

Worship Time.
The Journey Towards the Sacred
and the Contemporary Christian
Charismatic Movement in England.

by
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In memory of my Grandfather, Arthur Elliott (3 June 1911- 25 February 1999).

A truly wise man who both taught me all that I needed to know and loved me in such a way that I will always have the courage to explore the rest.

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Abstract

This thesis is an ethnographic description of the Charismatic movement in England as it is to be found in the mainstream denominations. It specifically focuses on the Baptist denomination and uses the life and faith of the Jesus Fellowship Church as a controlling example of a Charismatic group which sits on the boundaries of both denominational and Baptist life. It traces the history, social organisation and framework of understanding of the movement and then highlights the Charismatic practice known as a worship time. It argues that in worship Charismatics become individual axis mundi, or channels for the transitory presence of the sacred on earth.

This thesis also traces evidence which suggests that Charismatics represent this transitoriness in their use of physical space to delineate the sacred. They base their use of this space around a model by which they also construct the shape of the universe and organise their social relationships. In the activity conducted in this sacred space Charismatics journey towards the sacred through the use of music, words and ideas which are built into a flow of feeling that moves towards a goal.

This ethnographic description is based on the theoretical and methodological programme of cultural anthropologists such as Turner, Bell and Geertz who have emphasised the idea of ritual as a functional process and, in the case of the latter two, the creation of meaning by which to live as a fundamental basis for all social and cultural life. It does so in direct response to other understandings of the Charismatic movement which focus on issues of power and forms of social relationships by using a different theoretical and methodological programme.

Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

The subject of this study

This thesis is an ethnographic account of the Charismatic movement within contemporary Christianity. The Charismatic movement is large and growing. The Christian Research Association has suggested that if the current trends continue, by the year 2000 30% of world-wide Christianity could be defined as Pentecostal and Charismatic (Brierley, 1996a:6-7)¹.

In a survey conducted in 1989 of adults who attended church in England on a regular basis 12% chose the title Charismatic Evangelical to define their faith (Brierley, 1991:48). Of these nearly half (42%) said that they belonged to a historic denomination (ibid)². In a survey of English rural denominational clergy in the same year 22% of respondents described their spirituality as Charismatic (Davies et al, 1990:2:19). Such statistics, however approximate and partial, provide some solid representation of a widespread opinion that the Charismatic form of faith and practice is a major force within English mainstream or denominational Christianity.

The beginnings of the Charismatic movement in England can be traced back almost forty years to the early 1960s and the movement has attracted the interest of social scientists

¹ The Christian Research Association works with a confessionally Christian philosophy however, its methodology and results are widely recognised as reliable.

² This however is a conservative figure. The figures for individuals who attended churches that are popularly defined as denominations even though they are not as established as the major historic Christian denominations, such as the Brethren, Congregationalist, Evangelical Union and the Church of Christ, were placed without delineation alongside the figures for those who attended the definitely non-denominational new churches, other Christian groups, residential schools and colleges and liberal Catholic groups.

and cultural commentators since its inception. They have approached the data from differing perspectives and have used a variety of methodological frameworks to express their opinions and conclusions. However, one main element which studies concerning the English Charismatic movement have in common is the recognition of a distinction between Charismatic groups within and Charismatic groups outside the established, historic denominations.

This distinction is one which is internally present, established and important in the English Charismatic culture itself. It is a factor of Charismatic life which was elucidated in Andrew Walker's seminal study of the movement first published as Restoring the Kingdom in 1985. At the time the distinction was made within the Charismatic movement on theological grounds: non-denominational Charismatics held a belief in the status of the church which was called 'Restorationist', whilst denominational Charismatics held an contrasting belief which was called 'Renewalist'. Walker focused his work on Restorationism and in particular Restorationism as it was found in the House Church movement. The fascination with these groups and networks, now a generation later renamed as 'New Churches', has continued (Cotton, 1995; Howard, 1997).

To date there has been no serious attempt to redress the balance of ethnographic information that is available to social scientists by the provision of clear and detailed descriptions of specific denominational Charismatic groups. This has reflected a dearth in social science literature covering mainstream Church life in Britain (Davies et al., 1991:2). Douglas McBain alone has begun the process with a historical study of Charismatics within the Baptist Union (McBain, 1997; Hunt et al., 1997:43-59). There is good justification for singling out this particular group. Firstly, the Baptist denomination contains the highest documented ratio of Charismatics in its membership. In Brierley's census of 1989 although there were more than twice as many Anglicans than Baptists who chose the definition Charismatic Evangelical (25% to 10%), these figures reflected only 9% of Anglicans but

nearly 22% of Baptists. More recently McBain has cited Hunt's tentative assertion that 20% of all Baptist Churches in Britain could be described as at least sensitive to the main ideas behind Charismatic renewal (Hunt et al.,1997:46). Secondly, it can be argued that it is Baptist Charismatic churches which have the most robust growth rate of all English churches. Over ten years ago one of the leading historians of contemporary English Christianity made the assertion that in the history of the Charismatic movement it was Baptist churches which grew most markedly (Bebbington, 1983:247). This can be seen in the context of Brierley's statistical conclusions formed from the 1989 census and summed up in the statement;

'... by far the highest percentage of growing churches were charismatic evangelical ones which had more than two in every five of them actually growing.' (Brierley, 1993:131).

Certainly, Charismatic Baptists congregations are perceived by many within the Christian culture as being numbered among the largest and fastest growing congregations in the country. Douglas McBain suggests, quite sensibly, that this well known, if non-verifiable, trend makes the Baptist denomination a good place to start examining developments and trends in church attendance and the relationship between church and society (Hunt et al.,1997:44).

This thesis seeks to build on McBain's foundation in a particular way. In recent literature about the Charismatic movement the distinction between denominational and non-denominational Charismatics has been challenged. Walker, looking back in retrospect, has suggested that although the distinction between Restorationism and Renewalism was solid in a theological framework, within both sociological and historical frameworks it was more fluid than he had made it appear in 1985 (Hunt et al.,1997:17-42). He further suggests that the relationship of both groups to classical Pentecostalism was more complex than he

had allowed. Following his previous focus on Restorationism he thus goes on to reformulate a definition of that group as a:

‘... syncretistic amalgam of classical [Pentecostalism], Renewalist and independent streams.’ (Hunt et al., 1997:32).

In the 1980s, fifteen or so years after the height of the relevance of the theological divide between Restorationist and Renewalist, another internal distinction became apparent to both those inside and outside the Charismatic movement. This was between those groups influenced by the American theology and practice of the Vineyard movement, usually called ‘The Third Wave’³, and those who were not. As Walker suggests it was the influence of Third Wave theology and practice which acted as the catalyst for the acceleration of the combination of theological beliefs, practices and historical precedents across the groups that make up the Charismatic movement (Hunt et al., 1997:33-34). He also submits that the Third Wave picked up the spirit of the age of the host community and continued the usual Charismatic practice of accepting and using it. This proposition lies at the heart of the recent body of work carried out by social scientists which frames an understanding of the existent and historical Charismatic movement with the secularisation theory (Hunt et al., 1997:3).

The current debate in social science concerning the actual name that should be used for this kind of faith and practice is indicative of the recognition that the Charismatic movement has developed into a complex assemblage of groups that are, themselves, composite in nature. In one of the most recent studies to date on the movement Hunt et. al. wish to use the term ‘Neo-Pentecostal’ with reference to the Pentecostal antecedents of the movement. Walker takes up this term and uses it in a way which draws attention

³ First used by C. Peter Wagner in a book of the same title in 1988.

to the parallels and analogies that can be made between the two movements in their historical and contemporary forms. He also, however, importantly uses it in another sense to refer to the Charismatic Renewal movement in mainline denominations. His suggestion that this only existed in a pure form between 1965 and 1980 implies that his continued use of the term for the whole movement after 1980 refers to a group in which he wishes to emphasise the presence and contribution of Charismatic renewal in mainline denominations. As this is an ethnographic study, rather than use the term Neo-Pentecostal in any value laden or loaded sense the title of 'the Charismatic movement' will be retained because it is popularly used and accepted by the group under study⁴.

This development in the understanding of the composition of the Charismatic movement makes the distinction between non-denomination and denominational Charismatics a complex undertaking. In a framework which uses organisational affiliation as a primary guiding principle by which to arrange individual participants it remains effective⁵. Thus, statisticians such as the Christian Research Organisation and participants who place great value on their personal membership in a specific group use it. In the frameworks in which social scientists work which use social, cultural and ideological values as guiding principles for description and explanation this distinction has to be qualified to be useful. This thesis seeks to respect both the notions outlined above; that which gives importance of denominational forms of Charismatic faith and practice and that which points out the difficulties in making a distinction between denomination and non-denominational Charismatics. In order to do so it uses the technique of examining the movement using ethnographic description of a specific characteristic of the whole of Charismatic faith and practice within the context of a denominational form of faith and culture, that of the Baptist Union.

⁴ It should also be noted that the term 'Neo-Pentecostal' was not considered to be widely established enough to appear in the title of the collection of essays edited by Hunt et al. 1997.

⁵ Although see note 2 for the difficulties involved in this project.

The specific characteristic of faith and life that will be focused on is that of worship, in particular that of participating in a worship time in a large gathering called a celebration. It can be argued that this practice is customary to, and universally undertaken by all Charismatics regardless of the name with which they are self-defined. Of course, this is a statement which is extremely hard if not impossible to verify. Specific behaviour of a certain kind which Charismatics associate with worship is universal to the movement however and is accepted by Charismatics and non-Charismatics alike to be a characteristic of the movement. It is a main contention of this thesis that this behaviour, evidenced most clearly in worship times in celebration meetings, is denotative of an established model of Charismatic worship.

To assist in keeping to such a narrow focus this thesis will use a particular group as a controlling ethnographic example. It is important to underline that this format is not to be confused with an ethnography which describes the life and beliefs of one particular group, it is rather a methodological device used in the service of the description of the real focus of the study. The group in question is the Jesus Fellowship Church. This group has been selected for three reasons. Firstly, descriptions of the group have already been fed into the understanding of the Charismatic movement which the social sciences have begun to construct (Barker, 1989:185-186; Hunt et al., 1997:120-139). Secondly, the group has its roots in the Baptist Union and retains a strong Baptist identity as well as being autonomous and Restorationist in theological position. In one sense it can be classified as Baptist, in another as Restorationist and non-denominational. It is therefore a very good example of the composite nature of the Charismatic movement. Thirdly, the Jesus Fellowship Church provides examples of Charismatic faith and practice in a highly visible, easily accessible and well defined form.

The structure and content of this study

The backbone of this thesis is to be found in its central three chapters which are descriptive outlines of Charismatic life and culture. In the first the history and social organisation of the Charismatic movement in general is summarised. Such background is imperative in ethnographic work for it sets the scene for the process of deeper description and further interpretation. In the second descriptive chapter the Charismatic framework of understanding is outlined and in the third the central Charismatic practice of worship is described.

Although primarily meant as an ethnography such descriptive work cannot take place in a theoretical or philosophical void. There are imposing general philosophical questions relating to why it is important to understand a group of people which exist in the background of any study of humanity. In discussing the early Victorian social anthropologists who gave so much to the development of social science in general, I.M. Lewis has suggested that their interest in other societies was based on a need to understand their own ancestors (Lewis, 1985:39). Lewis goes on to cite an anonymous critic who suggested that they were only interested in the living in order to better understand the dead. It can be added that this preoccupation with the past and ancestors was not without the motivational thrust of the need to better understand themselves. In other words, they were only interested in the living in order to better understand the dead in order to better understand the living! The need to understand others in order to understand ourselves is, it can be argued, a universally present demand.

As well as general philosophical questions, there are issues of an epistemological nature which regulate the imposition of a specific framework upon descriptions of human society and culture. These issues relate to how rather than why we understand things in the world. They involve such questions as the relationship between the knower and the

known and the capacity of the knower to understand. Such grand questions of philosophy and epistemology are worked out in the social sciences through the filter of methodological and theoretical issues⁶. How the social scientist goes about the task of understanding a particular group, how they collect data and their techniques for fieldwork, how they focus, select, choose, privilege and interpret information to form an understanding and, importantly, how they present that understanding to others are all questions of method. Some social scientists concern themselves primarily with these theoretical and methodological issues, using ethnographic data as examples of the competence of their framework. Others take such frameworks into account but are primarily concerned with providing detailed description. It bears repeating that this thesis falls into the latter category, although the notion that a circular relationship between theory and data exists underlies the conviction that this thesis is not a total understanding of the Charismatic movement in itself. Rather, it supplements and is supplemented by existing studies as well as work yet to be done.

The methodological framework in which this description of the Charismatic movement is embedded is specified and described in chapter two which immediately proceeds the three chapters of description. In chapter six, immediately after the description, some of those specified theoretical models and strategies are applied to the data. This fulfils two purposes; primarily it gives a fresh perspective on the data and, as an ancillary theme in this particular thesis, it also tests out the theoretical models and strategies themselves.

The experience of being immersed in the life of the people involved in the Charismatic movement gradually led to one major inquiry which was to become the motivation for writing this thesis in this particular way:

⁶ Here I follow a distinction between philosophy/epistemology and methodology/theory that has been made by Harris in his critique of the work of Mead (1968:417-414).

Why does the explanation, expressed by a variety of social scientists, that the major concern of the Charismatic movement is the acquiring and use of power not receive validation as an absolute and real understanding of the movement from Charismatics themselves?

Within the movement various individuals have indeed emphasised the notion of power in different ways. The early Restorationists, were part of a contentious debate about the notion of social power and the authority of leaders. Wimber, in a pragmatic framework, emphasised supernatural power in relation to the individual's capability and the efficacy of the spiritual realm. Commentators such as Smail, Walker and Wright and Percy have taken and reviewed the characteristics of power in a critical theological framework (Smail et al, 1993; Percy, 1996). But to ordinary Charismatics the word 'power' is only a part of what they are about and what they do and certainly is not their dominant *raison d'être*.

That power is a fundamental issue and motif in contemporary life and thought is certain. That it should find its way into the creation of understanding and explaining the lifestyle, actions and presence of the Charismatic movement was inevitable. The accumulated tenets and methods of the social sciences of the last two centuries have brought the issue to the fore through the emphasis on the study of social relationships. The themes of authority, leadership, domination and manipulation have come to dominate the field. One only has to have a cursory understanding of the work of the popular masters of modern social science; Marx, Durkheim, Weber, Nietzsche and Freud, to confirm this.

Social relationships and power however are dynamic entities and the data from the participants in the Charismatic movement suggests that they would like an understanding of their movement to include a sense of the objective whole of their culture and society rather than to just focus on some of the dynamics that go towards its construction, maintenance and development. Any Charismatic will offer the opinion that their faith and

practice is first and foremost about salvation and to be saved is to have meaning, significance and purpose by which to live, it is about being part of a design for life. That social relationships and their dynamic of power form an important part of this design is not denied, but they are not the whole and are not the only important part.

The final chapter of this thesis revisits this double-edged description of both the Charismatic world and the world of social science by drawing out and drawing together some of the key observations made about them both. It finally finishes with some comments specifically directed towards the quest to better understand Christianity and the Christian faith at the turn of the millennium. This contribution however is meant only as part of the foundation; an addition to the information base and the beginning of an analysis upon which others can build.

Chapter Two

Methodology

Introduction

This thesis involves the interpretation of observations made of a particular social and cultural group. Like any act of interpretation it lives within a context and is bounded by a philosophical and theoretical framework. This present chapter aims to explore and outline both the context and the framework within which this particular thesis sits and therefore can be seen as necessary groundwork for the whole thesis.

By very clearly using the term ethnography the particular methodological framework of anthropology which this thesis uses has already been implied. Lewis defines the research technique of writing ethnography as:

'... a sensitive qualitative approach in which the anthropological observer's questions are posed for him [sic] as he immerses himself in the life of the people he studies and which he thus experiences and registers subjectively as well as objectively. The 'field' may now be such familiar home ground as a street corner... a charismatic church or any other area of contemporary and urban (as well as rural) activity where people interact intensively in a particular cultural style characterised by shared values and understandings.'(Lewis,1985:380)

He then restates his definition as '.... a biographic approach to the interactions binding people together.' Another significant contemporary anthropologist, Clifford Geertz, has summed up the anthropologist's quest as:

'Believing with Max Weber, that man (sic) is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretative one in search of meaning.'
(Geertz, 1973:5)

Geertz then goes on to make explicit the fact that the data with which anthropologists work is; '...really our own constructions of other people's constructions of what they and their compatriots are up to...' (Geertz, 1973:9).

Lewis's approach is concerned with social anthropology, which privileges the social relations between people whilst Geertz is concerned with privileging culture. However, Lewis states the heart of the issue, admitting that the two overlap and are probably alternative sides of the same coin:

'... one treats culture as a medium for social relations (or, sometimes their content) while the other treats society as a display of culture.' (Lewis, 1985:380)

This concept, which is widely accepted, is that the relationship between society, culture and social relations is complicated and, is probably just a matter of perspective. Certainly it can be said that the effective relationship between them is one of mutual permeation, or to switch frameworks and snatch a term from doctrinal theology, they exist in a relationship of 'perichoresis'. It is only as each element is characteristically unique that they can relate to each other, communicate with each other and interpenetrate each other. And it is in the action of relating as well as the action of maintaining autonomy and the manifestation of these activities that their real essence lies (Moltmann, 1981:174-176).

This chapter seeks to describe and explore some of the issues surrounding the technique of understanding through writing ethnographic descriptions of the social organisations and webs of significance that humans create and manage. Furthermore, it describes the specific devices used in relation to this thesis in order to attempt to overcome some of the major issues traditionally understood as problems inherent in this type of study.

Data collection and ethnographic writing

In the first quotation given above Lewis describes the position of the ethnography producing anthropologist as one of being immersed in the life of the people being studied. The first academics to study society and culture in the modern period did so with the intention of explaining the appearance of intelligence and sophistication in the society in which they lived. The early anthropologists; Lewis Henry Morgan, Herbert Spencer and Sir Edward Tylor were committed to a comparative method of assessment which was based on the opinion that contemporary cultures bore differential degrees of resemblance to cultures that were extinct. They also believed that parts of cultures had survived change and perpetuated themselves during periods in which the original conditions they were formed in no longer existed. Those who made use of this comparative method did so in order to study the change which led from the Palaeolithic hunters to industrial civilisation. They did not suggest that each step of this progressive evolution had to be experienced by each culture but believed that once a sufficient number of cases had been documented similarities would be found which could eventually be built into a general map of history. Such a grand project however was often carried out from the comfort of an armchair in a University based study. Being immersed in the life of a people and the subsequent documentation and comparative assessment which ensued often involved little more than vast amounts of reading and re-reading reports about people groups and their behaviour written by travellers, missionaries, archaeologists and botanists. Herbert Spencer made an attempt to improve the ethnographic basis of anthropology and gradually a growing

interest in the importance of correctly collecting evidence and data took hold. The name most commonly associated with this incipient professionalisation of the study of society and culture is that of Franz Boas⁷.

Boas felt that the amount of regularity and similarities in cultures had been overestimated by some of the evolutionists. Driven also, as Harris points out, by an instinct for inductive purity, he suggested that in order to assess evolutionism properly there was a need to study specific sequences in delimited areas (Harris, 1968:250). He believed that premature generalisations were the worst of sins although he didn't always keep his own standards (White, 1963). Like Francis Bacon before him Boas believed that the greatest need of the day was the collection of a corpus of reliable facts. Therefore, at the start of his academic career Boas demanded less speculation in anthropology and more facts gathered from personal experience of particular societies, or 'fieldwork'. As his understanding progressed he became more and more convinced that scientific detachment and objectivity were needed to achieve this particular kind of study of society and culture. He understood a good ethnography to be one which faithfully mirrored the world of the observed as the observed saw it⁸. Boas believed that such objectivity was to be gained when an observer suspended their own belief system and value standards in order to judge another's way of life by the standards and beliefs they accepted. In this way the major mistake of the evolutionists, that of grading different cultures, could be put to one side.

In his understanding of the data Boas was to emphasise the notion that the common denominator in culture and society was inherent in the human mind, and was a facet of existence which did not necessarily need a uniform cultural matrix. With the passing of

⁷Goldenweiser has called Boas anthropology's 'culture hero' because he bestowed upon it the gift of science (1941:153).

⁸ This was later to become known as an emic perspective which is sometimes contrasted with an etic perspective or a perspective in which conclusions about a particular society or culture appear in a frame of cross-culturally valid analytical and quantitative categories.

time Boas's emphasis on the freedom that cultures and, ultimately, that individuals possess within cultures was to become the foundation for an American anthropological tradition known as 'historical particularism'⁹ and, Boas's work in general was enormously influential in the history of anthropology as he trained most of the best-known American anthropologists of the twentieth century including Margaret Mead, Ruth Benedict, Alfred Kroeber and Robert Lowie¹⁰.

When Boas produced his ethnography of the Kwakiutl Indians of Vancouver he believed it to be a true representation of how the Kwakiutl understood their system of thought. By the time Bronislaw Malinowski was studying the Trobrianders, thirty-five to forty years later, the discipline of anthropology had moved on. As their contribution to the continuing stream of interest in understanding history, or to be more specific historical consciousness, the philosophers Friedrich Schleiermacher and Wilhelm Dilthey had both concluded that a historical understanding was only to be gained by the projection of the experiences of one set of people onto the experiences of another. Their writings about the impact on the self of encountering the other were highly influential throughout the humanities and social sciences, including the rising discipline of anthropology.

Malinowski attempted to deal with this concept concerning the process by which understanding is gained by adding to the method of collecting data through fieldwork the tool of the personal diary of the fieldworker. He suggested this could act as a safety valve, channelling away as many of the observers personal emotions and cares as possible from the objective report of the point of view of the observed¹¹. By mid-century however it became apparent that this safety valve was not completely effective. Moreover, it was

⁹ The 'ideographic trend' in ethnographic description was to reach its particularist zenith in the ultimate narrowing down of history to the story of one individual in Paul Radin's 1926 biography of a Winnebago Indian.

¹⁰ Harris suggests that his ethnographic work on the Potlatch ceremonies of the Kwakiutl '...has probably been the single most influential ethnographic description ever published.' (1968:307)

¹¹ Published posthumously in 1967 the personal diaries of Malinowski do record his experiences of 'culture shock' whether or not they acted effectively for him in the way in which he intended.

also becoming increasingly apparent to those concerned with more philosophical questions that the worldview and beliefs of the observer could not be suspended, but were very much a part of the observer's very understanding of the observed. In one particular subsequent research strategy, sometimes called the New Ethnography Movement, which was popular among American anthropologists it therefore became all important to specify the operations by which the observer had understood and come to know exactly what it was that people were thinking (Harris, 1968:568-604).

Participant observation

This kind of technique for understanding a particular society and culture has come to be known as participant observation. Driven by the desire articulated by Boas as mirroring the world of the observed as they see it, participant observation involves going out to the field of study, being immersed in the life of the people there, attempting to faithfully record details of significance, non-significance and possible significance and reporting back in an objective manner upon return. The whole undertaking is not without its dangers, issues and problems, the most important of which revolve around the very issue of the role of the self in the processes of understanding.

The influence of Boas's work began to disseminate throughout the academic community in a historical period when colonialism, empires, Victorian domination through imposed governmental rule, and a whole attitude towards the cultures and societies which provided most of the data for study were dying. Early anthropologists had understood the term 'culture' to mean sophistication and intelligence, however it gradually began to be used to refer to learning and socialisation as an unconscious dimension of human existence. The societies which provided the data for anthropological research were no longer understood through the filter of their need for western government or Christian conversion. Boas's approach in studying particular societies therefore not only supported

the professional recording of ways of life that were disappearing but also endorsed the growth of a pluralistic philosophical perspective through the use of a method based on cultural relativism. In turn, such an attitude provided the impetus for those from the cultures studied to question the conclusions and motivations of the early anthropologists and ethnographers and to provide alternative descriptions and conclusions of their own.

Such criticisms were based on the foundation provided by the work of the great thinkers of the age - Frederick Nietzsche, Karl Marx and Sigmund Freud. It was Nietzsche who ushered in the contemporary European academic and intellectual climate with his now famous statement; 'All that exists consists of interpretations.' (1909-1913 Vol 15: The Will To Power Vol 2, 12 aphorism 481). These words symbolise a commitment to an assumption that everything in life, not just the academic act of exposition and explanation, is an interpretation. Karl Marx, who is also one of the founding patriarchs of the contemporary milieu, was less appreciative of the interpretative act stating that; 'The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it.' (Marx, 1941:82). For Marx, of course, the achievement of changing the world began with his reinterpretation of the way the world is. Sigmund Freud, accredited by Thiselton as the third master of modern suspicion, believed that interpretation was a intricate undertaking which sought to describe the complex processes of the mind, often resting on different layers of explanation which in turn rested on different layers of understanding (Thiselton, 1992:14).

Nietzsche, Marx and Freud in their 'psycho-social metacritique' perspective on society were far from being overwhelmed with excitement about the new worlds of possibility that an abundance of interpretation opens up (Thiselton, 1992:384). Rather, in their concern with the philosophical quest to understand the ultimate principles of truth they became haunted by the suspicion that processes of understanding may be manipulated within a community to such an extent that absolute and universal truth may never be

encountered. All three were concerned about the truth claims made by religion in general and Christianity in particular. Nietzsche believed that the truth claims of religion were a tool used by individuals protecting their own self interest, Marx believed they were a tool used by the dominant social group to protect their own group interests and Freud believed God, particularly the Christian God, was the projection of fantasises and neuroses concerning an omnipotent and ominous father.

One facet therefore of the debate about anthropological writing and anthropological method centred around the use of an interpretation in the service of a power relationship. If anthropologists were writing interpretations which, to a greater or lesser extent, involved their own experience and subjectivity, could they not be arriving at conclusions based on their own culture's need to dominate, control or manipulate? Some therefore began to suggest that some of the conclusions of the early ethnographers were grounded not just in a desire to validate the supremacy of western Christianity but also in a need to favour the status quo and stand in the way of change when, in reality, the people involved wanted change to occur. In all disciplines, not just in anthropology, women began to point out that the subjectivity of men, grounded in an experience of being male, influenced their conclusions. Some of the more radical feminist academics applied the Marxist notion of an exploiting ideology to suggest that such conclusions were part of a wider ideology designed to legitimate the dominance of men and the exploitation of women.

Another interrelated facet of the debate concerning anthropology and the role of the self in understanding relates more specifically to the technique of study through participant observation. The key to this specific problem lies in the juxtaposition of the two terms 'participant' and 'observation', the first symbolising a subjective involvement, the second symbolising an objective non-involvement. The academic standard de-privileges the first and privileges the second. In practice this means that the individual fieldworker, if they are to be academically successful, constantly seeks to negate their own subjective

involvement in the subject area (whether that is an accepting or indeed a rejecting involvement). It also means that those studies which are produced by observers, or outsiders, are often privileged over and above those studies produced by participants or insiders.

It has already been suggested that the tool which Malinowski suggested could aid this process, the fieldworker's diary, proved to have limited success. However, it can be argued that contemporary anthropologists, and sociologists who work to the same remit, have created and use a variety of supplementary tools and devices which constantly delineate them and reinforce their identity as observers. The actual procedure of going out to a specific community for a specified length of time before returning to the community to which the researcher believes themselves to truly belong is one such device. The use of disclosure is another. Stating researcher status and research intention to the society or culture being studied obviously sets up boundaries. Disclosure to cultural groups in the contemporary, pluralistic west rarely carries with it the risk of complete non-acceptance. It does however, carry with it the risk of being responded to with suspicion and wariness and the possibility of intentional misinformation. Use of certain techniques for collecting data are other tools which reinforce the identity of the observer. Writing notes and filming during events delineate the researcher as a participant who is in some way set apart. Formal interviews and the very act of spending time sifting through information or writing up notes while in the field all reinforce the researcher's status. Finally, producing a text which conforms to academic or publishers standards also confirms and validates status. Feminist critiques of anthropological methods have in particular examined the extent to which the research and writing process creates the self and differentiates the speaker or the writer from those for whom they wish to speak and write¹².

¹² Giddens believes that this ongoing construction of the self through a constant monitoring process is characteristic of modernity in which all knowledge gathering is reflexive so that any new and incoming information is used in the service of revising old traditions (1990).

The researcher's status as a unique kind of participant - one who observes, however can stand in tension with the guiding principle of Boas and Malinowski that what is needed is a mirroring of the life and culture of a people group as they see it. Of course, the easiest way to achieve this is to swing to the other extreme and privilege the status of the participant and the accounts of 'insiders'. Contemporary anthropology however has attempted to deal with the dilemma by incorporating devices and tools into the traditional methods of data collection and, importantly, the theoretical models upon which the processes of understanding or constructing researchers constructions of other peoples constructions are based, which aim to try and redress the balance and thus find a middle way. The rest of this chapter therefore seeks to describe the specific devices of data collection and theory which have been used in this thesis with the specific aim of moving away from the privileging of the observer.

Non-intrusive observation

Non-intrusive observation is a method which seeks, as much as possible, to downplay the observer's status as an incomer or invader into the life and culture of the group in question. There are three main techniques which are related to this type of data collection. The first involves the personal position of the researcher, the second involves the type of sources that are used and the third involves the way in which the researcher records the data they are observing.

Although it causes problems of its own, studying any people group, society or culture which is close to home, geographically, ideologically or emotionally can be said to also have benefits. In the first place the observer, although clearly not self-defining as an insider to the group, can often access knowledge from their own life experience which interconnects with the ideology, behaviour and beliefs of the group. Thus the initial process of enculturation is much quicker as, for example, symbolic and linguistic codes are

familiar up to a point and connections and significations have already been recognised as important. In the second place, the observer even though they disclose the fact that they are not an insider may be perceived as a partial insider by some of the participants. This may occur because the participants in question use different criteria from that used by the researcher to judge insider status. For example, a researcher who overtly discloses they are not part of a religious group because they do not believe certain doctrines and have not personally undergone certain initiation rituals, may be considered by some participants to still belong to the group by virtue of their relational connections, historical background or indeed, similarity or closeness of personally held beliefs. This means that the researcher is sometimes responded to as an insider and given access to privileged information. In such cases the researcher can use the ambiguous nature of belonging to any cultural or social group in order to give a participant orientated description. The risks involved to the researcher's own personal integrity, the 'nearly but not quite' characteristic of the product and even in some instances it could be said the risks to the boundaries and the very nature of the group are, however, not to be underestimated.

Using materials which are intended by the group for public consumption as a primary source is another technique which supports non-intrusive observation. Materials such as published texts, visual and sound recordings of the life and events of the group and other consumable items which are freely available on the open market can be a rich source of information. This 'folk material' can also be examined in private using the more strictly 'scientific' techniques such as the collation of statistics without the observer's role as a researcher influencing the life or response of the members of the group in question. Importantly, such material also provides a rich source for understanding the kind of message participants want outsiders to understand about their group - it draws attention to those aspects and characteristics of group life which participants understand to be the main defining features and significant aspects of the group.

Finally, non-intrusive observation also involves the way in which certain source material is recorded. This is particularly the case during occasions when the researcher is present at an event in the group's life. Recording this data through the use of note taking, film making or sound-recording may influence the very output of the group. Non-intrusive observation therefore involves only using such techniques during the event only when it is considered appropriate for a specific reason by the group to be undertaking such behaviour and waiting until after the event to record through notation from memory the majority of the time. In this way the influence of the presence of the researcher as an observer is restricted as much as possible.

This thesis is based upon data gained through this kind of participant observation. Firstly, although never self-defined as a Charismatic the author did grow up in a Baptist Charismatic community. Based on the information and relationship base received through this experience non-intrusive observations were made from a period of participation in a large Assemblies of God, Pentecostal Church between 1989 and 1992, from a period of participation in a Baptist Charismatic church from 1993 to 1996 and from a period of more rigorous fieldwork with the Jesus Fellowship Church stretching from 1990 to the present day. A period of more formal fieldwork with the Jesus Fellowship took place during the summer of 1992 and a week long period of formal fieldwork at the Spring Harvest festival took place during the Easter season of 1995¹³. The latter two experiences have been delineated as formal fieldwork because during those times the boundaries between researcher and community were firmly set in the traditional ways cited above. Appendix A includes examples of the folk material used as a primary source during this time. Appendixes B and C include examples of two types of more formal techniques of data collection which were utilised when it was considered appropriate by the community to

¹³ Some of this fieldwork formed the basis for a dissertation on models of leadership in the Charismatic movement which was part of a Degree of Master of Theology awarded to the author by the University of Nottingham in 1995.

be undertaking such behaviour. The first type involves a list of sermon themes. Note taking during sermons is common practice in the Charismatic world. The second type is the transcript of a formal interview undertaken which concerns the subject of religious experience and the Toronto Blessing, a subject which participants were also questioning using sociological tools at the time.

Participant directed theory

The perspective of anthropology in which mirroring the world of the observed as they see it is valued is concerned with description or explication before it is concerned with imposing an explanation. However, a large proportion of anthropological and sociological writings attempt to 'unriddle' any given description further than simply restating using different language by providing an explanation of the behaviour, beliefs and life of the observed.

Explanation and functionalism

In relation to the rise in influence of historical particularism I.M. Lewis has made the very valid point that if society is primarily understood as a whole in which each of the parts contributes to the whole then the essential questions change from those concerned with historical determinism and evolution to ones concerned with the actual function of the whole and the parts (Lewis, 1976:52). Nowhere is this notion of the function of parts of social and cultural life clearer than in the very early anthropological perspectives on religion. Andrew Lang had criticised the work of his teacher Tylor which suggested a progression from animism to monotheism because he believed that Tylor had underestimated the power of gods for 'primitive' people (Lang, 1898). Lang's responsive suggestion was that the gods held moral influence. In his highly controversial book Lectures on the Religion of the Semites (which is a good example of the problems

associated with academic study and being part of an interpretative community in itself) William Robertson-Smith had taken up this train of thought. Malinowski was to later state that it was Robertson-Smith who initiated the study of the important problems of why it was that humanity, 'primitive man' especially, performed ceremonies and the importance of the connection between society and the truth revealed by religion (Malinowski, 1948:37). Robertson-Smith was to suggest that the primary function of ritual and totemism in primitive societies was that of communication between the people and their deity. His concentration on ritual started what was to remain a central theme in anthropological and sociological study.

Émile Durkheim is generally regarded as the father of modern comparative sociology. He, like the other scholars of his generation, was in essence an armchair theorist and as I.M. Lewis has suggested, although he is less popularly known than Marx his work has had the greater formative influence in the development of anthropological and sociological thought (Lewis, 1985:47). Durkheim reacted against the developing trend in late nineteenth century thinking that Boas was to pick up a little later on which suggested that the way to understand human society was to analyse the minds of the individuals concerned. The foundations of Durkheim's work therefore lay in the assertion that only a close study of the social facts of the groups themselves would yield a true explanation of society. In Durkheim's understanding these social facts had two properties: a transcendent reality which is external to the individuals who make them manifest and they work by a process of constraint, obligation and coercive power. As Giddens has suggested;

'The key to Durkheim's whole life's work is to be found in his attempt to resolve the apparent paradox that the liberty of the individual is only achieved through his dependence on society.' (Giddens, 1972:45)

In this sort of model where society is understood as a dynamic organism the basis for functionalist tendencies in which the parts are understood through their role in contributing to the survival of the whole is quite clear. For Durkheim social cohesion was the key. He structured his theories around the question of economic competition, believing, in opposition to Adam Smith, that the division of labour was not caused by conflict but was in fact a mechanism for reducing competition and intensifying mutual dependence (Durkheim, 1947).

There are two names in the English speaking world of cultural and social anthropology which are associated most keenly with the growing functionalist tradition to which Durkheim's theories contributed. Malinowski was a biologist by training and his perspective was coloured by an instinctive belief that humanity was a crudely socialised animal whose main aim and purpose is to get that which is needful to survive. Like Lang's beliefs concerning his theory of the moral direction of the gods in organising society Malinowski believed that the organisation of groups, institutions and customs by which the basic needs for nutrition, reproduction, shelter and health were met relieved the intrinsic anxiety of the individual. In contrast to the work of Lang and Robertson-Smith Malinowski began his explanation with the individual rather than with the group and Peoples and Bailey call this kind of functionalist theory 'biopsychological functionalism' (Peoples and Bailey, 1991:78).

Alfred R. Radcliffe-Brown criticised Malinowski's use of the term functionalism stating that it encompassed a whole range of what he saw as non-social functions (Radcliffe-Brown, 1949). Radcliffe-Brown was more interested in the function of a particular social or cultural characteristic as it contributed to the persistence of the social structure and contributed to the status quo. Whereas Malinowski had concentrated on humanity's cultural adaptation Radcliffe-Brown concentrated on the social basis of all institutions and

customs. He used the term 'structure' to refer to the ordered framework upon which social life is based.

The difference between these two types of functionalism is perhaps one of the most abiding themes in the history of anthropology yet it can be argued that the foundations of the differences and similarities lie less in philosophical arguments than in the lifestyles, attitudes and personalities which each man brought to the discipline. It is recorded that Malinowski was a uniquely gifted teacher, more at home in the life of the field than in the gloom of the study. The exotic rituals of tribesmen therefore only made sense to him as living parts of community life, not as redundant customs which echoed past glories. Radcliffe-Brown was more a skilled theorist, more at home poring over intricate diagrams of kinship patterns and structures of social relationships (Lewis 1985:52-60). The generation of scholars that followed took the energy of the empiricism of the one and mixed it with the steadying power of the other.

As Kuper has pointed out a major shift took place in the English anthropology of the late 1930s (Kuper, 1973:72). This was symbolised by a relocation of interest from the people of the Pacific and the work of Malinowski at the London School of Economics to the people of Africa and the 'structural functionalism' of Radcliffe-Brown at Oxford. Two names are associated in mid-century English anthropology with Radcliffe-Brown's type of functionalism, E.E. Evans-Pritchard and Meyer Fortes. Radcliffe-Brown's remedy for false evolutionary reconstructions was to avoid all historical inquiry for periods and places for which documentation was not available (Radcliffe-Brown, 1952:3). The subsequent emphasis by functionalists on synchronic studies was to prove problematic. In 1940 two books were published in which the commitment to functionalism by Evans-Pritchard and Fortes was clear. In The Nuer Evans-Pritchard recorded his own fieldwork in Africa. Chapter three of this highly influential ethnography argued that Nuer concepts of time and space were still rational even if it did not appear so in a western framework of understanding.

His commitment to structural functionalism and a relativistic position like the one advocated by Boas was obvious. In African Political Systems, a collection of essays edited by Evans-Pritchard and Fortes, the structures of African political systems caught in an ethnographic present of the 1930s were expounded. The limits of such an approach were clear to many, particularly through the example of the editors conclusions about the connection between political systems and population density¹⁴. Evans-Pritchard was to later reject this emphasis on synchronic studies and to suggest that the decrease of Radcliffe-Brown's influence meant a return to the dichotomy between history and science with social anthropology being closer to the former (Evans-Pritchard, 1951:60-61).

As an academic of his age Durkheim was interested in the question of evolution and believed social cohesion to be a product of a slow process of development and accretion. However, because in England his influence was largely felt through the particular reading and emphasis which Radcliffe-Brown gave to it, Durkheim's theories are often understood to stand in direct contrast to Marx's emphasis on change and conflict. In Radcliffe-Brown's understanding of Durkheim's social functionalism conflict was understood to exist but to be something which needed to be minimised by strategies of avoidance, not heightened in order to produce change (Radcliffe-Brown, 1952). In the post Radcliffe-Brown era in England this theme of social equilibrium and change was developed still further in the work of Edmund Leach who also provided one of the most effective critiques of the functionalist program based on African fieldwork and in the work of the Manchester School.

Through his own fieldwork conducted among the people of Burma, Leach suggested that there was a connection between political systems and environmental conditions (Leach,

¹⁴ They argued that it would be false to understand that governmental institutions are found in societies with the greatest population density although evidence from other continents had suggested that a close correspondence did exist.

1954). Furthermore, he suggested that as such systems were not stable but had the potential for change working towards a typology of fixed systems was futile. Leach therefore stated that the way forward was to build up a view of how society would operate if it were in equilibrium and then examine the interplay of personal interests which temporarily formed a balance but which, in due course, altered the system.

Of the Manchester School Max Gluckman in particular, writing at the same time as Leach, forwarded the case for a functionalist conflict theory, suggesting that social equilibrium emerges through the balancing of oppositions in a dialectic process which operates at the level of confrontation between two bodies of people. Gluckman was particularly interested in the function of ritual and the inclusion of rebellious passages in them which act to relieve dissent and disaffection (Gluckman, 1963). The emphasis upon conflict and rebellion and a balancing of oppositions, with its obvious Marxist precedents, and its role in ritual activity has remained highly influential right up until the present.

Gluckman's emphasis on the use of rituals of conflict to adjust tense social relationships was successfully taken up by two of his successors - Victor Turner and Maurice Bloch. Their theories about ritual will be examined in detail in chapter six suffice to say that all the elements of contemporary British anthropology are to be found in Turner's work; conflict, stability, Marx, Durkheim, functionalism, structuralism, symbols, ritual activity, Africa and contemporary western society are all mixed together to form a very interesting understanding of social systems. A particular emphasis upon Marxist anthropology is to be found in Bloch's contribution which especially examines the role of violence in ritual activity.

Explanation and structuralism

As has already been stated Durkheim was not to privilege ideological systems within the framework he used to understand society. However, as Stephen Lukes points out he could be said to have anticipated the work of Wittgenstein by at least half a century in explaining that beliefs are socially generated representations of the collective consciousness (Lukes,1975:437). Of this collective mind, religion is the most characteristic product. In other words, religion is a social phenomenon and any sense of mystery which it might generate is therefore misplaced (Durkheim,1915). Through religious belief and action the collective mind establishes a distinction between the sacred and the profane thus providing the opportunity for obligation, duty, sanction and mysterious power. However, the distinction really provides a system of symbols and actions by which society becomes conscious of itself. Durkheim was thus to examine two subject areas which others of his generation were showing a great interest in, ritual and totemism. He understood the former to be the handmaiden of religiosity, the occasion at which the principles for group cohesion were expressed and impressed on the individual and the latter to be the most evident example in history of a representation of the collective consciousness.

Marcel Mauss was a pupil of Durkheim who had helped with the publication of the periodical L' Année Sociologique from 1898 to 1912 and led the resumption of its publication after the First World War. Mauss extended Durkheim's understanding of the *sui generis* status of social facts and the collective consciousness by suggesting that there might be deep, hidden inner structures in the individual human mind which were causally prior to any collective representations of society. It was Mauss rather than Durkheim who, as a teacher, encouraged the practice of fieldwork amongst French academics studying society and Mauss was to become renowned for his study based on the life of New Zealand

aborigines entitled The Gift (1925). In this work Mauss suggested that the act of gift giving, or 'reciprocity', is the channel through which the solidarity of relations between individuals and groups is maintained. It was this understanding of the importance and the characteristics of the exchange of valuables in society which was of great effect on the thinking of a very influential French anthropologist - Claude Lévi-Strauss.

Harris has suggested that Lévi-Strauss's major work The Elementary Structures of Kinship (1949) in which he devotes himself to the subject of reciprocity is the '...supreme accomplishment of French anthropology.' (Harris, 1968:489). In this work Lévi-Strauss suggested that it is the gift of women which maintains social solidarity and, furthermore, which resolves the basic dialectic in the structures of the individual mind between self and other. The mental substratum to human life was to become more important to him as his career progressed and as he examined the patterns which were thought to exist at various levels of consciousness as interconnected themes.

Psychological accounts of society and group life such as the theories about the collective consciousness and symbolism advocated by Carl Gustav Jung relied on finding the structures of feelings and emotions which their proponents alleged lay at the bottom of social behaviour. Lévi-Strauss's account of the mental substratum of social life came from a different perspective; it was Cartesian in that it considered the logical categories and binary oppositions by which the human mind builds understanding and makes messages for itself and others. Lévi-Strauss was highly influenced by the models and theories of some of the linguists who were his contemporaries, rather than the psychoanalysts, most notably the phonological structures suggested by the Prague School¹⁵. It can be said that in comparison to the form of structuralism used by the psychoanalysts Lévi-Strauss's type of structuralism is contentless. It is however still a type of functionalist explanation of

¹⁵ Particularly the work of N. Trubetzkoy and R. Jakobson on binary oppositions in sound differences.

society and culture, suggesting that the interconnected themes inherent in the patterns of consciousness reveal a structure to social facts which works to overcome basic human problems. It also emphasises the universal and timeless nature of social and cultural facts and for this reason it is sometimes called 'synchronic functionalism'.

Post-structuralism, objectivity and deep description

A nascent tension can be seen in the work of Lévi-Strauss between trying to find a new objective way to understand society through examining contentless systems and codes and the role of the individual, and the anthropologist, in understanding. On one hand the subject for study is society as a series of codes, signs and terms relayed through social facts. As Catherine Bell points out in a post-structuralist, deconstructionist critique, social science was placed upon a false path by a contradiction in Durkheim's work in which the sacred is understood to be both a social construct and beyond the very social facts it is constructed by (Bell, 1992). The sacred, as a truly social construct, is part of a subjectively empty discursive, terminological relationship in which certain actions, symbols and ideas are privileged instead of others. On the other hand however, when it comes to the structuralist understanding of the processes of understanding subjectivity is heightened for structuralism suggests that instinctive reactions and the reflexivity to be found in the human mind are important, not only within the processes of constructing and using a particular cultural code but also in the processes of understanding a cultural code from the outside. Closely following the Durkeimian tradition Alfred Schutz suggested that the objective understanding of subjective individuals in social interactions was a life-world or a routine pattern, scarcely noticed because it is taken for granted. Furthermore, that it is by a process of typification that individuals work out that which is relevant for a particular situation and act (Schutz, 1962). This line of thinking was continued by Thomas Luckmann and Peter Berger, particularly in their influential book The Social Construction of Reality first published in 1966.

In her understanding of the structuralist method and theory Bell takes up the fundamental subject through which Durkheim developed his conclusions about the sacred: ritual. Ritual, Bell suggests, is first and foremost a process based on a discursive, terminological relationship in which certain actions, symbols and ideas are privileged instead of others. It acts, therefore as part of the construction of meaning and understanding by which social groups and individuals live. Following a similar programme Geertz has suggested that ritual is the primary occasion at which understanding of a groups culture and society can be made because in ritual as at no other time or event symbols can be fully utilised by both observers and participants in two ways. Symbols can assist to formulate conceptions and perceived facts which both act as models *for* shaping moods and motivations and models *of* understanding within a specific framework (Geertz, 1973:90). This fusion of those thoughts and expressions, created moods and given facts accepted by the participants and those accepted by the observers appears to suggest a privileging of the specific fusion between the thought of the observer and the action of the observed (Bell, 1992:25-29). It is from understanding a ritual and its surrounding context which constructs and maintains a symbolic system that both observers and participants grasp an awareness of their world and their place within it. Geertz thus advocates a style of ethnography he calls thick description, borrowing the notion from Gilbert Ryle (Geertz 1973:6). In thick description the researcher attempts to unriddle that which is important and significant in the world of the practitioners by stating and interpreting the flow of social discourse in detail. In this way, especially if the primary focus is placed on the event of ritual as the centrepiece of a social discourse for all involved, the emphasis of an ethnographic description moves away from privileging the objectivity of the observer and towards defining all involved as participants who create meaning through a process of understanding which is subjectively based.

Deep description of the Charismatic movement

The current and authoritative corpus of interpretative works concerning contemporary English religion can be said to be functionalist in theoretical perspective and directed towards issues of social relationships in subject matter. A brief description of a good cross section, arranged in order of date of publication, follows.

Charismatic Renewal: The Search for a Theology authored by Tom Smail, Andrew Walker and Nigel Wright was perhaps the most widely accepted academic investigation of Charismatic Christianity when first published in 1993. It has continued to be popular and underwent a major revision with the addition of two new chapters in 1995. Charismatic Renewal is published by the 'C.S. Lewis Centre' and is an expansion of various papers given at a weekend seminar convened by the Centre for those sympathetic towards the Charismatic movement to meet and discuss some of the theological issues raised by the presence of the Charismatics in English Christianity.

The book has three parts. It begins with a clear statement by each author of their personal journey of involvement with the Charismatic movement and it ends with a discussion of three subjects raised at the seminar as being of particular concern: worship, prophecy and unusual behavioural phenomena. At the centre of the study lies a defensive reflection on the theology of the Charismatic movement in which each author addresses a different subject but ends up discussing issues of power. All three authors conclude that there is a wrong sort of power that is characterised as violent, superior, dramatic and absolute which is sometimes exhibited in the Charismatic movement but that there is also a right sort of power that is loving, self giving and paradoxically weak and this model can also be sustained by Charismatic faith and practice.

Interpreting God and the Postmodern Self. On Meaning, Manipulation and Promise by A.C.

Thiselton was published as a Scottish Journal of Theology monograph in 1995. It is concerned with religion in general and contemporary English religion in particular rather than the Charismatic movement *per se*. Thiselton writes from within the evangelical community which is closely related to, but not the same as, the Charismatic community. He is also professor of Christian theology at the University of Nottingham, Canon Theologian of Leicester Cathedral and a member of the general synod of the Church of England. He writes, not as a specialist in the sociology of religion, but as an authority on the relationship between philosophical hermeneutics and the discipline of theology.

Thiselton begins with an outline of Nietzsche's claim that religion is a self-interested use of manipulation and rhetoric. He goes on to suggest that a theology based around power as self giving love and the weakness of Christ on the cross confirms the Nietzschean charge that Christianity is antagonistic towards life even if it can be proved to counter the Marxian charge that religion is the manipulatory tool of a particular group. The centre of the study is based around a critique of an English form of Christian thinking; The Sea of Faith movement, which has taken up and used the proposals of thinkers who have followed in the tradition of Nietzsche. Thiselton concludes that an acceptable answer to the charge is to be found in a model of power which is characterised as the power of promise that leads to ongoing transformation. This comes from outside the forces which make an individual passive and is based on love which gives in an unconditional and interactive way. Thiselton decides upon this claim by using the presupposition that lessons learnt in the hermeneutics of texts can be transposed to the hermeneutics of selfhood and life.

Martyn Percy published Words, Wonders and Power. Understanding Contemporary Christian Fundamentalism and Revivalism in 1996. At the time of writing Percy was the Chaplain and Director of Theology and Religious Studies at Christ's College, Cambridge. He has since become the Director at the Lincoln Institute for the Study of Religion and Society

based in Sheffield. His 1996 publication takes its place in the spectrum of studies concerned with contemporary Christianity both because it is written by a Church of England cleric who has since become popularly renown for the anti-Charismatic stance he advocated in this particular work and because it concerns a specific part of the Charismatic movement: the theology and practice of John Wimber and the Vineyard movement. He suggests, from a sociological perspective based on the work of Weber and more recently Peter Berger, that power can be used as a principle of coherence around which to assess fundamentalism and concludes that Wimber's view of power is that it is an all controlling force and that this in turn leads to a construction of religious behaviour which completely adheres to the criticisms of religion made by Freud, Marx and Durkheim. Percy's suggestion, like that of Smail, Walker and Wright, is that the more appropriate model of power in Christianity is that of self-giving, love and freedom. Unlike the latter however, Percy finds neither indication nor room for this model in the faith and practice of the Charismatic movement.

The fourth study is that from David Middlemiss published as Interpreting Charismatic Experience, also in 1996. Middlemiss's perspective is unique in that he writes with the very clear statement of intent that he wishes to find out how things really are and to work through his own confusion rather than to justify a previously held position. He is a Baptist minister who became so concerned by the questions raised in his own encounter with the Charismatic movement in pastoral and worship situations that he left local church leadership to examine the issues involved through writing a PhD thesis at Glasgow University. He maintains that this experience turned his whole personal belief system upside down.

Middlemiss's concern lies with philosophy and epistemology. His main theme is the search for criteria by which to assess truth claims of religious experience. He suggests that the Charismatic movement uses the same type of epistemology as the contemporary

particularism of Wolterstorff, Plantinga and Farrer in that it starts from the idea that there are basic beliefs which do not need to be justified but are known to be true. He goes on to discuss the internal inconstancies in this theory and then argues that a better and more reasonable method of validation is a cumulative one which uses a web of arguments to create a synergism.

The final investigation to be discussed here is entitled Charismania. When Christian Fundamentalism Goes Wrong written by Roland Howard and published in 1997. This is the only thesis in this cross-section to come from outside the academic Christian community. Howard is a journalist who specialises in writing about religious sects. He became particularly respected for his first book which was an investigation of the group surrounding the Nine O'clock Service started by St Thomas Crookes, Sheffield (Howard, 1996). Howard uses a journalistic style to describe some of the practices of the Charismatic movement. He then goes on to describe the surrounding cultural context, arguing that the practices of the Charismatic movement fulfil a function for individuals in a society which is changing from being modern to being postmodern. Finally he offers an evaluation of the movement which is highly critical and ends with the recommendation that a good model of Christianity is to be found in the theology of Dietrich Bonhoeffer which advocates a faith entailing weakness and powerlessness in the world.

It can clearly be seen that all five of the above studies revolve around the issues of social relationships and psychological need and the themes of power and truth. One specifically mentions Weber, one Nietzsche, one explicitly directs the exploration towards the truth questions once asked by empiricism and rationalism and one examines the influence on religious expression of a cultural shift away from absolutes and certainty. All come up with answers or suggestions from within the same set of concepts; relationality, interaction, accumulation of accuracy to create truth and power in relation to others which is characteristically weak in some way. And the same Christian theologians appear over and

over again as exemplary; D. Bonhoeffer, R. Niebuhr, J. Moltmann, F. Schleiermacher and J. Edwards.

It has to be also stated however that all of the above studies are also similar in that they are all written by men with an extensive experience of English Christianity. The first four studies are written by men in some form of leadership role in the English Church, Howard's personal faith position remains undeclared although his comments on the final page of Charismania strongly suggest that he advocates the role of the church as one of challenging individuals and society. It can certainly be said that there is not a popular and authoritative study of the Charismatic movement in England written by a non-Anglo-Saxon, a female or an objector to the Christian faith. All of the above authors therefore may situate their interpretations of contemporary forms of English Christianity slightly differently but all of their interpretations come from within the same paradigm of understanding. It can also be said that all the major studies of the Charismatic movement in England to date belong, to a large extent, to the Christian community¹⁶.

This thesis responds to this corpus of work by switching the focus, following the participant-orientated theoretical basis outlined above and using the emphasis placed upon the part ritual events play in constructing and maintaining a terminological discourse in which meaning is created. Of course, the workings of social relationships play a part in this meaning creation and of course, as has already been pointed out, to create meaning can be said to be the function or purpose of a group's existence. However, this switch of focus is driven not by a desire to do away with explanation and the issue of social relationships all together but by an attempt to place the emphasis upon a construction in

¹⁶ At the time of writing the most recent study is a collection of papers published by Macmillan and edited by three sociology lecturers from the University of Reading (Hunt et. al., 1997). Although this aims to include contributions from sociologists and those outside the Christian community in the notes on contributors half specifically declared a Christian position. Furthermore, all contributors are male and only one writes from outside the United Kingdom. The study has yet to be widely recognised by the academic community as authoritative.

which the objectivity of the observer is more deprivileged than usual of the participants construction of what they and their fellow participants are all about.

Chapter Three

Description - The History and Social Organisation of the Charismatic movement

A short history of the Charismatic movement 1959-1998

Introduction

In 1959 Dennis Bennett, an Episcopalian Rector at St Mark's in Van Nuys, California, attended a prayer meeting held by some members of his congregation who were interested in the theology and practices of Pentecostalism. Three months later Bennett had a religious experience which he interpreted and explained using the framework and language of the Pentecostal doctrine of Baptism in the Holy Spirit (Bennett, 1971). As others from St. Marks had similar experiences the congregation struggled to stay undivided and detached from the gaze of the religious and secular press interested in the phenomenon which was to become popularly known as the 'Van Nuys Saga'.

The events at St Marks are not to be seen as the source of the English Charismatic movement, even though McBain begins his account of Charismatic renewal among Baptists with the statement that the Charismatic movement arrived in Britain in the late 1950s and early 1960s as a migrant from California (McBain, 1997:3). The 'Van Nuys Saga' does however highlight some of the major defining issues involved in the subsequent history of the Charismatic movement: there is the suggestion of a relationship with Pentecostalism, an indication that the Charismatic movement in Britain is part of an international phenomenon, the doctrine of Baptism in the Holy Spirit and the agency of individual church leaders are both given centrality and the charge of controversy from both within and without the established Christian church is present.

In his magisterial study of the origins and early developments of the Charismatic movement in Britain Hocken draws attention to the fact that Pentecostal Christians played an important part in its origins (Hocken, 1997:156). In a similar vein Walker suggests that the immediate precursors of Restorationism are the classical Pentecostal movements of the Apostolic Church, Elim and the Assemblies of God, although he is careful to preface this with the assertion that Restorationism has twin theological roots in the Irvingites and the Brethren of the Nineteenth Century and to summarise his thoughts with a diagram which incorporates other sectarian and non-sectarian forms of input into the contemporary form of the movement (Walker, 1998:228-267). Hocken also expresses the same caution as Walker in drawing a direct cause and effect line from Pentecostalism to Charismatic Christianity, suggesting that the diversity in the movement's British origins proves that its emergence '... can in no way be attributed to human planning.' (Hocken, 1997:157).

Walker's contribution to the recording of the history of the Charismatic movement is, of course, specific in its focus upon Restorationism. Hocken's study is also specific in that it has a cut off date of 1965. By using this specificity both circumvent the problem of writing a history of a movement which is so diverse in its nature not just in its origins that Walker is of the opinion that in its current state of fragmentation the term 'movement' is perhaps an overstatement. As has already been stated this study also seeks to circumvent the problem of the diverse nature of the Charismatic movement by sustaining an argument that at the very centre of its nature lies a characteristic form of worship. However, such behaviour takes place in both a historical and social context which bears two important characteristics. The first is that the movement has been, and is, event led, rather than idea led. As putting worship at the very centre of an understanding of the movement indicates action is privileged over and above words. Secondly, a contributory factor and indeed effect of the diversity of the movement is that certain historical events and social characteristics are owned by many self-identifying Charismatics as important to their sense of Charismatic identity regardless of the specific grouping within the movement to

which the event or characteristic belongs. This chapter seeks to explore the history and social organisation of the Charismatic movement therefore with both of these characteristics in mind.

Pentecostalism and Baptism in the Holy Spirit

Hocken's work successfully traces the role Pentecostal behaviour, doctrine and leaders played in the emerging British Charismatic movement and there is no need to repeat all the detail that he has provided here. However, it is important to consider certain themes which he draws attention to.

Firstly, Hocken's whole way of collecting (although not recording) his data emphasises the nature of the emerging Charismatic movement as one characterised by oral spirituality and a coherence built upon a network of friendships¹⁷. The importance to the start of the movement of the invitation only conferences organised by David G. Lillie and Arthur Wallis at Exmouth in 1961, Belston in 1961 and Mamhead Park, Exeter in 1963 and the series of conferences organised by the Evangelical Divine Healing Fellowship beginning at High Leigh in Hertfordshire cannot be overestimated. In the case of the former although the specified topic of concern was ecclesiology and the church an underlying theme was that of the contribution the power and the gifts of the Holy Spirit would make to a renewed church. In the case of the latter the expressed theme was that of healing although, again, there was a public Charismatic character to much of the substance of the meetings.

¹⁷ This is as equally true of Walker's work on Restorationism. A point can be made here concerning the access such writers have to the sources of information. It needs to be stated that the level at which they can and do interact with events and people who are their contemporaries is somewhat different to the level at which the next generation of scholars, i.e. the author of this thesis, interacts with the same information. Not least in the sense that much of the factual data which they take for granted because it is part of their personal memory store is data which scholars born after the Charismatic movement began can only read accounts of.

Secondly, Hocken draws attention to the fact that many of the people involved in these emerging networks at the most can be said to have come from outside both the Pentecostal denominations and outside other English historic denominations and at the least can be said to have not wanted to be identified wholly with mainstream Pentecostalism. Cecil Cousen, whose sermons and talks figured highly at the above mentioned conferences, was a Pentecostal leader in the Apostolic Church. However, in 1953 he was denounced by the Apostolic leadership because of his emphasis upon the life and power of the Holy Spirit evidenced in the restoration of the ministries of apostles and prophets, deliverance, Baptism in the Holy Spirit, spiritual gifts, signs and wonders and opposition to human organisation in church structures (Hocken, 1997:6-8). The conferences in Devon were primarily driven by a group of leaders with backgrounds in the Brethren movement - David G. Lillie, Sidney Purse and Arthur Wallis. As such they were interested in the Pentecostal experience in a brethren framework and emphasised the necessity of the individuals relationship with God¹⁸. Walker particularly emphasises the growing part Wallis was to play in the creation and maintenance of Restorationism, claiming that the death of its father figure in 1988 was a watershed moment for the movement (Walker, 1998:368-371). During the late 1950s two well known figures, Campbell McAlpine and Denis Clark moved back to England from the mission field in South Africa. Both men had been strongly influenced by the East African Revival and were to become highly respected father figures among the new and upcoming generation of national leaders with an interest in Brethren theology and Pentecostal types of experience¹⁹. Finally, Hocken points out that several people involved in the growing movement in the mid-sixties regarded Edgar Trout as the key figure of that period (Hocken, 1997:31). Trout had been a fully accredited Methodist lay preacher since 1935 but following his own experiences of being

¹⁸ It can be argued that the predominance of male leadership in the Charismatic movement comes directly from this early influence of Brethren theology which places high value on biblical injunction that women should not be church leaders or teachers.

¹⁹ The East African Revival began in Rwanda in 1936 although the impact of its teaching and practice was not to be seriously felt in England until the 1950s when some of its adherents died as martyrs in the uprisings in Kenya. See page 53.

healed after a car crash in April 1956 and experiencing Baptism in the Holy Spirit at a local Pentecostal meeting place in 1958 his ties to local Methodism lessened and he built up an interdenominational Charismatic house church fellowship known as the All For Christ Fellowship.

The example of Trout points out another characteristic of the role of Pentecostalism in the emerging Charismatic movement. It was filtered through the experience of Baptism in the Holy Spirit rather than any attraction felt towards Pentecostal ecclesiology or doctrine. The content of such an experience will be discussed below²⁰. However, it is important to notice that in placing the emphasis upon an experience which happens to individuals the stage was set for the emerging movement to be understood as ecumenical and boundary traversing. Certainly, as Walker points out the three leading proponents from the Brethren movement - Wallis, McAlpine and Clarke - set the tone of the movement through their independent and itinerant travels around the country (Walker 1998:57).

If the central theme taken from the Pentecostal denomination was an experience it is however safe to say that its effect of ecumenism was no more promoted than by one Pentecostal leader - David du Plessis. Du Plessis was a second generation Pentecostal whose Christian career was dominated by the fulfilment of a spontaneous prophecy concerning his role in the furtherance of the Kingdom of God given by another Pentecostal leader, Smith Wigglesworth (Hocken, 1997:2). By 1950 du Plessis was well known among Pentecostals, a decade later he was to take this influence and use it to promote the growing revival among non Pentecostal Christians within the Pentecostal ranks and also to help the non Pentecostals become more integrated and well known within the wider, international Christian culture. In this he was supported by the Pentecostal historian Donald Gee. Both men attended Vatican II and the Faith and Order Commission of the

²⁰ See pages 152-156.

World Council of Churches at St Andrews, Scotland in 1960 as observers. By 1963 du Plessis was visiting England predominantly to talk with Anglican leaders. His emphasis upon the importance of the ecumenical movement for those for whom tradition remain important was particularly inspiring in this context.

Evangelicalism and prayer for revival

Although the term 'evangelical' had been in use since the Sixteenth Century as a proper name and the Evangelical Alliance had existed in Britain since 1846 it had only achieved status as an international label for a type of Christianity with the formation of the American National Association of Evangelicals in 1942 (McGrath, 1993:11-14). Their aim was to distance themselves from a group known as the Christian Fundamentalists by applying the tenets of evangelical theology with more moderation. In America the decisive issue was that of the literal interpretation of the bible, particularly as it effected the belief in evolution. This was never a central issue in England and therefore the lines of definition were drawn in different places and the application of evangelical theology had taken a different course. Christian fundamentalism has come to be a label occasionally used within the English Christian culture to refer to those with an evangelical theology and more separatist practices. More importantly, the term Evangelical has more readily been used to define a party within the Church of England that is theologically and behaviourally different from the Liberal and the Orthodox parties. During the years directly after the Second World War the number of Evangelicals within the Church of England grew²¹.

English evangelicals both within and outside the Church of England were also attracted to one of the central tenets of the American evangelical culture: proclamation evangelism²².

²¹ At the Islington Clerical Conference in 1957 the chairman Maurice Wood pointed out that Evangelicals were producing more candidates for ordination than any other group (Bebbington, 1989:230).

²² In 1938 the Church of England doctrine commission had started to stress a theological viewpoint focused on judgement, redemption, individual repentance and commitment. These notions form the basis

In 1945 the Church of England Assembly had produced a report entitled Towards the Conversion of England, which, although not greatly received, had called for greater devotion within the churches and had precipitated a large advertising campaign. It also led to a diocesan Mission to London in 1949 inspired by Bishop William Wand. The technique of mass evangelisation however did not really have much success until the arrival of the American evangelical and evangelist Billy Graham in 1954. Graham's crusade at Haringay, London was attended by an estimated 85,000 people in its first week alone (Bebbington, 1989:258-259; Graham, 1997:210-238).

There were other areas of the English Christian culture where evangelicals were also making significant inroads in the 1950s. Camps were held at Iwerne Minster aimed at 'boys from the top' with the purpose of breeding a new generation of conservative-evangelical thinkers and leaders. The Tyndale Fellowship which encouraged evangelical biblical research provided academics with support whilst the Inter-Varsity Fellowship, and its publishing arm Inter-Varsity Press, supported students. In 1950 John Stott was appointed Rector of All Soul's, Langham Place, London at the age of 29. He was to become a, if not the, central figure in world wide Anglican evangelicalism. The British Evangelical Alliance also became more active; for example from 1955 it published a magazine about home mission entitled Crusade. From 1956, Filey near Bridlington became the home of the annual evangelical Christian Holiday Crusade for young people. London, particularly during the Islington Clerical Conference from 1952 to 1961 became the place where Anglican evangelicals met for discussion.

Hocken draws attention to other Pentecostal influences on the growing Charismatic movement in the early 1960s. However, it is arguable that in the English context it was events and attitudes within this expanding evangelical culture which had an equal, if not

superior, part to play alongside the major Pentecostal influences mentioned above. The crucial point about the evangelical culture is that it is centred on a type of individual conversion experience which is understood to be a work of God. The primary concern of those Independents influenced by Pentecostalism - the work of God in sending revival which occurred at an individual level - was therefore also a natural concern of the evangelicals. One set of events stands out as influential in the history of the Charismatic movement and that is the Nights of Prayer for Worldwide Revival which were generated by the Graham Crusade at Harringay in 1954. This interdenominational prayer campaign was organised by George Ingram who was not unaware that by starting regular meetings in 1959 he was feeding from the evangelical corporate memory of the 1859 Ulster Revival (Hocken, 1997:72). Also during 1959 an offshoot meeting of the Nights of Prayer for Worldwide Revival was started to pray specifically for revival amongst Anglicans and this was called Anglican Prayer for Revival.

The Prayer for Revival campaign occasionally held its meetings at All Soul's, Langham Place which was home for Michael Harper, one of the major players in the story of the Charismatic movement's move towards greater coherence in the mid and late 1970s. Harper was curate at All Souls at the time when John Stott was the incumbent. In 1963 while preparing a series of talks on Ephesians Harper had an experience which he later described as Baptism in the Spirit. However, in July 1964 Stott spoke out publicly against just such a post-conversion experience of the Spirit and Harper felt compelled to resign his curacy (Harper, 1965). The press coverage of the story again highlighted the tensions involved in dealing with new religious experiences in a church community. More importantly however for the history of the Charismatic movement by September 1964 Harper had set up the Fountain Trust. This organisation was to be perhaps the most significant factor in drawing diverse people together to form the Charismatic 'movement'. The Fountain Trust organised conferences and meetings and published the widely read

magazine Renewal whilst encouraging Charismatics to stay firmly within their own traditions and denominations²³.

Hocken suggests that it is important that Harper's experience was interpreted slightly differently to the interpretation given to the similar experiences reported by the Independents mentioned above (Hocken, 1997:76). As a 'Pentecostal evangelical' Harper and those around him interpreted his experience using the framework of the beginning of a worldwide revival, rather than as a continuation of the Pentecostal movement or a spontaneous act of God's grace.

All Souls still holds a prominent place in the world of Anglican Evangelicalism and news of events there still spread fairly quickly throughout the English Christian world. All Souls also provides a longstanding connection between Anglican Evangelicals and Non-Conformist Evangelicals. This is no more true than of the part played in the story of the growing Charismatic movement by the relationship between All Souls and Westminster Chapel, John Stott and Martyn Lloyd-Jones. The latter was an Independent in ecclesiology and theologically a neo-Puritan who gained widespread respect in the post-war years through the interdenominational meetings for ministers known as the Westminster Fellowship and through his expository preaching at Westminster Chapel, London²⁴. Throughout 1959 'The Doctor' had preached every Sunday on the Ulster Revival and the nature of revival. Harper had therefore written fairly swiftly to him to inform him of his spiritual experience. As Hocken records this was the beginning of fairly regular conversations between the two men (Hocken, 1997:77).

²³ The Trust closed in January 1981 claiming that internal denominational groups such as the Baptist Mainstream were fulfilling its purpose. See page 54-55.

²⁴ The Westminster Fellowship began in 1952.

However, controversy was never far away. At the National Assembly of Evangelicals held in 1968 Lloyd-Jones gave the opening message. It is recorded that he suggested that separation from fellow evangelicals rather than separation from liberals was schism and then went on to ask evangelicals to leave their churches and denominations if they contained self-confessed liberals. As he sat down dramatically and unbidden Stott stood up and opposed him²⁵. Interestingly, Lloyd-Jones and Stott were also to argue over the doctrinal issue of Baptism in the Holy Spirit. Stott considered it to be an experience of conversion whilst Lloyd-Jones had greater sympathy for the view that it was a separate, post-conversion experience (Lloyd-Jones, 1984).

Lloyd-Jones was obviously uncomfortable with the direction in which the ecumenical movement was moving, and he was not alone among evangelicals in his concerns. A second grouping centred around the denominational Revival Fellowships, the largest of which was the Baptist Revival Fellowship formed in 1938. Under the leadership of Theo Bamber from Ryer Lane Baptist Church, Peckham the average attendance at Baptist Revival Fellowship meetings was approximately three hundred and fifty²⁶.

Both the circle around Lloyd-Jones and the members of the Revival Fellowships, many of whom participated to some degree in the life of the Westminster Fellowship, emphasised a call for deep personal renewal and local revival long before the influence of the Nights of Prayer for Worldwide Revival meetings took hold (Bamber, 1921; Brown, 1921). To those who favoured Charismatic beliefs and practices Lloyd-Jones expositions on the issue of Baptism in the Spirit often added respectable weight to their polemics whilst in return he gained some support for his anti-ecumenism.

²⁵ The Church of England Newspaper called such a plan 'harebrained' (28/10/1966:5) and Lloyd-Jones, although retaining the respect of the people for his preaching, gained a reputation for being a separatist in ecclesiology.

²⁶ Information concerning the B.R.F. has been kindly supplied by Rev. A. Steen one of the leading figures in the group at the time of the Baptist Union controversy and the current B.R.F. secretary.

As the Charismatic movement began to gather pace however the Baptist Revival Fellowship began to split over the issue of whether or not the religious experience Charismatics were reporting, which was validated as orthodox by Lloyd-Jones' teaching, was actually the revival they had longed for or something completely different. The Baptist Revival Fellowship had a reputation within the Baptist Union for being Charismatic, so much so that their reservations over the ecumenical initiatives in the Union were thought to be synonymous with their Charismatic convictions²⁷. By the time the ecumenical issue came to a head within the Union in the guise of a doctrinal argument about the two natures of Christ there were many self-confessed Charismatics within its own ranks who were not members of the Baptist Revival Fellowship. The latter were to leave the Baptist Union over the doctrinal disagreement, leaving plenty of Charismatics in its ranks, and then they subsequently split internally over the definition of revival so that those remaining in the Baptist Revival Fellowship were the non-Charismatics²⁸.

Pentecostals and Catholics

By the summer months of 1964 a significant number of priests from the sacramental wing of the church had also come forward saying they had experienced something which they interpreted using the Pentecostal framework. In February, and then again in June, Michael Harper hosted residential conferences at Stoke Poges, Buckinghamshire for such leaders. The cross-section of Christendom invited and present was considerable. At the June conference the range included Independents, Evangelical Anglicans, Anglo-Catholics,

²⁷ In light of this it is interesting that in later years one of the most widely used arguments for Charismatic practice and theology is that it is a form of Christianity which positively encourages ecumenism at a grass roots level.

²⁸ The Michael Taylor controversy of 1971 concerned the two natures of Christ and was one of the biggest crises for the Baptist Union of the decade. Its controversy sprang from Taylor's variance with the Christological clause in the Union's Declaration of Principles which was fundamental to the internal discussions concerning joining the Lloyd Jones anti-ecumenism campaign. (McBain, 1997: 49-62). See also page 148.

Methodists, Baptists, Church of Scotland ministers and those who claimed to be 'Broad Church' in their theology and practice (Hocken, 1997:118-119).

The role of du Plessis in the growing dialogue between Catholics and Pentecostals driven by individuals attempting to make sense of the burgeoning reports of experiences of Baptism in the Holy Spirit has been made clear by Hollenweger (1997:166-180). A vital role was also played by an American Pentecostal lay organisation called the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International which was ecumenical and international enough in style for Catholics to attend comfortably. On the international scale, as Hollenweger points out, the breakthrough in the relationship between Pentecostalism and Catholicism came in 1966-67 when several Catholic laymen from the faculty of Duquesne University in Pittsburgh met and concerned themselves with the problems of renewal (Hollenweger, 1997:153-154).

From 1972 onwards formal dialogue between Catholics and Pentecostals took place in four quinquennia and Hollenweger, with his primary focus on Pentecostalism, suggests that '.... the new ecumenical climate among Pentecostals, especially in America, is due in part to this dialogue.' (Hollenweger, 1997:180). From the point of view of the English Christian culture, that such a dialogue was occurring, and that du Plessis and members of the Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship made repeated visits to the country, obviously forwarded the inclusion of a Catholic element within the consolidating English Charismatic movement.

Importantly also to Catholics, as Hollenweger from his wider perspective suggests, was the character of the Charismatic experience as an ecumenical phenomenon. This perhaps, especially so in the context of the sense of expectation the Vatican II Council of 1962-65 had aroused. Two points are crucial. Firstly, that as Hollenweger rightly points out, Catholic Pentecostalism has a tendency to accept the Pentecostal experience without its doctrinal

articulation and then fit the experience into their received theological tradition (Hollenweger, 1997:156). Such an attitude and exegetical practice obviously in turn aids the ecumenical nature of the Charismatic movement. Secondly, it is perhaps important to highlight that Hocken, the writer of the major thesis on the origins and early development of the Charismatic movement in Britain, is a Roman Catholic Priest. Thus, the standard text on the early history of the movement is, for many, filtered through a Catholic perspective.

Restorationism

In 1965 the Independents in Devon held their own invitation only conference at Herne Bay. Walker suggests that it was at this conference that the split began between those who had experienced something of a Pentecostal nature who wished to remain within their denominations and those who felt this to be a compromise (Walker, 1998:56). It was the start of the Restorationist story and although, as Walker points out, the story of the Restorationists was pushed to one side by the successes of the ever growing Charismatic movement in mainline denominations, Restorationism was, and still is, crucially important to the profile of the Charismatic movement in England (Walker, 1998:59).

There are two important but diverse incidents which took place in 1971. The first is that of the Festival of Light; a series of semi-spontaneous events emphasising the need for more morality in the country which culminated in a rally and march in central London. There is no knowing how many of the participants would have chosen the label Charismatic to define their faith however, the mass demonstrations did feature Charismatic style worship and behaviour, and thus the magnitude of the movement became public. The second was a private meeting, called by Arthur Wallis, of the seven of the ten or so national leaders of the emerging Charismatic movement who were committed to the doctrine of the restoration of the New Testament pattern of church structures. The seven began to speak of themselves as 'The Magnificent Seven' and by the

time of the next meeting their ranks had swelled and they had become 'The Fabulous Fourteen'. The discussions about church structures and the institution of apostles developed so much that at this second meeting the fourteen leaders made a multilateral commitment to each other in line with the hierarchical ecclesiology of apostles, prophets, evangelists and teachers.

There are two fundamental themes which are important to the growth of the Charismatic movement that came out of the history and experiences of Restorationism. From the late 1960s onwards house churches with a Charismatic and obviously often Restorationist intent had begun to appear throughout Britain, spontaneously started by Christian leaders who had experienced something of the ongoing Charismatic movement. These provided the space and opportunity for individuals to belong to non-denominational, often radical and exciting groups in which they could be as freely Charismatic as they wished. It also gave the leaders the opportunity to lead and try out different styles of leadership. The availability of such opportunities cannot be overestimated.

The second theme relates to an argument which was totally internal to Restorationism and yet which had a wider impact upon the Charismatic movement as a whole. In 1976 one loose confederation of leaders from within the fourteen split with the rest. That this was as much a clash of style and personality as it was an ideological disagreement is well documented (Walker, 1998:88-108; Hewitt, 1995:187-188). The split was acrimonious and had a long-lasting effect. John Noble later hinted at the wider impact this leadership split had:

'The division undoubtedly broke our strength as a group together, but a positive result of this was that in a strange way the blessing and revelation that we had received became available to a wider body of

God's people. If we had remained together, there might have been a strength that would have polarised and alienated a lot of other people.'(Hewitt, 1995:188).

At the heart of this impact and at the heart of the division lay an unprecedented use of resources. Fullness magazine had been the official voice of Restorationism in the 1970s until Restoration was published by Bryn Jones and others in 1975. Bryn Jones was highly successful at both the Lakes Bible Week in 1975 and the Dales Bible Week in 1976. Building on this success Jones and others set up a commercial enterprise called Harvestime in 1977, based in Bradford. This organisation published various books and musical compilations and it also distributed all kinds of Christian merchandise such as bible covers and posters. The Dales Bible Week was reorganised in 1983 into regional and residential conferences however, alongside the Downs Week started by Terry Virgo in the late 1970s, it remained a showcase for the culture of Restorationism. As Walker points out, through these conferences and the Harvestime organisation the culture of Restorationism, and its version of Charismatic faith and practice, became more accessible; the books, the consumer goods and, most importantly, the music, began to flow into the historic denominations (Walker, 1998:59-60).

Charismatic consolidation

A decade after the occurrence of the first spiritual experiences which had been described as 'Pentecost beyond Pentecost' (Hocken, 1997:127), the process of reflection was well underway. The theme of revival was still a major issue for preaching and teaching and this was particularly motivated by news of the East African Revival. During the 1960s and the 1970s Roy Hession worked throughout England to promote the message of the Revival and this culminated each year in teaching conferences held at Southwold on the Norfolk coast. The East African story was yet another example of a type of Christianity which

emphasised an individualistic and experiential blessing²⁹. In 1978 David Watson, the vicar of a well respected Charismatic Church of England; St Michael-le-Belfrey, York published a communitarian manifesto entitled I Believe In The Church as a reflection of practices inspired by the Charismatic attempt to return to New Testament church structures. Communities which pooled resources, following the pattern of the church structure recorded in Acts, existed in the form of the Post Green Community at the home of Sir Thomas and Lady Lees at Lytchett Minster in Dorset, the Methodist group the Sisters of the Way and the Baptist Jesus Fellowship, a description of which can be found below³⁰. Theological and spiritual reflection was also expressed through the creative arts. The worship group of St Michael-le-Belfrey, known as the 'Fisherfolk' made a wealth of new songs and choruses and a style of worship led by guitars available. St Michael's also generated its own full time theatre company called Riding Lights. Around the country individuals made colourful banners to decorate church buildings and set up craft and coffee shops. In 1967 the company Word UK was formed to produce and distribute music which mimicked the musical styles of the secular world. This made stars of Keith Green, Larry Norman and of course there was the inimitable Cliff Richard.

Serious theological reflection was also taking place inside the historic denominations. In 1971 the first Charismatic conference sponsored by the Catholics took place in Roehampton. In 1972 as the influence of the Fountain Trust grew the Methodists set up an internal group called Dunamis and began to publish a newsletter of the same name specifically designed to keep Methodists up to date with the ongoing events of the new movement. In 1976 a group of evangelical ministers gathered at Millmead for a 'think tank' conference organised by David Pawson of Guilford. For those within the Baptist Union this

²⁹ Hession's teaching also emphasised two other elements which were later to become important to the theology and practice of the Charismatic movement; a type of prayer which repetitiously invoked the blood of Jesus and contemporary music. The organisers of the conferences at Southwold were among the first groups to produce recordings of the music used in meetings alongside recordings of the messages given to be sold to the general public.

³⁰ See pages 96-112.

was followed up by a three day conference at Pilgrim Hall in Uckfield in May 1977 entitled 'Let My People Grow'. The subject of the conference was to explore matters of life and faith from a Charismatic perspective however, the reformation of the life of Baptists from inside the Union soon became apparent as an underlying agenda. Accordingly, at the 1979 Baptist General Assembly the group Mainstream was launched. This was not by any means wholly Charismatic in orientation however, tension concerning a Charismatic appropriation of Mainstreams aims and practices has existed and been worked out in its publications and conferences right from the start (McBain, 1997:108-114). In 1979 the British Council of Churches held a consultation in conjunction with the Fountain Trust on the renewal (Walker, 1998:110).

By 1978 some 80% of those training at the Anglican St John's Nottingham for ordination were Charismatics³¹ whilst by 1979 it was estimated that 10% of all Anglican clergy had had some sort of Charismatic experience (Bebbington, 1989:246) and in the same year the British Council of Churches produced a report on the renewal. In 1978 Anglican Charismatics held a conference immediately prior to the Lambeth bishops conference. At the final Eucharist of Lambeth twenty five bishops led a dance round the communion table in Canterbury Cathedral. This action snatched the secular and Christian newspaper headlines and it also sums up the crux of the impact of the Charismatic movement in the 1970s on the culture of English Christianity. That which had begun to stand out was not the religious experience of Baptism in the Holy Spirit but a new type of religious expression which was physical, holistic and spontaneous.

Bebbington suggests that it was during the 1970s that evangelicals in Britain began to lose their suspicion of involvement in social issues, partly driven by the recovered sense of confidence they had expressed at the National Evangelical Anglican Conference in Keele in

³¹ 'England, Spirit of Renewal' Anglicans For Renewal 1982 (Autumn):7:148

1967, partly in response to the sheer weight of international social need and partly because of an ideological move towards a more optimistic view of the future (Bebbington, 1989:263-267). The growth of the Charismatic movement and the influence of its values and attitudes also played a part.

There are two major arenas in which evangelicals have filtered the Charismatic experience, an annual conference known as Spring Harvest and the Evangelical Alliance, both of which partly owe their Charismatic character to one man: Clive Calver.

Spring Harvest began in 1979 directly as an initiative of two men, Peter Meadows and Clive Calver but was supported by the organisation British Youth for Christ and the magazine Buzz. Meadows is on record as stating that Spring Harvest took a committed Charismatic stance right from the start (McBain, 1997:138). However, it is also a major characteristic of Spring Harvest to attempt to bridge the gap between Charismatic evangelicals and non-Charismatic evangelicals. The ensuing two way sympathy and tolerance is perhaps one of the major reasons why Spring Harvest is now the largest conference of its kind in Europe attracting some 70,000 participants each year (McBain, 1997:135).

Clive Calver was appointed to the office of General Secretary of the Evangelical Alliance in 1983 with the expectations that he could fulfil the need for a leader who was a skilled broadcaster and communicator who could also preach, teach and be a diplomat in both the established denominational networks and the new churches that were developing out of Restorationist faith and practice. Since his appointment the Alliance has gone through a period of growth, reaching an annual growth rate of some twenty five percent (McBain, 1997:133-134). There is no doubt that the informal links with Spring Harvest as a 'showcase' for the Alliance's values has been of substantial mutual benefit. Calver stepped down as General Secretary of the Evangelical Alliance in 1997 and went to America (Capon,

1997a: Calver, 1997). Although the new General Director, Joel Edwards promptly set about a consultation process initiated by the production of a 'Millennium Manifesto' the relationship between Charismatic and non-Charismatic evangelicals can probably be said to be now well founded and stable.

The Restorationist movement continued to grow numerically throughout the 1980s. Walker suggests that the growth peak of the movement occurred in the mid 1980s and is represented by an overall figure of 70,000 (Walker, 1998:390). Rather than numerical growth Walker suggests that the major issue Restorationism faced in the 1980s was not how big or small it would become but the direction it would take; either into the centre of British Christendom or towards a sectarian enclave (Walker, 1998:126). In the context of what was occurring in the rest of British Christendom this is interesting. The established historic denominations were not growing, for example, in 1987 the Baptists alone among the Free Churches reported growth³². But the number of evangelicals already within the Churches was growing. In 1986 more than half of the ordinands in Anglican colleges were said to be Evangelical (Bebbington, 1989:270). In the same year Michael Whinney became an advisor to the Anglican Renewal Movement which had been set up in 1981. He was the second Charismatic bishop³³. In 1987 George Carey, sympathetic to evangelicalism and some reported also to the Charismatic movement, was consecrated to the See of Bath and Wells. It appears that a major theme at this time was the mindful consideration of theological and spiritual options.

This theme also ran through the public face evangelicalism presented to the world. Mission England ran from 1982 to 1985 and was predominantly orientated around the tried and tested ministry of Billy Graham. Graham held crusades throughout 1984 and 1985, culminating in Sheffield in 1985. Large venues were rented and the latest technology was

³² Baptist Times 31/12/1987:7.

³³ Richard Hare, Suffragan Bishop of Pontefract being the other.

used to relay the meeting to as many national locations as possible. At the 1954 Haringay crusade and the less well known 1966-67 crusade this had been a radio/telephone cable link up but in 1985 many church centres housed their first ever satellite broadcasts (Graham, 1997:637-38). Mission England's unapologetic mission statement suggested that one of its secondary purposes was Christian unity. For that reason it published a songbook of hymns and choruses called Mission Praise which is still highly popular and has become a symbol of less traditional worship. In 1989 Graham again visited London this time with his 'Life' campaign.

McBain suggests that this attitude of thoughtful consideration was also one which permeated the Baptist Union during the 1980s (McBain, 1997:108). Two of the leading Charismatic proponents, Douglas McBain himself and Nigel Wright, were to seriously challenge the Union with their ideas concerning the Charismatic notions of covenanted relationships and apostolic ministry, but the challenge was never strong enough to cause a major split. As the decade drew to a close leaders who were accommodating to renewal but not Charismatic extremists took over key positions in the Union. By 1988 Paul Beasley-Murray had taken over as principal of the Baptist training institution, Spurgeon's College. Equally importantly the career of David Coffey was advancing. Union President in 1986 and Secretary for Evangelism from 1988 he was appointed as General Secretary in 1991. Coffey began the consolidation of the serious examination of the notions of spiritual renewal and structural change in the Union. His work received a great amount of support and furtherance from Derek Tidball who was appointed President in 1990. By 1998 however the predominance of this kind of negotiated compromise with the extreme Charismatic position came full circle as McBain himself accepted the Presidency and worked towards greatly furthering Coffey's project.

Finally it must also be stated that the publication of Walker's study of the House Church movement in 1985 helped many both within and outside the movement to seriously rethink their position and opinion of the Charismatic movement (Walker, 1998:344)

A renewal movement

Walker states in reference to Restorationism: '... by 1976 - despite the division - a new radical Christianity had become established in Great Britain.' (Walker, 1998:108). From what has been suggested above it is also true to surmise that this statement holds as true for the Renewalist form of the Charismatic experience as it does for Restorationism. This new form of Christianity however much a permanent fixture in the English Christian culture has, to date, kept its radical, innovating edge.

A new musical style and the public demonstration of worship had always been a major feature of the movement. It is perhaps true to say that this bred both an attitude of confidence and heightened the sense of evangelistic fervour. Throughout the late 1980s and 1990s one way in which this was symbolised was through the March for Jesus events. March for Jesus began in 1986 with a public march of Christians through London organised by a group of four friends all leaders in the Charismatic culture (Kendrick, 1992:20-22). In 1987 the number of participants had reached an estimated 15,000 (Boston, 1997). By the time of the next march in May 1988 that number had swelled to a dramatic 55,000. In 1989 Kendrick and others marched across England geographically making a cross sign as part of Youth With A Mission's 'Target 2000 International Torch Run'. The march culminated in a major event in London and in corresponding marches in major cities across the country. The marches were linked by a ceremony transmitted by land-lines and by a common script. An estimated 200,000 joined in nation-wide. In May 1992 half a million Christians marched across Europe and North America. March For Jesus continues to the present day, is phenomenally successful and highly Charismatic in style. It is organised so that marchers

can pray and sing as they march. Their aim is to change the spiritual atmosphere as they march, not just to witness to their faith³⁴. Since 1988 much of Kendrick's very popular music has been produced under the banner organisation of 'Make Way Music'. For the 1989 march Kendrick released the song 'Let the Flame Burn Brighter' which he also promoted through the secular charts. By 1991 the marchers were using a totally new package of tailor made songs called 'Crown Him'. Kendrick is also the author of 'Shine, Jesus Shine' (1987) - a song which was to become not only associated with March for Jesus but is perceived by many to be the theme tune of Charismatics in the late 1980s³⁵.

The 1990s had been dedicated as a Decade of Evangelism after the 1989 English Church Census had portrayed worrying levels of denominational church attendance in the English population. The March for Jesus organising committee responded with the 'Challenge 2000' initiative, which they run in conjunction with the international DAWN strategy which has the aim of 'discipling the whole nation'. The major premise of the DAWN strategy is one suited to Charismatics in mainline denominations because its plan is centred on the encouragement of church growth through traditional denominational distinctives, whilst retaining an overall network of groups working towards the same goal. In the terms of Challenge 2000 that goal is 'twenty per cent of the population attending church by the end of the twentieth century by planting 20,000 new churches' (Kendrick, 1992:123-25).

The impact of the innovating spirit of the Charismatic movement on fervour for evangelism can also be seen in the growth of the use of the Alpha initiative and different styles of church services in order to attract converts. Alpha was started at Holy Trinity Brompton in 1977 by Charles Marnham. It is a ten week course introducing the Christian faith to people outside the church. In 1991 there were four Alpha courses running

³⁴ See pages 130-131 for a discussion of this sort of worship and its place in the practice of 'March for Jesus' events.

³⁵ See page 158.

attended by six hundred people. By 1996 under the leadership of Nicky Gumbel an estimated two hundred and fifty thousand people had attended one of five thousand courses run across the globe³⁶. The Alpha course is Charismatic in orientation; halfway through the course there is a residential weekend at which the doctrine of Baptism in the Spirit and the practice of using spiritual gifts is introduced. It is a commercial and professionally run interest which incorporates a recognisable logo, training manuals and conferences and scripts or videoed lectures as a teaching resource. Its material is protected by the imposition of strict copyright law which allows little room for local adaptation.

At Birmingham in 1992 the Willow Creek organisation held its first conference in the United Kingdom. Willow Creek is a large and growing suburban church in Chicago under the leadership of Bill Hybels who puts its success down to its use of 'seeker friendly services'. These emphasise drama and contemporary music and, rather than incorporating a sermon, they have a presentation which is aimed at responding to peoples questions about life and relationships. The church itself also works to a mission statement. Some churches in Britain took over the Willow Creek model completely and some tried experimenting with bits of it (Robinson, 1992) .

'Alternative services' or 'alternative worship' are again another style of meeting which is demand driven although these are usually aimed at people who are already to some degree aligned with Christianity but who have reservations about stopping within the boundaries of formal religion and wish to express their Christian spirituality in less traditional ways. Usually appealing to the young these services use a mixture of technology, secular rave music, traditional liturgy, Celtic thought and ecological ideology. Until August 1995 the Nine O'clock Service (NOS) that sprang from St. Thomas, Crookes,

³⁶ 'Assessing Alpha - Oratory from Brompton' Church Times 4/4/97:11.

Sheffield was the largest service of this kind and an Anglican showpiece. In the middle of 1995 however a scandal, initiated by the NOS setting up their own Parochial Council, broke. Church leaders outside the NOS had been worried for some time about the emphasis upon creation spirituality within the NOS ideology. This was particularly the case regarding their practice of a Planetary Mass and the friendship of some of the leaders with the alternative theologian called Matthew Fox. As members of the community began to speak out it became apparent that theology was not the only issue. The authoritarian leadership of Chris Brain was seriously questioned alongside allegations of sexual and financial misdemeanours (Howard, 1996). The scandal surrounding NOS has seriously damaged the reputation of alternative services although the Jesus Fellowship Church, the Greenbelt Festival organisers and the Spring Harvest organisers still continue to promote major events of this kind to the mainstream Charismatic and evangelical culture.

The commitment to an attitude of constantly being radical and innovative is as much directed inwards as outwards in the Charismatic movement. It is no surprise that right in the middle of a period that has been described above as one of consolidation and thoughtful consideration a whole new situation was emerging in relation to the Charismatic experience.

On February 18th 1984 one of the senior statesmen of the English Charismatic movement, David Watson, died of cancer. For a movement which holds a belief in divine healing at the very heart of its theology and practice this came as a severe shock and disorientated many. However, support was to come in the person, theology and practice of an American Charismatic leader and personal friend of Watson's called John Wimber.

Watson was an occasional visitor to the Fuller Theological Seminary in California where Wimber was a student and subsequently a teacher. Once whilst there he was encouraged to visit the Christian community Wimber had set up and, impressed by what he saw,

Watson suggested to Wimber that he think about visiting England. Wimber visited a number of Baptist churches and others on an itinerant tour in 1982 however, it was his visits in 1984 to London and particularly in 1985 where he was consciously invited to places outside the London network such as Sheffield which were to attract large audiences and have a wide impact (McBain, 1997:93-95; Gunstone, 1996:23-24). Many attended the 1985 conferences in the full knowledge that Watson had died passionately believing that he would be divinely healed and that Wimber had stood by and supported him, even flying to England specifically to pray for him³⁷. Wimber however continued to emphasise his hallmark belief in the power of God and the existence of miracles conforming to the New Testament pictures of 'signs and wonders'. It was perhaps not his exposition of Scripture and theological defence of his position which had the greatest impact but rather his whole presentation style, not least his use of a 'clinic' or the conclusion of a meeting with the invitation to individuals to be prayed for and experience the power of God.

Theologically Wimber offered the English Charismatics a fairly well thought out and tested understanding of the connection between the behaviour of the church of the New Testament and the behaviour of the contemporary church as well as an understanding of God which emphasised the availability of the power of the Holy Spirit. This gave English Charismatics and, importantly, non-Charismatics a framework in which to theologically talk about some of the issues of renewal. However, Wimber also provided for two other needs the movement had. Firstly, he provided a sense of fresh air for a movement that was at the very most, according to Gunstone, seriously confused and discouraged (Gunstone, 1996:33) and at the very least just tired and bored. It is important to recognise that Wimber arrived on the English Charismatic scene a full twenty years after the first

³⁷ Nigel Wright reports that an understudy of Wimber's made the comment that 'Satan murdered David Watson' on BBC radio shortly after Watson's death (Smail, Walker and Wright, 1993:74) David Pytches tries to clarify the controversy surrounding Wimber's reaction to Watson's death with the suggestion that Watson misunderstood Wimber to be saying that he was healed when, after Wimber had prayed over Watson for the final time, he said "Well, I believe we have done all we were meant to do" (Gunstone, 1996:23).

traces of the Charismatic experience had been reported. Many of the participants, and certainly most of the leaders in the movement, had been worshipping and living in a Charismatic style for a good fifteen years and perhaps needed something more than dancing and raising their arms to keep them excited. The experience of being flat on one's back or shaking with the power of the Spirit which many experienced at Wimber's conferences supplied such a need (Gunstone, 1996:37-38). Similarly, the California rock style songs and choruses which Wimber brought with him were for many a welcome departure from the English Charismatic choruses (Gunstone, 1996:142). Secondly, he provided a very clear example of an attitude of openness to all regardless of theological persuasion and ecclesiology and thus also provided a model of belonging which focused on a central principle radiating towards fluid boundaries. Wright suggests that this was part of Wimber's attraction to Anglicans (Gunstone, 1996:50-51). It could also be said however, that such an example did much to strengthen the Charismatic desire to be a movement within a diverse expression of faith and not to become a faction.

Wimber continued to visit England throughout the late 1980s and 1990s. The first English Vineyard fellowships were established in 1987 and David Pytches, at the encouragement of Wimber, started a new series of festivals or conventions in 1989. These are called 'New Wine' and subsequent offshoots of these are the Soul Survivor conferences for youth and the Lakeside conference which is more teaching orientated. The New Wine conferences are predominantly attended by Anglicans and are very successful (Gunstone, 1996:27). The Vineyard style of church planting which uses a strategy of plant, grow, divide, plant, grow and divide again and the enormous American financial, training and personnel resources available to new English Vineyard groups both contribute to the success of the Vineyard network in England³⁸. From the very beginning Anglicans have been heavily involved in the Vineyard movement; four of the first English Vineyard leaders were originally ordained

³⁸ Wimber first reached international acclaim by teaching a course on the principles of church growth at Fuller Theological Seminary, USA. See pages 120-122.

in the Church of England. For example, David Pytches has planted Vineyard style Independent Anglican Fellowships at various locations around Britain and they remain linked to St Andrew's Chorleywood rather than their Diocesan Bishop (Pytches and Skinner, 1991). In March 1996 John Wimber handed over pastoral responsibility for the English Vineyard network to John and Elli Mumford, a couple from South West London Vineyard who had firm ties with Holy Trinity Brompton.

The growth of Vineyard in England however has not been without its problems. The most notable of these was known as 'The Kansas City Prophets Affair' which took place in 1989 -1990. In 1989 John Wimber met a man called Paul Cain who claimed to be a prophet. Paul Cain soon joined the Kansas City Metro Vineyard under Mike Bickle and became part of a group of six men who all claimed to be prophets. In 1990 David Pytches visited the Church and wrote an account of the Kansas City Prophets which introduced them to the English churches (Pytches, 1990). Cain soon came to England and visited Holy Trinity Brompton where British Church leaders signed a statement affirming his ministry³⁹. In 1991 Cain predicted that revival would break out in England and gave a specific date for its start. John Wimber organised a conference at the London Docklands at the appointed hour. But revival as such did not happen and some began to call Cain a false prophet. Cain left the Vineyard movement over 'unity issues' around the same time as another of the Kansas Six, Bob Jones left due to a scandal over sexual impropriety.

John Wimber continued to visit England, even though his reputation had been severely damaged by the Kansas City Prophets affair. Then in 1993, after years of increasingly bad health, he was diagnosed with cancer. By 1995 Wimber was back in England but eight stone lighter in weight and using a throat spray to speak. During the early 1990s therefore the influence of Vineyard largely shifted focus from the personality of Wimber to the

³⁹ Church Of England Newspaper 27/7/1990:1.

music it produced. Vineyard songbook collections have never really made much impact outside the Vineyard network but individual songs have, particularly through the medium of the services at the major festivals such as Spring Harvest and New Wine. Songs by David Ruis, Kevin Prosch and Brian Doerksen have all entered the mainstream of the English Christian culture⁴⁰. Vineyard Music also produces music tapes which have grown in popularity, particularly the 'Touching the Fathers Heart' series.

Ten years after Wimber first made an impact upon the English Charismatic culture with something new the radical edge of the Charismatic theology and practice was to dramatically reappear again through a Vineyard connection. On Pentecost Sunday, 29th May 1994 Elli Mumford who had just returned from a life changing visit to The Airport Vineyard, Toronto spoke of her experiences and then prayed, requesting God's presence at a service at Holy Trinity, Brompton. Soon many in the congregation were laughing, weeping, dancing and being prayed for (Boulton, 1995:20-24). This continued and the news of suspected revival spread like wildfire through the Christian press and by word of mouth. By the time the secular national newspapers reported the story hundreds had visited Holy Trinity Brompton and Wimbledon Road Baptist Church which had reported examples of similar phenomena. As people returned back to their home churches congregations responded to their tales in like manner, laughing, weeping, laughing, dancing and more besides. The taped version of Elli Mumford's talk on that day had a similar effect and was swiftly copied, recopied and broadcast across the country⁴¹. Many from all over the world went to visit the Airport Vineyard Toronto. By August 1994 The Sunderland Christian

⁴⁰ Perhaps the most notable was 'Refiner's Fire' by Doerksen. 1990 Mercy/Vineyard Publishing.

⁴¹ For example, on 30 July 1994 a very poor quality recording of this message was played at a specially convened meeting at Queensberry Baptist Church, Nottingham. Many in the congregation had been heavily influenced by the teaching of Roy Hession and the stories from the revival in Rwanda, a few were regular participants at Spring Harvest. On that occasion no behavioural phenomena were reported although the minister was to later report a personal Toronto Blessing experience at a visit to Wimbledon Road Baptist and some of the other church members subsequently reported similar experiences occurring at visits to Holy Trinity, Brompton and Spring Harvest. See appendix C.

Centre under the leadership of Ken Gott had become the third English centre for what was becoming known as The Toronto Blessing (Gott and Gott, 1995).

As the numbers of those claiming to have been 'Torontoed' or have done 'carpet time' grew debate raged. For many the problem with The Toronto Blessing was the physical manifestations of the religious experience. Reports circulated of people making animal noises, laughing until they were sore and acting as though drunk. The main opponent was Clifford Hill of the Intercessors for Britain group, who even went as far as to issue a statement against it and set up a telephone helpline for those confused and distressed by it⁴².

The Toronto Blessing continued throughout 1995, although by the end of the year it appeared to have reached its peak and be declining in influence. At the end of November, beginning of December, it became apparent that the Vineyard leadership were not happy with some of the practices at the Airport Vineyard. In the first week of December they asked the Airport Vineyard to leave the Association of Vineyard Churches, which they did. The issues involved centred around theological differences concerning revival. In Britain the news was first greeted with confusion. Part of the reason for this was that some heard the news through highly polemical articles posted on the Internet before any official statement had been made, but most church leaders subsequently supported Wimber and the Vineyard leadership. There have been suggestions that by the end of 1995 when the Toronto Blessing was past its peak some 4,000 congregations in Britain, or 8% of British churches, had some experience of it (Brierley, 1996b:30).

The controversy surrounding the Toronto Blessing continued well into 1996 and has permanently changed many individuals and groups, although this change has largely been

⁴² Baptist Times 13/7/1995:1

incorporated into the existing culture. Certainly within the Baptist Union it has not occasioned many controversies or splits (McBain, 1997:158-165). In December 1997 John Wimber lost his struggle against cancer and although he was to be obviously missed this was not seen as a severe blow to the stability of either the Vineyard movement or the Charismatic movement. Wimber had constantly stressed during his lifetime that the emphasis should be placed not upon his personality but upon the experiential emphasis of the movement he felt he had been used by God to establish (Boulton, 1998).

Conclusion

As McBain has pointed out, it is a feature of the Charismatic movement of the last thirty five years for individuals to throw themselves wholeheartedly into the next new wave of experience and for the subsequent settling down period to take some time (McBain, 1997:160). Such an interpretation of the history of the movement is well summed up in the use of the designations first, second, third and fourth wave where the first wave refers to the Pentecostal antecedents, the second to the early Charismatic movement, the third wave to the signs and wonders ministry of Wimber and the fourth wave to the Toronto Blessing (Walker, 1998:314). As the above comments have attempted to suggest such a dynamic is an understandable characteristic of a movement that understands itself to be about renewal and thus to resist the process of denominationalization and bureaucratization (Hunt et al, 1997:11). That this dynamic of change and decay is a leading characteristic of the movement is not to be confused with the nature of the movement as one to which people 'belong' although the two are related in a complex way. The dynamic certainly encourages a type of belonging Wuthnow has described as a 'new voluntarism' in which individuals pick and choose until they find the religious identity which best suits (Hunt et al, 1997:10).

On the last Saturday in June 1997 nearly 43,000 people gathered in Wembley Stadium for the 'Champion of the World' event. Over a period of six and a half hours approximately one hundred and sixty dancers and musicians took their turn to perform on the large stage surrounded by four huge video screens. The event had taken many years of planning by the Pioneer group of churches under the inspiration of Noel Richards. The Champion of the World event was intended to be a celebration of Jesus Christ yet it also became the biggest showcase of all the elements of the culture of the Charismatic movement to date. Organised by a group with Restorationist roots it attracted people from various denominational and non-denominational, Restorationist and Renewalist groups. All the major leaders and celebrities in the Charismatic movement appeared on the stage. Participants wore specially designed scarves, sang specially commissioned music and subsequently bought the recording of the event. The last couple of hours were given over to a worship time in which new music was mixed with some of the old favourites such as 'Shine, Jesus Shine'. As the Baptist Times reported even the miraculous happened as the rain which was falling all over the country failed to fall over the stadium⁴³. The high point of the event however for many, including the writer of the official report in Renewal, was the appearance on stage of a man who had been involved in the Hebridean revival in the late 1940's and 1950's and his call to pray for another revival (Shearn, 1997). The emphasis given to this one appearance can be seen as symbolic of the self-perception that English Charismatics now have that they are embedded in both the history and the future of English Christianity. More importantly however this one event stands out as a symbol of the nature of the Charismatic movement as both a space in which individuals can both belong and identify with something greater through a constant process of choice and voluntary alliance with parts of something loosely held together and continually experience something new in an orthodox Christian framework. The rest of this

⁴³ 'Wembley lifts Jesus high - and dry!' Baptist Times 3/7/1997:3.

chapter goes on to explore and describe the social characteristics of the movement which make this possible.

The social organisation of the Charismatic movement

Charismatics in England are referred to as a movement and not as a denomination, a church or indeed a sect or splinter group. Those within the movement can be members of denominations, churches, sects or splinter groups. Some of the groups within the movement are themselves referred to as churches without being part of the pre-existing denominations, for example the groups that were once called Restorationist groups are now known as the New Churches. There are no formal procedures to become a member of the Charismatic movement and hence there is no formal membership. There is no Charismatic body of law, instituted code or established creed. Individuals become Charismatics by their personal participation in behaviours, events and beliefs that are defined as Charismatic by the Christian community at large, and most importantly by their experience of a certain type of religious experience. The movement then is a loose affiliation or network of like minded and like experienced individuals. This part of the chapter therefore is broken into two halves. Firstly it outlines the patterns of social organisation that are to be found in the Charismatic movement and secondly it outlines the social mechanisms which make these patterns possible.

Patterns of organisation -the individual and friendship networks

As can be surmised from the historical description given above the basic unit for social classification in the Charismatic movement is that of the individual. However, two models are used to classify individuals, the first is that based around family relationships and the

second is based around age. Charismatics emphasise the morality of 'family values' by which they refer to their belief that a family unit of father who is the main authority and provider, mother who is the main carer, and children living in one location is the most stable structure around which society in general should be based. All other forms of living that do not conform with this are considered to be anomalous to a greater or lesser extent. For example, single Charismatics are positively encouraged to get married and childless married couples are encouraged to find ways to either have children or nurture children⁴⁴. Same gender sexual relationships are considered to be both immoral and deviant although often same gender single people will set up a household together. Most Charismatic events and activities are family friendly if not family orientated and organised meetings are either conducted around the expected presence of children or defined by the fact that children are prohibited from attending. The stereotyping involved in such an ideal is role and gender based. Women are considered to be mothers or potential mothers and therefore care givers whereas men are considered to be fathers, heads of households and therefore decision makers⁴⁵.

Many community activities are organised around the three general groups of children (0-16 years old), young people (17-30) and adults (30+). As qualification for membership in the Charismatic movement is by an individual religious experience it is not unknown for children as young as seven to be eligible for the initiatory rite used in many Christian groups of believers baptism. The status of the elderly is also founded in this standard so that the old are not necessarily given leadership or pedagogic roles.

⁴⁴ In recent years a few Charismatics have begun to tentatively suggest the possibility of a biblical remit for some individuals to take a vow of singleness and celibacy. This is a position found in the Jesus Fellowship Church (see Faire, 1998) and also one sometimes taken by a well known song writer and singer from the Pioneer network, Sue Rinaldi.

⁴⁵ See Larry Christenhom 'God's Order for Family Life'. Bible for Spirit Filled Living pp xxiv-xxv.

Individuals therefore are classified by family position and age and then are organised into a radiating network of informal relational contacts. The main dynamic for this type of organisation is that of friendship relationships. This dynamic occurs on a macro as well as a micro level in that many of the larger groups also form alliances for various purposes on a regular basis that are built on the longstanding friendships of their leaders. In the English Charismatic culture there are two main networks which operate in this manner and which therefore provide one way in which to identify and delineate the position of individual Charismatics. One revolves around the three major organisations involved in March for Jesus; Ichthus, Pioneer and Youth with a Mission and the other revolves around the Vineyard axis involving the Vineyard movement, evangelicals in the Church of England and the Assemblies of God Pentecostals⁴⁶. These are however not exclusive and therefore large networks of allegiance between groups which criss-cross throughout the movement exist. This is also true for individual participants who over a lifetime can build up a huge network of personal contacts and friends from all kinds of groups and all kinds of theological positions within the movement.

The stress on friendship relationships is indicative of the Charismatic assessment that all individuals in the group are understood to be fundamentally equal in status. This is seen in the model used to underpin the division of labour and the accomplishment of tasks. Individuals are assigned to particular tasks because of their ability to perform that task, not because the role or job has an inherent status. The internal organisation of Charismatic groups therefore is often theoretically understood to be sequential or layered without being hierarchical. Some jobs or tasks need to be completed before others, administrators and engineers need to set up locations before musicians and preachers can undertake a meeting. Fundamentally the Charismatic movement is a theocracy, it is organised around

⁴⁶ The latter is an offshoot of a more established network between Vineyard and the Assemblies of God based in North and Latin America.

the rule and direction of God but unlike many other theocracies, Charismatics also hold fast to this set of beliefs concerning the equality of all participants. Although these two concepts are often held together in tension it does lead to a particular quality of relationship between individuals which are typically based around commitments that are chosen and informal, not commitments that in the first place are governed by covenants, promises or ties of cultural expectations and responsibilities.

The dynamic of friendship relationships within the Charismatic movement is primarily driven by an ideological emphasis upon doctrinal opinion as a truth claim and the desire to join together with those of a like mind in order to defend the truth. The movement therefore consists of many different groups each with a slightly different theological conviction or focus and participants in these groups are encouraged and often engaged through the use of persuasive techniques such as spoken rhetoric and visual advertisements. The ability to be persuasive and the exercise of techniques intended for the communication of the commands of God also requires a class of specialists.

Most of the main leaders in the English Charismatic movement have already been named. They are considered to be leaders of the movement because they are leaders within principal groups or organisations within the movement; there are no official offices or titles within the movement itself and no geographical centre at which its leaders are based. All of the twelve or so people who feature heavily as those with accepted authority in the movement are first generation Charismatics, many of whom have been leaders in the culture surrounding the Charismatic movement from before the movement first began. Some of the leaders have wives who are also given this status, not by virtue of their connection to a leader by marriage but because their leadership skills have also been

recognised⁴⁷. These people have high profiles within the culture of the movement, they are household names or celebrities. For example, in relation to Restorationism Scotland cites the occasion when in answer to the question 'what do you get be being a part of New Frontiers?' a local church leader said 'we get Terry Virgo' (Scotland, 1995:80).

In the Restorationist section of the Charismatic movement leaders such as Virgo are called 'apostles'. This title is open to a relatively small group of men in the English Charismatic culture. In terms of function apostles are Charismatic leaders *par excellence*. They are primarily decision makers and supervisors of a given community. They delegate tasks, support and manage others. The tasks of the others of similar status around them are all delineated by a specific function - prophets, evangelists and teachers. Within the wider Charismatic community leaders at a local community level operate very much in line with this model of apostleship. Each leader delegates, manages and supports and in the language of the Christian community they exercise a ministry of pastoral care. This role includes such functions as disciplining, instructing, providing guidance and organisation of resources. It also includes the function of acting as a symbolic figure head for a given community.

The controversy that continues to surround the particular function and place of apostles is primarily based in the concept of authority that the notion carries and the way in which this is worked out in practice. Charismatic apostles have authority because they are recognised by their communities as being gifted with predefined leadership skills. The dynamic involved therefore is a circular one of performance of an action, confirmation of the action as a governing one and validation of the performing individual as a leader. The power of Charismatic leaders therefore is based upon a relational process between

⁴⁷ This is particularly the case for Christine Noble and Faith Forster.

persuasion, influence and consent and acceptance. In practice there are leaders within the Charismatic community whose skills and personal abilities fit into a well predefined role, these are the prophets, teachers, evangelists and it is viable to add to that list musicians and administrators⁴⁸. The boundaries set in place by this provide a distinction between the individual's skills and abilities which are designated as those of a leader and their personal qualities. This is also the case for other forms of leadership in which power is grounded in an office, a title and a predefined role, although many theologians would argue that certain personal qualities are a necessary foundation for the successful exercise of proper Christian leadership in an office. In the case of Charismatic apostles, whose predefined role consists of skills which are particularly abilities of personality such as inspiration and motivation, the distinction is not so easily drawn. Leaders, who are understood to be apostles or who use apostleship as a model of leadership can therefore build up power which rests in their personal qualities.

There is however another facet to the type of authority leaders in the Charismatic movement possess. As Boone has pointed out in her study of fundamentalism, leaders of groups which privilege word over action in their emphasis upon the bible as the Word of God can act like elected dictators in that they are understood to be men of God conveying the words of God which have an inerrant authority (Boone:1989, 85-92). Whilst in the Charismatic movement the understanding of the Bible as the Word of God is perhaps not so centred on the doctrine of inerrancy as it is in the forms of American Christian fundamentalism Boone has studied the principle is still an important one. As well as specialists in rhetoric and persuasion leaders in the Charismatic movement are also considered to be specialists at conveying the Word of God and one of their primary roles

⁴⁸ The fourfold ministry of apostles, prophets, teachers and evangelists has already been drawn attention to on page 52. The inclusion of musicians and administrators is also biblically sanctioned by the use of David as the dominant model of leadership and the theological injunctions of Paul to a variety of communities respectively.

therefore is that of preaching. Thus, although the sense of inerrancy of the Word *per se* may not be transposed to the words spoken and thus to the person speaking, a lesser sense of the importance of the Word and thus of the importance of the words spoken and the person speaking may permeate the relationship between leader and followers. The consequence of this is very similar in the two cases. The leader is invested with an authority of a type which can allow for occasions when its exercise surpasses the procedure of the led giving consent⁴⁹.

The use of the term Charismatic is confusing here because of the difference between its use in a sociological sense and its use in a theological sense. The leaders in the Charismatic movement could be considered to be charismatic persons in the classic Weberian sense of having an extraordinary quality which is thought to give them unique 'magical' power, particularly if this quality is seen as a quantitative uniqueness as well as a qualitative one (Weber, 1963:2). They could also be called charismatic in the sense that they are socially recognised as having a claim to leadership and command a high degree of personal trust and emotional response and in the popular sense of their possession of special flair and glamour (B.R. Wilson, 1975; Wilner, 1984). However, the term needs to be used with care and great definition.

The tension between this model of leadership with its inherent dangers and the notion of the equality of all participants is, as will be seen, played out and managed in the worship

⁴⁹ Many biblical scholars have pointed out that Paul's notion of authority was founded in the belief that authority and power lies totally in the gospel and that his authority as leader was thus based on his commissioning to proclaim that gospel. (J.H. Schutz, 1975). Two points need to be made in relation to this and the description of leadership given above. Firstly, it could be argued that this moves the focus away from the individual's personal abilities as it places the emphasis on the dynamic force which the individual channels. It will be argued however that a major precept in the Charismatic movement is to place as much, if not more, emphasis upon the individual as a channel or a broker of this force. This is primarily made evident in the importance given to the physical, individual manifestations which are part of being this channel (see the following chapter). Secondly, it can be argued that the authority of this force or the gospel lies not in its power as inerrant but in its ability to transform.

arena, when those who can channel the Word of God are given both physical and governing prominence in the community⁵⁰. In other situations where community government is called for, such as the need for community decisions to be made, the tension often remains unresolved. In many Restorationist groups a hierarchical model of leadership with a theocratic substructure co-exists in seeming contradiction to their beliefs about equality. In many groups with denominational ties or histories principles for community government involve a negotiation between the Charismatic model of leadership and the denominational norms. Thus, for example, in Baptist churches the ultimate authority to make decisions lies in the democratic processes involved in the calling of the whole membership together. In this sort of situation a leader who is a Charismatic exercises his leadership role by perhaps being the individual who understands what the significant issues are which the gathered community needs to discuss. In issues of Church government the large majority of individual Baptist Charismatics understand themselves to be Baptists first and Charismatics second. The predominance of this watered down version of the apostolic leadership model has been greatly assisted by the process in the Baptist Union in the last fifteen to twenty years whereby Union leaders who declared themselves to be Charismatic have re-interpreted the strong Restorationist ideas concerning apostles to fit into the pre-existing Union ethos⁵¹. In many Anglican Charismatic churches a Charismatic leader negotiates his position by the mixture of an amount personal power gained in the two ways described above and of the power traditionally invested in his ordained office. In light of this it can be suggested that although many Roman Catholics and Anglo-Catholics are to be found in the Charismatic movement it is those who have focused specifically on the sacramental nature of

⁵⁰ See chapter five.

⁵¹ Although the Union leadership are presently calling for change concerning the role of area superintendents, they have not embraced the notion of apostles wholeheartedly but re-interpreted it to fit into the Baptist culture. For example the appointment of the suggested 'regional ministers' is by the democratic decision of the members of regional associations to whom they are responsible. The suggested 'senior regional ministers' whose tasks appear to resemble those of Restorationist apostles, for example incorporating the pastoral care of ministers, will also be appointed by regional associations but with the input of the Union. See 'Baptist Blueprint for 2000+' Baptist Times 26/3/1998:8.

ordination to the priestly office who are the least likely to associate with the movement. In other words, if the authority of the leader is understood to rest in their difference in type not just in degree the force is taken out of the dynamic of persuasion and consent.

It has already been pointed out that some see ecumenism to be an inherent characteristic of the Charismatic movement. However, it can be seen from the description above that this is not a determined policy of the movement but rather a side-effect of its emphasis upon the cosmopolitan nature of the action of the Holy Spirit in imparting abilities by which tasks can be accomplished. It is a distinctive characteristic of the movement that this alternative ecumenism is not based on a theological belief which interprets 'oneness in Christ' as 'the sum of the parts equals the total expression of Christ in the world'. Rather it is based on an interpretation of 'oneness in Christ' to mean each individual is of identical value, even if egalitarian community structures for government do not exist in reality.

Belonging to the Charismatic movement

Boone's study which has proved to be instructive above is based upon the work of Stanley Fish and Michel Foucault and, in particular, the notion of discourse in analysing society. (Boone, 1989:2). That groups and communities create and maintain a common discourse or a series of reciprocal relationships between actions, language, concepts, ideas, interpretations and individuals is fundamentally important to this thesis, as is the theme of how the dynamics of this discourse appear to and are effective for the individual. Before examining this however it is necessary to describe the mechanisms by which individuals become part of and are immersed in the discourse of the Charismatic movement.

Occasional visitors to the Charismatic subculture are not treated any differently from the regular participants. An outsider who walks into a meeting is not required to be delineated as an outsider and can usually join in all parts of that meeting; they can sing, speak in tongues, dance and speak publicly if they so wish. In the Christian tradition the Eucharist traditionally stands out as a ritual practice which can be surrounded by rules of restricted participation but this is not the case in most Charismatic groups. Visitors are usually verbally encouraged to participate by the leadership and often the customary restriction of visitors only being invited to participate if they are regular participants in other Christian communities is not placed. If a meeting contains an element which only functions for the regular member of that community, for example some groups have annual covenant making/renewal rites, the participation of an outsider is not considered to be polluting rather, the outsider is welcomed to join in and interpret the event as they wish.

As previously mentioned, some Charismatic groups are at the forefront of experimenting with a different type of meeting called 'seeker services'⁵². These contain many of the elements found in a usual Christian service but in a weakened form; the communal singing is more formalised, the preaching takes the form of a short talk about a contemporary issue and there is also likely to be comedy or drama sketches and musical presentations aimed at persuading the newcomer to engage with the Christian message. Seeker services are intended to be an unthreatening version of an ordinary Charismatic service for the target audience of the 'unchurched'. In essence they work for the new or potential committed participant in much the same way as occasional attendance at ordinary services. By attendance at such services an individual can master some of the patterns of behaviour and then move onto attending the ordinary services more regularly which in turn contain some new elements to be mastered as well as an intensification of behaviour already learnt.

⁵² See page 61.

Another form of interaction between the visitor or the potential participant is that of communication with others already inside a group or the movement. Evidence from the Finney report suggests that new or potential participants usually already know people within a Christian group (Finney, 1992). Charismatic groups place a high value on being very welcoming and many of the larger groups may have teams of individuals who act as welcomers and stewards for meetings⁵³. Some groups also hold new member social nights regularly where new people will meet with a few group members to socialise and find out more about the community. Another widely used technique is that of informal discussion groups based in a member's home. These involve a small number of new or potential participants and maybe two or three group members, one of whom will give a short talk explaining a point of doctrine and then there will be an informal discussion and question time. The Alpha Course has professionalised this method using fifteen sessions, ten of which take the format of a communal meal, a talk about Christianity and an informal discussion⁵⁴.

Social learning is a process that continues in the Charismatic movement on an informal basis throughout a participant's life although the speed at which cultural knowledge is accumulated is at the individual's control. The most obvious method is again general interaction with other members. This includes participation in meetings for worship, discussion groups and socialising. It is common practice after a main or large meeting for there to be a short time set aside for socialising. In many groups drinks and food snacks will be provided at the end of the meeting for that specific purpose. Sometimes, there will

⁵³ See page 180

⁵⁴ See also page 60-61. This type of meeting has been used for many years in many local communities without any central organisation. Often called 'home groups' or 'just looking groups' potential participants would be sought through the use of regular missions and house to house enquiry campaigns. It is interesting to note that although the Alpha Course relies on contacts being made through already established relationships not on geographical context the type of product offered has changed little. In a follow up report to the Finney report the Mission Theological Advisory Group has recently stressed this cultural shift concerning patterns of belonging and contact by relationship. However, the report contains little discussion of how a group practically deals with it (1996).

be a time of prayer or help for individuals after the meeting and it is not unusual to find that happening in one part of the room and people generally chatting in another. Most Charismatic groups also hold social events, such as sports events, meals or fairs. Many participants believe they should be resident in the area surrounding the place where the group meets so they will meet with other participants at the local amenities such as shops, schools, and doctors surgeries. Many Charismatic and church groups organise community holidays, these may be visits to conferences such as Spring Harvest or leisure time at a location such as a conference centre or a bible school, or even a holiday location such as the 'Center Parcs' leisure complexes. Such interaction helps the individual to build up a core of knowledge about the community; its traditions, social rules and its people as well as an emotional attachment to the group. It is within this discourse that individuals work out their belonging and their specific place within the group and on the wider scale this also builds up a central core of members which is well bounded but also outward looking.

Another example of general interaction with the Charismatic movement is that of the use of worship recordings. These deserve further description as they really are a phenomenon of the Charismatic movement. Some of these are recordings of actual worship times which have lasted long enough to be viable to sell as a complete recording⁵⁵. Most however are compilations. About half are compilations of songs recorded in a studio that are edited together around a common theme. The most popular however are compilations of the recordings of the actual worship at the large festivals and the Spring Harvest albums are particularly popular. These are recordings of a series of songs sung by the congregations gathered in the various Big Top locations and led by various well known worship leaders. The Spring Harvest albums always include a mixture of new songs and old hymns and, as with most other worship recordings, give the full lyrics in a sleeve insert. In 1997 Kingsway

⁵⁵ See chapter five for a full explanation and description of a 'worship time'.

took the unprecedented step of producing a compilation album entitled 'Live'97 - A Classic Year of Live Worship' because there had been a few events during the year which had produced a hitherto unmatched quality of worship songs.

As a distinct product of the Charismatic movement an individual who listens to worship recordings does so to specifically interact with the movement as a whole or a specific group within it. Many potential participants and active participants use worship recordings in order to experience and learn not only the lyrics and music of the movement but also the emotional responses and accompanying bodily actions to the music. Thus, participants will listen to worship recordings expecting to have some sort of religious experience and an emotional response to it. It is for this reason that songs sung in a highly emotionally charged atmosphere are recorded and their 'live' quality is emphasised. The individual participating in private is led to expect an experience and an emotional response like that experienced by the congregation who have been recorded, regardless of the spatial and temporal distances involved. This may be a crucial part of the learning process for individuals who find being part of the emotion generated by a large crowd overwhelming or who find the public expression of such emotion difficult.

Another method of social learning by participants is that of an informal system of mentoring or a one to one informal friendship between an individual and a more experienced group member. This system has a long history in the Christian culture at large in the use of Spiritual Directors for life and faith. However its practice in the Charismatic movement has been influenced by the ongoing issues surrounding models of leadership, particularly the debate concerning 'shepherding' and 'covering' within certain

Restorationist groups⁵⁶. Mentors share cultural knowledge by giving advice and direct answers to questions and they also provide direction and an example for lifestyle.

Other methods used in the process of social learning rely less on personal contact and techniques of example and imitation. Preaching is not only the forum in which cultural knowledge about doctrine is passed on but also the time and place when community norms and values can be expressed. Charismatic preaching mostly takes the form of biblical exegesis with application to a contemporary situation. Sermons can often be broken down into answers to three areas: exposition of what the text is saying, the interpretation of its meaning for the present situation, and the description of the expected response from individuals. The subject and text for preaching are often chosen by the preacher in response to an issue within the community rather than being part of a liturgical calendar⁵⁷. Often the smaller local groups will meet on a regular basis for an informal bible study based around the same principles, but involving group discussion. These meetings are also often the occasion when the concerns and needs of a particular individual can be shared with others in order that the group may provide help, support or prayer. With the availability of resources such as books, magazines, study guides, videos, tapes, compact discs and computer programmes participants, either as individuals or as groups, can go through a process of education and training in a variety of subjects. The Scripture Union program for exploring the bible is one of the most popular methods of this kind of learning and is exceptionally schematic, but therefore a good example of the general model. The Scripture Union organisation produces bible notes in the form of booklets, distributed every annual quarter, that give a daily reading from the bible, commentary, application, prayer suggestion and articles based around a selection of

⁵⁶ Shepherding and covering are basically two terms given to a system of community government based around a hierarchical or pyramid structure in which each individual is answerable to someone above them, their shepherd, for their actions and in turn is 'covered' or given moral sanction for their actions, by that person. The perceived issue at the heart of shepherding is one of authoritarian leadership. (See Walker, 1998:183-188, 288-297).

⁵⁷ See appendix B.

topics, each one covered over a number of weeks. They produce seven different series of these booklets, each series aimed at a different consumer base. Scripture Union also produce teaching materials called the Salt programme to be used as resources for preaching in main services and in teaching children and young people. The Salt programme is structured in such a way that each Sunday the same subject can be taught to all sections of the community even though the teaching is aimed at different levels of understanding⁵⁸. As the daily bible notes are thematically unrelated to the Salt programme a participant in a group advocating the use of Scripture Union resources can choose to be involved in two different programmes of learning at once and can personally choose at which level they are involved in at least one of those.

Children are taught about and socialised into the lifeworld of the Charismatic movement by the same methods as those used for adult participants, predominantly relationally by imitation of example and also by the classical scholarship methods of reading, oral teaching and participatory discussion. Children generally do attend and are expected to participate in the main worship meetings of Charismatic communities however they also have their own children's groups which are the successors to the Sunday School concept. These usually operate weekly, sometimes before or during the main adult service on a Sunday morning and can also take the form of after school and school holiday clubs. They generally have a similar format to that of the adult services. They start off with communal singing, usually combining a mixture of adult songs and songs written especially for children through which they are taught and experience not only songs and doctrine but also about experience and its physical manifestation⁵⁹. Teaching occurs through small

⁵⁸ It is sometimes the case that completely different lessons are drawn from the same subject or biblical story for the different age groups, rather than different levels of understanding of the same lesson or moral.

⁵⁹ See for example the children's version of Mission Praise entitled Youth Praise. Most groups use a mixture of songs taken from contemporary musicians who write specifically for children, (the most notable is the group Ishmael) and traditional children's songs. Children's songs are often more simplistic in language than adult songs dealing with the same subject and there is also a large corpus of action songs which involve lots of physical activity such as foot stamping, jumping and physical symbolism. These are

groups delineated by age and the general format is the same as that of the adult model although there is more scope for individual participation through the use of art, drama and games as well as through discussion.

The children of Charismatic parents are expected to learn from the example of their parents and siblings. They may be required to individually read their bible and pray regularly but it is unusual to find families that regularly read the bible and pray together. As a conversionist group Charismatics emphasise that second generation individuals become group members by personal experience and assent⁶⁰. Thus the weight of emphasis is put more on the individual religious experience of the child than on their ability to gather knowledge through, for example, learning bible texts. In the family context this may mean that children join in with listening to Christian music, or are encouraged in an appreciation of nature as God's gift. Children in Charismatic families are expected to be polite, well mannered, sociable and active however they are not usually extremely disciplined and are allowed to be expressive⁶¹.

An underlying theme alluded to in the historical description above was the growth of an increasingly professionalised infrastructure of services and products which supports the Charismatic movement. Events such as Spring Harvest and the March for Jesus require enormous amounts of administration and effective advertisement. In the late 1960s and 1970s a cottage industry existed within the English Christian culture which not only mirrored the increase in arts and crafts, musical output and coffee houses in the wider culture but which also provided many Christians with a new means of expressing and

not recorded with the music but passed on orally.

⁶⁰ See page 150.

⁶¹ These points have been mentioned as a prime example of the major difference between the conservative evangelical culture and the charismatic culture, the former emphasising rational argument, the latter experience. Children brought up in evangelical families were, and are, often required to have a great knowledge of the bible, often learning large passages by rote, and to be very highly disciplined.

sharing their faith. In the competitive economic climate of the 1980s such small, often local and informal, businesses found it impossible to survive without any degree of change in their ethos. Thus making a profit and beating the competition as well as compliance with legal, financial and employment requirements became important to many Christian businesses and charities. The harnessing of the latest in information technology, service towards a good customer base and good quality products have thus become standard values in the Christian subculture in England. It has already been suggested that engaging with this product base is a good way in which to undertake non-intrusive observation⁶². However, it is suggested here that this product base also acts as a mechanism by which individuals can engage with the Charismatic movement in order to belong to it and identify with it. A short description of its main contents follows below.

Firstly, there exists a wide range of sound and video recordings. The contents of Christian meetings are now widely recorded and available to the general public. The larger meetings and many of the local meetings are recorded in both cassette and video format for those who cannot attend the actual event. This is a practice which has a long history in the Christian culture. However, as has been mentioned previously, the purchase of recordings of meetings by those who attended and the recording of music used in those meetings really started to become popular in the 1970s when the technology to do so became more widely available⁶³. Although many different kinds of Christian groups now do this, it is the Charismatic and evangelical groups who have the reputation of doing it as a matter of course. There are four main types of this kind of resource to be found on tape, compact disc and video format⁶⁴. The first is the recording of a whole meeting, the second is the recording of just the message or sermon. Organisations such as the Martin Lloyd

⁶² See page 21-22.

⁶³ See note 29, page 54.

⁶⁴ Videos are also produced that use worship music for physical workout exercises and relaxing guides to the countryside and of Christian films but these are not as prevalent as those mentioned above.

Jones Trust, Ellel Ministries and the Institute of Contemporary Christianity all produce catalogues of the spoken word. The third and fourth are music orientated, the recording of an album by a Christian band or individual and the recording of worship times. Word UK distributes the latter two through its Premier Club, centred on a monthly free catalogue magazine called Premier Music. This gives details of all new Christian music that is released in a format that is broken down into categories of music type. It also provides a monthly editors choice, a monthly sales chart, articles and interviews.

Secondly, the Christian culture and the Charismatic movement specifically also produces many written informational texts in the form of magazines and books. In England the main provider of Christian literature is the Wesley Owen company which runs a string of bookshops throughout the country stocking specifically Christian material. Wesley Owen bookshops usually stock a variety of popular Christian books, Christian music recordings and various goods such as cards, bible covers and stickers and they cater primarily for the more evangelical section of the church. Wesley Owen shops are the main stockists for Harvestime goods and for music promoted by Word UK. Shops, such as those in the Wesley Owen chain, stock a wide selection of Christian books of which there are many genres. For example there are study books, bible commentaries, thematic bible studies, biographies, autobiographies, novels, teaching books, collections of sermons, collections of sayings, daily readings and self help or self improvement books. They do not usually stock books of a more academic orientation. Wesley Owen also stocks the main magazines of the evangelical and Charismatic world which are usually published monthly. The most popular in the Charismatic culture is probably Renewal because it now has the reputation of being non-sectarian and aimed at the Charismatic community in general. Separate denominations produce their own magazines and publications. For example, the Pentecostal Assemblies of God denomination produces a monthly magazine called Joy and Anglican Charismatics are most likely to read the weekly Church of England Newspaper.

There are also magazines aimed at different groups of people within the culture, for example Christian Woman and Woman Alive are aimed at women, Youthwork is aimed at those working with young people and there are also magazines for Christian families, Christian leaders and Christian musicians.

Another major type of Charismatic and evangelical publication is that of the prayer or newsletter. Many groups, charitable organisations and individuals produce this type of newsheet on a regular basis. Some are simple photocopied text on double sided sheets of A4, others such as Tear Times produced by the charity TEAR Fund are highly professional, glossy magazines. These usually include items of news and information as well as details concerning how the individual can continue to support the work involved. Such publications are not usually readily available from Christian bookshops but are distributed by mailing lists of donors and information stalls in Christian buildings.

Thirdly, there are other consumable items. The majority of the charities use the sale of items such as clothing, greetings cards, stationary, jewellery and household ornaments to supplement the revenue they raise from direct giving. Other organisations manufacture such items to fulfil a demand for products which assist individuals to identify with Christianity or a particular part of the Christian culture. For example a company called 'Sunshine products' manufactures clothing and stickers with Christian statements, biblical texts or sayings printed on them. The Alpha organisation is another good case in point, selling clothing, cookbooks and stickers with the Alpha logo on them. Harvestime still continues to manufacture and sell items which those taking part in the Christian culture may need but which are unobtainable in the wider culture. This includes bible covers and diaries with the major Christian events noted in them⁶⁵.

⁶⁵ Because such organisations are also run as charities and because financial giving is a big part of the accepted method of evangelism often the boundaries for the supply and demand of these consumable

Alongside the consumable merchandise of the movement there stands a service industry. Many businesses are set up and run by Christians, not just Charismatics, in order to provide services to the Christian community in England. Some of these businesses also provide services to non-Christians, using their professional provision of a product as a means of evangelisation. The UK Christian Handbook published each year by the Christian Research Association acts, alongside its other functions, as a directory of Christian services. Another source of information is the Evangelical Alliance which seeks to promote a wide network of groups, individuals, businesses and charities. The most widely used source however is word of mouth recommendation and informal tradition. For example, the company Mastersun are renown for providing good quality, cheap overseas holidays with a Christian element. Most of the major Christian magazines have a classified advertisement section to also promote such services. The July 1998 edition of Renewal is typical, carrying advertisements for holidays, retreats, conferences, bible schools, air travel companies, finance companies, car sales and car hire firms, a security firm, an architect's practice, a furnishing company, bookshops, dating agencies, computer services, public address systems suppliers and technical support alongside those for charitable giving.

Finally, it can be suggested that a type of product and service supplied by the Charismatic movement and supportive of the Charismatic movement is that of events, festivals, meetings and conferences. It should be expected by now that the cultic events of the Charismatic movement are far from formal and fixed. The typical content of such events is further described in chapter five however and it is the general structuring and organisation of these events that is described here.

products are blurred. An individual may not only rationalise the purchase of an Alpha t-shirt for example as a means to identify themselves with Alpha but as also as a means of supporting the Alpha initiative and ultimately the wider evangelistic cause.

Many Charismatics, particularly those from the Catholic and Anglican traditions, continue to observe major, minor or contextual Holy Days and liturgical festivals, but are wary of over emphasising their importance as a necessary part of religious practice⁶⁶. The predominant events in any one year however are the major seasonal Christian festivals of Christmas and Easter and the summer session of conferences although many Charismatics add to those the Christian festivals of Pentecost and Harvest and the pagan festival of Halloween⁶⁷. In any one year a typical Charismatic participant therefore would move through Christmas Day, New Year's Eve, a trip to the Spring Harvest or Easter People festivals, Good Friday, Easter Sunday, a trip to a denominational or network conference, harvest and Halloween. However, each separate event is organised to be independent of all other events. For example, each year the Spring Harvest committee produces a theme for the teaching that year which they consider to be relevant to the situation of the church at that time. Thus the teaching does not cover the same ideas year after year, it does not build up into any sort of formal system over time and it is not part of a teaching plan covering a year of separately organised events.

Spring Harvest is a good typical example of an established annual Charismatic festival or convention⁶⁸. For a two to three week period over Easter the organisers of Spring Harvest hire a number of Butlins holiday camps⁶⁹. On each site they raise a number of small marquees and a large, three thousand seat marquee which they refer to as the 'Big Top'. All the main meetings take place in this Big Top and all the other meetings take place in

⁶⁶ See page 168.

⁶⁷ Pentecost Sunday has become increasingly important in the Charismatic calendar not just as a celebration of a biblical event which they give great emphasis but also because in the past it has been the time of major events in Charismatic history *per se* such as the beginning of the Toronto Blessing. Harvest is still celebrated in English churches and is often accompanied by an emphasis on social action rather than a ritual festival of thanksgiving for a good harvest. Halloween has become the yearly occasion for Charismatics to emphasise their opposition to anything they consider to be involvement with Satan and evil.

⁶⁸ A deeper description of Spring Harvest is to be found on pages 225-231.

⁶⁹ From 1979 to 1985 they hired only one site, that at Prestatyn. From 1986 to 1988 they hired two, those at Minehead and Skegness. In 1989 and 1990 they hired three, including Ayr with the sites used in 1986-1988. From 1991 to 1994 they used four sites including Pwllheli which they then dropped for the 1995 festival. Finally from 1996 onwards only the two sites of Minehead and Skegness have been used.

the other marquees and other venues on the site such as ballrooms, theatres and cabaret halls. All participants who stay on the site use the Butlins accommodation and can use the catering and sports facilities as well as the on-site bar, shops and transport. The main celebration meeting each night is held in the Big Top with other, smaller celebrations for single focus groups occurring in other venues⁷⁰. Participants return year after year to be part of the event, usually travelling some distance to do so.

During the rest of the year Charismatics participate in local and regular events. Some groups are formed around geographical closeness while others are local in the sense of being within the same city area. Often where the latter is the case the community is broken down further into smaller geographically closer groups although participation in these is always by choice. It can be seen therefore that individual Charismatics are used to travelling in order to be part of their community.

Charismatic meetings are held throughout the week, in fact it is not unusual to find that a specific group holds a regular meeting of some sort on each day of the week. Some of the groups have their own buildings which act as the central focus for daily community life. The main meeting of any group is usually the Sunday morning service of worship which all the community, including the children, attends. All the other worship services and events of the movement are usually timed so that participants can still attend their local community Sunday morning service. Often the numbers attending the main weekly meeting are large enough that to own a building to accommodate them would not be economically viable and the organisers rent or borrow property for these occasions. They are likely to hire secular venues, including places such as theatres, cinemas and sports

⁷⁰ There are usually celebrations arranged in the evening for young people, those who do not profess to be Christians, and those who do not like extremely large gatherings of people which run at the same time as the celebration in the Big Top.

centres but are unlikely to hire other Christian buildings⁷¹. Other weekday meetings are held for the purpose of prayer, learning or administration. These are usually on a smaller scale than the Sunday morning meeting, involving local groups in a home setting or a small delegated group in a home or office setting. Of course, where the group in question is actually a church that belongs to a historic denomination, such meetings run in parallel with the structure of meetings used for administration in that denomination. For example, Baptist Charismatic churches retain the practice of regularly holding a church members meeting at which decisions involving the life of the community, its people, its finances and its resources are made by the use of a democratic vote.

This large infrastructure of consumable resources and services provides not only a basis for individuals to choose whether or not to participate in the Charismatic movement but also a means by which the individual can dictate their own level and sense of involvement. For example, many individuals may feel comfortable with purchasing a worship tape but not with joining in at the recording of it or with regularly attending a group which worships in that manner. Some overtly Charismatic groups, particularly single issue charities, make allowance for this by having a system of membership which provides information and services for committed members and for 'friends' of the group. This practice is widely assisted by the fact that most events recordings of music, worship and teaching, books, study guides and magazines are intended to stand alone. Similarly, an individual can personally select a number of Charismatic products and maintain a certain amount of control over the way in which they relate one to the other. An individual therefore can choose to enter into the life world of the Charismatic movement,

⁷¹ The Christian Centre, Talbot Street, Nottingham is a good example of this. Over the past ten years they have hired numerous buildings for their main meetings including a disused warehouse, a school hall, a conference centre and the sports hall adjacent to a swimming pool that was in use at the time of the meetings. At one point they also hired a local Congregational meeting house for a smaller meeting. The decision was finally taken to move the community back to their own buildings in the hope of getting planning permission to expand, however this has not been forthcoming and the community now meets in a series of services held throughout the day on a Sunday. See page 141 for a discussion, particularly concerning the non-use of Christian buildings.

use its resources with very little preparation, knowledge or experience of the movement in order to participate in it and then leave it behind.

There is no doubt that it is the parts of the English Christian culture that are influenced by the Charismatic movement from which most of these products come. There is an abundance of events, meetings, festivals and conferences, publications, recordings of both addresses and music, single issue support groups and providers of directed service products. The existence of Christian products which are direct parallels to those of the culture of the host society of Western industrial nations, has been a cause for comment for some time. It has led some within the Christian culture to speak of a Charismatic and evangelical 'parallel universe' (Tomlinson, 1995:125). Certainly, the resources are there for an individual, if they so wished, to live a lifestyle in which they use their consumer power to predominantly chose ordinary items which are labelled as Charismatic - Charismatic magazines, meetings, books, even clothes and services such as car hire firms or dating agencies. Howard has suggested that this aping or mimicking relationship with the non-Charismatic world extends beyond products to values and attitudes, particularly emphasising the priority given to the value of success (Howard, 1996:126-128). Whatever the existence of this parallel universe may suggest about the relationship of the Charismatic movement to its host society and culture in a sociological framework however it is the structure of the relationship between the movement and its host as it is played out in the lives of individuals which is of interest here. Individual Charismatics do not generally live wholly within the Charismatic culture or in relation to a particular Charismatic group, they are also part of the discourse of contemporary, secular, Western culture. The amount of negotiation this takes is clearly seen in their attitude towards work and in their apportioning of time.

Some Charismatic fellowships are large enough to warrant their own full time staff comprising of leaders, administrators and single focus workers such as youth or schools workers however, most Charismatics are employed in secular work. Charismatics emphasise industriousness in all areas of life and therefore encourage all participants in the culture to engage in employment of some kind. There are no prohibitions on the type of employment undertaken although some professions such as those concerned with gambling or with alcohol consumption are frowned upon by Charismatics and evangelicals alike. Work does not necessarily have to be meaningful, as long as the individual concerned earns enough to support their lifestyle. However, many Charismatics do place value on altruistic motives for their daily work and therefore there is a large proportion of Charismatics in the so-called 'caring professions'.

The above outline of Charismatic events suggests that there is a usual cycle to the Charismatic year and the Charismatic week. There is also a normal cycle for the Charismatic day. A typical day is broken down into three parts. In the early morning it is usual for individuals to have a time of quiet meditation, prayer and bible reading before going to work.. In the evening they may attend community meetings, relax or undertake private study of the Christian faith. The leisure time which Charismatics have is usually filled in two ways. Firstly, by participation in the culture of the Charismatic movement and the wider Christian culture; its events and its products. Secondly by directed participation in the culture of the outside world. Charismatics do not particularly maintain any prohibitions about participation in the culture of 'the world'. For example, they do consume alcohol, go to the cinema, the theatre or a restaurant and do watch the television. Their relationship with the outside world however is guided by the twofold principle of ensuring that the non-Christian world is influenced by the Christian world while the individual Christian remains holy. Charismatics often employ the biblical precept that although everything may be permissible to the Christian, not everything is beneficial

to either the Christian or those who are being targeted as potential Christians. A major consideration behind the imposition of specific behavioural practices in relation to these principles however is that of time. Individuals simply do not have enough time, and sometimes do not have enough financial resources, to find a personally satisfying level of participation in the culture of Christianity and in the culture of the host community as well. Although all individuals are encouraged to find a balance between daily work, family life and spiritual life⁷² they are not required to find a balance between participation in the Christian culture and participation in the culture that surrounds it. Thus, the negotiated relationship involved in belonging to two discourses is often biased towards the discourse of the Charismatic movement.

Conclusion

The Charismatic movement therefore is not to be classified as an organised religion. The bonds which hold it together and assist it to function are all of an informal type: participation, affiliation, networks of friendship, rhetoric, persuasion, consent, and acts of generalised reciprocity where the actor does not necessarily expect anything in return for giving. It can be seen as a loosely organised movement of individuals who repeatedly personally invest in the movement by constantly choosing to participate in its infrastructure of products, services and events. Most of the groups which are a part of the Charismatic movement in England claim the charity status which under British law and custom is legitimately theirs because they are religious organisations. This is a very telling illustration of the type of organisational model described above. As charities such groups operate by continually seeking sanction, approval and the consent of those who affiliate

⁷² This is in contradiction to the traditional evangelical ethos of emphasising hard work and excessive industry which was outlined by Weber in his Protestant Work Ethic thesis.

themselves to the charity and overtly invest in the group by financial means. This chapter finishes with a description of a specific Charismatic group - the Jesus Fellowship Church.

Ethnographic Example: The Jesus Fellowship Church

History

The Jesus Fellowship Church claims to be an orthodox Christian group which is reformed, evangelical and Charismatic⁷³. As a group it was once a member of the Evangelical Alliance and its activities are frequently mentioned and advertised within the pages of Renewal, a popular magazine of the Charismatic movement⁷⁴. One time members of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, the Jesus Fellowship consider themselves to be rooted in the Baptist way of faith and practice. Born out of the congregation of Bugbrooke Baptist Church in Northamptonshire the Jesus Fellowship number their participants to date at approximately two thousand five hundred⁷⁵. The Fellowship practise communal living, aggressive evangelism, full immersion baptism, speaking in tongues, foot washing and a weekly Eucharistic rite which they call 'agapé' or the love feast. They believe in God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the full divinity of Christ, his atoning death and bodily resurrection, the availability of justification by faith to all, Baptism in the Holy Spirit and believe the bible to be the fully inspired word of God.

The story of the Jesus Fellowship Church is inextricably intertwined with the history of the Charismatic movement. Bugbrooke Baptist chapel⁷⁶ was built in 1808, five years

⁷³ A paragraph entitled 'A brief statement of faith' from which this sentence is taken is to be found in the front cover of every issue of Jesus Lifestyle/Jesus Life the quarterly magazine published by the group.

⁷⁴ See page 87.

⁷⁵ Jesus Life 43 1998:1: 4.

⁷⁶ In non-conformist tradition although a group of people are considered to be a church the building in

before the official institution of the Baptist Union and an individual called John Brown who was converted through the evangelistic work at Bugbrooke went on to become a Union President (Harrison, 1986:43; Cooper and Farrant, 1997:22). Although the church at Bugbrooke had a strong evangelical and evangelistic reputation the numbers in the congregation there dwindled after the Second World War. In 1957, three years after a large evangelistic campaign which was motivated by Billy Graham's 1954 Haringay crusade, a thirty one year old called Noel Stanton became the minister. Stanton had been baptised by a Pentecostal minister but had always preferred to move within the evangelical community. He had trained at All Nations Bible College, and was certified by the Ministerial Committee of the Baptist Union as a minister. Stanton initiated a period of intense activity for the church which included evangelistic drives, crusades and missionary weekends but by 1967 the results were tangible and, in the summer of 1968, Stanton and the church community began to seriously consider their next move. Their discussions and bible studies all took place in an environment in which the beginnings of the Charismatic movement were starting to make an impact. Some of Stanton's friends in Bedford had registered the experience of a Pentecostal type of experience, the book The Cross and the Switchblade was very popular and Charismatic meetings had begun to spring up in the vicinity. In the last few days of 1968 Stanton also had a Pentecostal type of religious experience and by the end of 1969 this kind of experience had swept through the fellowship at Bugbrooke.

It was during 1970 that the exceptional outcome which the impact of the Charismatic religious experience was to have at Bugbrooke began for it was during this year that the congregation temporarily revoked the rules of the Church Constitution with the intention of rewriting them⁷⁷. The issue for the Bugbrooke members was that of 'body ministry' or

which they meet is called a chapel. This is meant to distinguish the plainer non-conformist buildings from the churches of the Anglicans and the Catholics.

⁷⁷ Baptist Churches are independent congregations in matters of polity and government. They are

the capacity within the ethos of the fellowship for each individual member to recognise and exercise their particular spiritual gift in worship and ministry (Cooper and Farrant, 1997:41). Hand in hand with this emphasis importance was placed on a need for deeper relationships between members of the congregation and a need for greater devotion. Gerald Coates visited Bugbrooke in May 1971 and the chapel was refurbished and evangelism among the young in the nearby cities continued. In July 1973, having spent a fortnight away on holiday, the Bugbrooke fellowship took active steps to live more closely together, moving to live nearer the village, opening their homes to other members, renting property for some of their new young contacts to live in and sharing resources.

The next year, again while away on holiday, the fellowship took the decision to restructure their leadership. In line with the principles of shepherding the fellowship was broken down into regional groups which met mid-week and which were led by one male 'shepherd'⁷⁸. By this time the members had mortgaged Bugbrooke Hall, an old Georgian rectory, and some of the members had moved in and started refurbishment work. The activities at Bugbrooke, especially the purchase of the Hall at auction had not gone unnoticed by the secular press but the ethos of the fellowship by which each individual as well as the group lived a publicly open life was considered to be an effective check against the excesses of 'heavy shepherding'.

During the second half of the 1970s the fellowship expanded their commitment to the three issues which they understood to be at the heart of the concerns of the Charismatic renewal and the Restorationist culture - shepherding, community and the Kingdom of God (Cooper and Farrant, 1997:105). The fellowship began to understand this style of

affiliated to other churches in the Union by a commonality and similarity of individual constitution. The rewriting of the Church constitution is not an unusual practice within Baptist Churches. Because of the democratic way in which decisions are made it can be a lengthy process and therefore Churches who are undertaking it are not necessarily immediately unaffiliated from the Union.

⁷⁸ See note 56, page 83.

renewal and the Restorationist culture - shepherding, community and the Kingdom of God (Cooper and Farrant, 1997:105). The fellowship began to understand this style of Christianity in terms that the Restorationist leaders were using, speaking of the Kingdom and Zion⁸⁰. They also bought a farm near Bugbrooke which they called 'New Creation Farm' in which the 'New Creation Christian Community' lived a communal lifestyle; sharing resources and practising a simplistic lifestyle. In the early years of the Charismatic movement not only the religious experiences of the first disciples in Jerusalem but also their lifestyle had been a model for faith and practice. The New Creation Community however was one of the few groups to maintain the use of this Jerusalem model beyond the end of the 1970s⁸¹. By the time two more community houses, one in Daventry and one near the Farm, had been opened the communal lifestyle the fellowship were practising was well established and a new Trust had been set up - The Jesus Fellowship Community Trust - into which members put their homes and possessions in pledge to the church. The fellowship had also loosely organised 'discipleship bands', again as with the notion of shepherding inspired by the work of Juan-Carlos Ortiz. These groups cut across the natural divisions in the fellowship created by residence and were each run by a 'discipler' who aimed to teach and further the spirituality and missionary activity of each individual by a direct relationship. By the end of the 1970s the Jesus Fellowship had eleven large community houses and many smaller ones, a centralised food distribution network and clothing store, and three businesses. They had also lost two key members in tragic accidents, been publicly denounced as a cult by the parent of a member who had subsequently had her child sectioned under the Mental Health Act and thought they had become:

⁸⁰ Both terms are meant to indicate the community of people on earth with whom God dwells.

⁸¹ Many members of the Jesus Fellowship refer to the area around Bugbrooke as Jerusalem and as Zion as well as using these terms to refer to the community of people. See pages 223-224.

'...a worry to the world, an irritation to the evangelicals and an embarrassment to the Baptist Union.' (Cooper and Farrant, 1997:132).

For the Bugbrooke Jesus Fellowship the 1980s began with the emphasis on two themes. Firstly in 1979 the Fellowship brought their first house outside Northamptonshire as the start of an extension of their evangelistic plans for the whole of Britain. Secondly, in 1980 the Fellowship put in place measures by which their membership could be consolidated. Firstly they instituted the practice of regular 'love feasts' at which members spent time together in a concerted effort to maintain their commitment to each other. Secondly they perfected and instituted both a new Church Constitution by which individuals could actually become members of the community and by which the community could be affiliated to other bodies and a new Trust Deed for the administration of the New Creation Christian Community. Throughout the 1980s the profile, reputation and mood of the Fellowship swung backwards and forwards between high and low points. The early part of 1981 brought opposition with it from some secular and Christian quarters and a sense of despondency within the community which was only dispelled by a fresh movement of religious experiences in 1982 which renewed the community. There then followed two years of fervent evangelistic activity and substantial growth which were followed by another series of community wide religious experiences by which the Fellowship as a whole went through a time of spiritual purification and catharsis. The turning point for the Jesus Fellowship however came in 1986 when they were excluded from the Baptist Union and resigned from the Evangelical Alliance.

The Fellowship had only requested to join and joined the Evangelical Alliance in 1982, their ties with the Baptist Union had remained from the relationships that were in place with Bugbrooke Baptist Chapel and Stanton before the Fellowship had been born. The Alliance had always considered the Fellowship to be controversial but nevertheless

orthodox, the Baptist Union had a supporter of the Fellowship in one of their leaders, Lewis Misslebrook, but their reputation in the Union had always rested on their status as an experimental church group. By 1986 the interest in the Jesus Fellowship both in the outside culture and in the Christian culture had extended to include serious allegations from ex-members of abuse and intolerance. Both the Evangelical Alliance and the Baptist Union felt it their duty as bodies committed to the maintenance of the wider Christian community to listen to such concerns and worries. Their specific problem was not with the more sensational accusations made against the group but with their perceived lack of association with other Christian groups, more particularly the groups in the same geographical locality⁸². The Fellowship resigned from the Evangelical Alliance feeling they had been unsupported in their defence against the more sensationalist claims. They were disaffiliated from the Baptist Union on the grounds that they were not closely enough linked with other local Baptist churches⁸³. The experience of being marginalised was to galvanise the Fellowship's fighting spirit and to set the agenda for the years to come.

As discussions were underway between the Jesus Fellowship and the Evangelical Alliance and the Baptist Union members of the church had set targets for growth and were working hard to attract new members to the community. They held evangelistic missions and campaigns all over the country using teams of evangelists, a giant marquee and marches through city centres, all backed up by a group of two hundred and fifty members who took it in turns to pray for the evangelistic efforts. The mood in the community was one of aggressive combat. They were inspired by a book by Clive Calver and Derek Copley of the Evangelical Alliance which promoted a militant Christian lifestyle (Calver and Copley, 1986). A methodology for their evangelism came from the newly available theology of

⁸² One pamphlet for example had accused the church leadership of exercising a forced labour policy, whilst the Daily Star Newspaper had accused them of denying their children the innocent joys of Christmas (Cooper and Farrant, 1997:226-227).

⁸³ They have however still retained the rights to use Bugbrooke Baptist chapel.

John Wimber. Wimber's premise that there was a battle occurring in the heavenly realm between two spiritual forces which had dramatic, miraculous effects in the physical realm was at the very heart of his style of ministry both in the setting of a church meeting and in an evangelistic setting⁸⁴. Wimber believed that the dramatic effects of the 'power encounters' which took place would attract people to Christianity and the Jesus Fellowship began to report and record such happenings in a regular newsheet⁸⁵. By the time the Jesus Army was commissioned on April 18th 1987 the theological, behavioural and dispositional framework for an evangelistic wing of the Fellowship that wore a uniform, marched under banners, planned campaigns and worked to a manifesto had been in place for some time.

Exactly twenty years after the first time the experiences of the Charismatic movement were encountered at the Jesus Fellowship in Bugbrooke village another wave of new experiences took hold of the community. Having accepted and used Wimber's theology and techniques in an evangelistic setting for some time the community began to examine their viability within a community meeting setting. Added to the feeling that after the frantic activity associated with the launch of the Jesus Army a time of rest was needed and the perceived need to plan for a new decade the Fellowship shifted into a time of inner refreshment. The bodily expression of worship in their meetings became more intense, the musical style altered, creativity abounded, new uniforms were adopted and the mood was one of happiness and a fresh sense of purpose. Importantly as well the Fellowship began to rebuild the relationships between their community and the rest of the Charismatic mainstream. They had been accepted at the March for Jesus of 1988 and thereafter took the initiative in emphasising the rebuilding of individual and corporate relationships. In the summer of 1990 the Jesus Fellowship held its first annual Wembley

⁸⁴ See pages 120-122. The book Power Evangelism by John Wimber and Kevin Springer was first available in England in 1985.

⁸⁵ Called Jesus Happenings this was gradually incorporated into Jesus Life.

Praise Day. The Jesus Army was out on parade, filling the Wembley arena with members, visitors, the latest in visual and audio technology, sound, lights and music. Over the course of the day many leaders from the mainstream of the evangelical, Charismatic and Pentecostal cultures spoke on stage or sent video messages of encouragement to the audience. The activities of the Charismatic and evangelical church around the globe were also given a place by the use of video footage of meetings and the stories of evangelists who had returned.

At the beginning of the 1990s some of the members of the Jesus Fellowship Church were dissolutioned, thinking their negotiated re-acceptance into the mainstream of the Charismatic movement had been at too great a cost. The acceptance of some of the values, behavioural patterns and styles of worship of other Charismatic groups was felt by some to be indicative of a compromise in which holiness and a distinctive lifestyle were being shunted out. Some left, and the rest of the community began to find ways to extend this sense of negotiation into the culture of the world. The Fellowship began to use contemporary music, dance forms and the language of the youth culture. By the time the Jesus Army was reborn at the 1993 Easter Festival as 'the modern Jesus Army' the combative ethos of the community had been tempered with a desire to simply keep company with others who were on similar paths⁸⁶. By the end of 1993 some of the children of first generation members were beginning to join the community for themselves as adults bringing with them an understanding of a new youth culture, new friends and a fresh enthusiasm for evangelism and building the community. New evangelism initiatives were started in nightclubs and town centres, and a campaign was launched in which an 'ignition' coach visited strategic towns and cities throughout the UK

⁸⁶ The dedication in the 1991 edition of Fire in Our Hearts reads: 'to the people of God everywhere who long for the Fire of the Holy Spirit to spread through the nations. And to the homeless, the exploited and the poor, whom Jesus loves.' The expanded edition of 1997 includes the added phrase 'And to all spiritual searchers in our post-modern culture'.

in order to motivate others into evangelism. The central core of members living together in community houses was still considered to be vitally important but by the end of 1997 the official community history writers could record about 1995:

‘Revivals usually ran along the lines of family and friendship. Homes provided great opportunities to meet people and home-based cell groups could grow up into small congregations. We now baptised anyone, anywhere, who had faith in Jesus. Covenant membership was our strong heart, but anyone who loved us belonged. We were inclusive.’
(Cooper and Farrant, 1997:344).

Social organisation

The Jesus Fellowship is often referred to as a community, a fellowship and sometimes as a Church. The latter is often used to refer to the sense in which the Jesus Fellowship incorporates a solid group of members who have made a covenant to stay together. The two former terms are often used to refer to the sense in which the Fellowship also incorporates many individuals who participate at a less committed level. The characteristic model of Charismatic social organisation of a central core with outward looking boundaries is clearly in evidence.

The Jesus Fellowship operates a system of formal membership which is layered into four ‘styles’. This forms the central core of the group. Beyond that they distinguish two other layers of participation. The first is made up of individuals who they call ‘new friends’; people who occasionally participate in the life and culture of the community. The second is made up of ‘baptised members’. This refers to individuals who have been baptised at

other churches and regularly participate with the Fellowship for worship and for the Eucharist⁸⁷. The difference between these two forms of participation and the four styles of the central core is that formal members make a covenant commitment to the Fellowship. 'Style One' members are covenanted members who participate on the same level as 'baptised members' and also attend the weekly agapé meeting. 'Style Two' members add to that a financial and time commitment as well as a commitment to a lifestyle of simplicity, sharing and full accountability. 'Style Three' members take the commitment to a simplistic lifestyle one step further by living in a communal house and sharing possessions and income. 'Style Four' members are covenanted members who live at some distance from a local group or are in prison and therefore cannot regularly participate in the life of the church. It is the covenanted members of the Jesus Fellowship who form the Jesus Army.

The covenant which individuals who join the central core of the Jesus Fellowship make has seven parts⁸⁸. They pledge to: hold the Christian faith, love the church, be committed to serving and living in order to build the church, to love the community of God's people in equality, simplicity and righteousness, to stand firm in the face of opposition and love the enemies of the church, to accept discipline, correction, forgiveness and reconciliation from other members and finally make a pledge of oneness and an intention of lifelong commitment to the Jesus Fellowship. The Fellowship understand this to be part of a threefold process of God's covenant to them as Father, their covenant to God to be his people and their covenant to each other.

⁸⁷ 'Come and Belong to the Jesus Fellowship Family!' Flame Leaflet Number 1 1992. Northampton. Jesus Fellowship Church.

⁸⁸ 'A Covenant people' Flame Leaflet Number 12 1992. Northampton. Jesus Fellowship Church.

As well as individual participation the Jesus Fellowship provide opportunities for other churches and Christian groups to corporately affiliate themselves both to the Fellowship and to each other. This is known as the Multiply Initiative⁸⁹. Church groups from the Africa and Europe along with groups from the UK either join in by affiliation or association. The former is the stronger of the two types of relationships in that it incorporates a voluntary covenant relationship between the leaders of the church or group and other Multiply leaders. Each group retains autonomy of government but shares resources and training with the Jesus Fellowship acting as 'mother church'. The Multiply network was started in direct response to the DAWN initiative⁹⁰.

The ideological basis for leadership within the Jesus Fellowship is the same as that in the rest of the Charismatic movement. Leaders are believed to be chosen and given specific skills by God which are recognised by the whole community. In terms of structure Noel Stanton is known as the Senior Pastor although he has no more organisational power than any of the other sixteen men who form a leadership group known as The Covering Authority. This includes men who are known as 'regional leaders'. To the Jesus Fellowship these are the shepherds of the community. There are then local leaders. Each local household (and sometimes a single physical house is ideologically divided to incorporate two households) has one main leader who is supported by two or more other leaders. The Fellowship are very careful when they advertise the details of each household to incorporate the phrase 'and others' in the list of leaders names. The only other formal leadership positions are those of the leaders of discipleship bands and single focus groups. It is at this level only that women in the Fellowship can be leaders and only then when the group is entirely composed of women. Of all the leaders in the Jesus Fellowship only

⁸⁹ 'Together to Multiply' Flame Leaflet Number 6 1992. Northampton. Jesus Fellowship Church.

⁹⁰ See page 60.

Stanton has the visibility and reputation as a leader that other national Charismatic leaders have. He therefore also acts as the symbolic head and representative of the Fellowship.

Children within the Jesus Fellowship are not understood to be members of the community. However although they attend mainstream schools which are carefully chosen and have friends outside the community they are expected to participate fully in the life and culture of the community and to attend all the meetings. Unlike other Charismatic groups where very small children may be kept at home for evening meetings parents in the Jesus Fellowship take their children with them and also take with them sleeping bags and nightwear so that the child can be put to bed actually while the meeting goes on around them. There are no specific children's groups that regularly meet; teaching and knowledge gathering takes place through the child's interaction with the adults in the household. Each child is expected to have a religious experience of their own and to make an individual commitment to Christianity when they are at an age to fully understand what they are doing. There are however stringent guidelines covering the covenant membership of individuals under the age of twenty one and financially all assets of children and young people under this age are held in an accessible trust fund rather than being fully taken over by the Fellowship.

All kinds of participation in the Jesus Fellowship are assisted by and supported by a network of products, resources and services which are specifically Jesus Fellowship orientated. The Fellowship produces a quarterly magazine called Jesus Life which carries news, information, teaching, musical scores and advertisements for Jesus Fellowship products and services⁹¹. They also publish the same information on a web site on the

⁹¹ This was originally called Lifestyle Newness, by 1989 it was called Jesus Lifestyle and by 1993 with the birth of the 'modern Jesus Army' the name was changed again to Jesus Life. this magazine also began to incorporate the social issues newsheet of the community which was called Heartcry this remains as an insert.

Internet and have included in that a chatroom and prayer request site. Like the rest of the Charismatic movement the Fellowship produce and sell specially designed clothing, badges and stickers as well as books, videos and recordings of their own music. In fact the product base is identical to that found in the wider Charismatic culture, the only difference being that its manufacture and distribution is centralised and contact with the distributor is free to the customer⁹². They also produce a newspaper called The Streetpaper four times a year which is specifically used for evangelism purposes and covers stories of conversions, baptisms and miraculous healings. Both of these publications are free, the other resources are competitively priced. All products and services are the property of the Jesus Fellowship as a whole, not of individuals. Video's and recordings of music are produced by 'The Jesus Fellowship'. Importantly, the new songs which the Fellowship distribute are copywritten to 'The Jesus Fellowship' rather than individuals and, in their recorded form, are performed by 'The Jesus Fellowship' rather than named individual worship leaders or musicians. The stories which appear in both Jesus Life and The Streetpaper only distinguish individuals by their first name and never use their second name.

The Fellowship also run five businesses on a commercial basis to support their community, these include a health food distribution company and retail shops, a car repair firm and a building suppliers. The businesses all employ community members whose wages are automatically placed into the 'common purse'. The upkeep of these businesses not only makes money for the Fellowship but also maintains a base of personnel who can be used for campaigns at short notice and for long periods of time.

⁹² The resources office is based at the Central Offices of the Fellowship at New Creation Farm, Nether Heyford, Northants.

which are based in the local community households and the others; monthly and occasional celebrations, teaching meetings usually incorporated into festival weekends, and specific evangelistic presentations which use the latest in technology and cultural forms of performance to attract participants. Again, as with the rest of the Charismatic culture there is an annual cycle of events to which new participants are welcome. The Jesus Fellowship do not celebrate any religious or cultural festivals at all, including the festivals of Christmas and Easter. Rather their year is roughly split into two; in the summer months they undertake extensive evangelistic campaigns of which there are less in the winter months so that the Fellowship can prepare for the next year and consolidate. The boundary between the two is perhaps marked by the annual Wembley Praise Day in September or October which many members see as the highlight of their year. Not only is this a time when the whole community and all its the visitors of the past year come together and relationships with other churches and groups are affirmed it has also become the time for the inaugural demonstration of the latest initiatives and the latest evangelistic presentation using images, music and drama. Each year there are also three festival weekends held in the grounds of Cornhill Manor over the April, May and August bank holidays, a day conference for men, a day conference for the Multiply leaders and between five and ten Celebrate Jesus events which form the closing service of campaigns in various cities that have been targeted.

Local households divide their weekly meetings into three parts which approximate to the three rough divisions between 'friends', 'baptised members' and 'covenant members'. Firstly, on three evenings in the week specific time is set aside to make relationships with new people and potential participants. One evening, usually that of a Wednesday, is given over to going out to the local community and visiting people in their homes and places of residence and holding meetings there. The other evening, usually that of a Thursday, is given over to hospitality and a meeting is held in the community house and food is served.

Sunday evening is reserved for a more formal type of church service style meeting to which potential participants and new contacts are invited. Secondly, one evening in the week is usually given over to meetings concerned with the training or discipleship of members, both the baptised and the covenanted, this is usually a Monday. Saturday evening, if not taken up with a celebration or another event, is usually a time when those members also come together in an informal meeting, a time of praise and worship. On a Sunday morning the local members gather together for a more formal church service at which the Eucharist is served. Once every three months the whole community meets together for a celebration meeting of this kind. Finally, once a week on a Tuesday evening the agapé meeting takes place, this is for covenanted members only. During the day time, on other evenings in the week and throughout the night each local household operates an open door policy of hospitality.

There are numerous training programmes which the Jesus Fellowship run. Local households regularly run a type of course for new participants which is based on the Alpha Course. This uses material from the Jesus Fellowship rather than the Alpha material and is called the New Friends Course. Those individuals who participate more fully in the life of the Fellowship are split into discipleship bands in which their spiritual progress is maintained and co-ordinated by one person. Specific training and teaching also takes place for men who wish to be leaders and for both men and women who wish to be celibate, for the newly married and for parents. The teaching that forms part of the Sunday services, the celebration weekends and the community celebrations is, as in the rest of the Charismatic community, issue led, and although it may follow a program for some time, is not rigorously systematised to form a body of teaching over many years.

Leisure time and time outside meetings in the Jesus Fellowship is centred on local households and the Fellowship itself. Members, if not employed by the businesses of the

community, take on any type of employment which theoretically pays enough to cover their living costs. As they primarily understand themselves to be members of the community first the decision over what type of employment is usually focused on how much time and space that particular job and particular company gives for the member to put the activities of the Fellowship first. By necessity therefore community members are not career orientated. The same foundation provides a similar ethos for the use of leisure time. Community houses do not possess televisions, rather their central focus is a large living room with comfy chairs and homemade pictures on the wall. Leisure time is usually spent in conversation with others, in reading or craft activities or in learning and playing musical instruments. Of recent years however members have been known to spend some time in the houses of the members who do not live in the community houses, watching certain programmes on the television such as documentaries and sports. The Fellowship has always advocated the presence of newspapers and radios in order to keep up with world events however in most houses these are kept in specific areas.

Whatever the opinion of the theological position of the Jesus Fellowship it can be said that their life and culture are typical of the rest of the Charismatic movement but with the difference that it is in a highly visible, easily accessible and clearly defined form. Not only is the culture easily accessible through the range of cultural products that the group supplies but it and the ethos behind it are easily accessible through the life and the lifestyle that is maintained in local community houses. The fundamental Charismatic notion of the ideal of equality is clearly visible in the practice of wearing uniforms, centralising food and clothing supplies⁹² and sharing possessions. The organisational scheme of layers of participation is also clearly seen, this time in the formal organisation of membership groups or styles. The

⁹² The 'food distribution centre' is based at the Farm. This houses a store of clothes and possessions and a group of members who buy food, clothing and necessary household and personal items in bulk and then organise their distribution. This is undertaken on the basis of need rather than personal choice. The requests that local households place are described in basic terms, for example in the case of foodstuffs the household will estimate how many meals are needed in a given week. The personnel of the FDC then send back the nearest match or an equivalent.

supplies⁹³ and sharing possessions. The organisational scheme of layers of participation is also clearly seen, this time in the formal organisation of membership groups or styles. The mechanisms of leadership and control are also basically the same but more visible in the day to day running of a household. It can be suggested that the bonds of relationship are the same but have been made more formal by the use of a lifelong covenant.

⁹³ The 'food distribution centre' is based at the Farm. This houses a store of clothes and possessions and a group of members who buy food, clothing and necessary household and personal items in bulk and then organise their distribution. This is undertaken on the basis of need rather than personal choice. The requests that local households place are described in basic terms, for example in the case of foodstuffs the household will estimate how many meals are needed in a given week. The personnel of the FDC then send back the nearest match or an equivalent.

Chapter Four

Description - The Charismatic framework of understanding

The organisation of identity markers and expressions

Clusters of people with informal social organisational structures such as the Charismatic movement rely heavily on networks of paradigms of understanding and multivocal symbols in which individuals can invest. This is an ongoing process which involves patterns of behaviour and language expression as well as specific religious beliefs. It is also a circular process that operates on two levels. Personal investment both leads to and is affected by the creation and maintenance of a corporate nature and identity, both of which are continually influenced by and have influence on the wider cultural and social context in which the movement is situated. It was with this in mind that the history of the Charismatic movement was written as a mixture of wider cultural events and factors, incidents, events, actions, theological debate and controversy and creative language use.

The composite nature of the organisation of all Charismatic systems, structures and models, including the organisation of its identity markers and expressions of belonging, is itself a crucial characteristic of the movement. This, however, poses somewhat of a problem for attempts to define and describe the movement's behaviour and ideology. Some studies use an external interpretative principle for organisational purposes. Howard's journalistic examination which weaves behaviour, language and beliefs of the movement into an arrangement based around attitudinal features is a typical example. 'Charismania' according to Howard is defined by the motifs of; an emphasis on power, a

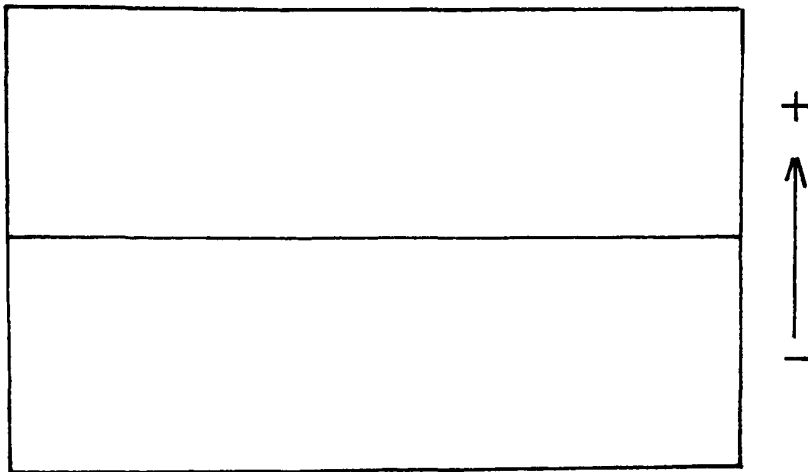
belief that they are the purveyors of the only truth, a pronounced dualism, an emphasis on success, a central concern with the individual and a deep seated conservative attitude (Howard, 1997:122-30). As a way into understanding some features of the Charismatic movement such organisations of the data can be successful and Howard's is informative in this respect. As a way of gaining an awareness of the spirit and the ethos of the movement such organisational models are limited because they place importance upon an external issue by using it as a central axis. Rather than doing that therefore the following description will be based on the two internal basics of the Charismatic framework of understanding which guide behaviour, belief and language; the perception of time and the perception of space⁹⁴. Although the paradigms and symbols which are used to express these perceptions are combined into clusters and haunt each other the model that lies underneath them carries a dominant motif; the relationship between God and humanity. It is this theme therefore which provides the thread of organisation for the following description.

The Charismatic model of the universe

In Charismatic thought and behaviour there is a fundamental distinction drawn between the world in which humans exist on earth and the other world, the spiritual world or the heavenlies. This distinction comes from a formation and use of a two tier model of the universe. In short, Charismatics structure space around an 'up' and a 'down' dichotomy which is also tied to a value judgement of a comparative dichotomy between 'above' and 'below'. The up is positive: better, it is perfect, it is good and it is as things should be in comparison to the down which is negative: imperfect, evil and defective (*see figure 1*).

⁹⁴ It can be argued that the way in which both time and space is understood lies at the foundation of all systems of knowledge and thus all systems of action.

Figure 1. An abstract model of the division of space.



This type of structure has been fundamental to Christian faith for centuries and has been vividly expressed through the metaphors used in liturgy and hymnology. A few examples from English hymnology over the last two centuries will suffice. Human hearts and heads are required to be lifted up to the Lord, voices raised in praise, joy comes from above, faith is given wings to rise, the cross shines through the gloom and points the Christian to the skies which Christ's glory fills. The Christian dead, the saints, are in the Church above, triumphantly risen from the dust of death to their glorious mansion in the skies. God is seated above, upon a throne, or the circle of eternity, beyond that which mortal eye can scan, his 'robe is the light, his canopy space; his chariots of wrath the deep thunder clouds form, and dark is his path on the wings of the storm'⁹⁵. In Calvinist theology God is considered to be so above that he is untouchable, unknowable and unreachable; 'in light inaccessible hid from our eyes'⁹⁶. In other forms of Christian theology it is stressed that God stoops down to touch the earth, his throne may be heaven but his footstool is earth, he is never too high or too far away to hear or to touch or to speak, and the angels join the strain of human voices to reach high enough to be heard. At the end of time, according to W.Y Fullerton the two will meet:

'But this I know, the skies will thrill with rapture,

⁹⁵ 'O worship the King all glorious above.' Robert Grant 1779-1838.

⁹⁶ 'Immortal, invisible, God only wise.' W.C. Smith 1824-1908.

And myriad, myriad human voices sing
And earth to heaven and heaven to earth will answer
At last, at last the saviour of the world is king.⁹⁷

In the present however, humanity is lifted, made lighter by thoughts of God and the work of God, their hearts are in heaven, while sorrow, trouble and physicality weighs them down and burdens them. Jesus Christ provides the most important connection between the above and the below, coming down from heaven to be born as a human, the Godhead veiled in flesh, heralded by the angels and through his life story imparting the glory of God. At the end of time, according to hymn writers such as Charles Wesley, Christ will again come down, descending with the clouds, attended by an angel train and heralded by the trumpet of God. The language expressing the doctrine of the rapture states that not only will Christ descend but that the Christian community will ascend to meet the Lord and his angels in the air, caught up in the clouds together.

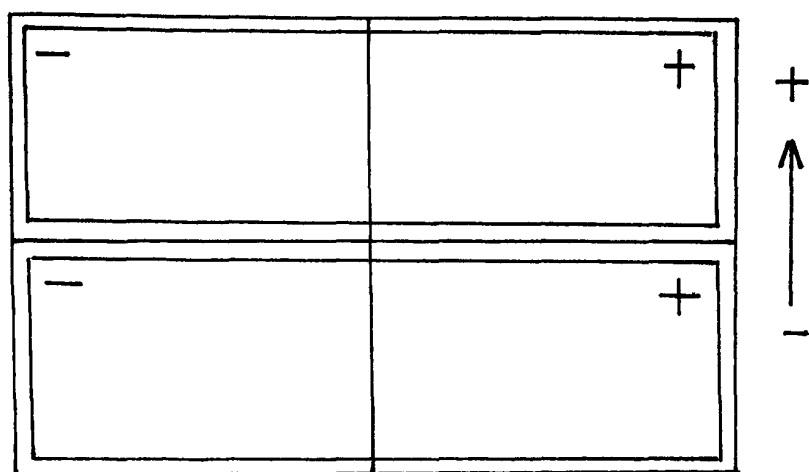
This is a primary distinction which is supported by a associated distinction between light and dark. The above is light and to go up is to become brighter, whilst the below is dark and to go down is to become darker. Thus the Christian dead are said to be in a place which is eternal day and Christ and God are up in heaven radiant in white. In hymnology and liturgy the natural cycle of night and day is attached to this dichotomy so that the rising of the sun brings with it lightness of spirit, renewed hope and joy, purity and a fresh knowledge of Jesus, the Lord of light, the day-spring and the day-star. The setting of the sun and the onset of night brings with it confusion, invisibility of Christ, lack of clarity and thus danger. It is also supported by an associated distinction between the non-corporeal and the physical. The heavenlies, or the spiritual world or realm is connected with spirit

⁹⁷ 'I cannot tell.'

beings, with angels and demons and with the human spirit or soul and the immortal. The earth is connected with physicality, the human body, nature and the mortal.

In Christian thinking down the centuries the structure of the universe has often been constructed using three tiers - heaven, the earth and hell. In Charismatic thinking there is a place of utter darkness, the habitation of Satan, hell, or 'the pit'. However, this has ontological ambiguity because Charismatics rarely think of it in the traditional Christian way of being beneath or down from the earth, the bottom layer of the universe. In the Charismatic mental picture, hell is not an underworld place in the centre of the physical earth or the bowels of the earth which is reached by special paths underwater or through caves or volcanoes. In mainstream English evangelical theology of the last hundred years or so the characteristics of the basement of hell have been implied but judiciously not overly discussed or used in polemical argument in order to make Christianity more positive and appealing to potential converts. This, alongside the scientific knowledge that the earth is a globe and not a line, has been highly influential in the symbolic placement of hell in the Christian mental map. Crucially Charismatics, along with other Christians, acknowledge the fact that from any point on the physical earth there is nothing beneath which is not covered by sky and the above. This has led to two trains of thought. Firstly it has helped confirm the belief that the physical earth can ideologically be the location for both the up and the down, the positive and the negative, the light and the dark. Secondly Charismatic theology specifically has transposed the physical location of hell and its inhabitants into the same space as that of heaven and its inhabitants - the sky and the above. The inhabitants however are however still value-attached and associated with the down and therefore are pictured in terms of evil, darkness, and the night. Therefore although in the dominant model the up is valued as positive and the down as negative this can be overlaid by a version of the model in which the up can be both positive and negative and the down can be both positive and negative (*see figure 2*).

Figure 2. An abstract model of the division of space showing all possible qualitative values.



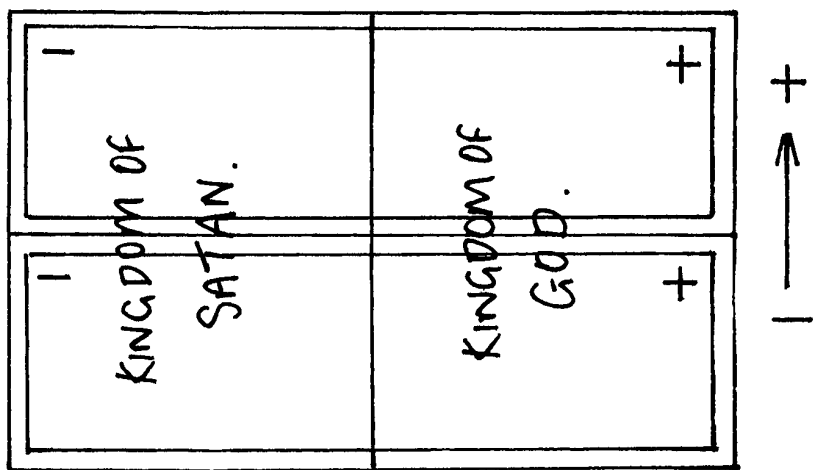
The structure of relationships between the two worlds

The classificatory sacred narrative

Charismatics use a sacred narrative of a cosmological battle to support a classificatory division by which they construct relational dynamics between the two parts of the universe; the heavenlies and earth, the up and the down, above and below, light and dark, non-corporeal and physical. The sacred narrative, taken from an interpretation of the biblical storyline of history, tells how God is opposed by an inferior evil principle called Satan or the Devil. In this type of scheme, sometimes called monarchical dualism, God and his supernatural and human supporters fight a cosmological battle against Satan and his supernatural and human supporters which involves the spiritual and material world. Beliefs in a cosmological battle have always formed a strong traditional element in many world systems. They were present in some of the movements such as Zoroastrianism and the community based at Qumran which formed the backdrop for the early development of Christianity. It was not until the Middle Ages that the Christian version of the cosmological battle motif reached a pinnacle in the Great Tradition of Eastern Europe, found in such groups as the Messalians, the Bogomils and the Cathars, and in the theology of Martin Luther. It is interesting to note that the latter strongly believed that the church was living its millennium rule, at the end of which Satan would be set loose and the

church would experience an unprecedented time of terror⁹⁸. The theme of a battle with universal consequences is also present in the beliefs of the Teutons or the Viking invaders from which many popular native English beliefs and myths are taken. Teutonic religious belief centred around a warrior king and a belief in a doomsday on which the final destruction of the world would take place and a new heaven and a new earth would arise from the old. This type of sacred narrative is therefore widespread throughout the history of thought, and has been adopted throughout the history of Christianity (*see figure 3*).

Figure 3. An abstract model of space showing the imposed categorisations.



Conflict

In the Charismatic version of the cosmological battle the present church and existing individual Christians are employed alongside the angelic host as the Kingdom of God in battling with the Kingdom of Satan consisting of Satan, his demons and his human supporters. They do so, as the army of the Lord, with Christ as their captain and with the power and authority of the Holy Spirit. Much of the language of the Charismatic movement revolves around metaphors used to express this purpose. Charismatics fight for the Kingdom of God, 'march for Jesus', unfurl banners, beat drums, sound the trumpet and

⁹⁸ See pages 137-138.

slay the enemy. Two of the songs written in the early 1980s express this generalised understanding of the Church as the army of God:

'Rejoice! Rejoice! Christ is in you,
the hope of glory in our hearts;
he lives, he lives, his breath is in you,
arise, a mighty army we arise.
Now is the time for us to march upon the land
into our hands he will give the ground we claim.
He rides in majesty to lead us into victory,
the world shall see that Christ is Lord.'⁹⁹.

'In heavenly armour we'll enter the land
the battle belongs to the Lord
no weapon that's fashioned against us will stand
The battle belongs to the Lord'.¹⁰⁰

The imagery of the Christian church as the army of the Lord has, of course, a long history of traditional use. What makes the Charismatic movement's understanding and use of it different is that it is no longer used in a largely metaphorical way but is used to in reference to a recognised fight between two domains which involves the whole of contemporary reality.

The consolidation of such thinking in the Charismatic movement occurred in the theology and practice of John Wimber and the Third Wave. The historical place of this way of

⁹⁹ 'Rejoice, Rejoice'. Graham Kendrick. 1983 Kingsway's Thankyou music.

¹⁰⁰ 'In heavenly armour (The battle belongs to the Lord)' Jamie Owens Collins. 1984 Fairhill Music/Word Music UK.

thinking in the context of the Charismatic movement as a whole is important in understanding why it subsequently became so popular and influential in the Charismatic culture. C. Peter Wagner and John Wimber taught this kind of theology and practice at the Fuller Theological Seminary in the late 1970s and early 1980s, ten years or so after the start of the Charismatic movement. There is no doubt that the emphasis in the movement on a religious experience of the type recorded in biblical times gave support to their claim in their teaching at Fuller that biblically recorded miracles were part of the contemporary experience of the battle between the two kingdoms. There is also good reason to suggest that the content of the courses at Fuller were influenced to some extent by Wagner's experiences of indigenous Christianity in Latin America which combined Western Protestantism with indigenous beliefs in the spirit world¹⁰¹. It can thus be said that the theology and practices associated with the Third Wave and with John Wimber grew out of the understanding of the religious experiences individuals were having in the early Charismatic movement, non-western forms of Christianity and the popular use of images and metaphors of war and armies.

Wimber and Wagner suggested that the specific clashes between the army of the Lord made up of angelic and human components and the army of Satan made up of demonic and human components produced physical results on earth. These clashes Wimber called 'power encounters' and the effects he called 'signs and wonders' because he believed that they were intended to be for the purpose of demonstrating the Kingdom of God to both members and potential converts. 'Power evangelism' is the term used for the methodology of relating to the world through power encounters specifically for the purpose of convincing individuals to commit to Christianity. The effects it is believed to produce all have biblical precedents; exorcisms, physical healings, raising the dead and

¹⁰¹ For example in his book Spiritual Power and Church Growth. Lessons from the Amazing Growth of the Church in Latin America Wagner clearly states that one reason why the Pentecostal churches that are using this method of evangelism are growing in Latin America is that in the Latin American culture the spiritual world is still believed in. (1986:37-42) This is also the message of another famous church growth specialist writing to Western Christianity out of the Korean culture (Cho, 1979:36-37).

miracles of nature, furthermore they all are to be found in the conduct and ministry of Jesus Christ.

Wimber and the Vineyard network have continued to emphasise the demonstration of the Kingdom of God to individuals both for the purpose of convincing individuals to join and for the purpose of encouraging and motivating individuals who are already members. Wagner, on the other hand has emphasised the more corporate power encounters and effects and specifically the effects that are produced in the heavenlies. The term that is popularly used for power encounters and this kind of understanding and practice is 'spiritual warfare'. Wagner breaks the practice of spiritual warfare into three areas; power evangelism and power encounters which he calls 'ground level spiritual warfare', the battle between Christianity as a system of belief and action and other belief systems such as witchcraft, Eastern religions, Shamanism and the New Age Movement which he calls 'occult level spiritual warfare' and the battle between Christians and angels and non-Christians and demons over territorial areas which he calls 'strategic level spiritual warfare' (Wagner, 1995).

Ethnographic examples: The Jesus Army, power evangelism, and strategic level spiritual warfare

The Jesus Army was commissioned in 1989. Full covenant members of the Jesus Fellowship Church are members of the Jesus Army and understand themselves to be soldiers in the Kingdom of God who have pledged allegiance to the cross of Christ. The Jesus Army was;

'...created in response to God's call for his church to be an army of his Kingdom conquering the spiritual powers of darkness...' (Cooper and Farrant, 1997:243).

As the account of the history of the Jesus Fellowship suggested the Jesus Army was also created in direct response to the influence of the teaching of John Wimber.

The Jesus Fellowship Church fully accepts the notions and practices of spiritual warfare. They participate in 'power encounters' for both evangelistic and pastoral reasons and power evangelism is a major feature of the operations of the Jesus Army. On a regular basis members from a local community house will decide to spend some time, usually an evening after dark, evangelising. Sometimes the decision to do so is based on a specific message an individual claims to have had from God, more often than not it occurs simply as part of the regular routine of the life of a community house. Once the household decision has been taken individual members decide whether they will go out evangelising or stay in praying for those who have gone out. Usually there are more people going out than staying in. Sometimes someone from the household will contact a Fellowship member who is known to be good at prayer support or who is known to be scheduled to pray at around the same time as the group is to go out to evangelise and ask for their prayers. Those who are going out then put on their Jesus Army jackets and the whole group then will gather together for a short time of preparatory prayer, asking God to go with those who are going out, to direct them to specific individuals and places and to protect them from harm.

The group either drives or walks to a specific public location or walks in a chosen direction waiting to see what happens. If they have a specific location in mind once they have arrived there they split up into two's or three's of the same gender and roughly decide which area each couple or small group will take. If they start off by walking in a chosen direction they also spread out into same gender couples. As they continue to walk the individuals pray, sometimes out loud and sometimes not. They may occasionally whisper something; the name of Jesus or a phrase describing God or requesting something, or a glossolalic word or phrase. Sometimes they will get a sense of the

atmosphere through which they are walking and pray about that, for example they may feel tension in the air and ask God to bind the spirits or demons of violence.

As they approach an individual or a group the couple will decide whether or not to make contact with them. Usually those who form couples are very well known to each other and one individual will stand out as the more decisive, experienced or in touch with God. Sometimes this individual will ask the other for an opinion as a sort of training procedure. Usually, however nothing is said between the couple before one individual makes contact and the other follows. Occasionally the couple will pass by an individual or a group without making contact and one individual will vocally express a strong feeling that this was not the right thing to do. The couple will then go back and make contact. The Jesus Army have a reputation for attracting individuals with severe social problems such as the homeless and drug addicts. These are individuals who are most likely to be found on the streets of towns and particularly in town centres which are a major location for Jesus Army evangelism. These individuals are also usually very distinctive in their clothing and behaviour and thus the decision to make contact is not solely based on divine revelation alone.

There are two ways in which Jesus Army members attempt to start contact with a stranger. They either begin a friendly conversation with questions such as 'how are you?' or 'what are you doing?' or they attempt to give the stranger a copy of the Jesus Fellowship's Streetpaper. This is a eight or ten page tabloid size newspaper which contains stories about individuals experiences of the church and of God, information about Christianity and details how to get in touch with the group. The paper is free and instantly recognisable as a document orientated towards Christianity. The members then try to steer the conversation towards general issues about God and religion. This may be through questions that are raised by headlines and articles in the Streetpaper or through enquiries concerning the strangers needs or desires. Often a member will offer to pray

with the stranger there and then and this will incorporate an element of spiritual warfare such as binding demons or asking for healing. Sometimes they will offer the stranger assistance such as giving them an article of clothing that they are wearing (but never the jacket), a bed for the night or a meal back at the community house. Occasionally a Jesus Army member will decide not to go through the preliminaries before asking to pray for the stranger. Upon approaching the stranger they will get a strong sense of their needs and immediately ask if they can pray about that specific issue¹⁰². Frequently, once the stranger has been offered and sometimes given assistance either through prayer or through practical means the onus is placed on the stranger to maintain contact either by requesting a visit from the Jesus Army or by visiting a community house.

The presence of Jesus Army members in public usually attracts attention from passers by. Often they have to respond to that attention as they offer assistance to individuals and sometimes this results in violence either from those watching or the stranger with whom they are trying to make contact. Members do not usually retreat in these situations but rather attempt to calm the situation down by compromise and silent prayer. Occasionally members will pray out loud in the situation, binding demons or calling out the name of Jesus. Sometimes if the violence is directed towards men female members actively chose to get involved believing that their presence is a calming influence. There is also a belief in the Jesus Army that the distinctive jackets that they wear act as a sort of protective shield in that they carry with them a sense and symbolise a reputation for non-violence and thus their presence also has a calming effect.

Sometimes a group of Jesus Army members will actively encourage attention before they undertake specific meetings with individuals of the type described above. This is usually

¹⁰² On one occasion, for example, a Jesus Army member passed a man in the street who was limping. Having let him walk off in the opposite direction for sometime she then suggested that the small group she was with retrace their steps in an effort to find him. Having located him she then ran up to him and asked if she could pray for his leg to be healed.

done by putting on a specific performance such as a dramatic play or a dance in public. They do not usually use the technique of giving a speech to gather a crowd. Often the group will gather in a circle and begin to sing Jesus Army songs and this has two purposes. Firstly it attracts attention in the same way that the other techniques do. Secondly however, members believe that by actively and overtly worshipping in public they can change the spiritual atmosphere in that area. This is a technique which is associated with strategic level spiritual warfare.

Practitioners of strategic level warfare have a particular view of territorial areas and civilisations or groups which occupy a particular area. This is most clearly expressed in their view on cities which is the subject area in which most of the work and writing about strategic level spiritual warfare has taken place. John Dawson of the organisation YWAM¹⁰³ states that:

‘A city is a human institution, and like all institutions it develops a creaturehood or personality that is greater than the sum of its parts.’
(Dawson, 1989:39).

Each human ‘institution’, including societies or groups based in a geographical location, is believed to have its own redemptive gift, born out of its personality, which motivates and feeds its unique place and vocation in world history. Each city, which is the institution which is the primary concern in the literature, is believed to have a primary angel and a primary demon, helped by secondary spirits which can control the redemptive gift of the city for good or for bad. It is the purpose of the human contingent in the Kingdom of God to help the primary angel and its assisting angels to win control of the redemptive gift and thus make sure the city or institution is fulfilling its greater vocation towards goodness

¹⁰³ Youth With A Mission.

and that the inhabitants or members are therefore happy, prosperous and satisfied. For example, practitioners in Nottingham believe that the city has a redemptive gift of social resistance to injustice they call the 'spirit of the bowman' which is symbolised in the myth of Robin Hood. When the primary demon gains control the city erupts in violence but when the primary angel are in control justice and equity are in abundance¹⁰⁴. Practitioners believe that in every institution there are 'strongholds of Satan', places where Satan and his demons are particularly active, these can be ideological locations such as cultural norms, belief patterns, social problems or geographical locations such as shrines, statues, historical places of interest or places of natural interest. These strongholds are said to be established when individuals or people groups make pacts with demons in times of disaster or undergo ritual ceremonies which transfer power. Many strongholds are thought to be under the control of a 'strongman' which is the name practitioners give to a specific human individual, a leader, who has cultivated an intimate and direct relationship with demons through specific occult activity (Jacobs, 1993).

For every institution, city or geographical area therefore practitioners can make a map of its 'spiritual dynamics'. This is done through gathering practical knowledge and divine revelation of the area and interpreting both through a highly complex system of logical connections and inferences (Caballeros, 1993:138-45). Practitioners believe that Satan is ultimately inferior to and under the control of God, therefore he and his kingdom are believed to be restrained. Demons are not thought to be ubiquitous but are connected to a specific areas, the special sites of which are often categorised as 'strongholds' and are understood to be negatively profane in the same way that other sites connected to angels and the human army of God, the church, can be positively sacred. Thus practitioners of spiritual warfare are very eager to find out about the particular places such as

¹⁰⁴ They have thus drawn a link between the mythological history of the area and the current polar social statistics which continually rate Nottingham as the or one of the most violent city in England.

monuments, statues, or buildings which may be used or connected in some way with evil purposes and thus with demons.

Practitioners of strategic level spiritual warfare believe that the controlling demons in the area affect negativity throughout the geographical area. This can be made manifest in numerous ways; through natural disasters, through the ineffectiveness of Christians, through general crime, corruption, disagreement and immorality and through physical darkness, financial recession and emotional depression. For example:

‘We have an area in Sweden called Bergslagen, where church membership was decreasing and many were unemployed. A decision was made to shut down the iron mill that had about 600 iron workers. One Sunday evening the whole town of Grangesberg protested by turning out all electric lights in homes, streets and shops. The TV news showed a town in darkness. It was a demonstration of hopelessness - people saw no future for the town. The price of property fell and it was almost impossible to sell a house.’ (Sjoberg, 1993:100)

As it is the Christian humans who are the most likely to be under attack from the demons first, practitioners believe that a good way to distinguish between ordinary events in the world which may be negative and negativity caused by demons is the mood of the local Christian population. If the local communities are divided, depressed, unwilling, tired and lethargic the cause is probably demonic¹⁰⁵. Another measure of the demonic control over the area is the change in mood of Christians upon entering and leaving the area. Some

¹⁰⁵ A story is told amongst the local Nottingham practitioners of a certain location on the local motorway between the Midlands and London where drivers, particularly Christian ones, were suddenly overcome by tiredness. Whilst local Christians were engaged in spiritual warfare it came to their attention that pagan meetings were being held in the woods nearby. On further investigation the practitioners realised that the site of these meetings was also directly under the flightpath of a passenger plane which had crashed onto the motorway in 1989. Practitioners therefore went to the spot one day and prayed, binding the demons of witchcraft. No reports of tiredness or accidents at the location were subsequently reported.

suggest that a distinguishable change from tiredness and depression to lightness and happiness can be felt as they travel across the boundaries of the area under demonic control¹⁰⁶.

Practitioners deal with the control of demons over an area through a practice which centres on a vocal invocation which involves admonitory and supplicatory prayers. Having ascertained through research which demon or demons are in control of that area practitioners corporately and vocally name them, restrain them, or bind them and then vocally welcome or release the presence of angels over the same area. This is usually accompanied by a physical symbolic action from the human army of the Kingdom of God such as marching, walking or driving stakes into the ground. These actions are known as 'claiming the ground' and the support for such action is taken from the biblical statement found in Joshua 1:3: 'every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given to you....'.

The March For Jesus events were set up specifically with a basic understanding of strategic spiritual warfare in mind (Kendrick, 1992:134-154) although Forster claims about the events:

'We don't know how to engage totally the spiritual forces of darkness that are vested in the structures of society. We don't know exactly what happens when we declare the victory of Jesus into the cosmos. What we do know is that something does happen even when we don't truly understand it. That is why we feel it is valid to understand March for

¹⁰⁶ Entry and exit points to cities are known to practitioners as 'gateways'. They are gateways not only for humans but also for spirits and therefore are sites of especial importance. In Nottingham there is a network of 'prayer camps' which have been set up in locations near or at the gateways to the city boundaries as well as at particular strongholds.

Jesus as having an impact upon the spiritual condition of the society in which we live.' (Kendrick, 1992:140-41).

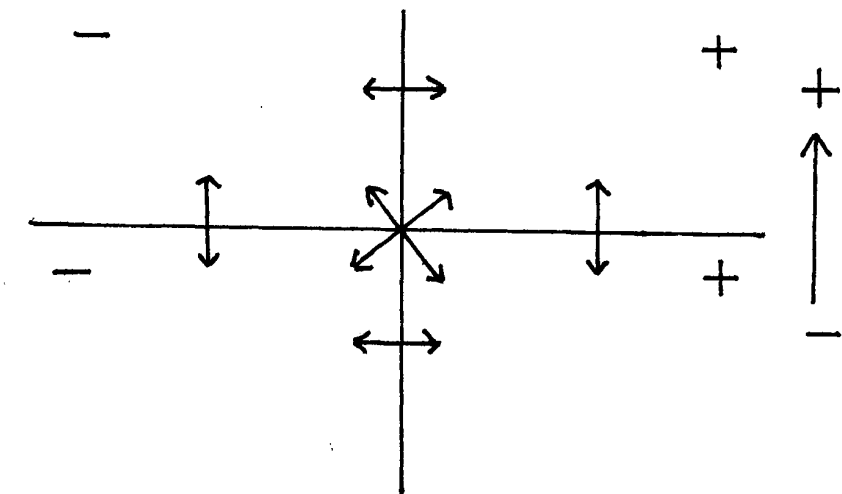
Forster's comments are perhaps indicative of the majority perception of the practice of strategic level spiritual warfare which exists in the contemporary English Charismatic movement. Certainly, the majority of those who have joined in with March for Jesus or other local marches have not done so with the specific strategic level spiritual warfare of Wagner guiding their feet. They have done so because publicly marching together is perceived as a good way of drawing attention to their cause and their faith and thus in drawing attention to the Kingdom of God and by inference doing something to change the atmosphere. Exactly how that occurs, whether or not it is because the controlling demons are bound, remains a vague conception in the majority of Charismatics minds. However, spiritual territoriality, is still a very understandable representation of the structure and the contours of connections in the Charismatic model of the universe.

Cause and effect

In spiritual warfare that which happens in one tier of the universe can affect that which happens in the other. In the practice of spiritual territoriality the emphasis is placed upon the effect human invocatory prayer can have in the heavenlies. Humans can bind demons and release angels, they are human warriors who can break through to the heavenlies, or in the words of Larry Lea, one of the Charismatic spiritual territoriality teachers they are '..humans poking holes in the clouds of darkness with their fingertips' (Wagner, 1991:86). In the practice of signs and wonders spiritual warfare the emphasis is placed upon the effect on humanity that is caused by that which happens in the heavenlies. The demonstration of the Kingdom of God is understood in terms of 'breaking into' the world. Thus using the classificatory distinction between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Satan

Charismatics understand the relationship dynamic between the two tiers of the universe to be an effectual one (see figure 4).

Figure 4. An abstract model of all possible relationships across spatial divisions.



Correlation

The classificatory distinction between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Satan provides not only a structure to the relationships between the two Kingdoms but also a structure to relationships within each domain. One type of relationship that this classificatory distinction maintains is that of correlation. In each domain that which happens or exists in the one half of the up/down structural division of the universe happens or exists in a parallel or simultaneous form in the other. This is clearly seen in the Charismatic understanding of demons. Each demon is understood to have a particular character and a particular responsibility, they can thus be specified and named by role; for example the demon of lust or the demon of greed. Each demon effects certain events in the physical world relative to their responsibility and character. Thus, if a demon of lust is at work an individual under its control may undertake a series of extramarital affairs. If the demon of greed is at work an individual may be driven by a heightened need to make money or to consume food. This understanding of individual demons makes the whole demonic world relatively easy to stratify. Demons are thought to work in relationship to other similar demons with a principal demon at the head. Once the principal demon is

recognised, and, importantly vocally named, the other demons in control can likewise be recognised. In the Charismatic practice of exorcism demon groups can be recognised by the specific physical effects they have on the individual or the entity over which they have control. In the case of the individual these effects are made manifest in the physical body, demons usually entering and exiting the individual through specific body orifices¹⁰⁷.

Another illustration of this correlative dynamic is found in the fictional work of Frank Perreti, an American Charismatic who combines a career writing fictional novels about spiritual warfare with a career as an itinerant speaker on the same subject. In his first novel This Present Darkness the story is told of the events surrounding a fictional town, chosen to be the place where a huge clash between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan takes place. The battle is described as taking place both in the heavenlies, between angel and demon characters and on earth between human characters. The final encounter takes place as, on earth, a New Religious Movement and corrupt organisation gets ready to buy the whole of the local university campus and as, in the spirit world, the principle demon challenges the principle angel to a battle to decide who will be prince of the territory. As the humans argue in a boardroom, certain key figures with connections to the spirit world invoke demons and angels to be a part of the battle. The spirits then fight a sword battle in the air just above the humans and below the ceiling of the room. As the angels descend the FBI also storm the building, as the main angel fatally wounds the main demon with his sword, the principal corrupt human is hit by an FBI bullet. Of course the good wins; the praying pastor beats the corrupt business people and the angelic host, after a small amount of celebration, flies off to assist in a Christian revival in a country in the two-thirds world.

¹⁰⁷ For example Hammond 1973 in an appendix charts three hundred and twenty demons by their family groupings. He suggests fifty three such groupings. A typical example and one which reflects a pattern of consanguinity familiar to all Charismatics is that headed by the 'demon of sexual impurity'. Other demons in the group are: lust, fantasy lust, masturbation, homosexuality, lesbianism, adultery, fornication, incest, harlotry, rape, exposure and frigidity. Hammond would expect those demons to enter the individual through events involving sexual intercourse and would suggest that demons can be passed on from one of the participants to the other.

In the Charismatic model of space and reality therefore there are two boundaries which are both fixed and strong. The vertical boundary provides the classificatory distinction between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Satan and the horizontal boundary provides a distinction between the heavenlies and the earth. The first boundary is pictured in terms of contrast, opposition and conflict. The strength of the second boundary is primarily built around an absolute dichotomy between non-corporeal existence and physical existence and is expressed in terms of relationships of cause and effect and correlation. There is no hierarchical graduation which provides a fluidity of movement across either boundary as they are used in this sense.

The dominant motif; God and humanity

Within the Charismatic framework of understanding there is a dominant theme which makes the classification of reality into the two domains necessary and that is the understanding of a relational connection between God and humanity. This connection is fundamentally expressed in relational descriptive terms such as those of love, covenant and, indeed Kingship or sovereignty. In terms of the organisation of the overall model of reality that is built and maintained this connection provides the type for a dynamic of a direct link which straddles the horizontal boundary but not the vertical boundary. It is through the means of this relationship that the positive and negative values expressed in terms such as goodness and evil, light and dark, up and down, can be found in both tiers of the Charismatic model of space.

This type of link is constructed by Charismatics using the notion of the presence of a King, a leader or a main individual in each classificatory category. The model that is used for this link is controlled by the absolute distinction in the wider framework between non-corporeal and physical existence in which the former is connected with the heavenlies and the latter with the earth. Charismatics use the human body at the centre

of their organisation of this model. It is a good metaphor to use to express this as it carries both the concept of a physical element and a spiritual element, a spirit or a soul. In the model described above, the absolute division between the non-corporeal world of the heavenlies and the physical world indicates that anything of the non-corporeal world which has an effect on the physical world must retain its non-corporeal nature. On the one hand therefore the presence of either ruler in the physical world is understood to be a presence of the ruler in a spiritual form. This is expressed in a belief in spirit possession of physical bodies. Both God, as the Holy Spirit, and Satan, as a demon or very occasionally as himself, can descend from heaven to inhabit an individual's body as the site of the individual. Thus, individuals possessed either by God or by Satan, who have accepted the rule of either in their lives, physically display this¹⁰⁸. On the other hand, the presence of either ruler in the spiritual world is understood to be absolute but the nature of this absolute can only be thought about and expressed on earth through the metaphor of the anthropomorphous character of all spiritual beings. God, Satan, angels and demons are functionally understood in terms which picture them as 'super humans', sometimes they are pictured with recognisably human-like bodies, the difference being that these are without physical limitations. For example, God is a King who can sit and stand and stoop down, who has hands, feet, a face and arms. Also God is believed to be capable of emotion, to have characteristics and a personality. Such anthropomorphic language is often used in relation to God the Father and God the Son but not in relation to God the Holy Spirit. As will be outlined below the Holy Spirit is often pictured in terms of being the spirit part of the personality of the whole of God. Some Charismatics however take this a step further and use anthropomorphic language to describe God the Holy Spirit; believing it to be a person which bears the characteristic of being the effective dynamism of the Godhead. For example Benny Hinn writes:

¹⁰⁸ See pages 200-202 for a description.

'The Holy Spirit is the power of God. He is the power of the Father and of the Son. He is the one who brings into action the performance of the Son. Yet he is a person. He has emotions which are expressed in a way unique among the Trinity.' (Hinn, 1990:52).

Hinn then goes on to suggest that the Holy Spirit is person enough for humans to have an active relationship involving conversation and friendship with him. Hinn's extension of the anthropomorphic image to encompass the Holy Spirit is not widely accepted by the Charismatic community largely because in the conclusions that he has drawn from it they see a detracting from the primacy given to Jesus Christ as the part of the Trinity individuals can have an active relationship with. But in general terms there is a model of a direct link between heaven and earth which is built around an inversion concerning the nature of non-human beings; in heaven the spirits have human bodies, on earth the human bodies have spirits. The use of an inversion dynamic again points to the strength of the boundary between heaven and earth, again there is no conception of a sequential arrangement to reality of which individual units in reality can travel up and down¹⁰⁹.

The Holy Spirit

In the Charismatic mental map individuals in the physical world can have a relationship with the Godhead through having a friendship with Christ which is 'empowered' by the Holy Spirit. Bearing the above in mind it can be said that it is the presence of God in the form of the Holy Spirit which has functional primacy. The notion that there has been a progressive revelation of the Trinity throughout history is not new, in fact it can be traced back to the thinking of de Fiore in the Middle Ages however, Charismatic beliefs about the presence of God in history have been heavily influenced by an interpretation of this theme

¹⁰⁹ This is in contrast to other versions of Christianity in which physical humans are placed at one end of a ladder of types of existence and can travel up it to become saints, then non-corporeal saints, then angels.

called Dispensationalism. In theological terms the word dispensation is used to indicate a system or administration organised by God to regulate human obedience such as the system of the law or that of grace. The Puritan writer William Ames (1576-1633) suggested that the different periods in the history of salvation through which God had administered his one covenant with humanity could be called dispensations. By the Nineteenth century the word was being used as a proper noun; Dispensationalism, for the faith and practice of a group of people who believed in a particular scheme of dispensations: innocence, moral responsibility, human government, promise, law, the church, and Christ's return. Dispensationalists understand that this scheme incorporates a progressive revelation of the Trinity. They believe that God the Father was active in the first five systems to regulate obedience and that the fifth, the dispensation of the law, ran from the existence of the Mosaic law right up to the death of Christ. The period from the death of Christ to his return is understood by Dispensationalists as the dispensation of the Spirit and the time of the church.

Nineteenth Century English Dispensationalism was highly influenced by John Nelson Darby (1800 - 1882), one of the early leaders of the group known as the Plymouth Brethren. It was popularised in a particular version of the King James or Authorised translation of the Bible called the Scofield Reference Bible (Boone, 1989:79-82). This version added dates, time lines and Dispensationalist exegesis to the biblical text and was highly popular among Christians who were eager to understand history and particularly the end of time¹¹⁰.

Dispensationalists agree, along with many other Christian groups, that when the specific work of Christ was completed he ascended back to heaven so that the Holy Spirit could

¹¹⁰ James Barr makes the comment that more than half of those students in conservative evangelical groups considered the Scofield Bible to be the normative text in the 1950s (1977:191). Attention has already been drawn to the Brethren influence on the early Charismatic movement.

descend and begin his specific work. Chapter two of the book of Acts records the coming down of the Holy Spirit with 'power from on high' at Pentecost which immediately initiates the growth of a large Christian community. Dispensationalists understand the rest of the New Testament and the rest of history to be the story of the establishment of the Christian community under the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit. In the Dispensationalist scheme of history the end of the dispensation of the Spirit and of the church will intersect with the dispensation of the Age to Come and the major signifying event of this will be the return, second coming or *parousia* of Christ which will dramatically alter the earth and humanity.

Many Dispensationalists in the early years of the Twentieth Century were interested in predicting the moment when, and the manner in which, the age to come would begin. For some the belief that the time of the age to come was close was heightened by the negative experience of earthly life; two world wars, the perceived slide into deprivation of the post World War Two period in the west, the threat of nuclear annihilation and the expansion in information about the state of other countries and their affairs. For others it was positive experiences of the increased activity of the Spirit and the church in preparation for the return of Christ which was convincing. This was demonstrated by the mass conversions of the great revivals of the Nineteenth Century and, as some theologians in the Latter Rain movement believed, by an increase in the use of spiritual gifts in the church¹¹¹. There is no doubt that the restoration of the physical State of Israel in 1948 was, for many Christians, also an event which challenged their beliefs about the end of the age of the Spirit. Many understood it to be the most serious sign to date of the end of the age. For others it also necessitated a re-evaluation of the premises by which they understood all the biblical prophecies about Israel, which they once interpreted to be referring to the church. By the late 1960s and early 1970s many conservative evangelical Christians,

¹¹¹ For some the theology of the Latter Rain Movement can be seen primarily as an early polemic defence of Pentecostal behaviour (Dayton, 1987).

Brethren and Pentecostals, among others, had watched for the signs of the end of the age, seen some of them occur, and therefore understood the world to be in the very last days before the parousia¹¹².

One specific belief concerning the supercession of this age with the Age to Come has continued to vex fundamentalists and conservative evangelicals and it lies at the heart of the foundations of Restorationist beliefs¹¹³. It involves the doctrine that Christians will enjoy a rule of a thousand years at the end of time. The belief that Christ will return after the thousand year reign of Christians is called Postmillennialism whilst the belief that he will return before is called Premillennialism¹¹⁴. Restorationists and those influenced by Restorationist theology were steeped in the Postmillennialist tradition and therefore formulated a belief in the necessity of the rule of a restored church in preparation for the return of Christ. Some Restorationists also believe that the existing societal institutions will be so influenced by the renewed church that they will evolve to become the institutions through which the Church rules for the thousand years.

The Dispensationalist scheme of history is a structured doctrinal form of the standard Christian belief that it is the Spirit which is the form of God present and active in the contemporary world until the Second Coming of Christ. Charismatics accept the notion, along with some of the more specific understandings and arguments of Brethren Dispensationalism and Latter Rain theology. It provides a language and creedal framework

¹¹² Hal Lindsey's book of 1971 The Late Great Planet Earth (London. Lakeland.) which systematically applied Biblical prophecies and signs of the coming kingdom to contemporary events was a phenomenally successful best seller.

¹¹³ The meetings of leaders which Arthur Wallis called together in 1971 were primarily directed at issues of prophecy about the end of time see page 51-52.

¹¹⁴ Two of the greatest figures in Nineteenth Century revivalism held opposing views, Charles Finney (1792-1875) was a Postmillennialist and Dwight Moody (1837-1899) was a Premillennialist. Finney believed that revivals could be instituted by human techniques and his measures included the use of meeting at unusual hours for great lengths of time with much prayer before hand and the availability of an anxious bench. On the other hand Moody firmly believed that conversion was a total work of God and moreover, that evangelism was for the purpose of calling out a select few to prepare for the coming kingdom. It is interesting to note that although many contemporary English Charismatics tend towards postmillennialism, many contemporary American Charismatics tend towards premillennialism.

in which this link between earth and the heavenlies can be understood. Very importantly, it does this in relation to notions about time as history and time in the abstract.

What is unusual about Pentecostal and Charismatic versions of this particular doctrine is the emphasis that is placed upon the purity, strength, and the similarity of the two actions of the Holy Spirit which initiate and complete the age of the Spirit and the church. The events of Pentecost and the events of the Last Days, including the restoration of the Church and the revival of the world, are understood to be normative and therefore the model for all other actions of the Holy Spirit in the age of the Spirit. It is for this reason that the archetype to which Charismatics refer for life is the lifestory of the early church, empowered by the Spirit.

It is logical that if the important characteristics of the two poles by which contemporary history is measured are understood to be the same then all the events which use them as a model bear a similarity not only to them but to each other. It is for this reason that the Charismatic understanding of time could be said to be ambiguously circular as well as linear. There is a direction to history, moving from one coming of Christ to another, but there is also a sense in which the time between the two appearances of Christ stands still; each important event is, to a greater or lesser extent, the same as all the rest in that they are all uniform in character. This understanding of time has been greatly supported by the belief that the present moment is undifferentiated from all other moments of the last few decades in that they all generally reflect the position of the church and of the world as poised at the very end of the age of the Spirit waiting for the absolute and dramatic event to finish the age off and start a new one. The church therefore is already living at the end of time, that the absolute defining moment is believed to be a good one for the church but totally out of the church's control however hinders even active anticipation of it and rather engenders a mood of inattentiveness, even disregard of it.

Within this Charismatic understanding of time the past history of the universal church is also seen as a collection of interlocking events rather than a sequential series of traditions. This is demonstrated in two areas of the Charismatic culture, spirituality and biblical exegesis. In both, events, opinions, thoughts, words and types of behaviour can be decontextualised and understood both in their singularity and as a complete entity. Thus for example, traditional components of spirituality such as prayers, music, poetry and dance forms are lifted out of their historical context and used as items in an eclectic programme. During some new style services celtic prayers, rave style music, gregorian chant, twentieth century poetry, first century philosophy and contemporary ecology sit side by side. In biblical exegesis, for example, chunks of narrative are placed in their historical context and their textual context but then gradually lifted out by a process of allegorical interpretation and connected to contemporary issues.

There is no doubt that this sense of the similarity of all history between the two comings of Christ is sustained by the belief that the present active form of God is 'spirit', an immaterial thing, an essence, or a ghost. It is not an objective, anthropomorphised or incarnated deity but rather is insubstantial and disembodied. This form of God can essentially be joined to materiality and physicality regardless of the historical and situational context. To restate the theme but in different language; for the Charismatic the primary mode of the sacred, the presence of God, is the Holy Spirit. This stands in contrast and yet in comparison to the conservative evangelical awareness of the sacred in which the primary mode of the sacred is the biblical text which provides the material for the Holy Spirit to interpret and make comprehensible to humanity. In both however, the nature of the sacred is primarily understood as constancy or immutability. In the former this is realised as constancy of personal character and nature in the second as literary inerrancy. In both interpretations, this nature is, in some way, an abstract entity which can be applied; unadapted, non-negotiated and uncompromised, in time and space. In the Charismatic framework this is related to a behavioural emphasis upon the present, in the

conservative evangelical framework it is related to a philosophical emphasis upon the absolute truth.

Another important facet of the link between heaven and earth as it is seen in relation to abstract notions of time is that sacred presence on earth is restricted by the limitations of physical time, as well as by physical being, while in heaven it is not. In heaven God's reign is understood to be eternal and infinite, on earth it comes and goes, decreases and increases over time and space. Where and when the sacred is present it is perceivable, it can be sensed; seen, heard, smelt, felt and understood. As the sacred gets further away in time and in space it becomes harder to perceive. Charismatics understand this as a dynamic, expressing it in terms of the power or strength of the sacred. Thus their experiences of the presence of the Holy Spirit have to be continually 'topped up'. Also, Charismatic sacred sites only possess intrinsic sacrality for as long as the presence of the sacred is perceivable at them. It may be that some sites such as religious buildings appear to be permanently sacred but that is only because such sites are the focus of a steady flow of moments in which the presence of God at them appears. They are not made permanently sacred by the presence of an object that has had sacrality transferred to it or by an accumulation of many such objects. All that counts is the actual presence of God. As will be seen below, the presence of the sacred is usually made manifest through hierophanies which are experienced on an individual level. A site may be considered to be more open to the potential of a hierophany if it enshrines memories of previous hierophanies but that is not certain. Sometimes if the site is considered to be so much concerned with that which has enshrined the sacred than the actual presence of God is forgotten it will be considered void and useless. As time passes the sense of the sacred is also lost. Buildings which focus on historical deposits therefore mean little to the Charismatic.

Jesus Christ

In Charismatic faith and practice Jesus Christ is the pivotal character in the construction of their model of space and time. They believe that it was God in the form of Jesus Christ who established for once and for all the distinction between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Satan by conclusively defeating Satan through his death and resurrection. It is also the action of Christ which initiates the new type of relationship between heaven and earth, up and down, above and below and it is the awaited action of Christ in coming to earth again that will complete the fight and the relationship. The career path of Jesus is therefore mapped in terms of travelling down: incarnation, descent into hell, second coming, and going up: resurrection and ascension. For example, a popular modern Charismatic Easter song states:

'You came from heaven to earth to show the way,
from the earth to the cross, my debt to pay;
from the cross to the grave,
from the grave to the sky,
Lord, I lift your name on high.'¹¹⁵

It is by becoming human, by taking physical form and being present on the earth, that God, as Jesus Christ, initiates a relationship with humanity. This belief is the linchpin of Christian and Charismatic faith¹¹⁶. It is by the taking of an individual, contextualised human form that God places humanity at the centre of the model of space and time.

¹¹⁵ 'Lord I lift Your Name on High' Rick Founds. 1989. Nashville. Maranatha! Music.

¹¹⁶ The word 'gospel' which refers to this central message of Christian faith is a translation of the Biblical Greek word *eùggélion* from which the words evangelise and evangelical are also taken. James Barr defines the evangelical understanding of the Christian gospel as '... salvation from sin through the blood of Christ and through personal faith in him.' (1977:25).

Jesus Christ's action on the cross by which the distinction between the two Kingdoms was eternally established is expressed in the doctrine of the atonement. Using the terminology of Aulén's classic study of different versions of the atonement the Charismatic version can be said to be predominantly a classical type influenced by a Latin type (Aulén, 1931). The later is based around the metaphor of a penitential system where God is seen as an angry judge, or an angry creator demanding payment for wrongdoing and around a metaphor based on the Jewish pre-exilic understanding of sacrifice. Jesus Christ is understood to be the perfect sacrifice who dies in the place of humanity thereby paying the price for wrongdoing and justifying humanity in God's sight. This understanding of the atonement is steeped in the language of substitution, propitiation, expiation, sin, shame and guilt and uses the primary symbol of Christ as the lamb of God. For example, a song written by Graham Kendrick has the lyrics:

'The price is paid,
come let us enter in,
to all that Jesus died
to make our own.
For every sin
more than enough He gave,
and brought our freedom
from each guilty stain.'¹¹⁷.

This interpretation of the action of the atonement is the one which most evangelicals would ascribe to and therefore is highly influential on Charismatic thought. However, Charismatics also distinctively assert a classical view of the atonement in which Christ directs his work towards Satan who is holding the world in bondage using his manhood as

¹¹⁷ 1983. Make Way Music. Eastbourne.

an instrument representing all humanity. Satan is tricked into encouraging those around Christ to put him to death on a cross and Christ then descends to hell, fights Satan and defeats him once and for all. The language is that of a mythological battle, in which Christ fights as a warrior and breaks the power of Satan or crushes him. Humanity is then offered the new kind of life which is initiated by the defeat of Satan through an incorporation into Christ's power as a representative. The second verse of the above song reads:

'The price is paid
see Satan flee away;
for Jesus crucified
destroys his power.
No more to pay,
let accusation cease,
in Christ there is
no condemnation now'.

Another popular Charismatic song which is often frequently sung around the Easter period captures many of the strands of the Charismatic doctrine of the atonement:

'He has risen, he has risen, he has risen, Jesus is alive.

When the life flowed from his body, seemed like Jesus mission failed;
but his sacrifice accomplished victory over sin and hell.

In the grave God did not leave him for his body to decay,
raised to life - the Great Awakening, Satans power he overcame.

If there were no resurrection we ourselves could not be raised,

but the Son of God is living so our hope is not in vain.

When the Lord rides out of heaven, mighty angels at his side,
they will sound the final trumpet from the grave we shall arise.

He has given life immortal - we shall see him face to face;
through eternity we'll praise him, Christ the champion of our faith'¹¹⁸.

The notion of Christ as the 'Satan slayer', the 'warrior prince' who descends to hell is a part of the Charismatic acceptance of the sacred narrative which has been described above. The re-use of this model of Christ in the contemporary world has, it can be argued, played a large part in the reintroduction by the Charismatic movement of the ideas of myth and fantasy, war and battle into the Christian culture (Smail, Walker and Wright, 1993:86-105). An equally important point however is to be made in the assertion that Charismatics have been very eager to hold in tension these two versions of the doctrine of the atonement and the contrasting pictures they give of Christ Jesus. In the former, the emphasis is placed upon Christ as a representative human, in the latter as an invincible, divine figure. This ambiguity in the nature of Christ means that he becomes the mediator *par excellence*, the ultimate connection between the spiritual and the physical, in the dominant model constructed around a two tier universe.

It can be said however that the tension between the two natures of Christ is not always as successfully balanced in other parts of Charismatic faith and practice as it is in their version of the doctrine of the atonement. Other versions of the cosmic battle motif and narrative, such as gnosticism, indicate that once the doctrine of the atonement is associated with beliefs about the nature of humanity there is a bias towards one nature or

¹¹⁸ Noel and Trica Richards and Gerald Coates. Eastbourne. Kingsway's Thankyou Music Ltd.

the other in the beliefs concerning the two natures of the saviour figure. For example, if humanity and the physical world is believed to be inherently evil, so evil that God left it, then the saviour figure has, by logical necessity to be beyond the world - a divine figure. Manichaeism coped with this notion by suggesting that Christ was a totally divine figure who only appeared to be human, Montanist gnosticism suggested the converse, that Christ was a human figure who was adopted by God to become totally divine (Runciman, 1969).

In the history of Christianity the belief that humanity and the physical world are in the grip of evil is traditional, that the physical world is innately evil is not. The idea that the physical world is not necessarily evil has traditionally been expressed in two ways, by the belief that the physical world will progress through history to be 'heaven on earth' and by the belief that humans are essentially good beings. Charismatic belief incorporates this idea of the goodness of the physical world in its use of the classificatory category of the Kingdom of God which stretches across the whole of reality, physical and non-physical. Some Charismatics place the major expression of this idea in a temporal framework which centres around the notion of progress. It can be argued however that most Charismatics, because of the decentring of history and temporal notions in their wider framework, express the idea through the belief that humans are essentially good beings. In some versions of Christianity this is indicated in a view that all humanity needs is teaching, a model in which Christ appears as the teacher. In Charismatic thought perhaps the central manner in which this is indicated is in a belief in the ability of humanity to be an efficacious carrier of the divine. It is possible to understand some of the central characteristics of the Charismatic framework of understanding by using the suggestion that, by virtue of the above progressive argumentation, a major way in which Charismatics understand Jesus Christ is as the ideal, the archetypal human carrier of the divine. Furthermore, this is connected in Charismatic thought to the notion that it is the Holy Spirit

which is the form of the Godhead which is actively present in the physical world, and the cluster of interrelated thoughts that this carries.

It can be said, for example, that the Charismatic plot of the lifestory of Jesus Christ reads like the story of a human adopted and empowered by God. The major points in the narrative to Charismatics are the temptation of Christ by Satan, his baptism and his transfiguration, in other words; his proving, his adoption and empowerment and his reward. Moreover, it is Christ's acts as a miracle worker that many Charismatics emphasise above his teaching as proof of his character. Acts of this nature can be said to confirm and demonstrate Christ's empowerment by God.

In the Charismatic version of the atonement the Latin version which emphasises the human nature of Christ can be said to be balanced out by a Classical version which separates the human nature of Christ from the actual effectual agent; the Holy Spirit. Charismatics often point to the twofold image of the Christ before the atonement event and the Christ after. On the cross Christ gives up his human will and spirit in order for the atoning work to be completed. After the atoning work is completed Christ is raised from the dead and is present on earth as a spirit like being. There is room to suggest that, with the aid of a connection made by the affinity of the language and imagery of spirit, will and Holy Spirit, sometimes the image of the Holy Spirit working as or through Christ's will or Spirit in order to perform the superhuman feat of self sacrifice or as the force which descends to hell to defeat Satan is used in Charismatic theology.

That the Charismatic doctrine of the nature of Christ is bias towards emphasising his human physical nature and locating his divine part in another being is also seen in Charismatic liturgy, particularly in song lyrics where the most common name for the second member of the Trinity is Jesus. Often an experience of this 'Jesus' will be pictured in terms of an experience which is distinct from an experience of God the Father or of the

Holy Spirit and is characterised as a human relationship with a friend, or a human relationship of the most spiritual kind without involving a divine figure, that with a lover¹¹⁹. The Jesus figure, separated out from the rest of the Trinity, is often therefore mostly pictured in human terms. This can be seen as another way of expressing the theme which underlies the understanding of the historical Christ's divinity as something which was affixed and confirmed to a human figure by the action of God the Father and God the Holy Spirit.

The Taylor controversy in the Baptist Union was concerned precisely with this doctrinal matter of the two natures of Christ. Those who left the Union and subsequently became firmly aligned with a conservative evangelical position as a result of the controversy strongly affirmed the divinity of the historical, physical Christ. Those who stayed and subsequently became the backbone of a Union largely in step with Charismatic faith and practice understood the issue primarily as one of freedom of opinion (McBain, 1997:62). Again there is room to suggest that there is a connection between a Charismatic framework of understanding and the downplaying of the notion of the divinity of the physical Christ figure.

It is in the particular theology of John Wimber and the Third Wave of the Charismatic movement where this type of thinking is overtly present. Through his understanding of signs and wonders Wimber clearly understands the life of Christ in terms of his ability to perform miracles. Furthermore, he understands the whole of Christ's life, the 'Christ event' which includes the miracles and the action of the cross as part of the atonement, itself

¹¹⁹ The eroticism of some of the lyrics of Charismatic songs has been much discussed in the Christian press and by Percy. From a functionalist perspective it has been suggested that love piety such as the lyrics 'You are my passion, love of my life friend and companion - my lover. All of my being longs for your touch with all my heart I love you. Now will you draw me close to you, gather me in your arms, let me hear the beating of your heart O my Jesus, O my Jesus' (Noel and Trica Richards. 1995. Eastbourne. Kingsway's Thankyou music.) is a culturally determined expression of a desire for intimacy, a form of expressing something that was once repressed, or the expression of a self perception of inadequacy and a need for otherness. It has also been suggested that this theme in the development of Victorian female hymn writing is an indication of the feminisation of Western Christianity (Sizer, 1978).

understood as the defeat of Satan. The atoning action of Christ in Wimber's theology, as Percy has suggested, is founded on the notion of 'power encounters'. This includes the miracles and the cross, which Wimber understands using the Classical model. Similarly Wimber makes no distinction in the Christ event between the incarnation and the atonement and understands the incarnation in terms of Christ's empowerment by the Holy Spirit (Percy, 1996:99). Percy pays only cursory attention to the logical conclusion that both these ideas entail that divinity in Wimber's theology is empowerment by the Holy Spirit, choosing rather to emphasise the effect of a concentration on power at the expense of weakness that this produces (Percy, 1996:127-28). Yet the fundamental point remains; Christ stands as the archetype for humanity as an individual human who only becomes effective by the empowering activity of the Holy Spirit in him.

The comments made above are not intended to suggest that all Charismatics are 'closet adoptionists' in their doctrine of Christ. The intricate questions which centre on doctrinal matters concerning the two natures of Christ and the relationships within the Trinity is neither a central concern of this thesis nor, it can be suggested, of the Charismatic movement itself. The fundamental point is the suggestion that Charismatics use a model of space and time which both places a human being with a divine nature at its pivot as the creator of its organisational categories and as the intermediary between them and which, by virtue of the construction and character of the model, necessitates the functional primacy of a spiritual being in the connection between heaven and earth. Therefore it can be said that Charismatics hold the centrality of Jesus and the centrality of the Holy Spirit in tension in their framework of understanding.

Human beings

At the centre of Charismatic faith is the understanding that a convert to Christianity is both otherworldly and yet still a material, earthly being. Troeltsch suggested the thesis

that Christianity could be described by its possession of a congenital tension between the emancipation of the individual through personal transcendence and the existence of these 'outwordly' individuals in a community which, although its equality exists purely, in truth or in heaven, still treads the earth. The tension is managed, he suggested, either by adopting the attitude of escaping this world by contemplation or by the adaptation of this world to the principles of the other (Troeltsch, 1931). The basic premise however can be expressed in the language terms of this chapter in the assertion that in the Charismatic mental map converts to the Christian faith of the Charismatic movement are understood to be individual *axis mundi* by which a connection between the structural up and down of the universe operates.

It is by the act and rite of conversion that the individual is set in the classificatory division between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Satan. This provides the channels by which the link between the up and the down can be made. In Charismatic faith and practice there is no greater, definitive event than that of conversion to the Christian faith, indeed to the Charismatic version of the Christian faith¹²⁰. Conversion is the personal rite by which an individual becomes a member of the Kingdom of God. Charismatics are most likely to follow the traditional evangelical interpretation of the doctrine of conversion in that they stress that conversion is by a personal decision rather than by a group decision and that it can, and probably should be, a distinct event in an individual's life rather than an ongoing process. Many individuals can therefore name the date, location and time at which they 'turned to Christ' or 'gave their heart to the Lord' while at the same time acknowledging that there was a period before that event where they were becoming prepared to make a decision and that life afterwards is a period of putting that decision into action. Conversion therefore is a decision making act of will and can also be an

¹²⁰ Many Charismatics can tell two personal conversion narratives: one of salvation from sin and one of joining the Charismatic movement.

emotional experience. By the act of conversion the human individual joins in the activity of the Kingdom of God as it is brought to bear upon the earth.

The emphasis on conversion is accompanied by a minimisation of life cycle events. Life events such as birth, marriage and death are not understood to be as important as conversion and events in which the individual fulfils their particular role as a member of the Kingdom of God. Life event rites of passage are celebrated in minimal ways, often emptied of much effectual significance. On the other hand, conversion and its rite of passage; baptism, and events where an individual displays spiritual gifts or displays behaviour of great service to the Kingdom of God and the rites that are sometimes created to celebrate these are laden with significance. In terms of social organisation this assists the notion that once the primary threshold has been crossed by the individual in becoming a member of the group through conversion, the internal boundaries in the group that are encountered are weak and soft ones. The structure of the social organisation of the Charismatic movement has already been described in this way, using the concepts of equality of membership by participation and affiliation.

Through the act of conversion individuals imitate the action of the Jesus Christ. In theological terms they are saved by their appropriation of the salvific work of Christ in delivering the universe from sin, death and the devil. As has been described above Charismatics believe Jesus Christ to be the archetype in contemporary reality. Not only is he the originator of the classificatory system but he is also the example which all other humans should follow. This is nowhere more clearly seen than in the ritual expression of conversion, the rite of baptism in which the individual mimics the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ¹²¹. The link position in which individuals are set by conversion is a direct

¹²¹ See pages 188-189 for a description.

imitation of the central role that the Christ figure has in the system of understanding, as a mediator and pivot between heaven and earth.

After conversion the individual therefore becomes a channel in which the values and actions of the Kingdom of God which are attached to the heavenlies are made present upon earth¹²². In theological terms, by associating with Christ an individual is granted the potential and the right to be in an active relationship with the Holy Spirit. In terms of the historical model that becomes normative for life and faith in the mainstream of the Charismatic movement this entails the following of the example of the Christian church upon whom the Holy Spirit has descended after the death and resurrection of Christ. This places Christ's inaugural act at the beginning of the historical sequence as well as at the centre of the structural model. As such it can be thought about as a preceding, foundational act rather than an immediate and extant act. Transposed into the present significance is therefore placed after the Christ event or the post-conversion experience. In the theology of the Third Wave however it entails the following of the example of Christ's behaviour before he undertook the cosmic inaugural act on the cross. This means the normative picture is one based upon a historical sequence which ends with an inaugural act. This can, obviously be transposed into and related to an emphasis upon the inaugural act which ends all time, the belief in the second coming of Christ. It also however can be transposed into an emphasis upon the originating descent of the Spirit in the Christ event before his death and resurrection understood by many to be evidenced in his baptism. It has already been suggested that this places the emphasis upon Christ the archetypal miracle worker, it also places the emphasis upon the notion and symbolism of baptism.

There is a strong stream of tradition in the Christian faith which suggests that the Holy Spirit does not just come to the Christian on the one occasion of conversion and remain

¹²² It is interesting to note that Darlene Zschech's 1998 worship album was entitled 'Touching Heaven. Changing Earth'.

eternally and actively present. Seventeenth Century Puritans such as John Owen, Richard Baxter, Richard Stibbes and Thomas Goodwin argued that it was possible and valid to have a similar, separate emotional experience of the Holy Spirit which was in addition to the experience of the Holy Spirit at conversion and which affected the subsequent and ongoing process of sanctification. It was in American post-Wesleyan Methodism that this notion of a 'second blessing' came to the fore.

The doctrine of a second blessing was popularised in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century England through the teachings of the American holiness movement as it was presented at the Keswick Convention and to the Keswick movement. Wesley had suggested that mature Christians should seek and expect to enter into an instantaneously given experience of perfect love for God in which they had complete victory over sin which he defined as the voluntary transgression of a known law. The American holiness preachers Phoebe Palmer and her husband reaffirmed a version of Wesley's teaching by suggesting that once a believer had been converted they should claim the experience of 'entire sanctification' or the realisation of their perfection. In the cultural climate of frontier America, with its optimism about human ability, moral agency and free will such a doctrine was welcomed. It led to two further conclusions. Firstly it evaporated the need for any sort of spiritual struggle on the part of the individual either before or after conversion and secondly it heightened the belief that a religious experience could take place in an instantaneous moment. It was the latter which had the most affinity with the culture of the Keswick movement as it was steeped in the context and culture of Romanticism (Bebbington, 1989:151-180).

The optimism in human ability soon subsided in America culture and the doctrine of perfection that Wesley had taught was also severely challenged by those who held a strongly Calvinistic theology and thus believed in the doctrine of election. Therefore a doctrinal shift occurred so that the second blessing was understood to be for the purpose

of holiness rather than perfection. This shift made sense in light of the general turn away from emphasising the political involvement of the Christian towards emphasising private devotion and it made more sense apologetically too. The Palmers began to suggest that whereas perfection had been about capability, holiness was about the power for life. Another popular understanding of the second blessing was the notion that the negative cleansing action which affected purity and the positive making holy action which affected power for life were two sides of the one experience.

Until this point the doctrine of the second blessing had been primarily concerned with the doctrine of sin. However, for some the experience of two blessings turned out to be an experience of three effectual blessings - consecration (conversion), making pure and giving power. It was suggested, from recourse to the words of John the Baptist about the one who would '...baptise with the Holy Spirit and with fire' (Luke 3:16), that the second and third blessings were the result of 'Baptism in the Holy Spirit'¹²³. This was thought to bring purity, but also to bring fire, or by the extension of the metaphor of fire by reconnecting it with the story of the descent of the Spirit on the Early Church, to bring 'power from on high'. This idea of empowerment fitted in easily with the shift from understanding that Christians could eradicate sin and so be perfect to the understanding that Christians could only suppress sin to a advantageous extent. This emphasis upon empowerment took the application of the notion of a second blessing beyond the doctrine of sin to an involvement in understandings of Christian service. This meant that the doctrine of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit was highly influential among those who campaigned for more workers to promote the gospel¹²⁴.

¹²³ The key person to propagate such an exegesis was the Baptist Benjamin Harden Irwin, the founder of the Fire Baptised Holiness Church who, unfortunately by 1900 was found to be in 'open and gross sin'.

¹²⁴ In particular this was the position of Moody, and more explicitly of his successor at The Moody Bible Institute - R.A. Torrey.

As the century turned all the elements were in place for the manifestation of glossolalia at Topeka, America. The doctrine of the impartation of the Holy Spirit had evolved from being a belief in some sort of direction by God of the individuals life, through being a belief in an emotional experience at conversion, to being a belief in an experience that could happen subsequently to conversion that provided both holiness and empowerment. As all these themes came together the Pentecostal movement was born at Topeka. At the fore of Methodism and Puritanism had been the question of the desire for assurance and evidence of the internal experience and in Pentecostalism this took the form of glossolalia. As the movement adjusted to its context the validity of glossolaic speech as both evidence of an initial experience of Baptism in the Spirit and of its maintenance came to be more and more a central issue.

There is no definitive Charismatic version of the doctrine of Baptism in the Spirit there is however evidence which points to a trend in the movement to disregard the traditional link between the second blessing and conversion and replace it with a different dynamic. Most Pentecostals understand the initial experience of Baptism in the Holy Spirit to be the second half of the conversion event; either as the emotional experience of empowering which comes after the emotional experience of being made pure or as the emotional experience of both which comes after the more rational experience of conversion. Charismatics however understand conversion to be a complete event in itself, a rational, emotional, purifying and empowering event. They do so because they strongly emphasise its nature as an event which fixes a change of status. Any further spiritual experiences necessarily can not be about personal status as membership in the Kingdom of God but are understood to be emotional experiences of feeling. Therefore many Charismatics understand Baptism in the Holy Spirit to be an integral part of the conversion event and not a subsequent or second blessing. They understand any subsequent blessings, which they may also refer to as Baptism in the Holy Spirit, as concerned with the experience of being made more subjectively conscious of or feeling more powerfully the already

attained qualities of purity, holiness and power. Thus they maintain a dual emphasis. On the one hand they emphasise the post-conversion experience and intermingle it with an emphasis upon baptism. On the other hand they emphasise that this experience is one of affectivity not of inclusion, enrolment or initiation.

A good example of this is the interpretations given to the recent phenomena associated with Baptism in the Holy Spirit which have been experienced at Pensacola and at Toronto. The Pensacola experience is considered to be about non-Christians becoming Christians, in other words about conversion and hence it is termed 'revival'. The Toronto Blessing was interpreted by many as an experience for Christians of refreshment and reassurance (Church of England, 1997:15). The terms refreshment, rejuvenation and restoration are commonly understood to be symbols of a different type of experience than that referred to by the term revival. In the language of the Charismatic movement the latter is concerned with the bringing back to life of the world through mass experiences of conversion and the former is concerned with the reinvigoration of those already reborn. It is not surprising to learn that the Pensacola phenomena started at and is continuing to take place at a Pentecostal Assemblies of God Church whilst the Toronto phenomena started at and continued to be orientated towards a Charismatic Vineyard Fellowship¹²⁵.

The characteristic of touching the emotions, the soul or spirit of the Baptism in the Spirit experience has been emphasised by some commentators. Cotton for example, has suggested that the movement as a whole is successful because it joins together evangelicals who emphasise reason and logic and Charismatics who emphasise instinct,

¹²⁵ This crucial difference has been missed in many discussions throughout the history of the Charismatic movement. Often protagonists have understood the Charismatic version of Baptism in the Holy Spirit as the emotional side of a conversion event or have focused on the validity of its behavioural manifestations. For example, it has been suggested to me in private conversation that the Charismatic experience was welcomed in its early days because many of those who underwent it as an emotional experience were from the Presbyterian, Westminster Confession tradition and therefore had an even smaller understanding or experience of conversion as an experiential experience of the Holy Spirit than most other evangelicals.

vision and the Holy Ghost. The latter he goes on to describe as concerned with the pre-verbal instinctiveness of tongues, change, fluidity, uncertainty and flexible boundaries, the experiential and tactile expression (Cotton, 1995:27-32).

Cotton begins his description of the experiential side of the evangelical/charismatic combination by quoting the chorus of the Charismatic theme tune; Kendrick's 'Shine, Jesus Shine'. This is no accident as the Charismatic movement places as much emphasis, if not more, upon singing as preaching and it is this form of behaviour which is the greatest symbol of a Charismatic emphasis upon emotion. Theorists such as Susan Sontag (1982:181-204) and Harvey Cox (1996), the latter specifically writing about religion, have suggested that the manner in which language is delivered is symbolic of its content. Cox's work on Pentecostalism suggests that glossolalia is used to express emotions beyond words as it is ecstatic utterance, primal speech or, to use Cotton's terminology, pre-verbal. Participants in the Charismatic movement however, sing far much more than they practice glossolalia. It can be said that by combining words with music rather than emphasising the pre-verbal they use the verbal in a manner which intensifies its emotional content¹²⁶. There is no doubt that music stirs the soul and when it is formed into songs can convey the feeling of very specific emotions.

Emotions such as love, joy and security as well as the passion and passivity which Percy draws attention to are common place in the lexicon of the movement in contrast to the emphasis on feelings of guilt, sinfulness and endeavour which are associated with the conservative evangelical perspective (Percy, 1996:65-66). An equally important element however is not the type of feelings Charismatics emphasise but their *modus operandi*. Emotions often overwhelm, course through and overcome the individual as intense

¹²⁶ The Charismatic religious experience is not understood to be totally beyond the ordinary but just beyond it and therefore unable to be described by language.

feelings. For example, the language of Charismatic songs contains many metaphorical uses of the symbols of water and fire. Charismatics ask for floods, for rain, for Christ to pour down his blessings and run through the individual until they are overflowing with Him or with a specific emotion. Similarly, they speak of being refined by fire, having burning hearts and desires and passions being kindled. The type of music used in relation to the content of these kind of lyrics is also intense. It is either fast and excited or slow and fervent. Kendrick's 'Shine, Jesus Shine' is indeed the best example; musically it is scored in such a way that it can be sung either in an excited or a fervent manner and the lyrics are extremely typical:

'Shine Jesus shine
Fill this land with the Father's glory
Blaze, Spirit blaze
Set our hearts on fire.
Flow river flow
Flood the nations with grace and mercy
Send forth your word Lord and let there be light'¹²⁷.

This dynamic of the action of emotions is one valuable way in which Charismatics express the notion that the values, the action and the sensations of the heavenlies break into or infiltrate the material world.

A completely different way in which the Charismatic movement gives importance to the emotional aspect of experience is by using experience as a principle of validation. Middlemiss has drawn attention to this characteristic method of validation in his thesis on

¹²⁷ 1987. Eastbourne. Make Way Music.

the movement (Middlemiss, 1996). When asked to assert or defend a particular doctrinal point Charismatics will often respond in experiential terms. For example, they may suggest that the resurrection of Christ truly happened because they know it to be so in their heart¹²⁸, or that the Toronto Blessing was valid because their personal experience of it entailed good feelings. To validate doctrine and behaviour in this way places a huge emotional investment in feeling and experience.

The Charismatic understanding of religious experience is distinctive not just because of its emphasis upon the heightening of emotion and feeling to cause the stimulation of the individual but also because Charismatics believe that, unlike an act of restoring life, acts of rejuvenation and stimulation can occur repeatedly. The Charismatic type of religious experience therefore is characterised by being a frequent occurring emotional experience. The Holy Spirit descends to link heaven and earth over and over again. Participants in the Charismatic movement continually attend meetings in order to frequently experience a refreshing or stimulation. These experiences do not add up until the participant has reached a limit but rather they lose something of their force and completeness with the passing of time. Each experience then is seen as only for the moment in that it is only absolutely potent for short-lived time and its efficaciousness becomes increasingly weaker. A good example of this is found in a common critique of events such as Spring Harvest that they give Christians an annual 'emotional high' which is unrealistic¹²⁹.

¹²⁸ A song which many older Charismatics are familiar with and which appears in the Mission Praise compilation sums this response up with the line 'you ask me how I know he lives, he lives within my heart'. 'I Serve a Risen Saviour.' A.H. Ackley. 1933. Milton Keynes. Word Music (UK) Ltd.

¹²⁹ Professor D.J. Davies has suggested in private conversation that the Toronto Blessing as a whole could be explained by a 'thirty year itch' theory. It could be seen as a phenomena experienced by people who have not had an embodied religious experience since the widespread phenomena of glossalalic utterance that heralded the beginning of the Charismatic movement. Consequently, they are people whose experience of the sacred has deteriorated and they are ready for another absolute and intense boost (see pages 63-64).

Once converted then the individual becomes a location for the action of the Holy Spirit in the physical world, or a site for the sacred to be present upon the earth. That the manner in which this occurs is the same as the patterns of operation that are familiar in the wider model should cause no surprise. The Spirit descends upon the individual by a process which has a dynamic of infiltration and primarily acts upon the individual's emotions, their 'spirit', soul and will. That this is an experience of the moment is an equally familiar theme.

The notion that the individual is a location for the presence of the sacred in the material and physical world is clearly expressed in the Charismatic mental map in the belief that intense religious experiences produce correlative bodily actions. The inner experience of feeling, of the spirit and the soul is, it can be said, thought by Charismatics to be incomplete without its embodiment in physical action. Charismatics use the whole of their bodies in worship through dance, applause, prostrating acts of kneeling and lying down and the elevating act of lifting their hands and arms. Such actions are not only performances or manifestations of emotions but also, as many social theorists have pointed out, symbols and markers of the Charismatic movement itself. The body is both a physical and symbolic artefact which is naturally and culturally produced and which reflects the social body and is the terrain in which the social body is formed and maintained¹³⁰. Charismatics therefore both express and mark what is important to them and create their emphases through the use of their bodies; they use it predominantly to worship and use it in a way which mainly expresses emotions of joy and excitement and a desire for a religious experience. Some commentators have suggested that a theoretical and behavioural emphasis upon embodied expression is not only a marker of the identity of the Charismatic movement but also a characteristic of the wider culture and have given

¹³⁰ For example, Turner 1984. More generally the work of Mary Douglas locates this idea within a structuralist framework whereas the work of Michael Foucault importantly locates this idea in a framework based on questions concerning social relationships and power.

this as one reason why the Charismatic movement is fashionable in the postmodern west (Drane, 1994).

Some commentators have suggested for various reasons that the Toronto Blessing signalled the Fourth Wave of the Charismatic movement, or was at least a defining 'craze' of the Charismatic movement (Walker, 1997:34-36). The Toronto Blessing was certainly characterised by a different type of embodied expression of emotion to that usually found in the Charismatic culture. Individuals left behind culturally defined physical expressions of feeling and rather acted out their emotions. They roared like lions with pain, staggered, fell over and lay paralysed on the ground under the weight of the descent of the Holy Spirit, and rolled about laughing with uncontrollable joy. Again, the notion of the physical expression of a emotional experience was paramount.

Charismatics believe that the sacred is present in the physical material world for a purpose. On the micro level this is shown in the belief that the presence of the Spirit can transform an individual's physical body, and this is primarily related to physical healing. On the macro level it is expressed in the belief that the presence of the sacred through the presence of the Charismatic movement, a group of renewed individuals, will transform the church and the world. This is the understanding behind the theological opinion that waves of experience such as the Toronto Blessing are the preparatory stages to world wide revival. Through such experiences the church is made ready to make the most of God's operation in sending revival.

Charismatic individuals therefore broker the sacred to the material world. The individual is the *axis mundi* between heaven and earth, the channel of the sacred as the presence of God, the Holy Spirit and the broker of this sacralisation to the material world through their action, social attitudes, opinions, and especially through their physical bodies. The

Kingdom of Satan is believed to be made effectual in like manner; through corrupt opinions, depraved behaviour in the encounter with the world and through the embodied action of physical bodies that are thought to be possessed by demons. It is the act of Jesus Christ on the cross which sets up the contours for the presence of sacred space in the physical world and the action of conversion which applies those contours to the individual. From another angle Charismatics can be said to manage their binary structure of the universe by imposing through it a classificatory bipolar opposition in order to understand the existence of the sacred in the material, profane world.

The Charismatic framework for understanding is therefore controlled by a dimensional paradigm. The model concerns location and situation. Motion is understood in spatial rather than in temporal terms. The Charismatic thus waits for the world above to be made manifest, penetrate and infiltrate the world below in acts of forceful and potent intrusion. In Charismatic faith and practice the Kingdom of God is nearby in the sky just above humanity, rather than being close to being completed, fulfilled, near at hand in the development of history. The sacred is experienced and sought for as the presence of God and as transcendence as intensity of being rather than permanence of existence¹³¹. A very common structure in Charismatic models, one which has been pointed to continually throughout this chapter and the previous chapter, is the spatial one of a layered organisation with one major distinction. The next two chapters of this thesis continue the interpretation of this description of the Charismatic movement, based around a spatially defined model, by considering more fully the type and structure of the major way in which Charismatic individuals make their journey towards the sacred.

¹³¹ In an introduction to her worship song 'Holy River' Sue Rinaldi states; 'Try and describe the holy place - impossible! -But lets have a go.... I think it's all about intensity of presence.' Promise Land 1998. Eastbourne. Survivor Records.

Chapter Five

Description - Charismatic Worship

Introduction - worship

One of the most popular visual images of the Charismatic movement is that of a large group of individuals with their arms outstretched and pointing upwards. Sometimes the image will focus on one face in the crowd which is particularly demonstrative; the eyes are tightly closed, the mouth is slightly open, the chin is tilted upwards and the brow is furrowed. This common illustration is used to accompany all kinds of reports and studies concerning the Charismatic movement from news reports both on the television and in the newspapers to academic studies¹³². It is also an image which Charismatics themselves regularly choose to illustrate their own community and it is found in picture form on the front cover of their books, magazines and tape, compact disc and video covers.

When a Charismatic undertakes this kind of behaviour they understand themselves to be worshipping God. When a Charismatic or an observer uses the image to illustrate the Charismatic movement they are suggesting that in some way this particular behavioural act associated with worship is at the very heart of understanding the Charismatic movement. Worship can be defined as the expression of adoration, praise and thanksgiving to God. It is an altered state of consciousness in that it is an expression of an attitude whether it be devotion, thanksgiving or interpreted in some way, for example as dependence. However, worship is also expressed and therefore it is also an altered state of activity. In worship believers go through established patterns of behaviour and public acts or rites: organised behaviour that communicates through shared symbols in order to

¹³² Take for example the front cover of the following books: Martin and Mullen, 1984; Cotton, 1995; Middlemiss, 1996 and Howard, 1997.

have some form of effect. These external actions have borne as much significance in the interpretative quest of culture as the internal attitudes they portray. The description contained in this chapter is built upon two assumptions; that worship is at the heart of religion and at the heart of understanding religion, and that the worship act of the type described above is at the heart of the Charismatic movement and therefore at the heart of understanding the Charismatic movement.

In many organised religions worship is a term that is used to refer to a ceremony made up of different parts. In Christian church services, for example, liturgy, song, prayers, readings from sacred and holy texts, sermons, music and visual images are all incorporated into an act of worship. The behavioural act described above is one which accompanies a particular style of corporate singing known as a 'worship time' which is a customary part of various types of Charismatic services. A worship time basically involves the corporate singing of a succession of songs under the direction of a worship leader. Alongside the kind of embodied expression described above worship times can also be distinguished from other Christian acts of worship by the type of songs (usually defined as songs and choruses) that are sung, the type of instruments (usually those found in a modern rock band) used to accompany the singing, the use of some form of electronic projector by which the congregation is prompted with the song lyrics and the informal mood that these devices create. This style of corporate singing stands in contrast to a more formal style which in the nonconformist subculture is known as 'the hymn sandwich' in which one hymn (a highly structured song) is sung in between other parts of the service to the accompaniment of an organ and without any lead singer.

There is evidence to suggest that not only is this specific style of corporate singing the norm in Charismatic groups but that it is also having a strong influence upon the styles of worship to be found in the regular services of churches and groups with a traditionally strong denominational and evangelical identity but which incorporate an interest in the

Charismatic culture. In a survey which to date is unpublished Christopher Ellis, Convenor of the Baptist Union's Doctrine and Worship Committee has drawn together results which appear to show a strong appropriation of the elements of a Charismatic style of worship in Baptist Union Churches (C. Ellis, 1998). Only 220 of the 1812 churches that took part in the survey said that they solely used the worship time style of corporate singing nevertheless, nearly half said that they used it regularly in conjunction with the hymn sandwich style. 60% of churches used a projector for singing, the vast majority of which did so in conjunction with the use of a hymn book. A slightly larger proportion of churches used an organ than used a music group as the accompaniment to singing. Importantly, however the most common hymn books used by far were those which contained the songs of the Charismatic movement, nearly twice as many churches used Mission Praise as used Baptist Praise and Worship¹³³.

In order to understand Charismatic worship more fully the style of corporate singing described above will be described as it is found as a part of a type of meeting which is wholly Charismatic in orientation called a 'celebration meeting'. There are occasions in the Charismatic calendar, either regularly prescribed or spontaneously organised occasions, when Charismatics gather together in large numbers, hundreds, sometimes a couple of thousand individuals meeting together for the express purpose of worshipping God. The gathering of vast numbers of Christians together to undertake a specific activity is not unprecedented in the history of Christianity. However, there are two types of large event which have, specifically, had an enormous influence upon the Charismatic movement and the subculture in which it stands. The first is that of the evangelistic meeting, examples of which are the meetings held by the early revivalists of the American Awakenings, the Early Methodist movement and more recently evangelicals such as Billy Graham. The

¹³³ Ellis suggests that the widespread use of Mission Praise is the musical equivalent of the use of the dominance of the New International Version of the bible. However, although the NIV has a strong reputation as a marker of evangelical identity Mission Praise is perhaps seen more as a marker of Charismatic than evangelical identity. Certainly the other songbook most widely used, Songs of Fellowship, has a Charismatic reputation.

second is that of the teaching meeting, examples of which are the meetings convened by the early European pietists and, more recently, the leaders of the Holiness movement. Charismatics will sometimes use the accounts of the types of behaviour that were recorded to take place within these kind of meetings to validate their own expressions of worship (Chevreau, 1994:70-144). However, Charismatic meetings of this scale are unique in their recent context, not because of their size, but because of their purpose. In the two types of meeting mentioned above the worship of God is a documented element but not thought of as the major and specific purpose of gathering together.

It was the Restorationists who first began to practice gathering together a large number of individuals for the purpose of worship but these large gatherings or celebration meetings have, over time, become an established part of the whole of the Charismatic culture. As part of the process of establishment these specific meetings have not only become regular occurrences but they have also produced a basic pattern of ceremony to which any gathering of Charismatics for the purpose of worship corresponds. This gathering may be on the macro scale of a large and diverse community of Charismatics gathered together for a festival or conference or on the micro scale of a local community. This chapter will describe the basic model using examples from the typical celebrations held during the Spring Harvest festival, the festivals of the Jesus Army and regular life of the local community of the Jesus Fellowship Church. Because the chapter has an even more specific focus in subject matter than previous chapters and yet is describing an ideal type the specific points of ethnographic data will be used and spread as a basis across the whole of the chapter.

Charismatics understand worship to be a characteristic of a relationship between an individual and a deity or a lifestyle choice. They define it as; 'giving God his worth', 'being honest with God', 'living as Jesus lived' and 'an attitude of the heart' (Hind, 1989). Recently

Matt Redman, a distinguished worship leader in the Charismatic community, has summarised the Charismatic understanding of worship:

‘Worship is not just the words but, the way you walk, the things you do, the things you say, and the things you think.... “many are the words we speak, many are the songs we sing, many kinds of offerings, but now to live the life.” (Rimmer, 1998)

Redman goes on to suggest true worship of this kind is different from the ceremonial or ritual acts of worship and the specific rites they are made up of:

‘[It’s] just trying to say, “Lord we know it’s more than about songs.”’ (ibid)

Gerald Coates has also picked up this distinction in his statement:

‘Services are places to stop on the M1; we aim for worship.’
(Hillborn, 1998).

Both Redman and Coates have made this distinction with the pragmatic intent to assert that there is something wrong with the current Charismatic and evangelical attitude towards their style of worship, for both leaders they have become stereotyped behaviour. Hillborn sums up Coates’ argument by stating that:

‘...in the so-called “alternative worship movement”, “services” has become synonymous with an outdated religion of dour church buildings, hard pews and hymns which are “sandwiched” between monologues led entirely from the pulpit’. (ibid).

This comment is specifically aimed at evangelicals but Charismatic forms of acts of worship have also been specifically criticised in this way. Nigel Scotland has summed up the critical attitude behind many anecdotal comments concerning Charismatic acts of worship:

'There's a feeling on the part of some that God won't show up unless particular types of songs are used or a certain length of time is spent in worship choruses. Vineyard churches for example have a very fixed order in which they sing at least thirty continuous minutes of Vineyard songs..... Other groups almost have a fetish about getting into "real" praise or dancing.' (Scotland, 1995:62)

Charismatics have, since the beginning of the movement, negatively valued ritual behaviour and the word ritual, believing it to be made up of dead, lifeless, unnecessary elaborations which have become the routine and habitual customs of religion. Ritual was one of the first areas of the Christian life to come under the spotlight in the early 1970s when Charismatics were beginning to talk and think about restoring the church. It is within the boundaries of this understanding of ritual that the above criticisms of what is now, thirty years on from the beginning of the movement, an established form of Charismatic worship have been made by Charismatics such as Redman and Coates. Therefore, this thesis accepts the definition of the Charismatic act of worship called a celebration as a ritual to be both an anthropologically correct designation and a designation that would be acceptable to certain sections of the Charismatic community using their own framework of understanding. Using the notion of ritual and the notion of rite as the framework in which to build a description of Charismatic worship this chapter therefore describes a typical celebration meeting as a ritual and a typical worship time as a rite.

The composition of a celebration meeting

Use of space

Charismatic celebrations are usually held in a space that is rented or borrowed for that specific purpose. This can be any large and relatively comfortable space such as a national conference centre like the Wembley Conference Centre, Earls Court or the National Exhibition Centre at Birmingham, any of the spaces nationally set aside for leisure and holiday activities such as the Butlins Holiday Complexes or the National Showgrounds, or large spaces that are locally available such as sports halls, theatres, cinemas, large Christian church buildings and empty warehouses. When no venue large enough can be found within the geographical area in which the celebration is to take place Charismatics will erect large tents or marquees. Two good examples of organisations and groups which use a variety of these locations are the Spring Harvest organisation and the Jesus Fellowship Church. Both use large marquees for their main celebration meetings. The Spring Harvest organisation utilises all the other venues such as ballrooms, theatres and cabaret halls which are available on the Butlins Holiday Village sites for smaller celebrations and teaching meetings. Households within the Jesus Fellowship Church rent local venues such as rooms in community centres and the whole community meets regularly at the Derngate Theatre in the centre of Northampton.

It is unusual to find Charismatics organising celebrations in buildings that are sacred to the rest of the Christian community apart from churches that have been specifically designed for Charismatic worship or older churches which have been refurbished with Charismatics in mind¹³⁴. Charismatics point to the practical considerations in the

¹³⁴ For example, Holy Trinity Church, Brompton has been renovated in such a way that it has retained its old balcony and stained glass windows, but has replaced its pews for chairs and its central altar for a stage and added lighting, sound and communications technology.

organisation of a celebration such as space for movement and the setting up of technological equipment but there is also a sense in which this use of space is characteristic of the unique way in which Charismatics think about and construct the sacred. This will be further discussed below but has already been implied in the notion that theologically Charismatics think of the divine as something temporary rather than something permanent. The use of buildings which incorporate the physical signs and symbols of sacred deposits as well as the furnishings and fittings of important aspects of community life such as altars, pews, pulpits and organs can be to the Charismatic as much symbols of a sense of the static, the immovable and the rigid as they are intended symbols of permanence, constancy and durability. Alongside this stands the notion that the sacred is something mobile and transitory. This is especially signified in the use of marquees and tents which can be erected on any plot of land. It is also signified in the use of equipment and furniture which is movable. It is not unusual for the musicians and technological engineers to begin the process of dismantling their equipment and loading it into vehicles to be transported elsewhere while the participants still occupy the space.

Charismatics do not usually use any formal material means by which to delineate the physical location for the celebration as a sacred space. They do not place any icons, symbols or artefacts on or outside the entrance to the location or mark out any thresholds to be crossed by the use of tunnels, bridges, special doorways or arches. Indeed, many of the venues they chose to use such as the larger marquees, incorporate many access points rather than having a single means of entrance and exit or one means of entrance and another of exit. One exception to this norm is the Jesus Fellowship's 'Golden Marquee' which has red crosses painted on the roof and sides and Jesus Army flags which are raised at its apex points. Charismatics, including members of the Jesus Fellowship Church, also do not usually undergo any formalised behaviour such as rites of purification or separation before they enter the designated space. The only small sign that they may consider this space to be different is that they may wear clothing which they consider to be appropriate

for worship. In the case of the Jesus Fellowship this is clothing such as sweatshirts and tee-shirts which incorporate printed Jesus Army logos, symbols and statements. Other Charismatics wear stylistically similar clothing to that worn by members of the Jesus Fellowship Church - casual but smart trousers, sweaters, shirts and skirts¹³⁵.

The delineation of sacred from profane space works within the model of space that has been described in the previous chapter. There it was pointed out that the sacred could be as much present on earth as in the heavenlies. Here it is pointed out that sacred space is not so much created by external boundaries as it is created by that which occurs in it. This concurs with the theme of positively valuing both physicality and the world which is present in Charismatic theology in comparison to other forms of Christian theology. In a similar way Charismatics do not have strict prohibitions or boundaries between their group culture and the outside world¹³⁶. It can be said therefore that for most Charismatics the boundaries between the sacred and the profane in the physical world are soft ones.

The space within the venue is organised so that there is a front and a back and the front is signified by the use of a raised stage or slightly raised platform. The majority of Charismatic meetings will incorporate sitting facilities and these are all organised in rows which are front facing. Sometimes they are arranged in rows which form a semi-circle, or they are arranged so that they create one, two or three main aisles. It is often the case that the rows are not particularly long, although in some venues, such as cinemas with

¹³⁵ There is a notion within the wider Christian church that to be part of the evangelical culture is to be part of something big which largely disregards other differences such as social position, social background and academic achievement and that this culture reflects a middle class lifestyle. This is a criticism which is repeatedly made about Spring Harvest and about the type of clothing that evangelicals, especially Spring Harvest attenders wear (McGuinness, 1997).

¹³⁶ The Jesus Fellowship however do have a more extremely negative view of the world outside their group which concurs with their physical delineation of sacred space and hence their view that it can be permanently sacred. However, this cluster of theology and practice can be seen to be related to the life of the Jesus Fellowship rather than to the life of the Jesus Army. Therefore hard boundaries are softened for evangelistic purposes, in other words the inner core is well bounded whilst the outer circle is more outward looking. For example in relationships with family members who are not Christians Jesus Army members display the same attitude to the world as members of the Charismatic community at large. For example, they find nothing wrong in going out for a meal and drinking alcohol on special family occasions.

static seating, this cannot be so for practical reasons. If it is possible plenty of room is left between rows and extra room is created in the space used for aisles and at the back and the front. Occasionally a building or a marquee will be used that has layered seating facilities. However, Charismatics prefer not to use such arrangements and individuals will attempt to not be placed in the balconies or along the sides but rather in the main body of the building. The seating is arranged in this way so that the front stage is easily visible and so that there is ease of access for movement between activities that require sitting down and activities such as dancing which require standing up.

Charismatic groups usually use technology such as public address systems, lighting systems and technology such as overhead projectors, or more recently autocue systems, to display text such as lyrics, notices, points from the address, illustrative graphics, or photoplay of the leaders. The loud speakers and screens which form an integral part of this are strategically placed so that everything that is happening at the front can be seen and/or heard from all parts of the venue.

There are no formal rules of community separation and so all spaces in the main congregational area are available to all participants. The space in which a participant will spend the meeting is signified by a chair and upon entering a venue they will delineate a space as their own by the placement of a coat or jumper, or bible on a chair. More often than not nuclear family units will choose to sit together as will couples and friends and sometimes teenagers will sit together in a large group. Choice of space is informally dictated by the notion that the closer to the stage an individual is placed indicates their level of eagerness to participate in the meeting. Often therefore the front rows will be taken up with young men, and sometimes women, eager to gain more responsibility within the community and the back rows will be occupied by reserved newcomers or individuals who do not wish to fully participate in the meeting for a variety of personal reasons. The other consideration is that of freedom of movement and individuals who

enjoy dancing or who have very young children will sit on seats at the end of rows so that they can regularly access the space in the aisles. Often when a community meets regularly in one particular venue individuals will become accustomed to the same space and some will be able, on request, to map out a very rough idea of where the regular participants usually sit.

It can be said that the space that is created as the front of the meeting controls the rest of the meeting, and it is from this space that the meeting is led. Sometimes the platform will be slightly raised, sometimes it will be quite a few feet above the rest of the meeting. Sometimes there is ease of access to the platform from the front and this is achieved by the use of steps if the platform is high. Sometimes however access is gained only from the back, even if the platform is only slightly raised this is achieved by the strategic placement of flower arrangements or equipment related to the public address system such as the feedback boxes.

The arrangement of the space on the platform is usually divided into three parts. Firstly there is the central space, often signified by the placement of a microphone and lectern, from which the majority of the meeting is led. Secondly there is the space at one side of the centre in which the musicians and equipment related to the corporate singing are placed. Thirdly, there is the space on the other side of the central space in which the speaker for the meeting, community leaders and visiting leaders are placed and this is usually signified only by the placement of a row of chairs.

The division of participants

The above comments draw attention to the manner in which space is connected to different kinds of people who participate in a celebration meeting in that it has suggested that there is a primary distinction created between those who partake from the space at

the front - the leaders, and those who partake from the rest of the space - the congregation. That this is so indicates that it is the leaders of the community who are also expected to control and direct the community when it meets together to worship.

This group of leaders can be broken down into two further categories. In the first category are those who are permanently positioned on the frontal platform because they have been recognised within the community as main leaders with authority over the whole of the community. This group of individuals, usually men, are permanently located by the use of a row of chairs on the platform. There is usually one principal leader of the meeting who is delineated from this group to act as a sort of master of ceremonies for the meeting¹³⁷. This one individual (always a man¹³⁸) acts as a controlling filter through which the direction and all the activity of the meeting passes. It is ultimately this one individual who bears all the responsibility for the meeting, even if the minutiae of organisational decisions are delegated to others. It is this main leader's role to direct the timing of the actual meeting, the organisation of the contribution of other leaders and to retain some form of overall control over the direction of the experiential flow of the meeting. That is why the central microphone and lectern are usually designated as the space owned and used by this leader and it is this leader who grants others, including other leaders, the right and the opportunity to enter and use that special space.

There are two other types of main leaders who play a crucial role in any celebration event; the worship leader and the speaker. These individuals occupy the two spaces directly to the left and directly to the right of the space occupied by the master of ceremonies on the front platform. They are leaders whose leadership roles are delineated further by their ability to perform a specific task. All leaders in the Charismatic community

¹³⁷ In a community which has two or three main leaders or is a community that is drawn together from various communities and thus there are a number of main leaders present, each main leader will take it in turns to be the master of ceremonies of the meeting for an evening. This is a decision that is ultimately taken within the group of leaders who sit on the stage.

¹³⁸ To date I have not come across any evidence that a woman has ever taken on this role.

have to be good orators, and usually those who are exceptional orators become main leaders both within local communities and the culture as a whole¹³⁹. The individual who has been chosen by the gathered leadership to speak on that particular occasion therefore will always deliver their address from the central microphone, having been publicly invited by the master of ceremonies to do so. This is in contrast to the position of the worship leader. Not all leaders in the Charismatic movement have to be musicians or worship leaders and in this sense the worship leader is set apart from the other leaders as one who owns a leadership position because of the accomplishment of a very specific task. Usually therefore the worship leader will perform from a separate position just to the right of the central microphone and the space designated for the master of ceremonies.

Many worship leaders in the Charismatic movement are professional Christian musicians, and some of these limit their activities to solely leading worship and therefore are always referred to in the subculture by the title 'worship leader'¹⁴⁰. Often the main leaders of the community are heavily involved in the musical output of that community, without actually ever taking on the role of a worship leader and this shows the importance of music in the Charismatic culture. John Noble and Gerald Coates are two notable examples of main leaders who are also authors of choruses and hymns. Noel Stanton of the Jesus Fellowship Church is anecdotally accredited within the fellowship with the authorship of many of their choruses and hymns, although all of their music is published under the name of the Jesus Fellowship Church and not under any individual names (Cooper and Farrant, 1997:180, 192). John Wimber of the Vineyard movement also wrote many of their more famous choruses, led worship and was a professional musician before becoming a Christian. Usually professional music leaders are also group leaders within a local community and frequently they are leaders within the youth programme¹⁴¹. However,

¹³⁹ See page 73-78.

¹⁴⁰ By professional Christian I mean individuals who work full time within the Christian culture.

¹⁴¹ There is a frequent connection often made between the type and style of music involved in Charismatic worship and the youth culture.

because it is the leading of worship which is perceived as the dominant aspect of their role as leader within the whole community when they are included in a grouping of principal leaders they are always included as worship leaders and there are no known cases to date of worship leaders becoming main community leaders.

In recent years there have been two notable additions to the group of nationally recognised worship leaders. The first is Matt Redman who has already been mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. Redman is an Anglican associated St Andrew's Chorleywood, whose music, specifically targetted at young people, is showcased at the 'Soul Survivor' conferences. The second is Darlene Zschech who was an accomplished secular musician before becoming involved in the musical output of the Hills Christian Life Centre in Sydney. Zschech's recent growth in popularity is noticeable for two reasons; firstly because she and Sue Rinaldi (like Redman also of the Pioneer network) are the only two women who have gained any major recognition as worship leaders in England and secondly because she is Australian and represents a recent trend towards the influence of the Australian Christian culture on English Christianity. If Kendrick's 'Shine Jesus Shine' was the anthem of the Charismatic movement in the late eighties and early nineties, Zschech's 'My Jesus, My Saviour. (Shout to the Lord)' is probably the Charismatic anthem of the late nineties. Zschech has commented on the role of worship leader:

'If you want to give everything to praise and worship, then that's what you do. It is not about your art. It is about God. It is about something that is holy and sovereign, and is not about you and I, it is about God. It's very different from being an artist. That's where a lot of people get it wrong.'¹⁴²

¹⁴² 'Darlene Zschech - Beyond the Spotlight.' Premier March 1998: 12.

Some of the more famous speakers within the culture of the Charismatic movement are those with a strong evangelical background, where sermons are highly valued. R.T. Kendall of Westminster Chapel and Nicky Gumbel of Holy Trinity, Brompton are both examples of individuals renowned within the Charismatic movement for teaching and expository skills. Their contribution, along with that of the worship leader will be more fully assessed later in the chapter.

The second category of leaders are those individuals who have regular access to the platform but who are either not permanently positioned there or who are positioned in the background on the platform. These are people who are considered by the local community to be able to accomplish the main leadership task, the communication of the message of God to the people, without having specific organisational and structural responsibility, power or control within the community. All of these individuals therefore are communicators; artists, performers; musicians, dancers, mime artists, puppeteers and prophets. It is the musicians who support the worship leader who are positioned permanently on the platform but in the background. They are organised behind the worship leader, to one side of the central point and may be individually obscured by equipment. Every worship leader is accompanied by a band usually comprising of backing singers, a keyboard player, guitarists, percussionists and other woodwind and brass players, rather like a modern pop or rock band. Their permanent position on the platform perhaps indicates that music is the most used medium through which all the participants, leaders and non-leaders, hear and communicate the message of God.

At some Charismatic meetings dancers perform expressive dances on the platform or in the space just in front of it in accompaniment to the congregational singing. It has become a recent trend for these dancers to accompany the singing with the swirling of large colourful flags or ribbons or, as at Spring Harvest in 1996, with the pounding of large sticks. Mime artists also occasionally accompany the singing and likewise use the platform for a

limited period of time. At the Easter people festival in 1998, puppeteers accompanied the singing with their puppets from within the congregation. All of these individuals also sometimes perform set pieces as another part of the whole ritual using music, mime, dance or puppeteering to tell a story or communicate a lesson or moral. They however do not usually permanently occupy a space on the platform, rather they are located towards the front of the congregation. The other type of individuals who also have access to the frontal platform are those individuals who leave the congregation, gain access to the leaders platform and direct the meeting through the communication of a glossolalic or prophetic message and then return to the congregation. These individuals are usually recognised as prophets within their community and only contribute to the meeting under the express permission of the main leader at the time when they approach the stage. This second category of individuals are therefore functionally and ideologically located as leaders, but their ability is limited to one of communication and thus their authority and status is dependent on, and limited to, their exercise of this task.

The practices of the Jesus Fellowship church again form a good controlling example for this configuration of leaders. At any Jesus Fellowship celebration meeting which involves the whole community Noel Stanton occupies a central position and has sole control over the central microphone. It is Stanton who invites others to use that microphone in its central position and standing next to them or, by inviting them to use another microphone while he stands to one side of them having removed the central microphone from its stand so that he can retain it. If, as frequently occurs in Jesus Fellowship meetings, there is a crowd of people on the platform for a specific length of time Stanton will either remain in the central position while the group perform around him or will remove the central microphone and sit down with the other leaders to one side of the platform. It is very rare that he is ever out of sight or that he ever lets go of the central microphone.

The Jesus Fellowship have two music groups - the 'Alpha band' and the 'Beta band' and either one of these occupies the part of the platform on Stanton's right. Sometimes rather than have one permanent worship leader different worship leaders from within the community will take it in turns to lead different songs. On Stanton's left sit a group of main leaders from the church. There are a number of the main leaders from the covering authority who have a regular position on the platform but other, male, leaders are regularly invited by those to sit with them. The number of leaders on the platform of Jesus Fellowship events is always greater than the number at other Charismatic events, sometimes there are four to five rows of seats for this purpose. Also, other community leaders are sometimes permitted to sit on the front of the stage facing the rest of the congregation during the worship. They however, usually return to the congregation when a speaker, usually Stanton, begins his message. The other category of leaders; the communicators, are also apparent at Jesus Fellowship events and use the platform for a limited period of time. Again, if words are used in the communication they are discharged using a microphone other than the central one which Stanton keeps in his possession.

Charismatics also create one major distinction in the group of people who form the congregation or the non-leaders. This is between those participants who fully participate in the whole of the ritual and those who do not. Of the latter group there are two kinds of individual. Firstly, there are those individuals who are involved in some sort of service capacity in the meeting. These individuals are categorised as regular members of the congregation and therefore their specific, distinct role is primarily externally indicated not through the use of space but through the use of name badges or clothing which incorporate printed logos. This first group can be further split in two. On the one hand there are those individuals whose distinct role only lasts for a part of the meeting, these are individuals who counsel others, usually at the end of the meeting. They will only wear their badges or clothing during the time in which they are on the peripheries of the meeting. However, they are also like the second category of leaders mentioned above in

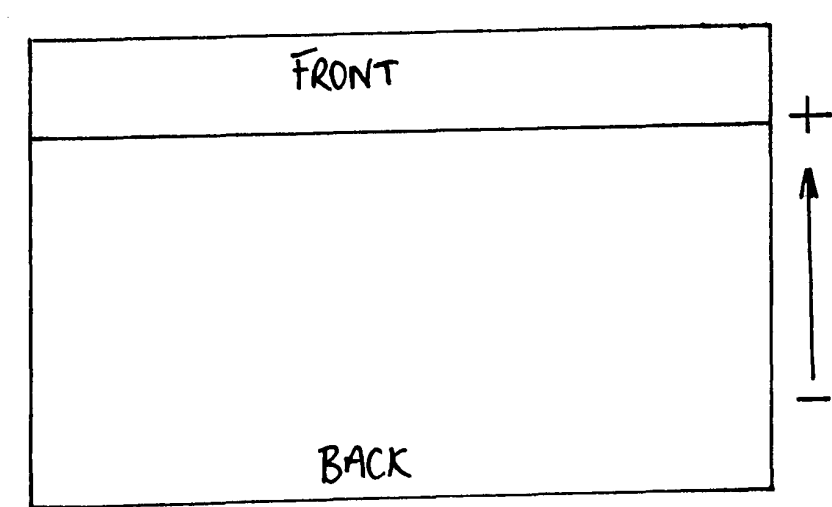
that during this limited time they can occupy a specific space at the front of the meeting, although they never occupy the platform. These people are considered to be the wise and experienced members of the community. On the other hand there are those individuals whose distinct role and thus partial participation is distinguished for the whole of the meeting. This includes members who are trained as stewards and safety personnel, as well as the members who operate the technology. These individuals are never solely located at or towards the front of the meeting. Many Charismatic groups, and other church groups, designate certain members as 'welcome staff' whose role it is to welcome people to the meeting and enter into conversation with any newcomers. All groups have their own trained stewards and safety personnel, who on occasion operate alongside the personnel provided by the organisation from which the venue has been hired. Their role is to direct people to seating, organise any mass movement of participants and keep a vigilant eye out for any safety or security problems that might occur. All such personnel are experienced members of a community. For example, the Spring Harvest organisation uses members of the Christian community who have volunteered and been given written recommendations from leaders within their community as stewards. They undergo a day's training and are paid expenses for their time as a steward. The Jesus Fellowship Church uses male members of their community to act as stewards.

Secondly, there are those who for whatever personal reasons do not wish to participate in some or all aspects of the celebration meeting. It may be that they are visitors or newcomers to the Charismatic culture or to that particular group or that they have responsibility for young children who are present in the meeting. As has been suggested these individuals are most likely to be found at the spatial boundaries and peripheries of the congregation - placed towards the back or on the end of rows.

It can be seen therefore that Charismatics construct the internal space in which the sacred is made present around a framework, the shape and structure of which should be

familiar by now. There is one primary distinction between leaders and non-leaders. In the spatial representation it is a horizontal distinction created out of the classification into the front and the back of the venue. It is supported and tied to a secondary value distinction between power/authority and control and powerlessness/compliance and dependence. In order therefore for individuals to gain authority and leadership status within the community they must enter the space ideologically and functionally designated for leaders and fulfil the leadership task of communicating God's word and thus brokering the sacred in a publicly effectual form. Some individuals may be considered by the community to be able to do this permanently, so that their task, role and personality become practically indistinguishable, others may only do it for a short length of time. Some methods of communication are highly visible, using the performing arts, the other, counselling prayer and advice is not so visible and because it lies ideologically closer to the methods of private communication requires those who undertake it to be visibly defined with the use of badges. Those within the community through whom God's word and presence is not active are also represented in the arrangement of physical space in the section called 'the back' which is associated with the negative values of powerlessness and ineffectiveness (see figure five)¹⁴³.

Figure 5. An abstract model of the division of space in a Charismatic celebration.



¹⁴³ Thus the back is the place for those who do not channel the sacred which interestingly includes not only the unconverted but those women who are looking after children.

Timing

Celebration meetings as Charismatic events can be held as a part of a larger festival and can be categorised as both regular and crisis rituals. During a festival or a conference celebration meetings are usually held at the end of each day, a larger one is held at the end of the conference, and sometimes an optional one is held in the middle of the event. At Spring Harvest, for example, celebrations are held in the early evening of each day, the main celebration, which includes the only celebration of the Eucharist rite, is held on the final morning just before the participants travel home and an optional celebration is held in the late evening, after the regular celebration, on the middle Wednesday. Such festivals are occasions where the normal structure of events in the life of a community are compounded to fit within a time span that never involves more than a week. This means that the festival can be used as a showcase for the particular community that is involved.

Most regular religious rituals are calendrical in the sense that they are attached to the seasons of nature and act as celebrations of its important occasions. In the Charismatic movement this is not the case as the seasons of nature pass by largely unnoticed. The Spring Harvest festival is perhaps the important exception from this norm in that it is deliberately held at the time when the most important Christian liturgical festival to Charismatics Easter is celebrated in conjunction with the celebration of the start of Spring¹⁴⁴. Spring Harvest however only celebrates Easter and Spring in an indirect way through the emphasis of themes associated with both such as the reviving and reinvigorating of life. Most Charismatic events, festivals and celebration meetings included, therefore are not strictly calendrical but are regular and follow an annual pattern. Some celebration meetings can be classified as crisis rituals in the sense that they are events which only take place when thought necessary. The 1997 'Champion of the World' event is

¹⁴⁴ The 'Easter People' festival is also held at this time but is relatively small in comparison to Spring Harvest.

a good example of this as it was organised to fulfil the prophetic vision of Noel Richards that Wembley Football Stadium could be filled with supporters of Christ rather than supporters of football teams (Capon, 1997b; Boulton, 1997). Celebration meetings whether regular or crisis separate or part of something larger therefore are always understood as events in their own right, not as celebrations of other historical or natural events or occasions.

Most Charismatic events are held in the time as well as the spaces reserved in the surrounding culture for leisure activities. They are not held in direct opposition to the leisure activities that are the norm in the surrounding culture but rather, as there are no external principles to which the timing and locating of meetings must conform such as a liturgical calendar, they are placed in the time and space gap beyond work and employment which Charismatics share with the surrounding culture. Many Charismatic events are held in the summer months when travelling is easier, the periods of daytime light are longer, the weather is better and it is customary in England to take time off from paid employment and to go on holiday. It is interesting to note however, that for the Jesus Fellowship church the motivation behind using this particular time of year is the direct opposite of the majority of the Charismatic movement; they rest during the winter and 'go to war' during the summer. This is perhaps because the majority of their events are orientated towards evangelism rather than towards the spiritual well being of their community. That the vast majority of the Jesus Fellowship church's celebration events are held with a focus that is much more outward than inwardly orientated is an important difference but one which makes more difference to the events surrounding the ritual than to the actual ritual itself or the rite of a worship time. Celebration meetings are pushed even further into this leisure gap in that they usually take place in the evening, lasting the length of time individuals would culturally expect to spend on a good night out pursuing a leisure activity. They are often held on a Friday or a Saturday night so that the Sunday can be left as the time when individuals participate in the activities of their local Christian

group. It is unusual for participants to attend another meeting once the celebration has come to an end and most travel straight home or back to their accommodation. At some festivals this is not the case as late night meetings or entertainment are provided after the celebration meeting has finished but it is unusual for any Charismatic meeting, of any sort to be still in progress after midnight.

The format of a celebration meeting

A celebration meeting usually takes the structural form of assembling, corporate singing as a worship time, notices, address or sermon, participant's response, socialising and ending. As individuals gather and disperse they socialise, chatter with their friends and spread information. This is done for a longer period of time at the dispersal stage than at the congregating stage and at the former participants are sometimes provided with food and drink as well¹⁴⁵. The socialising period does not usually last for more than an hour.

Charismatic meetings start at a given time which is advertised and participants can begin to gather anything up to an hour in advance. Sometimes the main leader will formally start the meeting by speaking some words of welcome. It is usual practice for the musicians to have been quietly playing music in the fifteen minutes or so before the formal start of the meeting while participants arrive, find a seat and socialise with those around them. Sometimes, therefore the beginning of the meeting is only signalled by the formal beginning of corporate singing; the musicians stand up, the volume is turned up, the lyrics are displayed and perhaps the worship leader makes a vocal statement about the purpose of gathering together to worship.

¹⁴⁵ Most communities provide tea, coffee and a cold drink, some provide snacks such as biscuits. The Vineyard network have a tradition of providing doughnuts.

The worship time is always placed towards the beginning of the meeting, although sometimes it is preceded by the short communication of the community's notices or information of forthcoming events and items of news¹⁴⁶. Worship times can last anywhere between five minutes and an hour, although a twenty minute period is most probably the average norm. After the worship time the music stops, the participants sit down and the speaker delivers their address or sermon. It is rare in Charismatic meetings for this to take less than fifteen minutes or more than forty five minutes, although the length of the address is often dependent upon the length of the worship time in that the speaker will frequently condense what they have to say because the worship time has been a long one and there is a vaguely expected time limit of an hour and a half to two and a half hours on the meeting proper.

Charismatic speakers rarely use a prepared text, although many do use notes. In the celebration type meetings they speak on all kinds of subjects relating to Christian life, although the majority of addresses can be classified as about either discipleship, evangelism or revival. The subject will have either been suggested to them by the organisers beforehand or more usually they speak on a subject which they have, in the few days before the meeting, decided by the use of experience and divine revelation from prayer and reading the bible is relevant to the community which they are addressing. Occasionally a speaker will begin their address by stating that they are not going to speak on their prepared theme but rather give a message which God has given them for the community in the few hours, sometimes minutes, before they are due to speak. During the address the speaker will constantly refer to the bible, either by spoken reference or by physically reading from his copy and many Charismatics take their copy of the bible with

¹⁴⁶ In some communities where there is a lot of information to be disseminated the notices will also be given out in printed form and in some communities very important notices will be highlighted by the use of drama or music when communicated.

them to refer to. However, in comparison to teaching meetings physical reference to the bible in celebrations is infrequent.

The speaker will usually finish the address with a question or a challenge to the participants. Sometimes this will take the form of a petitionary prayer which the speaker or the main leader speaks out for the whole community. Sometimes the challenge is put and a few moments silence for thought is requested. Sometimes the speaker will ask for a physical response from the participants by asking those individuals who felt the challenge was particularly relevant to them to stand, raise a hand or move to the front. This activity is either carried out in full view of the congregation or while the congregation has their eyes closed in prayer, and either in silence or with the musicians quietly playing music¹⁴⁷.

In most Charismatic meetings, as has already been detailed, there are participants who are trained by the community as counsellors who will either be asked to also stand or move to the front or who will watch to see which individuals make a response and indicate that they may need further assistance. Sometimes individuals who have made a response are directed to seek out further assistance if they require it and the counsellors will thus be directed to stand at the front and wait or the counsellors will wait until the meeting is formally closed before moving to a space, the front or a side room, which has been delineated for them to work in. Although the challenge or question is usually specifically orientated it is often further widened out either by the speaker, the main leader or the worship leader to encompass the whole community and this is often expressed through the vocalised offer of the counsellor's assistance for any problems or issues and by the use of a chorus or hymn on a particularly general theme with which the meeting finishes. Sometimes the counselling of specific individuals takes place at the same time as this responsive activity by the whole community. It is rare for the meeting to be

¹⁴⁷ See page for a comment on leaders and preaching the Word of God.

drawn to a formal close by the main leader but rather it comes to an informal end when the music stops. Sometimes this occurs before the counsellors have finished their work and therefore the end of the meeting is staggered spatially rather than temporally in that in one part of the space the counsellors continue to specifically channel the sacred, in another part of the space other participants socialise and share the sacred and in another part of the space the musicians and technicians begin to pack up their equipment and thus start to move the sacred on.

Occasionally a further rite will be added to the scheme of the celebration meeting after the address and response time. These are the rites of, exorcism, baptism usually of adults but sometimes of children, initiation to the membership of the local community and the Eucharistic or communion rites. These rites are all traditional within the larger Christian community although there are differences in the ways different denominations and traditions both interpret and practise them. Groups within the Charismatic movement reflect these differences although Charismatics understand that by maintaining the practice of them in a roughly identifiable form they are retaining their general Christian identity. As all four of these additional rites are explicitly related in the Charismatic framework of understanding to the individual's membership in a specific community they are most usually found in the context of the celebration meetings which take place in local situations.

The rite of exorcism is the only wholly negative rite of community membership. Charismatics who practice spiritual warfare believe that singular demons can be located within the individual human, rather like they can be located over cities and that these demons are the cause of illness, wrong behaviour and misfortune in the lives of individuals¹⁴⁸. They further believe that these demons can be expelled rather as they are

¹⁴⁸ See pages 122-130.

expelled from cities in strategic level warfare. Thus an exorcist will first find out which demon is present in the individual by the use of revelation and experience and then pray an illocutionary prayer expelling the demon, in which it is important that the demon is named and that the presence of God is requested. The individual who has the demon usually demonstrates the confrontation with the demon and their subsequent expulsion through embodied behaviour. Often the individual will initially violently shake, fall to the ground or become physically abusive they will then scream or shout and/or expel bodily fluids, wind or bad smells through their mouth. After the demon is expelled the individual becomes calm and sometimes sleeps for a short while. Charismatics believe that in this way the evil is expelled from the individual so that they can be more of a functional part of the Kingdom of God.

The Jesus Fellowship Church use this rite more readily than many Charismatic groups, in fact it is a regular and prevalent occurrence in their meetings. They use the rite in relation to individuals who have been members of the community for a length of time and can practise it repeatedly in relation to any one individual. The Jesus Fellowship also differs in its practice of exorcism in that all of its members are thought to be capable exorcists. In other Charismatic groups there may be one or two individuals who are recognised as exorcists or none, in which case the individual is referred to a specialist such as the team of leaders at Ellel Grange.

The rite of baptism incorporates both the negative action of the expulsion of evil and the positive action of the inclusion of good. Most Charismatics participate in the rite as adults who have self-elected to join the Christian community because they hold a theological position which emphasises conversion by individual decision. Some Charismatics will have been baptised as children and subsequently understand their child baptism in this way in retrospect. In adult baptism the candidate is required to vocally renounce evil and the devil and then advocate Christ and good. They are then fully immersed under water and

then lifted out to symbolise the death and burial of the old life and the power of evil and the devil and the beginning of the new life and identification with the resurrected Christ. The Jesus Fellowship Church baptise adults, including strangers to the community, on request as long as they make a vocal declaration of intent to follow Christ, using any reservoir of water that is available such as ponds, rivers, swimming pools, decorative fountains in town centres and their own portable baptismal pool. They do so because they believe that baptism is the rite which attaches the individual to the Christian community *per se* and that this is completely separate from the inclusion of an individual in a local community or church.

The rites by which an individual is attached to a local community are simply known as membership rites. Within the Charismatic movement it is the groups and churches with strong non-conformist denominational ties who practise them the most as it is these groups which emphasise the priesthood of all believers as it can be applied to congregational polity and the authority of the local group to make decisions. In Baptist churches, for example, the common practice is for an individual who has let it be known that they wish to join the local church to be interviewed by representatives of the leadership. These people report to the existing members at a gathered church meeting who then make a corporate decision whether or not the individual should be admitted to membership. If it is so decided that this is appropriate then during the next appropriate worship service the candidate is 'welcomed into membership'. They are taken to the front of the meeting, often accompanied by a supporter who is already a member, the rest of the membership stand and vocally declare their decision to admit the new member and the community's main leader shakes their right hand, the hand of fellowship, to symbolise their welcome into the community. In many communities this rite is used directly after the rite of baptism so that the individual is incorporated into the universal church and the local church during the same ritual occasion.

The Jesus Fellowship can baptise on request because their rites to formally join the local group are extremely strong. As they have Baptist roots they practise the rite of welcoming into membership as it is described above with the exception that the decision to include an individual in membership is not made by the whole church but by the local household and their area leader. The individual is however welcomed into membership of the whole church by Stanton and one of the other members of the Covering Authority at the next celebration meeting involving the whole community. By this time the individual will have gone through a process of signing over all their assets and property or declaring their intention to give a fixed proportion of their income to the community. The Jesus Fellowship understand this to be a legal requirement and therefore do not mark the occasion in a religious way. However, they will also have attended their first agapé meal in the local household. This occasion holds much significance and this is marked by the preparation and sharing of a special meal. Before the regular sharing of the Eucharist at agapé the new member is prayed for, prophesied about and formally given their Jesus Army jacket and a new 'virtue name' which reflects some aspect of their personality and which is used by the community instead of their surname. Members sometimes celebrate the anniversary of their first agapé as they would their birthday.

The rite of partaking of the Eucharist is another wholly positive rite which incorporates an element of expulsion of evil but which focuses mainly on the ingesting or consuming the good in the form of the symbolic body and blood of the founder Jesus Christ represented by bread and wine. In some communities the rite is known as communion because the significance of the efficiency of the rite to strengthen the togetherness of the community is emphasised. It is common practice in many Charismatic communities for individuals to remain in the congregational seating and be served with small pieces of bread actually broken from one large loaf and/or to drink the wine from a very small number of communal cups. In some communities however the bread and the wine are only available at the front of the building and the participants have to move forward, and thus closer to

the centre of the sacred, to receive them¹⁴⁹. The Jesus Fellowship practise the rite of communion in this way at their weekly local meetings which take place on a Sunday morning although provision is also made for the bread and the wine to be available at most of their main meetings. If this is the case it is always located at the front of the building. Members also partake of communion during the agapé meal of the local community.

The worship time

The overall pattern of a worship time is always one of a linear flow from one point to a significant or privileged point. Sometimes this is a smooth, sequential flow and sometimes it is a flow achieved by the use of consecutive contradictions. This pattern is repeated at both the macro level and the micro level in that each building block that is used in the overall structure also contains this pattern, and sometimes contains further micro versions of the pattern as well. The overall aim of the worship time is to break through to the presence of God and, as this goal is expressed in experiential terms of emotional feeling, the structural pattern is expressed in emotional terms as well. The most common expression of this pattern is the movement from calm to excitement or excitement to calm. It is customary to try to extend the experience of attainment of the privileged point once it has been reached, however this is not extended indefinitely and is understood to fade within minutes. There is no provision made for anything to occur once this has happened; the configuration has been experienced and the meeting moves on.

The worship time consists of communal singing which is occasionally interspersed with the spoken word or glossolalic utterances. The worship leader acts as a builder who crafts

¹⁴⁹ In most Christian communities the bread and the wine are served to the congregation by leaders. This functions as both a means by which the elements are considered to be consecrated and as a means by which the leaders are considered to be servants of the community. In many Charismatic communities the notion of fellowship has overtaken the notion of the need for leaders to have this specific consecrating power and therefore the elements are served by the stewards.

together the various components to construct and manage the flow of the worship time. Worship leaders are not only skilled performers but experienced participants in this rite who have access to a large pool of knowledge, experience and custom¹⁵⁰. Although the worship time may appear to be spontaneous to some of the participants, the worship leader will have a well formed idea of which choruses and hymns they are going to use on any given occasion, will have practised the formation with the other musicians and will have communicated it in written or spoken form to the operators of the supporting technology. However, many worship leaders are experienced enough to sense whether their formation is working or not and can use a component from outside the practised formation if necessary. If it is a chorus or hymn they usually accomplish this modification by shouting the title back to the other musicians¹⁵¹. Sometimes the worship leader appears to change the goal to which the worship time is aiming, sensing that if the original goal is non-achievable either a compromised version of it will satisfy the participants or that a completely different goal is more easily achievable from the direction in which the worship is flowing.

The flow of the worship time is maintained by the use of sound. Gaps between the main components of hymns and choruses are filled either by short bursts of music or by vocal acts from the worship leader. Sometimes they use both simultaneously; as the other musicians are playing an introduction to another chorus the leader will make short vocal statements or glossolalic utterances which he may get the other participants to join in

¹⁵⁰ There are resources within the Charismatic culture which worship leaders can use to learn and maintain their craft. These include courses led by experts and written resources. For example, the Kingsway organises two weekend conferences a year entitled 'Worship Together' aimed at teaching and practising worship techniques and also produces a monthly magazine of the same name with the same aims.

¹⁵¹ They do not however usually pass this information on to anyone else. Most of the individuals who operate the technology which projects lyrics are experienced participants in worship and expert musicians. This means that if the worship leader uses a new component in their formation, especially if they use only half a chorus, the operator can often 'read' the musical output, including the chords the worship leader is using, and know from experience which chorus is about to be used before the first line is sung. This is crucial as most communities know hundreds of hymns and choruses, the lyrics of which are referenced and accessed by alphabetical order of first line.

with¹⁵². The statements can be statements of belief such as 'God is good', statements of intent such as 'I really want to praise you Lord' or statements of exhortation from the leader to the rest of the participants such as 'just let yourself go'. It has recently become a common custom for the participants to clap, shout and sometimes whistle between the hymns and choruses, especially if the worship leader does not quickly fill the gap in another way¹⁵³.

Singing

The blocks that are built together in a worship time can be classified in two ways. Firstly there is the use of different types of vocalisation and secondly there is the specific categorisation of hymns and choruses. The fact that Charismatics use speech, song and glossolalia has already been pointed out. To add emphasis worship leaders will use vocal statements, often getting the participants to corporately shout out statements of significance, or they will make a series of statements which require a communal response using a single, repeated vocal statement. Very often the worship leader will audibly 'slip' into glossolalia, occasionally following a loud decisive vocal statement with a decisive glossolalic utterance, but more usually sliding between the end of a line of a song or humming to the continuing music and glossolalic singing which keeps the tune and then back again. Individual participants will also frequently do likewise.

There are thousands of songs in the Charismatic culture and new ones are regularly being written. These are first introduced at large celebration meetings, scored and released in spiral bound compilations and on printed acetates for use in local congregations and are

¹⁵² This is a common practice but one at which members of the Jesus Fellowship excel. Individual Fellowship members often have recognisable glossolalic 'words' which they frequently repeat during communal singing and during private prayer.

¹⁵³ There has been some discussion in the movement as to whether this practice is appropriate. Some have suggested it could be mistaken or misused as approval for the quality of the music or the skill of the worship leader.

recorded and distributed through the sale of tapes and compact discs¹⁵⁴. Charismatics understand that the themes inherent in popular individual worship songs follow trends in their community's focus and teaching. Shearn has suggested that a pattern can be seen in the songs that are the most popular in the Charismatic movement as a whole (Shearn, 1998). Many of the new songs of the 1970s, she suggests, concerned the personal relationship between the individual and God and the individual and others. In the 1980s, particularly after the influence of the theology of John Wimber, many of the new songs spoke of the victorious church as an army of the powerful God. More recently songs have turned to the theme of the quality of the intimate relationship of love with Jesus and the awesome nature of God. The lyrics of the very popular song by Zschech: 'My Jesus, My Saviour. (Shout to the Lord)' are a good example of this most recent trend:

'My Jesus, my saviour

Lord there is no-one like you

All of my days

I want to praise the wonders of your mighty love.

My comfort, my shelter

Tower of refuge and strength

Let every breath, all that I am

Never cease to worship you.

Shout to the Lord all the earth

Let us sing power and majesty

¹⁵⁴ The Spring Harvest and the Songs of Fellowship compilations are the most popular. These are regularly updated with new spiral bound compilations and integrated recordings. The Spring Harvest organisation produce these on a yearly basis, although often the material is duplicated in the Songs of Fellowship compilations or the similar compilations of other festival organisations. In the Spring of 1998 two compilations were published which were promoted as definitive collections: The Source edited by Graham Kendrick and Songs of Fellowship 2. 'New: Source and Songs 2' Baptist Times 12/2/98:9.

Praise to the King

Mountains bow down and the seas will roar

At the sound of your name.

I sing for joy at the work of your hands

For ever I'll love you, for ever I'll stand

nothing compares to the promise I have in you.'¹⁵⁵

There are two other themes which are apparent in recent new Charismatic songs which Shearn overlooks. The first is that mentioned right at the beginning of this chapter which concerns the characteristics of true worship beyond the worship act. Redman's popular song 'When the music fades' is a good example of this:

'When the music fades, all is stripped away,

And I simply come;

Longing just to bring something that's of worth

That will bless your heart.....

I'm coming back to the heart of worship,

And it's all about you

All about you, Jesus.

I'm sorry Lord, for the thing I've made it,

When it's all about you,

All about you, Jesus....'¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁵ 1993. Darlene Zschech. Sydney, Australia. Hillsongs. It is interesting to note that many Protestants know this song simply by the title 'Shout to the Lord' whereas many Catholics know it by the title 'My Jesus, My Saviour'.

¹⁵⁶ 1997. Eastbourne. Kingsway's Thankyou Music/MCPs.

The other theme is that of the desire for revival, this can be seen in the very popular worship song written by four members of a Charismatic pop group called 'Heart Beat' which is now disbanded:

'Lord we long for you to move in power.

There's a hunger deep within our hearts

To see healing in our nation.

Send your Spirit to revive us:

Heal our nation! Heal our nation!

Heal our nation! Pour out your Spirit on this land!'¹⁵⁷

As these themes reflect trends in teaching they can be traced back to the community in which the author is placed. Worship leaders have all of these different themes at their disposal and so can craft a worship time that is thematically customised for the community which is taking part. However the total pool of Charismatic songs is not thematically limitless. The language used also has a finite and restricted number of symbolic references even though these can be interwoven over and over again so that new nuances begin to appear. In this way the lyrical content of Charismatic worship is multivocal but not infinite and this makes the management and control of the worship time much easier.

Of course, lyrics are set to music and the Charismatic community in the last ten years or so has attempted to use many different musical styles, believing that contemporary musical forms are not only attractive to outsiders but also assist a genuine expression of feeling from the individual. Charismatic music groups in the early years of the movement

¹⁵⁷ Trish Morgan, Ray Goudie, Ian Townsend and Dave Bankhead. 'Lord We Long For You (Heal our Nation).' 1986. Eastbourne. Kingsway's Thankyou Music.

such as the Fisher Folk had only one style; guitar based folk and this very much reflected dominance of only one style of music in the popular culture surrounding the Charismatic movement. As the surrounding culture has taken on a diversity of fashionable musical styles so too has the Charismatic movement. In the 1980s Wimber introduced a 'soft rock' musical style to the English Charismatic movement which is still probably the most popular style today. This is reflected in the widespread use of a rock band formation of musicians and whereas some English worship leaders such as Chris Bowater lead from a piano most lead from a guitar. Graham Kendrick is perhaps the best known for explicitly experimenting with a number of styles in his musical output. Some of the newer song writers such as Martin Smith of the band Delirious? have imitated the style of modern popular rock bands like Oasis, while some others, like Dave Bilborough, have more recently experimented with a Celtic style to their music. One of the more recent popular additions to many worship groups has been that of a percussionist using instruments such as chimes, rain sticks and a variety of drums. The style of music always works in conjunction with the lyrics; strong beats and bass fit with statements of declaration whereas calmer, woodwind led music fits with more reflective music. This is particularly apparent when worship leaders wish to use an old hymn. For example; Dave Pope used a version of the nineteenth century hymn by George Duffield (1818-88), 'Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus' at Spring Harvest in 1997 which was led by drums and bass¹⁵⁸. Then in 1998, again at Spring Harvest, Pope used a version of the hymn often attributed to the fifth century monk St Patrick 'Be Thou My Vision' which was introduced and led by woodwind¹⁵⁹. The Jesus Fellowship Church have always enjoyed singing old, traditional Non-conformist, Huttite and Salvation Army hymns to express sentiments such as resolution and commitment. For many years they retained the use of a portable organ for this purpose but in the last few years they have used their regular musicians who usually

¹⁵⁸ Spring Harvest Live Worship 1997. Volume One.

¹⁵⁹ Spring Harvest Live Worship 1998.

distinguish between these hymns and other songs by using a rock anthem style using lots of piano and brass for the former¹⁶⁰.

Recordings of songs sung during worship times at major festivals give local worship leaders and participants basic ideas for the style of music which they can directly copy or change to fit the local resources or circumstances. Kendrick however explicitly scores music in a particular style and is well known for incorporating key and timing changes in his musical transcripts. Some worship songs are scored with an indication of tempo but most are not. Each individual song does have a speed which is customary in the general Charismatic culture, although even that can be changed if the worship leader thinks it will fit into their overall formation. Two of the devices which worship leaders make the most use of to help emphasise and express emotion are changes of tempo and changes of key. Usually this involves the tempo slowing down and the key going up a tone for the last verse or section of a particular song.

Not all Charismatic songs are formal ones, some are known as spontaneous or prophetic songs. Sometimes while the musicians are playing music to fill a gap between two choruses or hymns one of the backing singers, a member of the band or the worship leader will begin to sing along with the flow of the tune. Sometimes the words will form an ordinary phrase and gradually become a mini-address but sometimes the lyrics will be glossolalic. The other musicians gradually begin join together in improvising around the singer, trying to fit the style of music in with the words that are being sung. Occasionally, other participants will join in until the whole congregation is singing individually, improvising with the tune and using glossolalic or ordinary language¹⁶¹.

¹⁶⁰ It is often this particularly impassioned performance of well known hymns which attracts Christians to the worship services of the Jesus Army. For example the hymn 'When I survey the wondrous cross' was sung to accompaniment from the portable organ at a celebration meeting that was part of one of the festivals in 1986. As the last verse was repeated the lights were dimmed and a large internally lit red cross with a golden crown was slowly lowered from the ceiling of the marquee to fill the whole of the front wall. This experience left many visitors in tears.

¹⁶¹ Although the effect is spectacular this is not difficult to accomplish, especially for individuals who

Worship leaders therefore have many different building blocks they can use to craft together a worship time, they can build through vocal style, lyrical style, through musical style and devices and through language use. They can place a song after another song or after a glossolalic utterance or a vocal declaration, they can repeat a song or part of a song, they can change the tempo of a song to add effect. Importantly, each block, particularly in its linguistic symbols has an intended meaning but also carries a sense of ambiguity. Worship leaders and individual participants can therefore pick up one theme out of a various latent themes to make the worship time their own. Each worship time therefore is unique in that the worship leader directs his crafting of the components to the expectation of the participants and the atmosphere in the venue.

As the worship time proceeds under the control of the worship leader the climax of the worship gets near. This high point of worship usually takes one of two forms; ecstatic excitement or complete calm. The former is usually expressed through the participants clapping, shouting either in English or in glossolalic utterances, whistling or mass enthusiastic dancing or clapping and improvised music with a strong beat. The latter is often expressed through the stillness of participants, spontaneous singing described above or through soft improvised music¹⁶². After a few moments of either state the worship leader occasionally chooses to sing another song to try to lengthen the experience. More usually however they make a simple vocal statement such as 'God is good', finish the music and prompt the participants to sit down. In this way the 'high' achieved lasts throughout the address, during which time it begins to fade. Usually the response time or the dismissal time incorporates some music, maybe only a single chorus. However brief,

are regularly participating in corporate singing. Very often the improvisation is based around the classic 'four chord formation'.

¹⁶² I have only been in one meeting where the high point of the worship was signified by complete and total silence. By the time this happened most of the participants were motionless and kneeling on the floor and quite a time had been spent repeating a particularly thoughtful chorus. Many of the participants there subsequently pointed to this experience as one of the most powerful times of worship they had ever participated in.

this final act of corporate singing acts as a booster to the fading high achieved during the worship time so that the participants leave the meeting with a sense of achievement.

Bodily movement

As Charismatics sing in a worship time they move their bodies in time to the music. Charismatics perform many other bodily movements as well as the movement with their arms described at the beginning of this chapter and the full body activity of dancing¹⁶³. They may clap, tap a foot, or stamp their feet, sway, lift their head, nod, air-conduct with their hands and fingers, smile, laugh, weep or cry, clench their fists or pound the air with their hands. Each action also has many variations for example, in the basic movement of raising the arms upwards the arms can be raised to a height anywhere between being level with the chest to a full upward extension and can have a horizontal spread anywhere between being a few inches apart to a full extension. Similarly the position of the hand and the fingers varies, sometimes the palms of the hand are pointing fully upwards, sometimes the fists are clenched, sometimes the fingers are kept together, sometimes they are spread and sometimes one finger is used to point upwards. Often a participant will change the position of the arms and hands during a time of having them raised and some continually move their hands at the wrist. Styles of dancing also vary, often participants will use their arms and legs to dance on the spot, sometimes they will take up more space, occasionally they will dance with someone else but more often they dance alone.

Most individuals have a customary, preferred and recognisable style of bodily movement in worship. It is not unusual to find that members of a particular community know the individuals who regularly take up a considerable amount of space in dancing and often

¹⁶³ There is an old joke in the Christian culture that at the end of Charismatic meetings the leader shouts 'hands down if you want a cup of tea'.

move into the large spaces at the front, back or sides of the venue. It is unusual however to find a particular style of bodily movement that is customary in one group although sometimes certain movements, such as swivelling the hands once they are in the air, become fashionable for a time across the whole culture. The members of the Jesus Fellowship Church however, on top of individualised bodily expressions of worship, do sometimes display a stereotypical style of dancing which involves jumping up and down as though jiggling in a very confined space. Sometimes the worship leader of any Charismatic meeting will encourage all the participants to share in a particular activity, such as lifting their hands, stamping their feet or marching or dancing in a specific style around the room. Occasionally at the end of a meeting, especially at the end of a final celebration meeting at a festival, a worship leader will encourage the participants to move the seating to create an open space in which everyone can dance. Usually the majority join in with the leaders request.

There are other bodily movements which are displayed in a Charismatic worship time. Occasionally participants will kneel on the ground or fall over and lie still for some time. However, these actions are usually considered to be expressions of emotions not specifically associated in any strong way with the notion of general worship; repentance and being overwhelmed by God and they are therefore usually more apparent during the time of response after the address. During the phase called the Toronto Blessing other actions were added to these two. The most familiar of which were movements such as shaking, staggering and weeping although participants also displayed unusual bodily movements such as roaring like lions and bouncing up and down as though on a pogo-stick.

In the Charismatic movement all bodily movement is thought to be a tangible expression of emotion. For example, the arm raising movement is believed to be an expression of a desire to receive from God. Charismatics suggest that the more an individual extends their

arms and the palms of their hands upwards the more willing they are to receive from God¹⁶⁴. Dancing is believed to be an expression of joy and therefore a similar conclusion is drawn that the more movement there is in an individual's dance the more willing they are to express their feelings of joy. The movements that are connected to the exorcism rite and those which have recently been connected to the Toronto Blessing but are not exclusive to that phase are also thought to be expressions of emotion but importantly, also to be specific physical manifestations of the effects of the presence of the spiritual realm. Lying still on the floor, staggering and shaking were all believed to be manifestations of being overwhelmed by God's power and expressions of the accompanying feeling of non-control. Vomiting, spitting or screaming are thought to be the physical manifestation of the expulsion of a demon. Other actions specifically associated with the Toronto Blessing were understood at the time to be mimicking actions, or physical manifestations, which symbolised something important within the Charismatic frame of reference, for example roaring was understood to be a show of strength, the pogo stick movement was understood to be a sign of excitement (Jackson, 1994).

Conclusion - Charismatic worship

In the above description the centrality of communication between God and humanity has been emphasised. It is clear that in Charismatic worship music has become just as much a channel for communication from God, the presentation of the divine word, as preaching or glossolalia. Roughly equal amounts of time are given to singing and preaching and, in comparison with the Pentecostal movement glossolalic utterance is designified. It can in fact be said that a unique characteristic of the Charismatic movement

¹⁶⁴ Professor D.J. Davies has suggested in private conversation that a good indicator of how involved an individual is in the Charismatic movement is the position of their hands and arms during worship. The higher the arms, the greater the level of involvement and commitment.

in relation to the trends and traditions which surround it is its emphasis on singing as the most significant mode of divine communication. Singing is privileged over speech by being placed first in the structure of the meeting and by being given priority over the sermon when time is short. In non-celebration types of Charismatic meetings such as teaching meetings this privileging action is replaced by an attempt at balancing but never by a privileging of speech over singing. Even in meetings that specifically revolve around the study of the bible a time of corporate singing is held before the study begins and, although it is understood to be a preparatory activity, it is nevertheless present.

It can be said that by doing this Charismatics symbolise the uniformity found in their common pattern, the equality of all participants in relation to God. In the evangelical culture although community leaders are not understood in a sacramental framework to be 'priests'; formal mediators between God and humanity or the sacred and the material, they are understood to be 'ministers'; deliverers of the divine word and therefore still mediators of the sacred. The preaching experts in this culture have always maintained that their sermons are more than speeches in that they are messages from God. Furthermore, they have maintained that the production and expression of these messages comes about through their ability, usually initiated by God, to create order out of chaos through the use of language and intelligence. Through the privileging of singing this capability has been democratised. Singing is a corporate activity which necessarily takes place in public rather than in the singular privacy of the individuals study. Also, it necessarily involves a group of people acting together in a systematised and negotiated way to make order out of chaos. The act of corporate singing therefore is crucial to the Charismatic understanding of each individual as the potential mediator of the sacred. Occasionally however an individual will attempt to privilege themselves to gain advantage over the group. Functionally this is accomplished either by a speaker throwing away their formal and prepared speech to communicate the message of God through an informal speech or by an individual's attempt to communicate the message of God through

glossolalia. In the first the individual gains control by coming as close as possible to the stereotypical mode of communication of the divine word without actually using the democratised form of singing. In the second the individual gains control by moving as far away as possible from the stereotypical mode into disordered communication which requires further interpretation through speech.

There is something more in this emphasis upon singing which can be expressed by looking beyond the patterns of social organisation to cultural considerations. Singing, unlike glossolalia, does not break through the limits of ordinary language and unlike speech making, does not formalise ordinary language. Rather, it places a structure around language in which the components can flow and mix together towards an anticipated common resolution. In his work on Pentecostalism Cox has suggested that the use of glossolalia in the movement has satisfied the desire for 'primal speech', the need to try and express the inexpressible, to continue even when words and language become barren and flattened (Cox, 1996:92). Cox has thus drawn structural parallels between the Pentecostal movement and jazz music; both value improvisation and the experience of being caught up into something greater until a trance like state is achieved. However, in contrast Cox finds Charismatic worship to be tepid and derivative;

'...a toned-down and primly packaged pentecostalism.... a pentecostalism, so to speak, without blue notes, drum breaks, or gut bucket choruses.' (Cox, 1992:152).

It is perhaps, the fulfilment of the need to express the inexpressible whilst still retaining some control and exercising some restraint. As jazz is to Pentecostalism so soft rock is to the Charismatic movement; it gives the surface appearance of unbridled freedom but underneath lies a well formulated structure and rules which are kept rather than pushed to their limits.

Clearly in worship times centring on communal singing individuals become an active part of a group creation. They combine their individual voices, harmonies, noises and movements together to form a song. Worship times therefore function as rites of inclusion indeed, Charismatics understand that they attend and participate in these rites and the rituals of which they are a central part in order to have 'fellowship' and 'communion' with each other.

There is however, one crucial qualification to the above suggestion which has come to light during the preceding description. The evidence given above constantly implies that the group which meets together to worship is made up of participants whose distinctiveness is maintained, rather than wholly subsumed into something greater. Individual participants actively choose to participate in the ritual, they then constantly make a choice whether to continue that inclusion or not and at which level they participate. Leaders can only suggest ideal types of behaviour or response and can only use multivocal and ambiguous language and symbols with an emphasised intention not with a fixed meaning. The individual constantly indicates their chosen level of inclusion through their spatial location within the venue; starting from a space, symbolised by a seat, which they have chosen and own as their position throughout the meeting, they can then move either closer to the front to symbolise their desire to be more involved or to the back to indicate their desire to be left out. At any point in the meeting a participant can choose to leave the venue and go somewhere completely different. Throughout the ritual the individual expresses through the use of their body the retention of an individual identity; they wear the clothes they have chosen and move their body in ways which are characteristic to them.

A further explanation of the behaviour found at celebrations held by the Jesus Fellowship Church will support this interpretation. Participants in celebration meetings of the Jesus Fellowship are constantly prompted to fully participate and therefore to become part of

something bigger. When Stanton is preaching he will keep vocally prompting the listeners to keep their concentration, occasionally he will expand his vocal prompting by shouting, picking out by name and by physical indication a certain individual in the audience who appears not to listening, or adding actions to gain attention such as kicking equipment. As Jesus Fellowship celebrations are fairly long events it is not unusual for participants to want to take a break and leave the venue for a variety of reasons. However, unlike the majority of Charismatic meetings this behaviour is not left unchallenged, stewards often locate individuals who are still in the immediate area and encourage them to return¹⁶⁵. Attention was drawn above to the distinctive existence of a stereotypical style of dancing and bodily movement in the Jesus Fellowship. Equally importantly, participants in Fellowship celebrations overtly dress in a similar manner, either by wearing their Jesus Army uniforms or by wearing customised clothing¹⁶⁶.

There is no doubt that in the Charismatic movement the culture of the group is indeed embodied, physically expressed through the use of the individuals body. What is interesting is that the Charismatic movement provides good evidence that in group life the distinctiveness of the individual can still be given significance and maintained. The Jesus Fellowship Church provides a very good example of an extremely low acceptance of this significance of the identity of the individual in relation to the practice and awareness of the rest of the movement, but nevertheless even in this group the significance remains. Charismatic worship is indeed a group affair but at the very heart of the act of worship lies the image of an individual with arms raised towards heaven. Through this image and action Charismatics understand that at the very centre of their faith and practice lies the

¹⁶⁵ It is interesting to note that the inclusion of participants is strongly controlled by the main leader and the peripheral personnel in Jesus Fellowship celebrations in contrast to most Charismatic meetings where it is the worship leader who most overtly takes on this role.

¹⁶⁶ Based around her notion that the physical body communicates information for and from the social system Mary Douglas suggested that all social groups could be placed in a typology structured around different levels of 'grid' or rules which relate one person to others on an ego-centred basis and 'group' or the experience of being a bounded social unit. Thus the Jesus Fellowship display a stronger level of group than grid and thus the high level of control of individual behaviour is evidenced in the control of the group over the individual's body (Douglas, 1970).

belief that the individual is an *axis mundi* between heaven and earth. Through the individual stretching towards heaven, heaven is brought down to earth and the sacred is made present.

Finally, Charismatic worship takes place in a physical, social and ideological context. That a recurring pattern is to be found at in all three should come as no surprise. This pattern, best described as a uniform, layered structure which incorporates a major division, lies at the very heart of the Charismatic movement. That the layering effect of this uniform structure is as strongly emphasised as the presence of a major division in the pattern of the dynamic flow of a worship time is highly significant and the reasons why this should be so direct the rest of this thesis.

Chapter Six

Ritual and Pilgrimage

Introduction

The task of this chapter is to build upon the description of the Charismatic movement given in the last three chapters by providing an interpretation of the data. This will be done through the application of the theories concerning ritual described at the end of chapter two. In chapter three a case was made for the presence of a particular model of social organisation in the Charismatic movement which, it was suggested in chapter four, is indicative of the structure of a model Charismatics use for understanding reality. In chapter five it was suggested that this model is represented in the use of physical space in the main gatherings of the movement. Also, in chapter five a case was made for a particular pattern of dynamic flow to worship.

The theories concerning ritual that Van Gennep, Turner, Bloch and Bell have produced have already been drawn attention to in the context of Twentieth Century sociology and anthropology. They are all functionalist understandings of ritual which propose a series of relationships between the form of rites, the characteristics of ritual activity and their social function. In Van Gennep and Turner's theories ritual helps society cope with social dramas, in Bloch's theory ritual helps society manage its own perpetuation and in Bell's theory ritual creates a never-ending flow of meaning, providing a loose systemacity by which individuals exist together. In all four theories ritual is understood as an event which stands within the flow of a social, historical, temporal and spatial context. Therefore, rather than organising the following application of these theories around a discussion of the comparative validity of their suggestions concerning what it is that ritual does the first half

of this chapter is organised around the more abstract unifying theme of movement and the second half considers the relationship of the social to the sacred.

Ritual activity as movement

Ritual as a tripartite process

Van Gennep's contribution to anthropology was the important discovery that rituals can involve a process or a passage. As Max Gluckman has suggested, that he failed to do anything other than attempt to prove the universal occurrence of this kind of sequence in the configuration of ritual was as much a product of the context in which he wrote as a serious lack of intellectual power on his part (Gluckman, 1962:11-12). Gluckman acknowledges that Van Gennep was on the verge of making the important connection that subsequent anthropologists such as Evans-Pritchard (1948) and Gluckman (1954) himself made between this characteristic of ritual and social relations. It was however, Victor Turner who, while exploring social relations, re-examined Van Gennep's description of the mechanism of ritual and greatly furthered the understanding of the latter as well as the former.

The process of ritual which Van Gennep had suggested was that of a tripartite sequence of separation, mid-transition and reintegration. It was in the phase of mid-transition or 'liminality', Van Gennep suggested that participants meet with the sacred. Both Turner and Bloch have advanced this model. Turner, from a perspective which emphasises social life, understood the ritual process as a feature of the redressive stage of a wider social process or 'social drama' of breach, crisis, redressive action and reintegration or the recognition of irreparable schism (Turner, 1974:37-42). Bloch, from a perspective which emphasises the character of the sacred, albeit in order to understand more social organisation more fully, understood this ritual process to involve a dynamic of violence. Whether or not this

connection to the social order is made the basic Van Gennep/Turner/Bloch tripartite model of the sequence of ritual remains a valid interpretation of the process through which many rituals pass.

It certainly does not strain the descriptions of the two Charismatic rituals of believer's baptism and celebration meetings so far that they are unrecognisable to apply this model to them. In the ritual surrounding the rite of baptism the candidates are separated from the outside world and their normal way of life and role, go through a time of transition and are subsequently reincorporated into the community with a new way of life and role. Traditionally candidates are separated from their old way of life through the symbolic changing of clothes, vocal renunciation of their past beliefs and actions and their symbolic death in the baptismal pool. They are reincorporated as a new person through their symbolic resurrection from death in the water and through subsequent prayers of commission. The whole ritual can be seen as a time of transition for the candidates when they are betwixt and between roles although, the interval between being buried under water and being pulled back out can be seen as the transitional phase proper. In the ritual of a celebration meeting participants are separated from their normal way of life by entering a place in which the meeting is to be held and they then go through a transitional phase during which they participate in a worship time and listen to a sermon. They then leave the building to be reincorporated into the world as a new person, changed through the experience of participating in the goal of the worship time and the response time.

The sensations connected with this process

Turner developed Van Gennep's work by focusing on what the latter had termed the transitional or liminal phase of the ritual process and this became an increasingly important notion in ritual theory. Individuals who are in a liminal state are thought to be geographically, emotionally, physically and socially betwixt and between. Turner

suggested that there are three primary sensations connected with this state. Firstly, individual participants in a ritual suffer in order to separate themselves from their old life and create liberation from the social structure they are located in. Secondly, the experience of suffering produces a unique quality of relationship amongst those participating. Thirdly, the sense of involvement in a ritual can be a total one which is best described by the use of the term flow. Unlike both Van Gennep and Turner, Bloch focused on developing the understanding of the liminal experience in relation to the post-liminal phase of reintegration or irreparable schism. By doing so he added a further sensation to those characteristic of a ritual experience, that of violence.

Suffering, separation and antistructure

Van Gennep pointed to the preponderance of acts of physical mutilation such as circumcision, piercing and cutting in ritual acts and suggested that the removal of a physical part of the body symbolised the removal of part of the personality. This was necessary in order for change to occur. Turner expanded this basic suggestion and supplied fieldwork which suggested that, alongside physical acts of mutilation, initiands suffer hard trials and ordeals which underline and enable separation from the old way of life to take place¹⁶⁷. He called these 'rites of separation'. Turner understood these as a mechanism which stripped the participants bare, sometimes literally but always symbolically. This functions as a levelling action by which all the participants are levelled to a homogeneous social state or a state of 'antistructure'. This state, he suggested is not contradictory to but rather is complementary to social structure for it is part of the process of social growth (Turner, 1974:272-298). In Turner's understanding of the process of ritual this is where the sacred lies for in the absence of social power of any kind sacred power is

¹⁶⁷ See for example Turner's description of the trial of Thomas Beckett (1974:60-97).

to be encountered, through the power of the normally weak, the resurgence of nature and the reception of sacred knowledge.

Turner suggested three main ways in which this stripping action of social levelling usually takes place. Firstly, there are symbols and actions in many rituals by which the mighty are humbled and the lowly are empowered. These can be seen, for example, in the ordeals and trials of ritual humiliation that the powerful may go through and in the prevalence of the motif of the humble and weak being made mighty and strong. Secondly, in many rituals there is a dominant motif of poverty which is a symbol, Turner suggested, of basic humanity as the equal foundation for all participants. Thirdly, there is the dominance of the directional motif of fluidity which, he again suggested, expresses the fluidity of social structures, divisions and property and the notion that antistructure is the continuing dissolution of structure rather than its absolute negation.

Again, looking at the major Charismatic ritual of worship certain forms of these ideas and instances of these rites of separation can clearly be seen. The motifs of the structural reversal between the mighty and the humble and the power of the weak are prevalent in the language of Charismatic songs and sermons. For example, God is often said to exalt the humble and put down the proud. Equally important in the Charismatic culture are the motifs of self-sacrifice, discipline, obedience and that of the weakness and poverty of all humanity. These motifs are generally understood using a series of interlocking themes based around the notion of the sinfulness of humanity and the absolute holiness of God. Charismatics sometimes accompany the symbolic and linguistic expression of these motifs with the embodied action of kneeling in submission to God. Similarly there is a prevalence of the use of the metaphors of water and fluidity in both the language and the symbolism of the culture. This is particularly the case in the rites of baptism and the Eucharist which focus on the symbolic use of water and wine. Also, participants may not physically mutilate themselves or accept an ideological framework in which the theme of making

merit through physical suffering is overtly present but they do acknowledge that participation in a Charismatic meeting involves some physical discomfort which they have a duty to endure in order to reap its benefits. Participants are often accommodated in cramped conditions and required to stand, sit, be involved and concentrate for lengthy periods of time. This kind of participation can often be very physically tiring and is expected to be so. This is particularly the case for participation in Jesus Fellowship meetings.

Andrea Dohlberg has suggested that Turner's understanding of the importance of suffering in ritual is often more obvious in the centrality of the theme of suffering in the group's cognitive map taken as a whole than it is in the group's overt physical actions, symbolic code and motifs (Dohlberg, 1991). Certainly suffering and miraculous healing are important in the cognitive map of the Charismatic movement. It is often during the response time or ministry time of a celebration meeting that individuals request prayer to ease their physical, psychological or spiritual pain.

Although this theme and these motifs are recognised and widely used by Charismatics many of the criticisms of the movement from within Christianity are based on the comparative value judgement that the notion of power through suffering is not made central enough¹⁶⁸. This is usually expressed in the criticism that the motifs of suffering, ordeal and weakness are not emphasised as much as the motifs of triumph, ease and strength in the cognitive map. The criticism however can also be made on other levels. For example, although participation in a Charismatic meeting involves some physical discomfort which is endured participants and organisers actively find ways in which participants can both travel to the venue and be accommodated there in as much physical ease as possible¹⁶⁹. This criticism can also be made using Dohlberg's perspective. Although

¹⁶⁸ See pages 33-38.

¹⁶⁹ There is an anecdotal story told within the Jesus Fellowship that Stanton once left a meeting of

physical suffering and miraculous healing are part of the movement's cognitive map they can be said to not be in as much of a central position as they once were. This can clearly be seen in the relatively moderate reaction of contemporary Charismatics to the death of John Wimber in 1997 in comparison to the widespread doubt and reassessment of faith and practice that the death of David Watson caused in 1984.

Philip Richter has examined the notion of suffering in the Charismatic movement in the wider context of some of the above theories by switching the location of suffering from that of the physical body to that of personal economics (Richter, 1997). He does so by assessing the financial investment made by a participant in attending a Charismatic meeting expecting a spiritual return. However, it can be said that even if economic cost and loss can truly be placed on the same scale as physical loss and suffering Charismatics do not suffer financially to the point where it could be termed an ordeal or trial, nor do they intend to do so. Accommodation and admission fees and travel costs can be expensive, and if no fee is charged there is often a public request for charitable donations but many participants in Charismatic events find ways of economically funding their trips with little disruption to their existent lifestyle and finances¹⁷⁰. Some count them into their annual budget as a second holiday, some receive sponsorship from their church or group and many of the larger festivals and celebrations advertise free places with advance block bookings. This type of reasoning is borne out in the advice offered by Feardon concerning trips to Toronto which Richter cites; 'Fine, if you can afford it, go.' (Richter, 1997:104).

Richter's idea of moving the location of suffering can also be extended to examine suffering in the context of the social image of the participant in their everyday world. Again, the same criticism can be made; participants do not suffer so much that it could be

national Charismatic leaders thundering that bragging about travelling to the meeting in the First Class section of the train did not reflect the lifestyle of Jesus who travelled by donkey.

¹⁷⁰ As a rough guide of the financial costs involved a five day stay at Spring Harvest in Skegness in 1999, half board based on two adults sharing is priced at £100 per person whereas a four day stay at a Jesus Fellowship Festival in Northampton in 1998, full board is priced at £15 per person.

termed severe pain or a trial or ordeal. Most meetings and events are located in leisure times and spaces and therefore to attend them is usually viewed by the wider community as a personal and private leisure choice and not as something which attracts social ostracism or embarrassment.

Communitas

Turner described how groups of individual participants are bonded together by the experience of undergoing a ritual. He suggested that social levelling created a unique quality of relationship which he called social antistructure or *communitas*. In this kind of relationship participants are bound as individuals, each retaining their own essentialness, rather than being merged into each other. As they are liberated from the social norms that usually operate participants are free to spontaneously relate in direct and non-rational ways through full unmediated communication (Turner, 1978). Turner very clearly suggested that this type of relationship and experience of pure unity or universal oneness, is fundamental to all human life but is a transient one. Thus feelings of unity, togetherness, affinity and friendship are also common features of the liminal state.

There is no doubt that the participants in a Charismatic celebration and worship time sometimes express these kind of feelings. For example, a member of the Jesus Fellowship when asked to describe her experience of the Wembley Praise Day 1997 stated:

'Everybody loves, everybody laughs, everybody dances, everybody prays, everybody sings, everybody is together for Jesus and for God.'¹⁷¹

¹⁷¹ *Jesus Life* 43(1:1998):9.

At the most simple level the feelings of togetherness and friendship that are described as part of the experience of worship are accomplished by the gathering of similarly minded and similarly dressed individuals together in the same physical space and for the same reason. It is often the case as well that there are existing longstanding friendships between the individuals who gather to participate in the worship time. These feelings of unity, familiarity and closeness are also encouraged by the performance of corporate singing, dancing and other bodily actions.

It needs to be stressed again that in Charismatic worship however it is the individual worshipper that is given paramount importance not the group. The widespread use of first person directed language in songs is an indication of this. Even in the Jesus Fellowship where the language of brotherhood, fellowship, family and covenant is relatively more prominent in the language of songs and in the attitudes that are expressed about meetings the actual emotional content of the worship act is usually expressed in terms relating solely to the individuals. For example:

‘Worship is my lifeline, my sanity... It’s solid, the time when I can feel I’m right there with God. I get lost in worship: like the rest of the world has gone and it’s just Him and me.’¹⁷²

Certainly then participants in Charismatic celebrations retain a sense of individuality, whether or not this is built upon their essential nature, their individuality stripped of all social roles and actions is hard to say. The use of an ideological framework which refers to individuals in terms of their basic nature, for example as ‘sinful humanity’ or as ‘built for a relationship with God’ would seem to indicate that it could be so. It is equally hard to say whether or not this leads to full, unmediated communication. Participants can

¹⁷² Streetpaper 43(3:1996):8.

unquestionably be extremely open with each other about their emotions and feelings but, importantly, this type of communication is usually used for the purpose of requesting prayer directed towards the deity not for the purpose of having a direct interaction with another person. In Turner's understanding that which sets *communitas* apart from extraordinary feelings of being part of a group is the feeling of universal oneness that is accomplished. He extended the use of the term to refer to experiences of close friendship which were described by participants in social occasions other than religious rituals. As Mary and Max Gluckman have pointed out however, this may not be the right description for many very powerful experiences of unity, such as the spirit of camaraderie felt by those who fought together at Dunkirk (Gluckman and Gluckman, 1977). Clearly this understanding of a sense of unity as universalistic oneness beyond mere closeness and intimacy and beyond the simple unit, the sum total of the parts and the ultimate product of the division of labour, is at the very heart of that which Turner understands the sacred to be but may not actually either be an accurate account of the data or a correct interpretation of it.

Flow

Turner took the notion of flow from the work of M. Csikszentmihalyi who used the term to describe a type of experience of total involvement in which action and awareness are merged to produce a very enjoyable holistic sensation (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975a:1975b). In flow experiences the individual loses all sense of the self and the ego and enjoys acting without conscious intention but according to internal logic. This is the feeling Cox referred to in his analogy between Pentecostal worship and the experience of performing jazz improvisations¹⁷³. It is the feeling of being caught up into something greater through any

¹⁷³ See pages 204-205.

means of articulating feeling, whether this be music, speech, bodily movement, dance or sport.

Charismatics will often refer to the feeling of participating in an enjoyable worship time as 'I really got into the flow' or 'I really got caught up in worship'; phrases which appear to suggest that this experience is indeed flow in Turner's sense of the term. Certainly, even if it is granted that this sensation is less widespread throughout a Charismatic service than a Pentecostal one, the times when Charismatics believe that they have broken through to God in worship are distinctly flow like. The similarity between Jazz improvisation, to continue the metaphor, and the corporate glossolalia which is often present at such moments is striking. There are two further facets to Turner's understanding of flow which support this application of the notion. Firstly, Turner suggests that while an actor may be aware of what they are doing if they are made aware that they are aware the flow is interrupted. Similarly, Charismatics understand that when they are caught up in worship, in a trance like state to use Cox's terminology, they are still in control and aware of what they are doing and what is around them at some level of consciousness. This was particularly emphasised by certain Charismatic leaders in defence of the experiences connected with the Toronto Blessing¹⁷⁴. Once mindful of their awareness however the spell is broken to use another metaphor, and the flow is interrupted. For Charismatics this does not mean that the sense of flow is completely lost on that particular occasion. Often individuals can return to as though it has not been left. It is not unusual therefore to find that participants in a worship time suddenly stop singing for a moment, open their eyes and lower their arms in order to respond to a request from a child or to pass a comment

¹⁷⁴ For example; 'If the person is one of the 'hard ones', you might help them do the following. Help them to deal with a tendency to rationalise, with their fears, or with loss of control. Calm their fear of loss of control by helping them know what to expect. For example, let them know that they will have a clear mind, that they can usually stop the process at any point if they want to, and that the Spirit comes in waves.' 'Tips for praying for people number 7'. Ministry Tips from the Vineyard Champaign. April 20, 1994 posted in the Internet. However, some believed that the phenomenon associated with the Toronto Blessing could not be controlled by the individual for example; 'Feedback. 'The Toronto Blessing': What happened to self control?' Baptist Times July 21. 1994: 9.

to someone close by and then, just as suddenly, resume their state of worship. Secondly, Turner suggests that flow is made possible through the mechanism of centring attention on a limited field of stimulus, often achieved through a set of rules until the self becomes irrelevant. This is a good description of the experience of responding to music and lyrics which are familiar in an ideological framework which rejects the value of the self as ego in relation to God.

Violence

Bloch revisited Van Gennep's notion of separation through suffering and reinterpreted it from a different perspective. Rather than extending the remit of its application as Turner had done Bloch restricted the definition of suffering until he understood the process of separation as one characterised by violence. Bloch's 1992 essay Prey Into Hunter in which he suggests this perspective is geared to show why it is that many religious groups and expressions of religion are aggressive. He suggests that an individual who has been ritually imbued with the transcendent or the sacred which has taken them over in a violent manner takes part of it back with them into their previous social existence so that the action of reintegration is actually a continuation of the transcendent conquering the profane. He uses this theory which he calls the 'rebounding violence theory' to classify religious groups and their predominant rituals in relation to one of three primary concerns; assertion of self-reproduction, legitimisation of expansion or abandonment of earthly existence.

In his description of Christianity Bloch takes the example of the early church described in the New Testament letters of Paul and classifies it as predominantly concerned with abandoning earthly existence, seen in the metaphors of the death of self and the denial of human reproduction in the continued use of the practice of circumcision. Bloch interprets this in terms of his framework as evidence of a group which, having been taken over in a

violent manner by the transcendent, refuses to enter into the rebounding stage and conquer the world. He also however suggests that Christianity in some forms, as many other millenarianist movements, holds within it an element which accepts the second stage and joins in the rebound, going out to violently conquer the world in order to expand the group (Bloch, 1992:90-98).

It is precisely Bloch's understanding of the sacred or the transcendent as possessing a violent characteristic that is the most problematic part of his theory as the notion of violence in contemporary culture is heavily value laden. In order to offer a different perspective on the nature of violent energy D.J. Davies has imported S. Tambiah's notion of ethical vitality or the basic human propensity and power to act as it is harnessed and put to social use into Bloch's rebounding violence theory (D.J. Davies, 1995). This suggests that violence in this instance is a force which is motivated and energised by a basic propensity towards the common good.

The *modus operandi* of the descent of the Spirit upon an individual in a worship time, or the experience of having transcendent vitality conferred, has already been described as an overwhelming infiltration of the sacred. Some commentators understand this to be negatively violent, (Percy, 1996:132-136) others value it more positively, using language terms such as 'irresistible'. The evidence that the Charismatic movement or groups within it such as the Jesus Army are aggressively evangelistic also supports this use of the violence motif. Charismatic meetings always conclude having involved the participants in a challenge to go out and change the world as changed, empowered individuals but then so do other forms of Christian worship. For example, the final prayer after Holy Communion (Rite B) in the Anglican Church is given in the Alternative Service Book as ending with the phrase:

'Send us out into the world by the power of your Spirit, to live and work to your praise and glory. Amen.' (Church of England, 1980:199)

Leaving the specific discussion of the value judgement of the notion of violence aside however it can also be said that Bloch's extension of the understanding of the tripartite model of ritual process to include a greater emphasis upon the change to the third stage sheds light on Charismatic rites. The format of Charismatic worship times which do not, as has already been suggested, ever formally close suggests that the experience of meeting with the transcendent is carried over into the rest of the participants experience. As Bloch's model suggests, the transcendent is never systematically approached, experienced and then systematically retreated from. In other words the pattern for the dynamic of encounter is not increase to a pure and total point and then decrease. Rather the sacred is approached, experienced in its most intense and raw form and then, remaining in this form, taken and mixed with the rest of experience and the profane. In Charismatic celebrations this functions on two levels. It means that participants hear and understand the sacred text from the very beginning of its exposition from a position close to this intense form of sacred power and it means that they leave the meeting still in possession of feelings they associate with being very close to the heart of the sacred in an intense form. The dynamic of an experience of the absolute sacred as one which fades over time has already been described and certainly fits this model.

Importantly for this study in light of the location of emphasis that Charismatics place on the first years of the church D.J. Davies applies Bloch's model to the form of Christianity found in the early church of the gospels and the Acts of the Apostles and not as evidenced in the Pauline Epistles. D.J. Davies therefore suggests a re-interpretation of the purpose of Christian faith:

'The life of Christ generated that ethical vitality which, symbolised in the resurrection and conceptualised as merit, provided the energy for rebounding violence, symbolised in the coming of the Holy Spirit, which both empowered the new Christian community to evangelise and validated its emergent soteriology.' (D.J. Davies, 1995:212).

Vitality, conceptualised as merit made by Christ but symbolised in the dynamic force of the descent of the Spirit appears to be a very good description of the understanding of sacred power that Charismatics have.

Pilgrimage as the dominant contemporary form of ritual

As an established anthropologist Victor Turner suggested that the dominant contemporary form of ritual was that of pilgrimage (Turner, 1974:166-230: 1978). This conclusion was based on his assessment of differences between the composition of contemporary Western society and the composition of African society which he had come to understand through his own initiatory fieldwork among the Ndembu of Zambia¹⁷⁵. He believed that contemporary western society is different from the stable, structured systems of social relationships to be found in African societies in that it is a transitional form of social organisation, moving away from hierarchical structural involvements based on status and towards non-structural involvements based on voluntary contract. In stable and hierarchical African societies the main cults therefore are ancestral and political which all tend to represent crucial power divisions and classificatory distinctions in society. The main ritual form in this type of society is that of initiation whereby the main form of change involves the identification and location of an individual with a new role and status

¹⁷⁵ There is a note of the type of historical relativism in Turner's work also found in Jung, Lévi Strauss and Eliade which, although not relativistic is critical of western culture and seeks to be sympathetic with other cultures in order to understand what has gone wrong.

within the fixed social order. Turner suggested that in these kind of societies there are also secondary, earth and fertility cults which tend to represent the ritual bonds between groups of people. Turner suggested that throughout the passing of world history as the stable, structured systems of social relationships have given way to alliances based on individual choice and voluntary obligation, these rituals which affirm the bonds between people have become the major ritual type. Therefore in the middle and late 1970s Turner's focus shifted from Africa to Catholic pilgrimage centres worldwide and he published his findings in 1978. Turner believed that pilgrimage had become the dominant contemporary form of this type of ritual for two reasons. Firstly, he demonstrated how the practice of pilgrimage shares the form and content of the tripartite process of ritual that Turner was used to finding in initiation rituals. Secondly, it does so with a clear emphasis upon a mixture of obligation and voluntariness which is a characteristic of the ambiguity found in historic religions in contemporary society which, in turn reflects the nature of the structure of contemporary society with its pockets of stable social structures.

The eighth edition of The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines a pilgrim as a person who journeys to a sacred place for religious reasons and a pilgrimage as a pilgrim's journey. Richter has pointed out during the Toronto Blessing Charismatics went on pilgrimages to the main places which featured in the movement such as the Airport Vineyard Church in Toronto and Holy Trinity Church in London (Richter, 1997). Richter's important article focuses on understanding the Toronto Blessing and he uses the concept of pilgrimage to do so firstly because participants in the Toronto Blessing themselves classified their journeys as pilgrimages and secondly because these participants were journeying to geographical places which, within the framework of the Toronto Blessing, were understood to be inherently sacred. A slightly different example of Charismatics undertaking a pilgrimage can be found in the Jesus Fellowship Church. Members and other participants in the life of the Fellowship often journey to the chapel in Bugbrooke village, New Creation Hall and Cornhill Manor which are all within a ten mile radius of each other

in the Northamptonshire countryside. Within the ideology of the Jesus Fellowship these are classified as sacred sites, and although members do not specifically go on a pilgrimage to them they understand they are moving towards a sacred geographical centre when travelling towards them¹⁷⁶. Members frequently call all types of travel to this particular part of the country 'going down to Jerusalem'¹⁷⁷.

In the Christian culture the practice of going on a pilgrimage is associated with Catholic and Anglo-Catholic groups and traditions. Evangelicals and Charismatics have, throughout their history, sought to distance themselves from this type of identification because they base their classification of it on their value judgement about the behavioural practices associated with 'dead religion' and empty rituals. The two examples given above can be seen as recent attempts to repossess selected parts of the Christian culture by Charismatics as they seek to continue to locate themselves in the mainstream as a revitalisation movement. However, as Richter has pointed out the practice of attending Charismatic meetings, major festivals and celebrations does '... take on something of the feel of a pilgrimage' (Richter, 1997:99) whether or not the term is actually used. This should come as no surprise when the practice of pilgrimage is understood to be the contemporary form of the ritual process that was described above and applied to the central rite of celebrations and hence festivals. The application of the pilgrimage model however can go further. On the one hand it can be applied on a the macro level beyond the level of worship times of attendance at a Charismatic festival. On the other, some of the conclusions Turner drew from extending the model of ritual to its pilgrimage form can be applied to worship times.

¹⁷⁶ The community's graveyard is also based in this area and this adds to a sense of geographical sacred permanence.

¹⁷⁷ The physical Jerusalem is obviously a centre of pilgrimage for Christianity although many Christian groups use it in a metaphorical sense to refer to the place where God is present. In the Jesus Fellowship church the term Zion was first used in reference to the first community house, New Creation Hall. However, more recently Zion has come to be used as the term to refer to the community of people and Jerusalem to the geographical centre of the community. (Cooper and Farrant, 1997:107-115).

Spring Harvest and pilgrimage

Although participants in the movement do not specifically categorise their attendance at Spring Harvest as a pilgrimage it can be used as an example of a form of Charismatic behaviour, very like the ideal form of pilgrimage as used by Turner, which Richter has in mind in his stretching of the application of the term pilgrimage¹⁷⁸.

Turner has suggested that sacred sites radiate sacrality in a concentric decreasing spiral and that this is evidenced in the geographical landscape becoming increasingly scattered with religious artefacts as the pilgrimage site is approached (Turner, 1974:197-198). This assists the build up of the feelings of anticipation pilgrims feel as they journey towards the sacred site. Although there may not be geographical markers upon which Spring Harvest participants can focus many do undergo an increasing sense of anticipation as they approach the site for the festival. This is based on a growing intensity of the number of fellow travellers. For many years participants were given stickers proclaiming 'we are going to Spring Harvest' to place in the windows of their vehicles as they travelled to the site. Participants therefore can recognise other participants on the same road and very often identify themselves as fellow travellers by waving and sounding their vehicle horn or flashing their lights. As there is a standard booking in time for all participants as the approach roads to the site converge there is an increased number of these identifying vehicles (Lucas, 1999). The same phenomenon occurs when the Jesus Fellowship church attend one of their festivals or events. The vehicles the Jesus Fellowship travel in are painted in Jesus Army livery and thus are highly distinctive. Very often the members of houses in neighbouring cities will recognise each other's household minibus and, after identifying themselves will spontaneously travel in convoy. It is also common practice for

¹⁷⁸ The Spring Harvest festival has been chosen as a good example of the Charismatic festivals because it is the longest running festival, is numerically the largest and uniquely incorporates participants from across the spectrum of the Charismatic movement.

members to stop at the nearest motorway service station to the site in order to freshen up and this often precipitates a spontaneous large gathering of members all using the same facilities.

The vehicles of participants are still identifiable when they leave a particular festival site. In recent years the organisers of Spring Harvest have handed out car stickers printed with the logo that has been used for that year as the participants drive through the gates for the final time. However, the participants do not place any emphasis upon identifying each other on the road as they disperse and therefore do not feel any increase in a sense of detachment. Participants do however usually keep the stickers in their vehicles so that on occasions throughout the year they can identify with other participants¹⁷⁹. This is not the case in the Jesus Fellowship church where convoys of vehicles travel home along the same motorway or road together, the occupants waving and signalling to each other periodically and to vehicles as they leave the convoy¹⁸⁰.

As has been described the sites used for the Spring Harvest festivals are not considered by Charismatics to be permanently sacred sites but are leisure complexes that are considered to be temporarily sacred during the time that Charismatics are resident and active at them. Thus participants do not return to the sites at other times in the year when they are being used for a different purpose in order to experience the sacred in a deposited form. The Big Top marquees that are erected on the sites especially for the Spring Harvest festival are thought of slightly differently. These are temporary venues which are considered to be the same in appearance and form throughout the year but their use for other activities is not really taken into account and thus they carry an

¹⁷⁹ It is quite usual to find vehicles in church car parks and on the Spring Harvest sites with a collection of Spring Harvest stickers on them, denoting how many times the owners of the vehicle have attended the festival.

¹⁸⁰ As many Jesus Fellowship festivals finish in the late evening it is not unusual to find a well spread out convoy of Jesus Army vehicles, cars, minibuses and buses, all travelling along a motorway together. As all the vehicles have a fluorescent red cross painted on the back this can be quite an interesting sight.

ambiguous sense of permanent sacrality while being only temporary buildings. The fact that the sites used for Spring Harvest festivals are only made sacred in the moment by Charismatic activity at them is clearly shown in the employment of participants as markers pointing towards the site rather than physical artefacts. This is to be understood in contrast to the journeys that are undertaken to Jesus Fellowship Church festivals when they are held in the Bugbrooke area. As travellers converge on the roads surrounding the permanently sacred Jerusalem area they mark the approach of the festival site not only by the identification of an increasing number of fellow travellers but also with the acknowledgement of physical sacred sites. For example, sometimes a driver of a minibus will pull over on one of the country lanes surrounding the Hall and the Farm and point out the Hall to new participants across the landscape or even just stop to look themselves and give thanks for the community. As the larger area surrounding Bugbrooke contains many of the Fellowship's major properties and businesses the convoy phenomenon occurs everyday as members travel to and from work. The participants who live and work in this area are ideologically considered to be at the very centre of the Fellowship emotionally and socially as well as physically. It is interesting however that Jerusalem in the Fellowship is more an ill defined geographical area which encompasses many different properties than it is one specific location. This could be said to be symbolic of the Fellowship's ideological understanding of the sacred as being located in all areas of life. Members also characteristically hold a view of the temporary locations for their festivals which involves a more durable notion of the sacred than other Charismatics. It is not unusual to find members returning to pray and experience the sacred on the patches of land on which the Golden marquee stood for a short festival weeks after the marquee has moved on.

Turner suggested that pilgrimages were journeys that were not just understood as journeys to the source of *communitas* but as occasions when *communitas* was experienced (Turner, 1974:203). Certainly, journeys towards Spring Harvest, although

conducted in comfort, can be times when the participants experience an exceptional level of togetherness and fellow feeling. This is particularly the case for those who share vehicles. However, if the application of the model is widened so that the definition of the pilgrimage journey includes the activities that take place at the sacred site but which are not part of the main worship rite the presence of togetherness and fellow feeling is even more pronounced and visible. Social levelling occurs through mechanisms which designify three of the most socially defining commodities in contemporary culture: clothes, vehicles and accommodation. As Spring Harvest is always held over the Easter holiday and at venues on the coastline the participants always anticipate bad weather and thus prepare to dress accordingly. As the festival wears on and if the weather continues to be bad the remnants of value placed in physical appearance and personal style decrease in favour of the more basic necessities of warmth and dryness. Similarly, as the festivals are held on large leisure complex sites all vehicles are left in car parks for the duration of the festival and participants walk or cycle around the site to various locations. Finally, participants are accommodated in groups in purpose built chalets and caravans across the site. Although some are more expensive to rent than others and are less basic, the accommodation is very much of one standard type. Very often it is the accommodation which is closest to the main venues which is positively valued by participants, regardless of its other facilities. All three mechanisms involve a sense of corporate suffering and endurance.

The pattern of encounter with the sacred which Van Gennep, Turner and Bloch suggested can also be seen in the extension of the physical journey to the sacred beyond the approach to the sacred site. Each night participants leave the relative comfort of their accommodation and walk *en masse* to the location of the celebration. Often this journey takes on pilgrimage like qualities as participants laugh, talk and sing and show great camaraderie with each other and also endure the hardships of bad weather together. As the location of the celebration, for most the Big Top, comes into view, a sense of excitement and anticipation is often felt by participants. This is created by the

convergence of numbers of participants from all areas of the site onto a few main approach paths, by the presence of stewards and welcoming personnel and most of all by the increase in the sights, sounds and smells associated with a worship rite. Often the musicians will be practising or playing as the time for a meeting draws close and journeying participants thus begin to recognise familiar music and tunes as their journey comes to an end. Similarly the sight of the marquee and the bright lights within it, the sound of many participants gathering and chatting, the flapping of the marquee and the heat generators, the smell of the marquee, the floor covering and the heaters are all evocative of a Charismatic meeting¹⁸¹. As the participants enter the Big Top they are separated from the outside world by heavy blue canvas and the difference between bright lights and darkness outside. Once the meeting is over they return to their accommodation, perhaps laughing and singing with others but more often in distinct small groups talking quietly or walking silently with a thoughtful disposition, their sense of individuality and encounter with the sacred still very real¹⁸².

Worship times and pilgrimage; the extension of the model of ritual

The movement towards the sacred through an increasing concentric circle of sacrality is clearly seen in the pattern that was suggested as the model for the rite of worship times. Sacred symbols and associated feelings of anticipation build up until the source is reached and the participants break through to God. Here, the pilgrimage journey is undertaken not in a physical way but in an emotional way. Turner suggested that physical pilgrimage was a surrogate journey of this kind for the masses who had neither the time nor the

¹⁸¹ The Jesus Fellowship use straw matting to cover the floor of their Golden Marquee which, particularly when wet, gives off a very distinctive smell and which many participants associate very keenly with Jesus Fellowship meetings.

¹⁸² At Spring Harvest festivals during 1995, at the height of the Toronto Blessing, it was not unusual to come across participants who had been overcome by a spiritual experience on their journey home. These participants were often at the centre of a small group of their friends or those who shared their accommodation who were standing around them half watching and half talking about the meeting. Other participants felt no compulsion to stop and join in often just acknowledging the group and then carrying on their journey.

resources to undertake the monastic emotional journey of mysticism (Turner, 1978: 1-17). Like both types of journey, the surrogate journey of the masses and the mystical journey of the monks, the main elements are still embodied or written on the physical body although in a different way. Charismatics symbolise their ideology of the journey through the use of bodily movement, singing, dancing, clapping and kneeling as the anticipation builds until the culminating moment when, with the great symbol of the Charismatic movement, the participants raise their hands heavenwards and break through into the presence of the sacred.

Charismatic worship times as an example of the pilgrimage form of the ritual process also exhibit the particular quality of obligation and freedom which Turner suggested was characteristic of contemporary religion in the west. Participants choose to participate at every level and yet they are aware that they have responsibilities because of their continued commitment to a particular group. Very often participants will express the desire not to attend a celebration or a worship time because they are tired or it is inconvenient, however they will still attend out of a sense of duty. As Turner has suggested:

'Pilgrimages represent, so to speak, an amplified symbol of the dilemma of choice versus obligation in the midst of a social order where status prevails.' (Turner, 1974:177)

Turner also suggested that the increase in pilgrimage journeys and the pilgrimage ethic assisted the expansion of the communications network of contemporary industrialism:

'It is as though such shrines exert a magnetic effect on a whole communications system, charging up with sacredness many of its geographical features and attributes and fostering the construction of

sacred and secular edifices to service the needs of the human stream
passing along its arterial routes.' (Turner, 1974:225-26)

This emphasis on communication at the very centre of contemporary society and contemporary ritual forms is clearly seen in the worship times of the Charismatic movement. It has already been suggested that it is communication between God and the human which is at the very centre of the experience of the sacred. Also, however, the importance of a whole communications system which services the needs of the human stream which chooses to use it has been pointed out. Structures such as Premier Music, the web of worship recordings, not to mention organisations such as The Evangelical Alliance have all been constructed to communicate the Charismatic culture and give information to Charismatics.

The social and the sacred

Clearly Van Gennep, Turner and Bloch stand within the Durkheimian tradition of connecting the sacred to the social. In Turner's thought the sacred turns appears to be little more than feelings of *communitas* and flow. In Bloch's thought the sacred is the permanence of the group which results in a dynamic of violence in the individual's experience. However, as Bell has pointed out such theories rely on an inherent contradiction in Durkheim's theory; the sacred is understood to be both a social construct and beyond the social order with coercive and transformative power. Bell's theory of ritual therefore revolves around understanding the sacred as wholly a construct of the social order, moreover as a construct of the communications system of the social order; discourse. In Bell's theory ritual is not a '...magical mechanism of social alchemy' (Bell, 1992: 176), in the sense that it solves social problems within the group through a process of conflict leading to equilibrium but rather it is a strategic and practical orientation for acting (Bell, 1992:69-93). Ritual activity therefore is only ritual because it is differentiated

from and privileged over non-ritual in action and communication, a process which Bell calls 'ritualisation'. This process does not control or regulate the system of social relations but rather *is* the system of social relations as they are worked out in the production and use of strategies by which the system is continually constructed, reconstructed, negotiated, qualified and organised into a shape that participants use to make sense of reality and act within it. Eade and Sallnow have made the same suggestion in direct connection with the practice of pilgrimage (Eade and Sallnow, 1991:1-29). They propose that each pilgrimage journey and site should be understood as a realm of competing discourses of this kind. Thus sacred sites or shrines provide ritual spaces in which are expressed the diversity of perceptions and meanings which pilgrims bring to the shrine and impose upon it.

What is fundamental to functionalist understandings of ritual is the interplay between the individual and the group that creates the social order. In the Van Gennep, Turner and Bloch axis, which it will be remembered centred on initiation rituals, the individual is controlled and fashioned to fit into the group. In the deconstructionist theories outlined above the individual creates and fashions the social by and through their presence. Using this theme of the incorporation of the part into the whole three issues have become important in the current understanding of ritual; the manner in which symbols function, the empowerment of the individual and the overall resolute function of ritual activity for a social group. It is with these three issues that this chapter ends.

Symbols

Turner suggested that the pattern of progression within a ritual was most obvious in the placement into a sequence of several symbolic elements which are used because the social order is suspended. Charles Keyes used the phrase 'processual symbolic analysis' to describe this way of understanding rituals (Turner, 1978:243). Turner understood symbols

to be useful in rituals because of their character. He suggested that in contrast to signs there is always some kind of likeness between the thing the symbol is signifying and its meaning. However, symbols are also dense with meaning; they can usually stand for many things and thoughts at once, with various meanings or values and have the potential to have new meanings added to them either by the whole group or by the individual in private. Symbols therefore are very good carriers of the culture of a group and have the generative power, Turner believed, to assist in the process by which a group adjusts to change. They do this through the functions associated with being multivocal in that they simultaneously combine and re-combine ideas and meanings by a multiplicity of reference, cognition and affectivity. Through their use individuals express the social drama and define the moral ethos and order of the group.

Turner suggested that a pattern of dominant symbols could be found in all rituals, sometimes as a group presiding over the whole process and sometimes as a series of individual symbols presiding over a particular phase. The meaning of dominant symbols is highly consistent although each one has a spectrum of referents which are interlinked into clusters by a process of association through analogy and similarity. Dominant symbols also possess in themselves two poles of meaning; the ideological pole at which clusters of norms, values, principles of organisation and the moral and social order is to be found and the sensory pole at which clusters of referents to feelings and desires in a generalised sense. During a ritual a dominant symbol effects an interchange between these two poles such that the norms and values of the group become saturated with emotion and the basic emotions of human life are given worth through contact with social norms and values. In terms of understanding the meaning of the Charismatic movement through tracing dominant symbols used in worship times there are perhaps four which have already been mentioned but which can bear being restated. These are: the image of the cross of Christ, the image of resurrection from the dead, the metaphor of battle, and the image of the human individual.

Bell emphasised the use ritual participants make of the ambiguity and the cluster formations of symbols. They do this to create their own rendering of the group's arrangement of norms, values and beliefs:

'One appropriates and thereby constructs a version (usually neither very explicit nor coherent) of the hegemonic order that promises a path of personal redemption, that gives one a sense of relative dominance in the order of things and thereby some ability to engage and affect that order.'
(Bell, 1992:208)

Clearly participants in the Charismatic movement perceive their personal relationship with the identity of the group in this way. It has been suggested that the social organisation of the movement is fundamentally based upon the premise of membership by personal choice and the constant personal appropriation of terms, values and norms. It is a loosely bounded group which relies heavily on the use of ambiguity in which an individual can personally invest in shared ideological positions and behavioural norms whilst retaining their own understanding of them. There is no doubt that, as been pointed out previously, the framework of understanding which is characteristic of the Charismatic movement unequivocally uses the ambiguity Turner perceives in symbols in order to construct and maintain a system of belief and action. This is brought to the fore in the construction of a worship time for it is here that one individual, a worship leader, overtly chooses linguistic and musical symbols and referents which are part of clusters of understanding and selects a combination of analogous relationships between them so that an overall pattern is constructed which leads to a breakthrough or a reinforcement of a particular ideological or behavioural theme. The worship leader will readily acknowledge that this single motif may be his intended one but is never totally preordained nor the only valid conclusion that can be gleaned from this process of combination. It is the one however to which he orchestrates the ideological and behavioural movement of the

majority of the group and the one which acts as a verification principle for the success of the rite.

Empowerment

Bell has suggested that an individual, rather than experiencing a ritual as an occasion when they are controlled and fashioned by something greater, experiences a ritual as an empowering occasion in which they construct a sense of reality and act within it. This is done through the processes of negotiation, appropriation, consent, complicity and struggle mentioned above and also through the ongoing exercise of power within the system which is being built to affect reality. Bell suggests this produces 'ritualised agents' or individuals who understand and manipulate the rules and relationships of ritual discourse and 'ritualised bodies' or physical bodies which act as the field upon which these strategies are played out. In due course ritualised agents become ritual masters who carry with them a wealth of experience of the ritualisation processes and traditions of a particular group.

The notion of the production of ritual masters is intimately connected to the question of group leaders. Undoubtedly, Charismatic leaders are masters of the Charismatic ritualisation process and traditions. Most of them have been Charismatics for long stretches of time, and previously were participants of groups which fed into the Charismatic movement. Importantly most of them have, in fact, been Charismatics since the movement began and thus have personally invested in its traditions throughout its life. As ritual masters *par excellence* however Charismatic leaders can only direct, guide and influence the group. They do not have absolute authority or command. Furthermore, their influence in the group is part of the process of consent giving, appropriation and meaning creation which is the necessary part of participation in the movement. It can be argued that some Charismatics, dependant upon the type of ecclesiology which forms the

basis of their faith and practice, emphasise the former mechanisms of leadership by consensual negotiation in their understanding of why they feel empowered while the vast proportion emphasise the latter mechanism of their role in meaning making. Bell states:

‘Whether ritual empowers or disempowers one in some practical sense, it always suggests the ultimate coherence of a cosmos in which one takes a particular place.’ (Bell, 1992:141).

Thus, it is in ritual space that the social organisation of the Charismatic movement as a group of participants who are thought to have equal levels of power through the control of negotiation and participation by consent is most clearly seen.

The function of ritual

Turner and Bloch suggested that the main function of ritual was to resolve the social dramas of transitions and social changes in a group environment. Bell’s theory on the other hand superficially suggests that ritual resolves nothing. Rather it constantly implies resolution without ever providing one or defining what resolution is. Absolute meaning therefore is constantly put off as a continual translation, retranslation of immediate terms, problems and issues takes place and through this process meaning is created. The historical antecedents to Bell’s conclusion are clear to trace. Towards the end of his career Turner had begun to suggest a similar idea to Bell’s understanding of the process of ritualisation in his theory of the dynamic of feedback apparent in the use of multivocal symbols in ritual activity. He suggested that throughout the ritual process symbols and actions constantly act in relationships to each other in a dynamic flow which invokes and produces new terms as well as reinterpreting, sometimes simultaneously, those referents and symbols that have already been used. Dan Sperber has also suggested something similar in his theory that symbolism continually creates meaning by the constant

expansion of terms and interpretations (Sperber, 1974). From another perspective the structuralists suggested that any resolution in ritual activity was no less real than the social resolutions Turner suggested lay beyond the process of feedback but were to be found on the level of ideological organisation (Bateson, 1936). Lévi Strauss had suggested a similar sense of resolution was to be found in the use and structures of myth. It is clear that the step was not a large one to suggesting that ritual resolves nothing absolutely but rather results in a deferred scheme of signification and through it, meaning.

Bell's theory however certainly holds out the possibility that ritual, as well as functioning to provide an perpetual scheme of meaning construction, works to create transitory pockets of resolution both within the minds of the individuals who are present and within the social structures and life of the group to which they belong. Thus, on one level participants in ritual activity gain an understanding of how to classify and think about the world, where to place themselves and how to act so that, on occasions, they can appropriate a specific answer for a specific situation. Over time they become ritual masters, individuals in possession of beliefs and traditions. On another level, as Bell suggests it, it is through the constant placing of individuals in schemes which hierarchise, define, integrate or obscure the self, not through the voicing and communication of absolute social values, that ritualisation works its magic of social alchemy and promotes social solidarity or equilibrium.

Of course this process is as multifaceted as ritual spaces are multivoiced. Along the way and at certain times, it may provide individuals with a sense of incorporation into a group, a sense of familiarity and belonging and of fellow feeling. It may in fact act and be used with intent to solve social problems, moving the group through times of transition, both by incorporating the new and by removing the corrupt and the polluting elements. It may be the stage on which power relations are played out, social roles are affirmed or denied, consent for authority is given. Yet, none of this can happen, as recent ritual theories

suggest, without a framework of understanding, without the construction and reconstruction of meaning which individuals invest in and find their identity through. Ritual activity therefore is more than social action, just as social groups are more than just collections of individuals acting together. It is about making sense of life.

The idea of ritual as movement towards the sacred and the notion of the connection between this and the social order can be seen in the use of two models in the main Charismatic rite of a worship time. On the one hand a pattern for social organisation and for understanding reality, that is to say, a pattern for creating meaning by which to live is expressed and maintained on the other hand the dynamic of moving towards the centre of this model or an intense experience of this sense of meaning is created. In the last chapter of this thesis some of the characteristics of this activity and therefore of the Charismatic movement itself in context will be outlined.

Chapter Seven

Conclusion

This thesis has argued that participation in the Charismatic movement is all about the creation of meaning by which to live. Anne Hawthorne has accurately summed up this argument in an introduction to a book describing the practices of various Christian groups in Southern America:

'Members live their religion by doing it, acting its rites, restating its memories, speaking its hopes, obeying its commands, thus gaining an identity and a world to live in.' (Hawthorne, 1988:5).

Thus by personal and persistent behavioural, emotional and ideological investment in a religious group an individual creates and maintains an understanding of the environment in which they live and an understanding of their location within it.

Conclusions concerning social science and the Charismatic movement

This argument has been formulated here in direct response to a simple question; *why does the explanation, expressed by a variety of social scientists, that the major concern of the Charismatic movement is the acquiring and use of power not receive validation as an absolute and real understanding of the movement from Charismatics themselves?*¹⁸³ The response to which has been expressed on a variety of different levels. On one level this response has acted as a critique of the understandings and explanations some social scientists have given of the Charismatic movement. It has been suggested throughout the

¹⁸³ See page 9.

course of this thesis that the problem lies in the perspective that such social scientists have taken that is expressed in the established framework of understanding and the preferences with which they have approached the data and the methods and tools which they have used in their interpretation of it. The precise problem is that the perspective that has been used has been ratified and given almost absolute truth and reality status because of its familiarity to the academic community *until it is no longer understood as simply a perspective*. Therefore the conclusions drawn using it are understood to be accurate and the correct interpretation of the data. This criticism could be extended to suggest that this treatment of the Charismatic movement is an example of an instance in which the very situation which the perspective of Marx, Nietzsche and Freud was meant to conquer has been further fortified by it as the criticism that truth claims can be used as a social tool of domination has come to be used as a device for control itself.

At the foundation of this mis-understanding lies the belief that it is the observer or the one who understands who is to be privileged over and above those who participate or who act. This thesis has been written in conformity to a methodological and theoretical programme which seeks to rebalance the dichotomy through processes which de-privilege the observer; worked out through techniques such as those which study and question the inherent subjectivity of authors. This thesis has therefore used the technique of deep ethnographic description and a focus upon ritual. These are techniques common to the programme used by both Catherine Bell and Clifford Geertz in which the difference between language and behaviour, thought and action and between world-view of the participants and method of the observer is retained but then designified or emptied of any real force. Bell bases her work on Geertz's affirmation that ritual is the prime example of where the thought of the observer is fused with the action of the participants. She then uses the post-structuralist linguistics programme which centres on endless deferred schemes of signification to not only confirm that this is best accomplished by focusing on

the meaning that the participants make but also to show how both action and thought are intimately connected in the processes by which they do this.

Such a programme is meant to challenge the swing in some sections of the practice of Christian theology towards understanding the world and culture solely through the discipline of hermeneutics. In hermeneutics the observer as an understander is privileged, predominantly as a reader of text, and this includes the privileging of language over behaviour, thought over action and the model of understanding over the model for moods and motivations which symbols construct. This results in the understanding of the observer being made to constantly dominate and manage their moods and motivations and, on another level to dominate both the understanding and the moods and motivations of the participants. It is no wonder therefore that the key tool of the model of understanding which Marx used; the issue of power in social relationships, came to dominate both the motivation for exploration of groups and cultures and the explanation observers imposed upon those groups.

Conclusions concerning the Charismatic movement

There is however another level at which this thesis has responded to the subject. It has provided a descriptive interpretation of the case study which has been used in order to make the theoretical criticisms. This description has been based around understanding the connection between a group's understanding of the sacred and a group's social organisation as a functional one, but one directed towards creating a system of meaning by which to live rather than creating and maintaining social relationships. The description of the Charismatic understanding of worship as the activity of meeting with the sacred has revolved around three principles. Firstly, the participants in the Charismatic movement have and use a dominant model which is structured around one major distinction. This model is to be found in their ideological construction of the universe and in their pattern

of social organisation and this is clearly made manifest in the way in which they organise the shape of sacred space¹⁸⁴.

If this was the only conclusion that could be drawn from the descriptive data a case could be made for saying that the Charismatic pattern of social organisation mirrors their understanding of the pattern of the universe and is exhibited and worked out in the behavioural patterns found in the rituals which take place in sacred space. However by using theoretical models based on this very understanding two other principles have also discovered in the description above. Firstly, participants in the Charismatic movement also structure their understanding and expression of sacred space around a soft distinction between the sacred and the profane, evidenced in the transitoriness of the presence of the sacred in the profane and in the use of soft boundaries between the group and the outside world. Secondly, participants journey towards the sacred in ritual through a process of increasing sacrality. It can be argued that the presence of this seeming paradox between a social organisation based on an absolute distinction and a relationship between the sacred and the profane which is based on a sequence is the most attractive argument for the evaluation that the Charismatic movement is concerned with meaning for life rather than social relationships of power. The model does not directly equate that which is distinct and positively valued and leadership and social authority with the sacred. Rather, the sacred is found in the very life of the group as it creates meaning through a series of negotiated relationships on all sorts of levels; socially, culturally, ideologically and symbolically, and sometimes that sense of meaning becomes intense or leads to a breakthrough of understanding for each participating individual. Thus social power is not directly equated with the sacred. Charismatics rather understand that there is a relationship of association between the two, believing that sometimes the very nature of

¹⁸⁴ The notion of using the same abstract model for sacred space as it is to be found within the life and culture of a particular group on different levels; ideological, functional, and expressive of an aspect of both internal and external social relationships has been used very effectively by S. Kunin in discussing Judaism (1994).

the intensity of the presence of the sacred impels its own public communication which in turn creates social power for specific individuals.

There are two other major conclusions which have been drawn in the description above, both involve the relationship between control and freedom. The use of the controlling example of the Jesus Fellowship Church has drawn attention to the necessity of a stable inner core for a group with soft external boundaries such as the wider Charismatic movement. The Jesus Fellowship Church are a good example of a group within the movement for which this stability is important. It is seen in the structure of their group organisation, in the various mechanisms by which the identity of the individual is strongly incorporated into a stable and permanent group identity and, crucially, in their use of space which is more permanently delineated as sacred than in the practices of the rest of the movement. The importance of this stability and permanence cannot only be understood from the perspective of the needs it fulfils for individual Charismatics but also for the Charismatic movement as a whole. Indeed, it could be argued that the Jesus Fellowship Church, with its emphasis upon stability and permanence is needed by the movement as a whole in order to sustain its incorporating boundaries and self-image as a renewal movement¹⁸⁵. The exact same point has been made in the discussion of the centrality of music and singing in the movement. It has been suggested that singing is a means by which the inexpressible is expressed in a form which necessitates a certain amount of control and restraint.

It can be argued that an attractive feature of the Charismatic movement and, perhaps, other forms of contemporary spirituality is this mixture of control and freedom. The movement creates space in which an individual can experience both stability and movement, freedom and constraint and can exercise both choice and compliance,

¹⁸⁵ Bryan Wilson makes this point but uses the language of denominations, churches and sects (1976, 1981).

independence and freedom within the same framework of meaning and reference. R.T. Bradley has argued the same point but from the perspective of social organisation (Bradley, 1987). He argues that transformation of charismatic groups is not a linear movement from stability to instability but rather is a complicated process of oscillation between the two. The argument here is that this occurs on two levels. On the macro level the existence of the Charismatic movement itself produces space in which individual Christians can experience this intermingling process criss-crossing through all sort of different levels and clusters of beliefs and actions¹⁸⁶. On the micro level worship rituals within the Charismatic movement produce space in which this happens as well and to such an extent that the participant leaves the ritual feeling empowered through the use of techniques and relationships of negotiation.

The conclusions extended outwards

It was mentioned in the introduction that this thesis is directed by the intentional aim of better understanding Christianity at the turn of the millennium. Therefore this conclusion draws to an end with some very basic reflective ideas which transpose some of the conclusions drawn into a confessionally Christian framework.

Firstly, a specific suggestion can be made in relation to the Baptist culture. It has been suggested above that the Jesus Fellowship Church is an example of a group within the Charismatic movement which values stability and permanence. As well as being Charismatic the Jesus Fellowship Church is also Baptist in orientation and its roots lie very firmly in the Baptist Union. In the current climate of the search for Union distinctives on all levels; behavioural, organisational and theological, it would be interesting to explore the

¹⁸⁶ A good example of this is the availability to an individual who attends Holy Trinity, Brompton of both the freedom of bodily expression characteristic of the Toronto Blessing and the structured organisation of an Alpha course.

Jesus Fellowship's means and methods of creating and maintaining a corporate identity and a sense of belonging in comparison and contrast to those used or under discussion in the Union. This could be specifically directed towards exploring the proposed changes to organisational structure in the Union.

Secondly, a specific theme can be noted in relation to spirituality. This involves the notion of a directed process which moves through the complexities of relationships between intermingled elements. Thus, in relation to the overall process of life spiritual experiences are intermingled with everyday experiences and in relation to spirituality *per se* behaviour is intermingled with thought, action with ideas. Moreover it is crucial to the mechanisms which make it work that this process takes this form in order to establish a whole entity.

The significance given to this pattern finds an echo in Paul Ricoeur's understanding of the importance of narrative (Ricoeur, 1980, 1984-88). Ricoeur, as a philosopher who was primarily interested in sacred text and not in the fashionable subject of language as systems and codes, drew on established narrative theory to suggest that a plot, the telling of a sequence of events, situations and settings, moves through a beginning, given patterns of events and reaches a conclusion to create a whole story. The components of this whole may not be placed in the plot line in the order in which they actually occurred in reality, if they occurred at all because it is the creation of this whole which is important. It is through this intentional positioning of contradictory elements, juxtapositions, schemes, relationships and associations Ricoeur suggested, that a world of the possible is created which attracts the reader in such a way that it becomes revelatory and transformative. The plot is structured so that it has a particular directedness, thus although the conclusion may not be predictable once it is reached the whole configuration becomes understandable and at times confrontational as a possible other configuration of events and reality.

It is not surprising that this view of the transformative power of narrative has been taken up by Christian academics who also wish to maintain this emphasis upon sacred text and yet also engage with the current penchant for language (Walker, 1996: Middleton and Walsh, 1995). Story telling, either as personal testimony or new methods of recounting old stories, including those from the biblical narrative, has become an important feature of Christian mission to a postmodern culture¹⁸⁷. It can be argued that the Charismatic practice of mystical pilgrimage through worship times is structurally exactly the same pattern of dynamic transposed from text and language to behavioural action. During a worship time components of songs, music and words are crafted into a plot which is structured so that it has a particular directedness and although the conclusion or high point may not be predictable along the way once it is reached the whole configuration becomes understandable and confrontational as a possible other configuration of events and reality. Perhaps both worship times and the practice of story-telling could be understood in this way as an explicit technique for mission and as an explicit technique for sustaining the faithful through the constant use of directed transformation¹⁸⁸.

Thirdly and finally, some of the above conclusions give impetus to the exploration of some of the elements which go to make up that which occurs in Christian sacred space. This includes such components of ritual and liturgy as physical movement and placement within space delineated as sacred, different types of vocalisation, and the imagery and symbols used to create sacred space. One major theme has stood out in the example of the Charismatic movement and that is the extent to which the sacred is understood to be permanent. It could be suggested that the increased use of celtic liturgy in the English Christian church also responds to the need for the sacred to be understood as both

¹⁸⁷ A good example is the B.F.B.S's initiative called 'The Open Book Project' which aims to 're-shape the future of our nation by reconnecting culture, community, individuals and church with the story of God's engagement with all human beings.' (Sprigs, 1989).

¹⁸⁸ Sue Rinaldi for example in an introduction to her song 'Restless pilgrim' states: 'The journey is as important as the destination. I keep going because I'm restless for more...' From the album Promise Land 1998. Eastbourne. Survivor Records.

permanent yet transitory. Celtic liturgy stands in an unusual relationship to English Christianity, it is part of its heritage and traditions in a non-direct way for it is understood to be the proper heritage of the nation's neighbours and relations the Scots, the Irish and the Welsh. Thus celtic liturgy to the English is borrowed, it has the status of being a visitor, a guest in English Christian culture and a guest which has only recently arrived but whose length of stay is unknown, its use therefore creates a mood of transitoriness. And yet, at the same time, its acknowledged use by its owners and its thematic content expresses tradition, stability, a sense of custom and heritage and permanence. Celtic liturgy also thematically emphasises the notion of the journey aspect of religious faith. In comparing the way in which celtic liturgy and Charismatic worship times both function to provide this dual sense of the character of the sacred there is also a sense in which an exploration is being made of the relative effectiveness of words and action.

Charismatics who choose to continue to belong to the English historic denominations, perhaps more than most other Christians, work out through this process, characterised by a dynamic flow of intermingled and combined relationships on many different levels, every day of their lives and every step of their journey of faith. They are, indeed, an excellent example of the complex nature in which religious belief and belonging creates a sustaining web of meaning and significance for an individual.

Appendix A

Sources of reference used for soft observation

Periodicals (including publishing body)

- Church Times - Church of England.
- Baptist Times - Baptist Union.
- Methodist Recorder
- Renewal - Monarch Magazines.
- Premier - Word Entertainment Ltd.
- Idea - Evangelical Alliance.
- Alpha News - Holy Trinity Brompton/Kingsway.
- Jesus Life (previously Jesus Lifestyle) - Jesus Fellowship Church.
- The Jesus Army Streetpaper - Jesus Fellowship Church.
- Multiply Magazine (previously See You!) - Jesus Fellowship Church.
- Revival Digest - The Fellowship for Revival.
- CRN Journal - Christian Research Network.
- Prophetic Vision - Eurovision Mission to Europe.
- Transformation - Oxford Centre for Mission Studies.
- Joy - Assemblies of God.
- Alpha - Monarch Magazines.
- The Church of England Newspaper.
- Third Way - Independent.
- The Christian - Independent.
- Tear Times - Tear Fund.

Recordings of worship (including distributing body)

Spring Harvest

This is Your God. 1986.

Uncage the Lion, Spring Harvest 90. 1990. (Word).

S.H. 12-19. 1990.

Live Worship 96. Volume One. 1996.

Live Worship 96. Volume Two. 1996.

Live Worship 97. Volume One. 1997.

Live Worship 97. Volume Two. 1997.

Live Worship 98. 1998.

Spring Harvest r:age 98. 1998.

Jesus Fellowship Church

Celebrate Jesus! 1989.

Let the Sons of Zion Rejoice in Their King. 1989.

Break Into Joy. 1990.

Bleeding With Jesus. 1991.

Sounds of the Jesus Revolution. 1994.

I'm Alive! 1997.

Wild! (and we're Christian). 1998.

I'm Winning. 1998.

Integrity Music (including details of the worship leader)

Mighty Warrior. Randy Rothwell. 1988.

Amazing Love. Graham Kendrick. 1990.

Eternal God. Don Moen. 1990.

Worship the King. Randy Rothwell. 1990.

War in the Heavenlies, Sampler. 1991.

Highest Place. Bob Fitts. 1991.

Jesus is Alive. Ron Kenoly. 1991

Come to the Table. Marty Nystrom. 1991.

Up To Zion. Noel Richards. 1991.

Miscellaneous

Sing Praises Unto God. Live Worship from the Dales Bible Week 1983. 1983. Harvestime.

Proclaim Him King, Live Worship from the Dales and Wales Bible Weeks 1986. 1986.
Harvestime.

Let God Arise! - Graham Kendrick. 1984. Kingsway.

Make Way for the Cross, March for Jesus. 1989. Kingsway Music.

Together for the Gospel, March for Jesus. 1995. Maranatha! Music.

Live Worship with Morris Chapman and the Maranatha! Singers. 1990. Maranatha! Music.

Praise 15, The Finale, the Maranatha! Singers. 1992. Maranatha! Music.

In The Presence of the Lord. 1981. Chris Bowater and the Evangel Church, Lincoln.

Highest Honour, Chris Bowater. 1989. Word.

In the Stillness, Chris Bowater. 1990. Word.

An Hour's Worship and Music from Together '90. 1990. Nottinghamshire Churches
Together.

After Hours Praise Concert at Together '90. 1990. Nottinghamshire Churches Together.

Sounds of Praise. 1992. Emanuel Church, Newark, Notts.

Let Your Living Water Flow. Vinesong Live. 1993. Word.

Winds of Worship, live from Toronto Canada. 1994. Vineyard Music.

God is in the House. Live Worship from Hillsongs, Australia. 1996. Alliance Music.

Live'97. A Classic Year of Live Worship. 1998. Kingsway.

Books

See main bibliography.

Appendix B

Sermon Themes Main Meetings Pentecostal Church A

Aug 89 - Aug 92

The Christian life

- Obedience to God (x10)
- Being pro-active and positive (x10)
- Prayer (x9)
- Stewardship, prosperity and the blessing of God (x8)
- Running the race, the journey, leaving and entering (x6)
- Necessity of commitment to knowing the Bible (x5)
- Having a sense of purpose, vision and destiny (x5)
- Wisdom (x4)
- Witnessing (x4)
- Spiritual maturity (x4)
- Knowing the will of God (x4)
- Contending for the true faith (x4)
- Being like Jesus (x3)
- Commitment in the face of adversity (x3)
- Having firm foundations (x3)
- God's testing (x2)
- Success (x2)
- Love (x2)
- Using free choice (x2)
- Forgetting the past (x2)

- Exercising the gift of prophecy (x2)
- Resting and waiting for success (x2)
- Being aware of the spiritual world (x2)
- Counteracting disappointments (x2)
- Being a new creation (x2)
- Choosing friends
- Sacrifice
- Thankfulness
- Overcoming problems
- Putting God before material possessions
- Principles of cause and effect

Doctrine

- God (x11)
 - Revelation in the world (x5)
 - The character of God
 - faithfulness (x2)
 - always on time (x2)
 - wisdom
 - strength and gentleness
- Grace (x7)
- Jesus (x6)
 - The miracle worker (x2)
 - The lifegiver
 - The provider
 - The shepherd
 - As powered by the Holy Spirit

- The Bible as the Word of God (x4)
- Redemption (x4)
- Revival (x2)
- Love (x2)
- The Second Coming
- Sin
- Faith

The Church

- Commissioned with a public vocation (x4)
- With the authority of priesthood (x2)
- leadership (x2)
- Unity and diversity (x2)
- Being comfortable but not settled (x2)
- As the army of God, capable of signs and wonders (x2)
- Being ready for revival
- Small groups

(Sample of 163)

Appendix C

Transcript of Interview Conducted with Participant A describing their ongoing experience of the 'Toronto Blessing'.

27/3/95

Interviewer: Describe for me, if you would be so kind, your recent experiences of the Toronto Blessing.

Participant: Well in August of last year we had an open meeting at church at which the minister and his wife talked about recent things that had been happening at some churches in London and played us a tape of a message by Ellie Munford of Holy Trinity Brompton. I went to that but felt quite fearful at first, then I became more open, triggered, I think by the words 'joy in our hearts'. Anyway, the week after I had a really bad week, and R (*another church member*) had the same experience so we decided it had to be of God. I thought I could understand everything that had been said, apart from the bit about people laughing. I felt generally afraid but then I decided not to be afraid of anything God can give.

A while later me and P (*the participant's spouse*) decided to visit Holy Trinity Brompton for ourselves. We were up in the balcony looking down and the congregation seemed full of love for God, the atmosphere was like they were in love with Him, almost romance, and I thought 'give me a love like that for You'. Something had obviously happened to them as a fellowship, somehow a hunger for God had been created.

We paid another two unintentional visits to Holy Trinity Brompton, just stopping off there on our way home from taking our son back to university. I saw one girl there whose

whole demeanour showed God was blessing her. The power and the presence of God there in that place at that time was absolutely beautiful. People were doing just what they wanted to do and often even though it was late at night and I had to be at work the next day I felt as though I didn't want to move - so we didn't.

One of the times we went it was to a morning service and in the evening we went to the service at Q (home church). I felt like I was taking something of it with me and in a time of quiet, while I was praying about how I'd felt in the morning, I began to shake. I held my Bible to try and control it. Then things started to happen one after another.

We took the youth group away for the weekend to a church in East Ham and me and P kept thinking could we get across to Holy Trinity? but we knew East Ham had also had some sort of experience. East Ham is different from Holy Trinity which is very affluent. East Ham Baptist is very deprived and ethnically diverse. Anyway, we had a real struggle to get there, there were lots of barriers. P got flu. But you know, I feel like I've got a deeper love for others it sort of goes up, down and outwards. Only the other Sunday I realised God had answered that prayer of last October. Anyway, at the morning service there was praise and worship and prayer about destroying strongholds. At the evening service there were lots of visitors and it was all about asking. I hovered about wanting to go to the front in response, once I'd decided to go out I couldn't get there fast enough. There was a need in my own heart and life for God to do whatever He had to do and it was OK. It wasn't emotional, there wasn't any music or anything and my need started to seem greater than my worry about seeming stupid.

Anyway, the man praying for me hadn't said six words and I was flat on the floor, somehow I just arrived there. I could hear him praying for joy but I was just lying there amazed and overwhelmed praising God. I tried to get up but couldn't. Then I could, by which time others from our church were on the floor.

I just couldn't stop praising Him, it's quite amazing, there's nothing else on my mind even when I'm driving to work. And there's been a real change in my life, like I wake up in the middle of the night to pray, usually I'm a zombie, and I can't wait to read the Bible. God's been talking to me about deeper issues from the Bible like sacrifice and His sovereignty. My heart's really been thrilled. It's really promoted me to give all because of the things that have happened. I suppose it's a direct result of what's happened to me at a physical level but the work of God is t a much deeper level. I feel excited and there's been a real increase in my faith when people pray for me and when I pray for others. Every day I pray 'God increase my faith and keep filling me'.

Then last Thursday night we went out to this meeting. I was so hungry for God it meant I was going out again. In my quiet times I'm so aware of God physically that I can't sit upright in the mornings and have to prop myself up against the bed. Anyway on Thursday night I was already having trouble staying upright and then someone prayed and I just couldn't stay upright at all. I sat there for ages and ages, well it seemed like it so it must have been. Then I joined the queue for coffee and half way into the queue I started staggering around, but I knew I was in the middle of the queue and in trouble. I tried talking to S and S (*two church members*) but my thoughts weren't coherent enough. It made them really giggle and eventually they gave in trying to help me and just let me lie on the floor for ages and ages - God was showing me how almighty and all powerful He is. We had decided I couldn't drive home like this, I was laughing at other people, I was like a drunk, I thought I could stand up but I couldn't. Oh, what a laugh. I can't really describe it. It's like God being powerful and having authority and dealing with people in gentleness and love. The next morning I couldn't go to work until eleven.

Interviewer: How would you describe the action of God, how does He come?

Participant: You never feel lifted out of yourself, more descended upon. It's a depth experience of God coming to you to give you something, what ever you need, and you're receiving something.

Interviewer: Are you aware of things around you, of time and space?

Participant: I think you're fairly aware of space and time, I know people are around but it's all totally incoherent, my mind's just not clear and it's a real struggle to think about other things. I don't think I lost a sense of time and space at any point, it's more to do with physical limitation than anything.

Interviewer: Has it changed your understanding of history and the future?

Participant: I can't wait to get to heaven, I'd really like a glimpse of it. But there's no real urgency in Christ coming back soon; we don't know when it'll happen anyway. I've spent a lot of time crying, asking God to show me what going to eternity without Him is like.

Interviewer: Has that changed your perception of the world around you?

Participant: Recently I was coming home on a bus and there were just tears rolling down my face, seeing this lost world.

Interviewer: Thank you for your time, can you just try and sum up your experiences for me in a couple of sentences.

Participant: I've had lots of emotions, but it has made a real difference to my life.

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