is good.

JC: I ask because having met John he's from Brinsley, John Lacey.

R: Yeah, well John is the furthest away.

JC: And my friends the Farrington's are Kimberley so I just wondered...

R: Yeah yeah Andrew has only just started coming. But they are the two furthest away because after then there's a guy in Hucknall, Graham, he's in Hucknall and the vast majority then are the estates down towards Bullwell or ? there's another three or four who live in the street as me. Yeah it is a local Church. Which again highlights, like Vineyard hasn't got a community that's why they do excellent work in other areas and I said to our Church, Vineyard is excellent, but we are not Vineyard so we need to find out what should we be doing here. I mean one or two of our members support Vineyard and they go and help out in some of these places and work amongst the homeless and I think that's where a big Church you can link, if you join with in them and say well there's no point us starting up a homeless work when you've got an excellent one we'll just piggy back on what you're doing so anybody who comes to me and says we're interested I just send them to Vineyard. But for the rest of our congregation I say to them, ok we need to find out what we're doing here and work that way.

JC: And why do you think that the congregation come here, is it because it's a Baptist Church and they grew up in the Baptist movement.

R: Well for starters some have been here for generations. I don't think amongst Baptists there is a strong sense of denomination in my, when I was training as a Baptist...

PHONE RINGS

JC: About whether people sort of think they're Baptists

R: Yeah in the Church that I was trained, or training in, for a couple of years we went round with a diaganate (?) one night and there was only one Baptist amongst, about, eight of us the rest had been brought up Pentecostal, Anglican, Wesleyan before they went into the Baptists and I think that's true right across the board now, more so, there's... It doesn't matter what the denominational range is people are choosing according to style of Church and that's the key. So people are joining a local Church and they look around we get, we usually get a number of people who come here and will say I've moved into the area I'm just looking around so they try all the different Churches and the one that suits their needs is the one they choose. But not there denomination.

JC: Do you have like a youth service or a service tailored to a certain...

R: No we don't have any special service as such besides our Christmas Carol service and our candlelight services afterwards. But no we don't. I've spoken to our youth leaders about it, particularly for the younger ones and our youth leaders in the past have said no they don't feel that's a good use of time they would rather just concentrate on the kids but they've stepped down after number years of faithful service so the new people have come in and I broached it with them and they are kind of yes we would like to do a special service so we will do within the next year, I've got material and I'm hanging on to them, we will do something but as yet no besides our Christmas services we don't do special services and again I think that's another area of vision that I want to go into I want to see us using more drama,

multimedia. I want to see that but at the moment we haven't got quite the best out. When I came here we certainly didn't because they were a older congregation now we're getting more younger ones in I think we are getting close to where I can build a team to say right we are going to look at the services and the services will be built by a team and we're going to have more multimedia and so on.

JC: So how important, we've already on touched this, is ideas of mission and getting new people into the Church?

R: We try to keep it as a priority, we try to, what I've tried to do through all the? is whatever we do we do it for the sake of reaching out so that if we have a time of ministry and in a sense the Christians are blessed I keep on saying that you've been blessed in order that you go out and be a blessing to others so we try to keep it as a high priority but it's something for all churches you have to keep remaining the people that it's not about us. Who was it, it was an Anglican guy that once said the Church is the only organization in the world that exists for the benefit of those who are not its members. That's a fantastic quote and he's absolutely right but you have to keep saying it because otherwise we all tend to slip into this is what I like, it's not about what you like it's about what is best for the community which we are called to serve.

JC: So it is very much the case that, I think it's the case of the classic Baptist, not advertising board but sort of mission but the classic disciple go out and meet people...

R: yes it is. Very classic Baptist, classic evangelical because the Baptists are quite close to that. Coming from a, I come from a free Church background, so I don't have many obstacles or problems with the Baptist set up its very similar to the Free Church the thinking was very similar. I'd have to say not as radical as the Free Church, in many ways the radical, the, sorry Free Church, you know the evangelical Free Churches can be more radical and demand a higher commitment from there people but the Baptists are similar to them.

JC: I think the favourite sign was God answers knee mail.

R: Did you see the one, it's been in the Times in more than one occasion at Mansfield Road Baptist Church, they've got a board and I don't know who used to do there signs. It was when David Beckham, he got sent off in the World Cup and of course he was the villain and then the next world cup he got us through with that free kick in the last minute and it said, David Beckham what a little forgiveness can do . I thought an excellent message, good use of the billboard. What everyone tends to look at, because the boards that we put out its one of our members that does them all himself and I keep on saying to him I meet a lot of people who say oh I know your Church you're the one that has the, because at the morning the traffic is piled down the street so they have to read it. I meet a lot of people particularly from the, we, our council use the building quite a bit and council workers say oh I know this Church you're the one that has all the signs...

JC: If you see St Aiden's you wouldn't tell...

R: I always used to joke that when I was on Merseyside in the Baptist Church that what we should have is, I don't support Liverpool, but in Anfield its famous that as you are running out onto the pitch above it you've got a big sign saying 'this is Anfield' a warning that this is the place, this is the place and I used to say to them why don't we have a big sign saying this is Morten Baptist Church, this is the place and yeah I think. I remember somebody once saying, a media guy once saying, that if he could get hold of the billboards of the Churches, some of them are in such predominant places in Market Squares he said, you know, people would pay a fortune he says but they're not used or they are underused. We had one out here, we picked it out the, I made sure it was Ok I phoned up the organization that produced it but it was Christmas and you had the picture of the stall and the angels above and it said 'glory, glory man united with God' cause it's a big man utd song, it's a theme of man utd glory man utd. Glory glory man utd with God I thought wow so we bought the poster and then Tony reproduced it, and the amount of comments that got, you know, people were seeing I was going to rip that down.

JC: you wouldn't do it in Liverpool

R: yeah...

JC: How does the Church sort of relate to the Baptist Union as a whole? Do they offer, I mean I was reading there annual report last night I've got it in my bag actually because I've not taken it out yet. And they said that one of their aims is to provide sort of the logistical and financial expertise to allow the Church to concentrate on its mission and congregational...

R: Yeah, they're very good at that. I think the Baptist union are excellent at, what I would call, administration support and I've said this, you know, that we look to them. The law has changed over the Charity Commission this October so we've just found out, we've got to change our constitution. Now the Baptist Union have already prepared a constitution online that you can download and then you just alter the specifics for your Church. That's superb and I look to the Baptist Union for that I personally don't look to the Baptist Union for spiritual input, I look elsewhere for that. But I've got great respect for the Baptist Union that's what, where there strength is in there administration.

JC: I was also going to ask you do you sort use sort of, any spare, well not spare but any deposit in any Baptist Union corporation accounts or use the...

R: We are insured through the Baptist Union, but no we don't. Any investments we have are just in local, you know the usual building society and investment accounts. We obviously all Baptist Churches pay into...

JC: A percentage per member...

R: We pay that percentage per member we do pay that every year and we give I think our giving is up to scratch if not slightly above what we are supposed to pay regarding our Baptist Union fees and support of Home Mission and Missionary things. So we support them financially to the extent that we are supposed to so we honour our pledges to them and respect the work they do. In fact we have, we

recently got in touch with them because we are looking at some legal aspects of the Church and they are obviously very supportive.

JC: If you don't mind me asking and feel free not to say if you don't want to, but what kind of percentage you have to pay per member.

R: I honestly don't know it's so much per member I know that and the BMS the Baptist Missionary Society and Home Mission Fund it's something like, let's see if I can find it, it's so many thousand a year

(looks in drawer)

It doesn't say, it just says Missionary Support on Schedule Two, oh £26,000. So we gave £26,000 that was in 2005, 2006. So out of that there would be the BMS and the Baptist Mission Home Fund. Yeah so, we used to give it used to be 20% of our giving we used to give away, 20% of our income we used to give away. That has dropped now to about 12% because since then, since this one. You know I think in this one it was 20% because we took on another full time worker. This was when we had another full time worker. So up till recently we were paying 20% it was only this year a couple of our missionaries have actually come home it has dropped down to about 12% of our giving now. Yeah so I can't be any more specific than that. £26,000 was what we gave to the...

. but that was including all our missionaries. Sorry I cant...

JC: Have you umm, I know the Building Fund, the Home Mission Fund offer grants and stuff does the Church benefit from those at all.

R: We don't take any of them at the moment we are actually, we are too well off to. If we wanted to, I certainly would look at the Baptist Union if we were going to if we wanted to borrow money for a large expenditure I certainly would look at them because their interest rates are very good. I don't think in my time, certainly in my time we've never borrowed any money off of anybody in my time. We're not averse to offering off of people.

JC: The other thing I was going to ask is I was talking to John quite a lot about things that Churches feel they can't be involved in and he was saying that the Church as part of the constitution doesn't allow sort of bazaars or, and I was sort of a rule of the Church from the Baptist Union.

R: No the Baptist Union is a Union of Churches it is not a denomination so they can't dictate anything to us. So each Church decides its own constitutions and we have decided, it was before my time, we have decided that we will not raise any money through jumble sales or bazaars so we've done several community events since I've been here where we have BBQ and sport and different aspect on the field we invite the local community to come here and we don't charge anything. I think one of the reasons certainly from my point of view I would be uncomfortable with a bazaar because it seems, it's the old image of the Church, the Church just after your money. The jumble sale, selling rubbish to earn money and at the end of the day when you look at a jumble sale and how much money it's actually made you think is it worth the effort and so we don't do anything like that. Also in the modern world I think a lot of people go to a Car boot sale as well I mean, you know, if you've got jumble to get rid

of go to a car boot sale and sell it there. But I just feel, I mean it wasn't my decision anyway, but I personally would feel uncomfortable with anything like a jumble sale. It just smacks of women's institute that sort of thing.

JC: I kind of know what you mean. Is it possible for me to see a copy of the Church constitution, do you have it online or...

R: We have it online, we may have an old one here which unfortunately doesn't reflect the new...

JC: It's ok if you've got it online

R: This is it I think, looks like one. The only thing that has altered in this one is deacons-elders now we have leaders but I don't think there's anything in there that's particularly that's just a basic. Of course legally now you've got this new to match. The constitution has got to, this is why it's an old copy, we're scrapping it, our new constitution will have to fit in with the. I don't know why they've changed, nobody seems to be aware...

JC: It's the threshold change isn't it? They changed the threshold to the Charity Commission if you have a turnover higher than a hundred thousand I think it is that you have to alter it, register as a charity.

R: Basford Road, because we've a small congregation they've got to alter their constitution as well and I'm sure it is that because someone mentioned £100,000 to me so that's the reason why we have to correct it. But they're tightening up on who

can claim to be a charity because I think there are a lot of loopholes that people are picking and one or two people, I must admit, have said to me in the past if I give you, someone said to me recently, if I give the Church £5000 and the Church sponsored somebody in the Philippines could the Church claim the tax back and keep it for itself, he said because I'm definitely going to give this person £5000 to sponsor them, they are part of a Church in the Philippines I'm definitely going to do it I'm going to give them £5000 and he says it struck me that I could just send them £5000 or if I give it to the Church and the Church could send them £5000 but the Church could claim the tax back on my £5000 but then someone interrupted intermittently and said no you cannot give a gift to the Church that is bracketed for anything other than the Church so nobody can come to me and say I'm going to give you so many so much money but if the tax give it you you can pay, we're not allowed to do that. You can only give us money as a Church per se and you cannot have any say in where it goes other than, of course you know, the members meet and agree upon our Church budget but if someone says I specifically then we have to say no sorry your giving cannot be, there's actually a word for it I can't remember but it means you're giving cannot be targeted so we didn't accept it we said no just give them the £5000, you know. I think the Charity Commission are trying to pick up and pull up on stuff like that where there's a loophole.

JC: I think the big sort of change is that all accounts have to be made public and available,

R: Yes and we have to have outside auditors in because we're over £100,000 you know we have to have outsiders we can't do it ourselves.

JC: I mean that's absolutely perfect for me who's doing this research. (Laughter) But I downloaded the Vineyard accounts off the Charity Commission website.

R: That would be interesting, how much money are they talking about?

JC: Well they have a turnover of £1.5 million, one year they made a, well it's not a profit because they're a charity, a surplus of income over profit of £500,000. Which as a charity you'll be allowed to keep because it'll be 6 months revenue because you're only allowed to hold about 6 months revenue because you're a charity your meant to be using this money but apart from that they've always level. With a turnover within the past few years of £1.5m. Which is incredible.

R: Yes it is, I was talking to John and I wouldn't say I know John that well but I was chatting briefly because I knew about the building project I said to him how's the building project going and he said well at the moment we've got enough money in to build the new build but it will just be a shell he said I need to make an appeal within the next two or three weeks to equip it and I think it's in the region of £1m to actually put all the goods in that they need to put in. We're considered the biggest Church in this area, and I said that's a 10th, that 10 times our income and that's just a one off your asking for. That's 10 years income and again, you know, I hope he'll get it.

JC: I guess the thing is a million from over 1000 members is a lot less then

R: 150 members and also the other thing is, I know they get a lot of students though, but we get in our membership of 145 we have got a number of elderly people who,

you know, only have pensions so they can't give much and so like a lot of Churches like our self, like the Methodist Church, often there's only a few big givers to the church and they are key to the Church.

JC: Sorry, I'm taking up your time, is it ok to ask one more question, that alright?

JC: Do you think there is sort of a tension between the religious aspects of the Church and the financial aspects of the Church, a general concern?

R: Not here I don't think there is I'm not someone personally who preaches much on giving. I personally I have dropped in two messages I believing in tithing I always have tithed ever since I became a Christian I was in Church preached and taught tithing and I did it and I preached it, I just said here I tithe, but I don't major upon it at all partly because I don't want members to kind of think Peter always gives us a lot of money. But I haven't felt any tension here between the financial aspect of the Church and the Spiritual aspect of the Church and I've never actually come across that in any Church, I think I've only been in four Churches, but I've never come across any tension in that. I think the vast majority in the Church has understood their obligation to support the Church and quite happily supports the Church and certainly when I was an engineer I tithed and I remember talking to lads in work who thought I was stupid giving that much money to the Church, but I used to say to them lets go up to the car park and let's look around the car park and go up to our houses and see how much better off you are than me. The reality is you're not so how come I've given a tenth and yet you're not that much better off than me. The reality is because the difference that Christ made in my life that I used to be, I used to love going out to the clubs drinking and that and now I just had no desire to. I still enjoy a drink now but

you know I used to work at one of my mates Paul, this is going back 15 years when I was an engineer, Paul and I were good friends but he said to me he spent easily £70 a week on Stella and Curry and you multiply that by 4 so I thought that's £280 a month, you know, that's far more than most people tithe and yet nobody bats an eyelid at spending all that money on beer and curry, they think good on you mate. But, you know, hang on we give it to a charity which then gives it to people from around the world and people are thinking that. There's something wrong in the thinking here and Paul was not excessive it's just that Paul, we were good friends and he just mentioned in passing. I know the other lads used to go out drinking and they spent a lot of money on their ale and there nights out, fair enough, but I couldn't understand them kind of saying...

JC: well that's a lot of money to give out.

R: yeah, yeah [name] you're giving the Church how much money a week yeah but you're giving three times that money. You know what we used to say was that you're pissing it up against a wall and that's the reality and that's where it's going, you know you take it and you flush the toilet and that's where your money, all your hard work has gone. I can't see the logic in it, I don't criticise you for doing that I don't criticise you.

JC: Finally, I was talking to John about this as well. When the Church was deciding who to bank, who to source pension funds with was it sort of a conscious decision to go with that bank because they invest in certain things.

R: Not as far as I'm aware, the banks we were with the banks before I came and I'm not aware that there was any ethical choices made. I mean, you know, John might be the best one to answer that. My pension, I took my pension out as a young engineer, so I just took it out with Standard Life and I didn't really think of it when I took it out. And it's something that now I would consider but certainly when I took it out and I don't think our Church. I mean again its teaching, our Church is big on environmental issues and ethical issues regarding the individual. I think it's a weakness of a lot of Churches like ours, Baptist Churches, is that we are big on personal ethics and weak on corporate ethics and that reflects, perhaps, on ministers like myself who recognise that I struggle with the big corporate ethics of it. I know people who make a stand against Nestle but are Nestle really that worse than other corporations if other corporations were as powerful as Nestle would they be any more ethical than Nestle? I know other people who've criticised Tesco but I mean Morrison's are they any more ethical than Tesco.

TAPE ENDS