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EVOLVING DISCIPLES? A COMPARISON OF THE TELEOLOGIES OF
JOHN WESLEY AND GEORGE WHITEFIELD WITH THE TELEOLOGY
OF THE HTB/ALPHA MOVEMENT.
A LITERATURE REVIEW

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Introduction

This paper is an attempt to survey and evaluate some of the major literary contributions to three areas of research that come together in my thesis. The first two are directly related as revivalist movements with their origin in the Church of England and the final is a tool I utilise to study the relationship between them. The foci are: 1) John Welsey and George Whitefield in the eighteenth-century 2) The HTB/Alpha movement as it emerged in the twentieth and twenty first-centuries, 3) Spiral Dynamics [SDi] - a psychosocial development tool. The review focuses on the teleologies of each movement, investigating their goals for converts. Particular attention is given to continuity and discontinuity between HTB/Alpha and the Methodist revival and whether SDi might enable an apt evaluation of the two.

Defining terms: Teleology

Teleology is commonly used in evolutionary theory, genetics and embryology as the study of purposes that affect biological development, building on Aristotelian philosophy.[1] It implies a final metaphysical or religious aim in life.[2] It is an apt term for our study particularly due to its etymological origins in the Greek word *telos* which, in its various New Testament contexts, heavily influenced John Wesley's doctrine of Christian Perfection. For our purposes it relates to the holiness teaching or goals for members of the Christian movements in question. The teleological question is then who/what is it that converts are supposed to become?

Methodology

Ian Maddocks proved the benefits of a comparative treatment of Welsey and Whitefield in his published doctoral work.[3] He sets out the convergence and divergence in their doctrines of the human condition, justification and regeneration outlining how for both Whitefield and Wesley experiences of regeneration lead to an enduring emphasis on inward and outward holiness. It establishes the background for their disagreements on Christian Perfection

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[1] Johnson, 2005.
[2] Hence some like CS Pittendrigh (1958) prefer the term 'teleonomic' to divorce end-directedness from higher purpose. Contra this JZ Young (OED).
[3] Maddock, 2011

while elucidating sufficient coherence between the two that the eighteenth-century emphasis on holiness can be seen as a significant mirror and challenge to its apparent successors in the current era.

A 250 year gap between the movement evidentially makes the comparison in this investigation more complicated than Maddock's task. The first movement has a vast corpus of literature - hagiographical, critical and revisionist. Particular consideration is give to recent works by Rack, McGonigle, Outler, Stout and Lampert. Some vital literature covers the development of evangelicalism between 1730 and 1980s, including Heimert, Bebbington, McGrath and Noll. The second movement has the benefit of being contemporary, enabling ethnographic and primary source investigation from a proliferation of published and online sources. It also has some more detailed critiques (including those associated more generally with the influence of John Wimber and the charismatic movement). These include Percy, Hunt, Walker and Heard.

However a direct comparison may not give a straightforward assessment of these movements given a rapidly changed sociological landscape. To this end I am utilising a psychosocial development theory known as Spiral Dynamics. Spiral Dynamics Integral [SDi] (the later version of the theory referred to here) portrays human development on both a societal and individual basis as a progressive spiral of 'levels of consciousness' from survival orientated the most advanced integral levels. I locate it within its wider Hegelian context and consider broader critiques of development and integral theories to assess the extent to which it can provide an apt framework for the practical theologian seeking to assess a contemporary religious movement in conversation with a similar, yet inevitably different, antecedent. I consider how clear a lens it provides for seeing each movement against the dominant cultural norms of their time and explaining their varying appeal to different sections of society, and whether it gives a framework for evaluating what is gained and lost through theological and organisational developments. This review will also highlight some of the challenges of working with this and similar models in an academic context.

The Impact of Methodism

The importance of Methodism as a movement is celebrated and yet contested. Packer estimates that four-fifths of America's colonists would have heard Whitefield preach.[4] Maddock equates this to 18,000 sermons over 35 years often to 20,000 people.[5] Clifford calculates Wesley delivered 40,000 sermons over 50 years, travelling 250,000 miles to preach them.[6] Both were household names who utilised technological developments and courted controversy for their cause. Whitefield was adored throughout North America, an anti-insitutional icon of the colonies, 'articulating increasingly a Whiggish Republicanism' that enamoured him to them even more. He was an 'A' list celebrity that crowds would flock to see. A 'spirit-filled minister' who 'directed his work first at the soul and second at charity and never one without the other.'[7]

One point of contestation is the role of Whitefield. Whitefield scholars and enthusiasts often complain that he has been overlooked.[8] Rack devotes the vast majority of a book, ostensiblily on the 'rise of Methodism' to the English scene thus minimising Whitefield's contribution.[9] Dallimore, Packer, and Lloyd Jones have all written to this effect, with Dallimore's 2 volumes on Whitefield subtitled '*The Life and Times of the Great Evangelist of the Eighteenth Century*.' Indeed Douglas and Dallimore see Whitefield respectively as 'one of the foremost evangelical leaders of the eighteenth-century', and the 'one human factor that bound [the revival] together in the lands that it reached,'[10]

Another, that we will return to in considering Whitefield, is the degree to which the Revival can be interpreted purely sociologically. Rack is arguably

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[4] Packer, 167-68
[5] Maddock, 2011, 5
[6] Clifford, 1990, 56
[7] Stout, 1991, 287
[8] e.g. Wakefield (1992), 172 who argues it was Whitefield "and not the Wesleys who may be said to have begun the Evangelical Revival in 1737" contra Noll (1997) 221-244, who gives credit to Wesley's decision to preach in the fields two months after Whitefield as the critical turning-point.
[9] Rack, 1989
[10] Douglas, 47, Dallimore 1:14

reductionist and naturalistic in his interpretation of Wesley,[11] but sounds
hagiographical compared to Kent who set out to 'debunk the myth of the so-
called evangelical revival.' Kent argues that there was an innate 'Primary
religion' in the British public searching for 'some kind of extra-human power,
either for personal protection, including the cure of diseases, or for the sake of
ecstatic experience, and possibly prophetic guidance…'[12] 'a longing for 'visibly
interventionist supernatural forces.'[13] These 'primary' religious impulses were
always present in early modern (and indeed later) societies and so in Kent's
view, John Wesley and his colleagues tapped into an existing pool of 'primary
religious' aspirations unsatisfied by an increasingly rationale and moderate
Anglican Church fearing a return to seventeenth century religious fanaticism.
Therein, Kent argues, lies the seeds of Methodism's failure to reach the better
educated repelled by 'enthusiasm' evidenced through emotionalism,
convulsions, claims of 'perfection' and even of healing powers.

Social impact is also contested. Some like Rule (1992) see Methodism as
having had a profound political impact but Kentis clear that the claim that
Methodism prevented an English revolution is now widely discredited.[14] Yet
Ditchfield, not as negative as Kent, notes that Methodism made a significant
contribution to reforming politics,[15] and others like Smith continue to argue that
classical evangelicalism was a world-transformative religion causing social
change and renewal.[16]

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11 cf Witherington: *Wesley on the Rack, Rack on Wesley:* 'Richard Watson's
complaint about Southey's life of Wesley might also be applied to Rack -
"the guidance of the Spirit is too often reduced to personal inclination or
ambition," "spiritual phenomena are reduced to aberrations with a natural
or psychological explanation," and "firmness of purpose is described as
inflexibility or lack of human compassion. " This results in Rack portraying
Wesley as "reasonable," but in the end not truly an "enthusiast" though "he
would have been one if he could."'
http://biblicalstudies.org.uk/pdf/ashland_theological_journal/23-1_76.pdf
[12] Kent, pp1-2
[13] Kent p.10
[14] Kent, 2002, 100, contra this: see John Rule's *Albion's People: English
Society 1714-1815* (London: Longman, 1992) which claims Methodism
inculcated the virtues of middle-class Utilitarianism into the working-
classes through the process of religious conversion and class-meetings.
[15] Ditchfield, Grayson. www.history.ac.uk/reviews/review/367
[16] Smith, 1998, 2.

Whatever maybe proven of its socio-political impact the religious legacy of Methodism is significant. Of particular interest to us here is the continuation of the holiness teaching (that John Wesley believed 'the Methodists were raised up for') into both the Keswick Convention and second-blessing theology in Pentecostalism.[17] Rack notes that for 'later Methodism this was often an embarrasment', and an 'ambigious' legacy,[18] but the path from Wesleyan sanctification teaching to the 1870s Keswick Higher Life conference via various revivalist movements is very significant.[19] Keswick tempered the teaching on entire sanctification by shifting the emphasis firstly to an empowerment for service rather than individual personal holiness, and secondly downgrading its effectiveness against sin from total eradication to a counteraction that allowed for a joyful and victorious Christian life.[20]

This apparent downgrade is important for our reflections, as is the legacy of emphasis on holiness. It was often marked more by enforced abstinence from external markers deemed to be sinful (dancing, make-up, theatre, ornamentation) than by such joy and victory.[21] Many Anglican evangelicals touched by renewal in the 1960s onwards had lived with a legacy of this teaching on holiness and were keen to avoid anything that seemed like a return to legalism after their own personal charismatic encounters. Ric Thorpe describes a common HTB metaphor for this change: Imagine carrying a backpack called Law for many years, then taking it off, eating the heavy food inside it and finding that what had been a burden on your back sustains you when eaten inside you.[22] As Thorpe describes it this led HTB increasingly to believe that it was the Spirit who changed behaviour, and gradually led to less ethical teaching about specific types of prohibited behaviour:

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[17] Rack, 1989, 553; McGrath 193, 629 summarises this (with George Croft Cell) as a synthesis of the Protestant ethic of grace and the Catholic ethic of holiness.
[18] Rack, 1989, 553
[19] see Bebbington, 1989, 153-55, 171-74
[20] McAlpine, 2008, 28
[21] Bebbington, 214.
[22] Bishop Ric Thorpe, pers. Comm, 1/4/15

It became clear that we saw the Holy Spirit working in people's lives to change people from the inside rather than say 'you've got to live like this'. And so there's been a subtle shift over time where [HTB] will still say 'this is the way to live' but there won't be that 'stop doing this, stop doing that'. Just much more 'follow the Spirit and let Him convict you'.[23]

Yet it was Wesley's sanctification teaching that opened up the possibility of tangible impartations of God's power in a second blessing. In his 1783 sermon, *The General Spread of the Gospel*, Wesley recounted the whole purpose of his life's work thus: 'Between fifty and sixty years ago, God raised up a few young men, in the University of Oxford, to testify those grand truths: That without holiness no man shall see the Lord; that this holiness is the work of God… that this holiness was the mind that is in Christ.'[24] Wesley's Arminian and experiential theology left him expectant and longing for more and greater works of God in his life, and the impact of this subsequently on Pentecostalism and charismatic theology is well documented and makes Wesley an important conversation partner in any analysis of charismatic renewal.[25]

The other point of reference is the (re-)inauguartion of the charismatic preacher, particularly in a North American context, through George Whitefield 'Divine Dramatist' example and the legacy of that on the international evangelical mind today. For much of the nineteenth and twentieth century Whitefield's innovative role in field preaching and the revivial generally was overlooked or forgottten.[26] His latest biographers, Stout and Lampert, focus on his acting skill and commercial savvy. Stout's influential revisionist biography sees Whitefield as 'the consumate actor',[27] selling the new birth with the 'dramatic artifice of a huckster'.[28] He sees Whitefield as an actor-preacher

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[23] ibid.

[24] Wesley, J, *Works,* Vol 2, pp.490-491

[25] For further details see, Donald W Dayton, Theological Roots of Pentecostalism, Grand Rapids, 1987; Donald W Dayton, 'The Doctrine of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit: its emergence and significance' in Wesley Theological Journal, Vol. 13, Spring 1978, pp. 114-126.

[26] Dallimore's two-volume George Whitefield redresses this.

[27] Stout, 1991, 42

[28] ibid., 40

(contra Edwards' scholar-preacher) seeking the fame of a center stage command performance. In one sense Stout's view is evidenced both by his travelling pulpit itself, (which resembled a tiny stage)[29] and by his rhetorical style. Cornelius Winter, a travelling companion of Whitefield said:

> " I hardly ever saw him go through a sermon without weeping…
> he was frequently so overcome, that, for a few seconds, you
> would suspect he could never recover…'[30]

Yet Stout's cynicism is debated. Carlsson and White lament his prioritisation of sociological factors over spiritual insight, whereas Hardman finds him basically in sympathy with his subject and Marsden, Van Dyk and Bundy find his perspective refreshing.[31] Piper's riposte is helpful. He offers a third way to conceive of Whitefield's speaking - beyond the actors who move people with imaginery things, and preachers who fail to move people with real things. He reports a conversation recited in Stout between the actor Butterton and the Archbishop of Canterbury,[32] and concludes Whitefield's resolution 'to bawl' and not be a 'velvet mouthed preacher' is genuine. Whitefield, in Piper's account, is speaking about a real spiritual world as if it were magnificently real. He is driven, says Piper, to out-actor the actors as he has seen what is ultimately real.[33] Whereas Stout has Whitefield "integrating religious discourse in the emerging language of consumption",[34] "driven by egotism",[35] "craving respect and power",[36] Piper contends that Stout has not suffcently reckoned with the power and depth of the supernatural change in Whitefield which opened his mind to a new reality.[37]

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[29] see pictures in Haykin, ed., *Revised Puritan*, 96 and Dallimore, *Whitefield II*, 303-304
[30] Stout, 1991, 41
[31] see Maddock, 16
[32] Stout, 1991, 239-40
[33] Piper 2009
[34] Stout, 1991, xviii
[35] Stout, 55
[36] Stout, 36
[37] Piper, 2009

Nevertheless it is Whitefield's innovative style as much as his substance that seems the key to his impact. He broke the bounds of ecclesiastical boundaries with his dramatic preaching on the individual experience of the New Birth.[38] The energy and drive with which he did so was extraordinary even to his renowned friend Benjamin Franklin:

> "his integrity, disinterest and indefatiguable zeal in prosecuting every good work, I have never seen equalled, I shall never see excelled."[39]

Lambert argues that his legacy included an organisational structure for revivals that barred ecclesisastical control.[40] Whitefield (and Seward) 'mould[ed] the [commercial] market to suit his own designs' while steadily railing against its excesses.[41] Stout sees Whitefield as a modern promoter with a shameless ego.[42] Walker argues this personality driven preaching style has metamorphosised down the years within the Charismatic church into 'almost "show-biz" obsession with the big-name charismatic stars, and its reliance on management and commericial techniques'.[43]

Noll suggests that this revivalism led to individualism and immediatism. The very democratic determination that led Whitefield to simplify his sermons for a mass audience also undercut tradtionalism and left individuals with a sense that not only their faith, but every scrap of understanding, conviction and wisdom about their faith was a matter for individual choice.[44]

Towards a teleology

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[38] Smith, 1986 demonstrates that this commitment to preaching the new birth was shared by both Wesley and Whitefield.
[39] Carlsson, 1993, 245.
[40] Lambert, 1994, 228.
[41] Lambert, 1994, 231
[42] Stout, 1991, 287
[43] Walker, 1992, 60
[44] Noll, 1994, 59-64

Many studies of Wesley and Whitefield (rightly) point to the differences that existed between the two men.[45] Maddock is foundational to this study in also showing the continuity that has often been overlooked by more polarised accounts of Wesley and Whitefield – the *men of one book.*[46]

Maddock notes that both preachers:

> "Agreed that experiencing spiritual regeneration was necessary, that justification must precede sanctification, that regeneration marks the threshold of sanctification, that the new birth entails victory over the dominion and power of sin, and the pursuit of inward and outward holiness ought to categorise the regenerate life"[47]

They differed as to how to define sin, how far sin can be eradicated, and dramatically over their perception of Wesley's doctrine of Christian perfection. For Wesley this was a dynamic, relational possibility, drawing from a combination of his experiences of the Moravians, his 'conversion' and High Church readings. [48] But for Wesley the experience of 'Perfect' Love was something he though every Anglican prayed for in the Collect for Purity[49] and, contending that what we might be perfected from was simply a 'voluntary transgression of a known law', his experiences and readings led him to believe

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[45] Maddock 2011, 2 describes Wesley and Whitefield studies as 'polarised and partisan' with biographers asserting the moral acumen as well as theological superiority of their man against the other.

[46] note: Weeter: With regards to his wide reading combined with an utter focus on Holy Scripture John Wesley might best be described as a man of 'a thousand and one books', see also James Roy.

[47] Maddock 2011, 241

[48] see Rack, 1989, 103-04. Contra this Witherington who sees Rack's understanding of Christian Perfection as one of his weaknesses, arguing that a careful use of the works of L. Keefer and T. Campbell on Wesley and Christian antiquity would have enhanced this study considerably.

[49] Wesley culminates his *Plain Account of Christian Perfection* with a rhetorical reference to this prayer, stating simply that he expected God could/would answer it. Shepherd 2016, 131 cites an occasion Wesley used this prayer to defend himself of the charge of theological novelty by his Anglican superiors; cf Sanders 2013, 217; Rupp 1987, 27 argues that Wesley is calling his interlocutors' bluff by finishing with this prayer – effectively asking what do you think it means 'to perfectly love him' if by it you do not mean perfect love?

that this was possible and indeed that obtaining holiness was the key thing that needed to be preached to people.

Whitefield is well known for taking issue with Wesley's doctrine.[50] Yet despite the clear differences in early Methodism the teleological question was at the fore for both in their teaching and personal motivation. Whitefield and Wesley were preparing holy people for a holy God to live in a holy eternity. Whitefield argued fervently that to be a Christian is "to be holy as Christ is holy"[51] and that "Jesus Christ came down to save us, not only from the guilt, but also from the power of sin."[52] He, himself, confessed sin had no dominion over him, although he felt "the struggles of indwelling sin day by day."[53] He even proclaimed that a mark of receiving the Holy Ghost is, "Not committing sin . . . This expression does not imply the impossibility of a Christian's sinning ... It only means thus much; that a man who is really born again of God doth not willfully commit sin, much less believe in the habitual practice of it."[54] Holiness including overcoming sin was clearly an active teleological concern for Whitefield.

McGonigle has made an important contribution to doctrinal studies of Wesley. He argues carefully that Wesley's arminianism was a new kind of evangelicalism: 'his rejection of Calvinistic predestination went along with an undiluted emphasis on original sin, atonement in the death of Christ, salvation by faith alone and regeneration by the Holy Spirit. It was undeniable that Wesley was an Arminian, but he was a new-style Arminian; his Arminianism

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[50] 'The more I examine the writings of the most experienced men . . . the more I differ from your notion about not committing sin and your decrying the doctrines of election and the perseverance of the saints. I dread coming to England, unless you are resolved to oppose these truths with less warmth . . . I dread your coming to America because the work of God is carried on here ... by doctrines quite opposite to those you hold ... I write not this ... from heat of Spirit, but out of love . . . Perhaps I may never see you again, 'til we meet in judgement; then if not before, you will know that sovereign, distinguishing, irresistible grace brought you to heaven.' "LetterCXCII. To the Rev. Mr. J.W." GW, Works, I, pp. 181-182.
[51] "Sermon CCLXVIII, To T... K..., at London" GW, *Works,* I, 252.
[52] "Sermon XXXVIII, The Indwelling of the Spirit, the Common Privledge of All Believers.: GW, *Works*, VI, 99.
[53] "Letter CLXIX. To the Revd. Mr. JW" GW, *Works*, I, 156
[54] "Sermon XLII. Marks of Having Receiving the Holy Ghost." GW, *Works,* I, 331

was unashamedly orthodox and, beyond even Arminius himself, it had caught the fire of the Holy Spirit and burned with evangelistic fervour.'[55]

Antinomianism was a consistent concern for Welsey and it begs many questions of what he would think of today's consumer churches. Following on from his 1762 publication *Thoughts on the Imputed Righteousness of Christ*, later that year he penned *A Blow at the Root, or Christ Stabbed in the House of his Friends.*[56]

> "None shall live with God, but he that now lives to God; none shall enjoy the glory of God in heaven, but he that bears the image of God on earth; none that is not saved from sin here can be saved from hell hereafter; none can see the Kingdom of God above, unless the kingdom of God live in him below. Whosoever will reign with Christ in heaven, must have Christ reigning in him on earth"

None of honest heathen efforts, Roman Catholic penance, petition, and priests, nor public participation in Protestantism can achieve this. Instead, using a favoured image from Phil 2.5 'the mind that was in Christ' (which McGonigle argues was increasingly Wesley's definition of scriptural holiness[57]), and cross-referencing it with the definition of the Kingdom of God as 'righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost' in Romans 14:17, Wesley argues that true holiness is the Kingdom of God in the heart and the mind of Christ. All this is possible after justification by faith. But those who preach 'inherent holiness' imputed to sinners, and thereby excusing them from 'hungering and thirsting after righteousness' he compares to Simon Magus of Acts 8, the psuedo-Christian who does more harm than good.[58]

McGonigle summarises the remains of Wesley's argument that washed, sanctified and justified, as they are, true believers are made righteous. They are really changed not merely accounted righteous. They are free from the law and works of sin, not the law and works of God! Christ is a 'Saviour from sin'

[55] McGonigle, 2001, 8
[56] Wesley, J, *Works,* Vol. 10, 364-369
[57] McGonigle, 2001, 227
[58] Wesley, J, *Works,* Vol. 10, 366-367

not a 'saviour in sin'. This should lead Methodists to love soul-searching sermons and not rest in any false confidence arising from imputed holiness while their hearts are impure. They must cleave to Christ till his blood has cleansed them of all sin. They must love God, keep his commands, exalt Christ, imitate Christ and walk in his ways until he creates in them a new heart and renews a right spirit within them.[59]

Maddock is very helpful here in noting the significance of the new birth for both Wesley and Whitefield. Like Smith he contends that neither man 'altered his basic stance on the primacy of the experience of the new birth.'[60] Both 'stressed the work of the Holy Spirit in bringing sinners to repentance and faith in Christ, assuring them of forgiveness, and, by his presence thereafter in their hearts, nurturing them in the love and holiness that pleases God.'[61] James Schwenk agrees, stating that "common devotion to the doctrine of regeneration bound them together."[62] Bebbington also helps narrow the Calvinist/Arminian gap by noting that (contrary to Wesley's many critiques) Evangelical Calvinists were moderate in their views of God's control of destiny, following Edwards *Freedom of the Will* (1754) and the notion of 'duty faith', as William Goode put it: "it is the duty of all men to believe.'[63]

Despite the doctrinal meanders and differences that we have begun to allude to,[64] Wesley and Whitefield from their days at the Oxford Holy Club to their final discourses were clear that they were calling people out of one reality into another. That holiness was a key Methodist concern is easily proven. In his 1783 sermon, *The General Spread of the Gospel*, Wesley recounted the whole purpose of his life's work thus: 'Between fifty and sixty years ago, God raised up a few young men [including George Whitefield!], in the University of Oxford, to testify those grand truths: That without holiness no man shall see the Lord; that this holiness is the work of God… that this holiness was the mind that is in

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[59] McGonigle, 2001
[60] Maddock, 211, cf. Smith, 7
[61] Smith, 13; Maddock, 212
[62] Schwenk, 2008, 35.
[63] Bebbington, 1989, 64
[64] see Hindmarsh (1999) 910-929 and Heitzenrater, 1990, 49-61 for detailed examinations of Wesley's developing concept of his conversion, and 'changing self-interpretation'.

Christ.'[65] He articulated to John Newton in 1765 that the origin of Methodism could be traced to Jeremy Taylor's *Holy Living and Dying* and à Kempis' *Christian Pattern*: '*I saw that one thing is needful, even faith that worketh by the love of God and man, all inward and outward holiness'.*[66] He believed that the young Oxford Methodists had been called to propogate Christian holiness: 'holiness was our point – inward and outward holiness'[67]. Again with great clarity he wrote to one of his preachers: 'Full sanctification is the grand depositum which God has lodged with the people called Methodists; and for the sake of propogating this chiefly he appears to have raised us up.'[68]

Evangelicalism – a flexible movement

A substantial corpus of literature maps the development of Evangelicalism between the eras we are investigating. It is too voluminous to extensively review but I want to pause to consider the conclusions of Tidball and Hunter as they relate to our theme, and note the impact of Alan Heimert's review of Parrington and Miller on Harry Stout and Mark Noll, two key commentators we have already mentioned, and set the scene for critiques of the Vineyard and Toronto Blessing movements in which HTB/Alpha have to some [debatable] extent been rebirthed.

Firstly then Stout and Noll. Noll was inspired as a young evangelical scholar when Alan Heimert, against the flow of most contemporary scholarship, and against his own mentor Vernon Parington's widely accepted thesis *Main Currents in American Thought* sought eruditely to rehabilitate Jonathan Edwards' Calvinism as an intellectual source for the American revolution.[69] Parrington, and Perry Miller had seen Edwards as an anachronism, and Heimert's rebuttal inspired Noll to a robust defence of evangelical thinking as an 'Edwardsean' legacy worth claiming. The same thinking however inspired

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[65] Wesley, J, *Works,* Vol 2, pp.490-491
[66] Wesley, J *Letters*, Vol 4, pp.297-300
[67] to preachers at Conference, cited in McGonigle p.241
[68] Wesley, J, *Letters*, Vol 8, p.238.
[69] Goff 1998, 695-721.

Stout, from a different tradition to a 'historical analysis that focuses on the context of communication'[70] with results we have already considered.

Noll's most seminal contribution to the historiography of evangelicalism has been his best-selling *"Scandal of the Evangelical Mind"*, in which he amusingly notes 'those who don't learn from the past are condemned to write end-time books'[71] and most famously that 'there in not much of an evangelical mind'.

This absence of an evangelical mind in Noll's thesis inevitably produces a doctrinal vacuum, and by increasingly prioritising experience (post-Jonathan Edwards, whom Noll considers as having had no successor)[72] it enables debates on core doctrines that the likes of Edwards, Wesley and Whitefield contended for to fade into the distant background and allowing a unity based more around religious product (worship style, conferences) than theological content. This vacuum largely accounts for James Davison Hunter's conclusion that despite the 'public rhetoric' of consistency evangelicalism is a 'flexible and adaptable movement.'[73] He describes how evangelicalism has adapted to modernity through sound biting its messages, marketing, making conversion into a 'step' processes, reducing discipleship to formularies and laws and through technology and organisational savvy.[74] Tidball takes this further noting how the adaptations have led to subjectivism within evangelicalism. Books on self-fulfilment, emotional balance and inner healing are 'a long way from the old pietistic and puritan spirituality in which evangelicalism was born'. [75] This change according to Hunter's 1987 study of evangelical students was consumer led.[76] He found little commitment among those he studied to the protestant work ethic, an increasing move away from seeing the Bible as an objective authority, a moving away from the inherited views of the 'Moral Majority' and a preference for viewing quality of life and leisure as their personal compass.[77] This in his account has led to even conservative forms of

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[70] Stout 1976, 521.
[71] Noll, 1994, 174.
[72] Noll, 1994, 24
[73] Tidball, 1994, 73.
[74] Hunter, 1983. See also Hunt, 2005, 14
[75] Tidball, 1994, 74.
[76] Hunter, 1987
[77] ibid.

evangelicalism mirroring contemporary culture, a growing tendency not to convict people or to make them feel unduly comfortable accompanied by a growing preoccupation with self and self- fulfilment. Feeling and emotion finally replace the traditional doctrine of repentance.[78] For Hunter 'this is probably the only means by which Christianity will survive in the contemporary age.'[79]

Several critiques suggest Hunter's trends are epitomised in the Vineyard Church movement.[80] After evaluating them a key question for the comparison we are undertaking will be the extent HTB/Alpha can be deemed to have become 'Wimberised' – i.e. how much under the influence of John Wimber's Vineyard teaching and philosophy is this movement? In his 2001 book *Telling Others* Nicky Gumble features John Wesley and George Whitefield as two of his key examples of 'power evangelism' (note his adoption of Wimber's terminology dismissed by Warner as 'Wimber's idiosyncratic model of thaumaturgy').[81] Stephen Sykes, drawing on Wimber's *Power Evangelism* and *Power Healing* to evidence Leonardo Boff's assertion that Christianity is not against power per se,[82] makes the point that Wimber 'needs to be taken more seriously than is apparent in theological circles', due to his widespread influence and reception.[83] This research will do just that through a teleological lens.

The Wimber Worldview

In a chapter entitled *'How do Westerners see the world'* Wimber expands on '*secularism'*, *'self-reliance'*, *'materialism'*, and *'rationalism'* as four factors 'inhibiting our ability to practice power evangelism.'[84] Following Blamires he argues that secularism limits thinking to a frame of reference bounded by this worldly criterion.[85] Self-reliance he defines as 'the swinging away from the medieval resignation to accepting all experiences as God's will…to the other extreme during the Enlightenment of making the human the measure of all

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[78] Hunt 2004, 14

[79] ibid.

[80] cf. Percy 1996 for an extended coverage.

[81] Gumbel, 2001, 50; Warner, 2007

[82] Sykes, 2006, 107.

[83] Sykes, 2006, 106.

[84] Wimber, 1992, 139..

[85] Wimber, 1992, 139; cf Kraft 1989, 60.

things.' This leads to people feeling 'little need for help from anything outside themselves.'[86] Materialism accounts for 'the elevation to the position of Holy Writ' of the scientific method' assuming only what can be seen, tried and tested is real. 'A philosophy of materialism directly contradicts a Christian perspective. Materialism warps our thinking, softening convictions about the supernatural world of angels and demons, heaven and hell, Christ and Antichrist.'[87] This, Wimber laments, leads to living as though the material world is more real than the spiritual. Rationalism takes this further, seeking to explain away anything that cannot be explained by human reason. This is therefore a 'non-Christian philosophy' and must be differentiated from eighteenth-century enlightenment thinking where 'many rationalists thought it was possible to analyse all experience rationally and arrive at objective truth even in spiritual and moral areas.' Wimber contends, that modern men and women have given up the quest for objectivity in these areas. [88]

Beyond these four areas Wimber also sees a rational inconsistency in prevailing modern humanist worldview that echoes Lesslie Newbigin's cultural assessment. Wimber points to the contradictions between believing in a closed material universe for scientific enquiry, whilst holding relativistic assumptions about religion and morality. Newbigin concludes that modern rationalism splits reality into 'the public world of what our culture calls facts, in distinction from the private world of belief, opinions and values.' [89] Wimber expounds on this to say state that the gospel is 'opposed to the pluralistic lie that says all religious experience is valid.'[90]

In conclusion Wimber maintains that most Western rationalism are not rigorously rationalist, frequently acknowledging a spiritual or moral world beyond the rational and feeling the need to reach out for more than scientist have conditioned them to believe.[91] Materialism and rationalism are 'unable to provide plausible suggestions for meaning in life,' or for satisfying the human

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[86] Wimber, 1992, 140.
[87] Wimber, 1992, 140.
[88] Wimber 1992, 140-41.
[89] Newbigin 1986, 14..
[90] Wimber, 1992, 41.
[91] Wimber, 1992, 41.

cries for attention.'[92] Humanism fails to meet the need to understand the universe, but pluralism is a lie that fails to help those questing for meaning outside the rational.

That Wimber's worldview was taken up by leading Anglican charismatics is evidenced in Bishop David Pytches writings. Pytches writes that:

> 'The Western worldview is both materialist and rationalist. Our materialism blurs our perception of the spiritual. Our rationalism … is incapable of understanding the spirit which can never be reduced to rules of logic or theories requiring proof. What we should endeavour to do is discover the worldview of Jesus (not to be confused with the first-century worldview which also had its distortions.'[93]

Pytches credits Wimber's 'unemotional matter-of-fact ministry of signs and wonders'[94] with 'revolutionising' 'vital aspects' of UK church life, noting how for David Watson ministry would never be the same again.[95] This was echoed by all the HTB senior leaders I interviewed who were in ministry in the early 1980s.[96]

Vineyard Critique

Luhrmann, in a book much praised by Mark Noll,[97] undertook an extensive ethnographic study of the Chicago Vineyard. She offers a capsule history of

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[92] Wimber, 1992, 41.

[93] Pytches, 1985, 13.

[94] Pytches, 1985, 15.

[95] Pytches, 1985, 16.

[96] cf pers comm John Irvine 28/3/15. Wimber brought 'a new kind of charismatic renewal… suddenly there was new intimacy in worship and prayer for healing on a regular basis and seeing things happen and a much greater expectation of God to actually work.' Irvine also spoke of 'visiting Wimberland' and as a 'wonderful model' for church planting and ministry. [but note Paul Perkins, pers. comm, 8/5/15 who was on staff at HTB and at Brompton Hospital who noted that many of the reported healings seemed 'quite trivial' compared to the situations he had to walk families through at the hospital].

[97] Noll, 2012 describes it as 'captivating' and 'stunningly effective.' Jenkins, 2012, 372 argues that further theological reflection on the limitation and impact

recent religious changes, and identifies Vineyard as 'evangelical, post-fundamentalist, soft charismatic, therapeutically spiritual.' She depicts the typical attenders as 'wine-bibbers and latte aficionados from the educated and mobile middle classes of urban American life.'[98]

Critically for this piece Luhrmann concludes that:

> 'It is also a religion significantly more oriented toward the anxieties, the upsets, and the new configurations of contemporary social experience. And it is a religion with a much reduced role for many traditional Christian teachings, such as the transcendent otherness of God, the moral perfections of divine holiness, the debilitating character of human sinfulness, and the spiritual maturity to be gained through patient suffering.'[99]

Wimber attracted some stern critiques from Anglican Conservatives. In a book provocatively entitled *'John Wimber: Friend of Foe'* Sydney evangelical Philip Jenson compares Wimber to the 'compassionate, loving, genuine, sincere' loaded dog of Henry Lawson's short story who ends up unwittingly carrying an explosive cartridge around in his mouth.[100] Reid contrasts Wimber with Whitefield noting that Whitefield discouraged unusual manifestations [then common in the Vineyard churches] at his meetings even writing to John Wesley to say that though there is something of God in the convulsions people have been having he was concerned that the devil was imposing too.[101]

Packer has a similar lament to Luhrmann surveying the broader evangelical context:

> "Worshipers in evangelical churches, from the very young to the very old, and particularly the youth and the twenty- and thirty-somethings, know far less about the Bible and the faith than one

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of experience would have enhanced her work.
[98] Noll 2012.
[99] Noll, 2012.
[100] Jensen, 1990, 11
[101] in Doyle 1987, 105-06.

would hope and than they themselves need to know for holy living.
This is because the teaching mode of Christian communication is
out of fashion, and all the emphasis in sermons and small groups
is laid on experience in its various aspects. The result is a pietistic
form of piety, ardent and emotional."[102]

In the UK context Guest has argued convincingly that 'softening of language' in
charismatic Anglican churches - which may have begun as an
unacknowledged marketing ploy to 'stress positive affirmation and evade
negative judgment' - actually changes community boundaries and the
congregational identity forged out of it.[103] Those who attend are often 'elective
parochials' who 'depend on the church for belonging, intimacy and collective
support.'[104] This, coupled with a deep need to be a 'successful' church [viz.
numerous, active and with a high level of volunteerism] means that
'interpersonal conflict is avoided and measures are taken to minimise its
occurrence.'[105] This conflict avoidance inevitably leads to a new implicit
teleology for the church. As Helen Cameron would put it there is a widening
gap between the operant theology (what is actually done) and the normative
and formal theologies these churches hold to – not least because there is a
complicit absence of espoused theologies on issues that might be deemed to
be troubling.[106]

Sandy Millar would counter this maintaining that the message has not been
compromised. He has argued that 'the trouble with the Church of England is
that as the market is distancing itself from us we have been forced to change

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[102] Packer, 2008, 30. see also Warner's 2008 article where he argues that
there is an evidenceable socio-political heterogeneity among younger
evangelicals.
[103] Guest, 2004, 72 drawing on Cohen 1985 and Dowie 2002.
[104] Guest 2004, 83.
[105] Guest 2004, 83.
[106] Cameron, 2012, 13. An interesting case study to investigate will be was
removal of the chapter on homosexuality from Gumbel's 'Searching Issues'.
Yet as recently as 2005 Hunt, 2005, 19 could say Alpha has 'clear and
uncompromising views on issues like homosexuality.'

either the message or the model'.[107] He states that changing the message is a 'total failure' as the market hopes to hear that the church 'actually does believe in something'. Rather it is the model that needs changing, to connect with the young.'[108] Research then is needed into the degree to which changing the model changes the message.

Finally, it is hard to explain the growth of Alpha and HTB without reference to the controversial 1994 phenomenon 'The Toronto Blessing' [TTB]. Whilst Wimber was hugely influential in the development of HTB as a church planting network, the adoption of church growth strategies, and an increasing emphasis on the power of the Holy Spirit, a strong argument can be made that Wimber's model and Alpha's impact only took its great leap forward through the expectation, impact, and after effects of TTB when Wimber's own international influence was wanning.[109]

In the wake of this experience (hosted in the UK by HTB) 5000 churches were primed and ready to spread this 'revival' and Alpha was the mechanism.[110] The course jumped from 4,600 cumulative number of guests in 1993 on 200 courses to 100,000 in 1995 on 2500 courses and 1.3 million guests by 1998 attending 10,500 courses, adding a million more guests worldwide each year over the following decade following its first national initiative.

Toronto has attracted a series of well documented theological critiques. Richter, Hunt, Poloma, Römer have all written on this and Poloma has a very helpful review of TTB which relates well to Spiral Dynamics and how a post-modernity gives and interpretative understanding. Walker sees the rise of Alpha as conveniently eclipsing the Toronto Blessing - which otherwise produced little social transformation,[111] and Hunt goes further arguing that the

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[107] Furlong, 2000, 274. 'Millar seems to be uncritically referring to 'market' here. This offers a fascinating parallel to Lambert's revisionist account of Whitefield playing for market share. If he is intentionally referring to the language of competition does this reflect a Ken Costa influence, or Millar's own CEO like abilities [cf. pers. comm Paul Perkins, 2015]? How much does an asserted drive for market share expansion account for Alpha's successes?

[108] Furlong, 2000, 274.

[109] Hunt, 2005,5

[110] Heard, 2003, 22

[111] Walker, A, cited in Hilborn 2001, 313

take up of Alpha was a mechanism utilised by the 5000 churches to 'force' the expected revivial and fulfil prophesy.[112]

The impact of Alpha/HTB

Warner sees Alpha as the great success story of British Evangelicalism since the 1990s.[113] Alpha has reached 22 million people in 138 countries. It has caused a quiet revolution in many denominational churches bringing a gentle, but confident renewal. Despite criticism, HTB has dramatically increased its international and technological reach, and influence. This is evidenced in the adoption of its church planting model on a national scale by numerous Dioceses part financed by Church Commissioners money and vocally backed by an Archbishop who was himself a graduate of Alpha and HTB.

Warner compares the growth of Alpha with Spring Harvest and argues for the likelihood of a boom and bust of the Alpha movement, which like Spring Harvest would inevitably overestimate the trajecotry of its success. He further posits that the rise of alphaholics – repeat attenders of alpha who may never transition to attending conventional church – means that one of four options is possible for these devotees: 1) assimilation through habitation, 2) reconstruction – reimagining church a little more in Alpha's image (cf café church), 3) dissolution – fading away from church when Alpha inevitably ceases and returning to 'secularity', 4) separate development:

> 'When Wesley developed class meetings more relevant to the felt needs
> of eager converts than the parish church, these meetings gradually
> became the focus of their Christian loyalty in a trajectory that led
> inelucatbly towards the birth of a new denomination. Notwithstanding the
> inate and emphatic Anglican loyalties of Alpha's founders, and HTB's
> policy of dissuading what they call 'Alphaholics' from repeated course
> attendance, if traditional churches remain unable to change sufficiently to

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[112] Hunt, 2005, 6
[113] Warner, 2007, 115.

address the needs of Alpha adherents, Alpha could yet spawn, however

unintentionally, a new Methodism for the twentieth century.'[114]

This last point is fascinating in the light of more recent developments with

Justin Welby helping HTB's church planting agenda to become mainstream

practice for desparate dioceses, and Nicky Gumbel's sense that Alpha can fail

without the right church driving the church planting agenda. Gumbel expects a

continued growth, whereas Warner is arguing the bubble will burst. The key is

likely to be the next leadership transition and whether this is navigated like

Whitefield in 1769 or Wesley's 21 years later. Baker comments:

> Largely because of his careful preparations for the future and his gradual
>
> relaxing of control over the preachers, at Wesley's death Methodism
>
> survived the tremendous strain with remarkable resilience.[115]

Like the Methodist revival Alpha/HTB has its key personalities, the most

influential of which being Sandy Millar and Nicky Gumbel. Heard, in his

extended critique of Alpha, describes Gumbel as 'embodying many of the

charictaristics of a Weberian charismatic leader'… which gives the impression

that he, like other such leaders in Awamleh and Gardener's framework, is

'particularly attuned to God', and able to build 'sufficient prestige through his

self-confident manner.'[116] He quotes a National Director of Alpha USA

describing Gumbel as an apostle Paul for this generation, as Billy Graham was

for the last. Gumbel, an introvert is a different personality to Whitefield whose

'public self was his private self', and yet the charismatic legacy in both its

ancient and modern terms is clear.[117] Expressed in a TV/media age Gumbel

does in a series of 10 evenings and a weekend what Whitefield would have

done in an evening, offering his hearers an individualised divine encounter, not

described so much as 'new birth' but 'an encounter with the Holy Spirit'.

Alpha offers a mixture of foundational evidence as well as experiential

personal faith. Guest affirms the ability of Alpha to appeal to both modern and

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[114] Warner, 2007, 135.
[115] Baker, F, 1970, pp. 322
[116] Heard, 2012, 18-19. Following Awamleh and Gardener (1999)
Perceptions Of Leader Charisma, Effectiveness, And Integrity.
[117] Stout, H, 1991, 287.

post-modern models of reality. By 'fostering an embodied experience of the Holy Spirit' alongside a plain and propositional presentation of Christian truth, he argues Alpha has managed a tension that is the key to its success. [118]

Nevertheless the continued growth, success and development of HTB and its major plants stands in marked contrast to the general research on larger churches in Jackson's major study of the Church of England. It has proven to be 'one of the powerhouses and potential saviours' of the national church Jackson anticipates larger churches could be.[119]

HTB/Alpha – A Teleology?

The degree to which a teleology of HTB/Alpha is possible to establish will be one key focus of the primary research of this DThM. However the literature review and early research gives a working hypothesis. We have already noted Guest and Luhrmann's take on a gentle charismatic religious system that avoids doctrinal and ethical controversy, evades negative judgement, downplays doctrines of divine perfection and human sinfulness and is 'therapeutically spiritual'. Could it be that the teleology of the most prominent current revival movement in the Church of England is markedly different to its eighteenth-century forbearer?

The worldview of Collins, Millar and the older clergy inspired by Wimber, was a traditional evangelical one easily traceable to the Bash Camps and John Stott.[120] Centrists often see Alpha as too 'evangelical' or even fundamentalist[121] evidencing references to propitiation among its four atonement theories,[122] but HTB are now regularly chastised by more conservative evangelicals for what

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[118] Guest, M, 2007, p.47
[119] Jackson, 2002, 130
[120] Bash Camps: see Ward, 2013, 37f.
[121] Percy 1998 sees Alpha as crudely 'fundamentalist' – a word he has a habit of overusing (see Anderson 2004, 258-59 for his 'very broad definition' of fundamentalist). cf. Hunt 2005.
[122] Silva sees his treatment of sin as 'brief and cryptic' http://apprising.org/2013/01/23/the-alpha-course-the-gospel-according-to-nicky-gumbel/

Andrew Wilson calls a 'complicity of silence' on moral/ethical issues,[123] and at a doctrinal level Alpha can be critiqued for significantly changing the locos of sin. The Holy Spirit is never presented as convicting people of sin and in the key *Why Did Jesus* Die talk Gumbel presents the issue of sin over thirty times but almost entirely as something people *do*, rather than as an explanation of what people *are* by nature.[124]

If Alpha/HTB has a tendency towards being a consumer religion selling (in Percy's memorable phrase) 'a bargain bucket weekend for two in eternity'[125] perhaps it cannot even afford to retain Wesley's emphasis on sin while 'marketing' to consumers that do not see themselves as sinful. But does 'knowing your audience' necessarily reduce the movement to (in Hunt's words) a 'spiritual 'drive-through' in true McDonalds fashion?'[126] Another conversation partner is needed to aid us in our practical theology comparison.

Spiral Dynamics Integral

To gain a lens to evaluate both movements against the cultural norms of their times I am proposing to use a model utlilised by Jim McNeish in developing leaders both at HTB and in the new senior leadership development streams in the Church of England.[127] It is a revised version of his former mentor psychologist Clare Graves' '*Emergent Cyclical Levels of Existence'* known as the *Spiral Dynamics integral* [SDi].[128] It posits a series of developments in societal and individual levels of consciousness[129] over time and suggests the leadership responses need to adapt to them.

American developmental psychologist Clare Graves (1914-1986) was a contemporary of Abraham Maslow who developed the idea of stages of cultural

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[123] http://thinktheology.co.uk/blog/article/sexuality_and_silence - an article clearly aimed at HTB / Hillsongs and similar.
[124] Silva op cit.
[125] Percy, 1998, 16
[126] Hunt, 2005, 20
[127] see research proposal for details
[128] popularized by Beck and Cowan, 1996
[129] These prevailing ways of seeing the world are known as value-Memes (after Dawkins' term).

development[130] and made it into a dynamic interactive system whereby each stage interacts in a 'dialectical spiral of development – a living system of evolution',[131] in which, as Habermas had maintained, 'individual consciousness recapitulates the historical development of human consciousness (ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny)'.[132] Graves differed from previous evolutionary thinkers in that he saw no final destination for that evolutionary process but he had an acute awareness of how context – cultural and social environments – could shape consciousness in an individual. Context can both inhibit and promote development. His work is used in business and leadership studies to explain, for instance, why change management initiatives fail up to 70% of the time.[133]

His framework offered eight colour coded phases of human (individual and societal) existence, arguing that each successive wave 'is a state through which people pass on their way to other states of being'.[134] The state in which a human is currently centred will determine their feelings, motivations, ethics, values, belief system, management preferences, education, political theory etc. Each culture has what Graves, and his successors and elaborators Don Beck and Chris Cowan, would see as a 'centre of gravity' a 'balance point' that constantly adapts to changing environments and conditions but is nevertheless the predominant worldview.

Graves' Levels of Consciousness

Graves was shaped by both the Depression and the Second World War and had the enduring desire to utilise biological, social and psychological advances to enhance understanding. These patterns he saw in individual students over many years seemed to Graves to correspond closely with the cultural and social developments recorded in history. He posited that there was an interplay between the dominant environmental and social circumstances

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[130] see McGuigan, 2016, 136 for the development of these ideas from Hegel, Bergeson, de Chardin, Gebser and Habermas.
[131] Steve McIntosh, 2007.
[132] McGuigan, 2016, 138
[133] Burnes & Jackson, 2011, 133 & 161-62 following McKinsey's change management survey.
[134] See Voros, 2001, 540-542 for a helpful elaboration on the phases later named vMemes

anvindividual/society was impacted by, with their intrinsic neurological and biological capacities.[135]

He illustrated this as if they were two strands of a double-helix: one the evolving environment inhabited by humankind, and the other the evolving landscape of the human brain responding to these various stimuli. As these strands interact and connect various stages of development emerged. Not only do whole societies journey through these stages (that span from caveman to current day), but individuals, he observed, can also make a similar progression in their own lifetime. His successors Beck and Cowan have largely been responsible for the dispersal of his ideas linking his levels of consciousness to Richard Dawkin's (1976/1989) concept of the 'meme' as a culturally embedded social "gene" that defines the worldview and consciousness of individuals and hence social groups.[136]

Cowan and Beck's development of the model has sociocultural worldviews depicted by a spiral where the vMemes are the temporary plateaus with each level of the model colour coded. The model shuns rigidity so each spiral is seen more like an emerging wave than a fixed progression – it is a living system, responding with fluidity to life's conditions. Each wave, or stage represents an average level of consciousness within the culture where the centre of gravity marks the current predominant cultural worldview. Within that culture individuals will have varying levels of consciousness. vMemes begin at brown, and work through purple, red, blue, orange, green, yellow and turquoise, although following Graves a 'higher level' is not ascribed a value judgement as a 'better level'. What is important is to develop a level of consciousness appropriate to your surroundings.[137] Some may grow to the prevailing level of consciousness, some surpass it and some never reach it. Over a period of time like the transition from eighteenth-century to the present the prevailing level of consciousness in society will also change, and there can be more than one prevailing level at a given time (e.g. across class differences). So in eighteenth-century England there would be clear gaps

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[135] Graves, 1970, 131-55
[136] Beck & Cowan, 1996; cf Dawkins 1976.
[137] cf. Cowan 2000

between the dominant vMemes of the highly educated and the labourers. In Kent's mind that gap is key the success of eighteenth-century Methodism.[138] It appealed to the lower level primitive religious consciousness of the industrialised poor (purple), but not (by and large) to the ruling classes (blue/orange). This has significant implications for our studies.

Validity of the model

Slaughter (while drawing on SDi to help posit an improved world post the first Gulf War) rightly notes that SDi is 'not immune to critique'.[139] But from a theological perspective Collicut concludes that the largely secular corpus of psychological development material is 'more in accord with the way of Christ than we might have expected.'[140] Prinsloo elaborates on the methodological issues in a helpful comparison of key organisational development models. She asserts that consciousness models need vigorous examination in terms of their scientific status, coherence of model, constructs, methodologies and value. Following Popper and Taleb she works with the "falsification" idea to establish where the integral and consciousness models, she is reviewing are most lacking. She has a particular focus on Spiral Dynamics, which as we will see holds descriptive value for her in painting a meta-narrative of development, while noting its empirical weakness.[141]

In scientific terms, drawing from Royce and Powell, she notes that the theory belongs to only the first three of their four levels of scientific development [philosophical speculation, empirical exploration, observation and quantification, formalisation and unification]. The formulation of the consciousness models 'lack scientific rigour' and 'involves significant speculation'.

She notes that the models reflect cognitive patterns in human mental processing such as identifying linear progressions and making generalisations. The danger is that development models reflect the theorist's skills and capabilities rather than the subject matter.Sternberg (1977) established that

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138 Kent 2002
139 Slaughter, 2005, 16
140Collicutt, 2015, 87
141 Prinsloo, 2012.

effective models need to meet 'meta-theoretical criteria' that include plausibility, completeness, parsimony, structural adequacy and empirical adequacy. These factors trade off with each other as parsimony calls for simplicity in understanding data but this may limit completeness. Detterman (1984) saw parsimony as the most important category for theory construction in social sciences as it simplifies the process of falsification and practical utility.

Prinsloo argues SDi meets the parsimony criterion, but not that of structural adequacy. She evidences this by showing how Graves' principle that leaders should have a level of consciousness reflecting or exceeding their followers clashes with another of his assertions that the effectiveness of a v-meme depends on its contextual fit. Hence Green or Yellow followers may accept Blue or Red leaders in Blue or Red contexts.

She sees the model as plausible and theoretically elegant, but believes that 'the randomness of human behaviour' might derail its adequacy to account for empirical findings. The model fails also on 'completeness' for describing phenomenon without addressing the underlying system dynamics. This links to Taleb's (2010) general criticism of social sciences as a 'pretense of science'. If SDi as a model is merely an organising framework, descriptive, with overlapping constructs then it lacks predictive validity. In particular Prinsloo asserts that there is insufficient evidence for the v-memes (levels or stages) in SDi and other consciousness models. Yet despite this she maintains that they 'provide descriptive and heuristic value.'

> Consciousness theories, the work of Graves and Wilber in particular, provide a valuable meta-framework for understanding human awareness and the principles by which complex behavioural, emotional, cognitive, valuing and identity formation processes are shaped.[142]

However despite Collicut's general appreciation there may be further theological reasons for caution. Moroney, analysing Kohlberg's model in

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[142] Prinsloo, 2012.

particular and developmental integral theory in general summarises the following critiques:[143]

1) Later stages seem to be 'higher, more adequate, morally preferable'

2) Overlooking immoral development at each stage of life (Joy, 1983)

3) Not taking human sinfulness seriously (Dykstra, 1983)

4) Lacking categories for grace, mercy, forgiveness, gospel (Schmidt, 1983)

5) Inherent bias against religiously conservative people (Richard and Davison, 1992)

6) Fundamental bias against dogmatic religious belied 'individuals who maintain that God reveals moral truths must be obeyed are by definition not post-conventional' (Johnson, 1996)

7) Failure to account for theological motivations for pursuing moral actions (Balswick, King, Reimer, 2005).

However others have used his stages of development for Christian childrearing books and three scholars have sought to construct detailed schemes of how his work interacts with Scripture. Motet (1978) linked the stages (quite poorly) with Moses' development, and Shepard (1994) to the changing covenants in Scripture with similar skill. Gibson (2004) acknowledged two weaknesses in Kohlberg's scheme [overlooking a) God as the source of development and human capacities; b) the reality of sin]. His counter-proposal is of a transition from self-centred to Kingdom-centred motivations over four stages:

Level	Source of Authority	Motivation
1	Self-centred	hope of reward/fear of punishment
2	Other-centred	Imitate godly exemplars, respect ten commandments
3	Principle-centred	Personal commitment to Christian world-view
4	Kingdom-centred	Actively promote corporate piety & redemption of creation
		(Gibson, 2004, 298)

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[143] Moroney, 2006, 361-371

But Moroney points to CS Lewis (1949) in suggesting that this framework is more Kantian than biblical. Lewis argued that from Kant and the stoics a notion has crept into the modern mind that 'to desire our own good and earnestly hope for enjoyment is a bad thing.'[144] Moroney goes on to question the empirical data behind Kohlberg's theory. This suggests it is patriarchal, biased by western mind-sets of political liberalism, competitive-market individualism, Kantianism, meta-ethical objectivism, formalism, classism – cf. Puka, 1994 who asserts that all these a 'read in' to the data. Even more challengingly perhaps is Mellema's (1989) challenge that the framework is unsubstantiated by data after making a detailed examination of five of his cases. Moroney then climaxes with a strong collection of New Testament texts where Jesus, seem to be appealing to lower level consciousness arguments with people ('fear God', 'stop sinning or something worse will happen to you'), or where Paul using a wide variety of motivators both with whole congregations and individuals, than span across numerous levels of consciousness. These critiques all accumulate to suggest that any utilisation of SDi in my comparison needs to be done in what Osmer describes a 'transformational cross-disciplinary approach'[145] posing questions back to SDi at the same time as utilising insights that arise from having a tertiary discipline to engage with to examine any teleological gap between the two movements within a socio-cultural historical context.

Nevertheless there are precedents for a cross-disciplinary investigation utilising the Spiral Dynamics model. Mann has cross-referenced it with the procedural engineering TRIZ model to help predict trends in customer needs.[146] Haigh has linked it to pedagogic research.[147] Persut applies it to developments in nursing.[148] Most helpfully Diane Salters in the Transactional Analysis Journal utilises Spiral Dynamics within her discipline in much the same way as practical theology models seek to interact with external disciplines. She suggests that SDi offers a framework for examining social-

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[144] Lewis, 1949, 1
[145] Osmer, 2008, 129
[146] Mann, 2011, 573-581
[147] Haigh, 2013, 174-191
[148] Persut, 2001,70

physiological phenomenon systematically and applying it to their work.'[149] She is writing in the complex context of post-apartheid South Africa, but sees the SDi framework as being capable of bridging 'the inner individual journey of psychotherapy' and the social context in which those journeys are outworked in.

Synthesis

We have seen that there is substantial primary and secondary literature relating to the teleologies of Wesley and Whitefield and some helpful attempts at doctrinal comparisons (particularly Maddocks). The HTB/Alpha secondary/academic material depends to a large extent on wider critiques of evangelicalism, Wimber and the Toronto Blessing, although the Alpha course has had significant academic critiques (notably Heard, Hunt, Percy). There is a clear need here for further ethnographic research to fill an important gap in recent church history. The utilisation of Spiral Dynamics in leadership development in the Church of England and HTB circles deserves a thorough critique but will be a very helpful model for thinking through any gap that can be proven between the eighteenth and twenty-first century teleologies we have been considering and exploring whether the message as well as the method can / should change for a fresh generation.

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[149] Salters, 2011, 265-276

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